

*Flyers Creek Wind Farm Proposal MP08-0252 : OBJECTION*

December 14 2011

Mr Toby Philip  
Senior Planning Officer  
NSW Department of Planning  
23-33 Bridge Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Re: Submission with regards to the Flyers Creek Wind Farm (Application MP08-0252)

Dear Mr Philip

We wish to lodge our STRONG OBJECTION to this proposal:

It is my understanding that the development company, Infigen Energy was to work with the community on this project. It seems that they have been very selective in their discussions and have not addressed some very important issues.

The Substation: No Consultation

*Why is it only now, when we study a proposal that has been put out for public display that we learn that a substation of 120 x 80 metres and accompanying overhead high voltage power lines are being planned for a site just 300 - 500 meters from our home?*

Chris and I were approached by Jonathan Upson of Infigen Energy many months ago in regard to the placement of two turbines that they had planned for a neighbouring property which were to be sited within 1.5km of our home. At this initial meeting all discussion was around the turbines and at no time during these discussions was any mention made of the substation, site buildings, roads and lay-down area that they planned for a location directly opposite our entrance.

We first learnt of the substation from our neighbour and host farmer (Chris's brother) when he informed us that it was to be located 'up the valley on Slattery's Creek'. The exact position and size was not discussed. It wasn't until around May 2011 that we saw a map showing the location of the substation and power lines. This map showed the substation to be very close to our house and on top of the hill opposite our driveway... not up a valley and out of sight. Measurements to where the landholder's understanding of its agreed site measured just 300meters from our front gate. This naturally caused us concern and when we enquired further were told by the host farmer that the substation was 'the size of a tennis court, maybe a little larger'. Even a substation of that size caused considerable concern and we requested that our neighbour contact Infigen Energy and arrange for it to be located further back and in the valley as first suggested. Unfortunately this request was not received well and family friction began to mount. The matter died down again until Infigen's EA was put out for public viewing. It is only now and through studying the EA that we have learnt that the substation is to be 'about 500 (?)meters' off Errowanbang Road, one hectare in size, up to 25 meters tall and that additional extra room is needed for site offices. To learn now that a substation of this

magnitude is planned for a site directly opposite our driveway is very distressing and has now reignited extreme friction within the family.

Infigen Energy's submission states that the placement of the substation is... 'not considered an issue for this project' and in Chapter 16 ... 'fields associated with EMF's will be localised'. I can only assume that they mean... it only affects one residence so therefore it is of no concern. (I have since contacted Mr Upson via email to enquire why we were not informed about the substation to which he replied that I should have studied the maps that were at a community meeting a year ago. It seems that the position was indicated by way of dotted lines and a box for the substation. We were obviously not diligent enough in finding our way through all the pie charts, graphs, photo montages and salespeople that were there on the day to be able to isolate a map that would at some stage at a later date, be the source of so much concern. At no time have we been shown an image of the substation or been made aware of its size or of the overhead power lines) Surely, information pertaining to the substation carried the same, if not more relevance to us than the turbines that Mr Upson initially came to see us about. The man's offhanded dismissal of our situation is not acceptable and unfortunately indicative of the overall handling of this project by Infigen Energy.

I can understand that the placement of the turbines is critical and that the developer is very hesitant to move them. But, surely the placement of the substation is not as critical and most certainly does not need to be perched on top of a hill just to facilitate ease of access. When looking at the map supplied by Infigen Energy I can see absolutely no reason to put it where they plan to put it. If it were positioned further toward the Panuara Road intersection it could be kept to an area dominated by host farms and away from non host farm homes. It would also reduce the need for the extensive amount of overhead power lines. (Please see our accompanying map which shows an alternative placement of the substation)

For those who are to make the final decision on this Wind Farm proposal, PLEASE take our situation into account and if it by some horrible twist of fate is to be approved, request a new site for the substation. It is bad enough that we are to be subjected to two turbines at around 1.5kms from our house, plus the cumulative effect of mine noise, lights and dust. We do not need the added burden of such a large substation virtually at our door.

#### Property Value and Safety

I have argued repeatedly with Mr Upson regarding potential diminished property values. His response is quotes from outdated studies based on a much larger demographic. Our farm is only 40 acres and as such is far more of a lifestyle choice than an agricultural enterprise. Chris has owned it for approximately 30 years and we have been living here as permanent residents for around 13 of those years. We have spent a lot of time and money on the property and in 2007 were forced to rebuild after fire destroyed the original farm house. I have sought the advice of local real estate agents and have been warned that the presence of large wind turbines could most definitely make it hard to sell the property at its optimum market price. To learn now that a large substation in full view of Errowanbang Road and opposite our driveway will greet any potential buyer is extremely distressing. (Even pro wind farmers would be put off, which would make the

sale of our property almost impossible) The EA states that trees would be planted around the substation to screen it from the road. Just how long are we supposed to wait until the trees grow to a height of 25 meters? One of the large pine trees that already exists between our house and the proposed site is dead. If any others follow suit we will be left with very minimal screening of the substation. (The photo of the proposed site showing 'exotic pastures' in the EA is directed away from, not toward our property) The entrance to the proposed substation site is currently a small farm track and on a blind corner. To facilitate the movement of large trucks, the whole corner would need to be taken out which would result in our entrance forming the forth side of a large intersection. Any accident here involving failed brakes could see a large truck in our driveway and the possible destruction of lives and buildings.

#### The Site Office Buildings and Lay down area

As stated in the EA, a large volume of heavy traffic will be required to access this site during construction. To reach the site traffic will need to travel from the Mid-Western Highway along Errowanbang Road past the local school for almost the full length of the project on a road that is substandard (please refer to Blayney Shire Council's road report). The siting of this infrastructure would be far better placed at the southern end of the development to minimise unnecessary vehicular movement.

#### Noise : Turbines

To date, Infigen has refused to confirm the exact size of turbines that they intend to install at Flyers Creek, yet their EA contains noise monitoring results. If the noise monitoring has been carried out using an average sized turbine, and they ultimately decide to use the larger turbines, then surely the results of the tests are irrelevant. Also, how are these results going to be effected if extra towers are added to the Wind Farm at a later date? (To my knowledge the contract has an allowance for additional towers to be added to the project.) Vibration and Noise, (both direct and infrasound) are a big issue on this project. A less than accurate report is just not good enough. Why has this company been permitted to lodge an EA without specifying the size of the turbines? Surely noise monitoring should be redone on the actual turbines to be used.

#### Noise : Substation

Substations are known to emit EMFs and a humming sound. The noise level is governed by the activity of the turbines. In a high wind situation, the noise level will increase. Infigen's EA states that this noise will be camouflaged by the increased wind noise and the turbines. When it is just 300 metres from our house, this is not a theory that I would like to have to prove by waiting for its construction to be able to it check out.

#### Noise: Cumulative Affect

Infigen's EA dismisses any problems in relation to Cadia Mine. The larger Cadia mine grows, the noisier it gets. Mostly, these noise levels are reliant on wind direction and atmospherics with a distinct increase in levels at night. The proposed turbines are planned for the hills opposite the mine. That will effectively sandwich us between the two. Infigen has not given any assurances regarding effective monitoring or compliance

## *Flyers Creek Wind Farm Proposal MP08-0252 : OBJECTION*

of noise levels. Will we be faced with a series of 'Buck Passing' between Infigen and Cadia mine when the noise levels become unbearable? Do we have to fund our own noise monitoring to prove a problem when all others are in denial? We are entitled to have honest monitoring and response in regard to these matters. The Quinn case currently in the South Australia Court has shown a serious breach of sound levels resulting in 16 turbines in the AGL Hallet Wind Farm to be turned off while sound levels are being disputed. This outcome is extremely important to the Flyers Creek development and all decisions regarding the approval of this project should be held over until we see a result.

### The Process

It is understandable that the objective of the proponent is to succeed in establishing a wind farm in this area. However, if to obtain that objective they need to adopt a less than honest approach then very strict government regulations should be applied to protect people's rights. In the blind pursuit of the 20/20 target for renewable energy we are becoming political road kill. As opponents to this development, we have NO protection. Local government cannot help us and it seems that the State and Federal Governments don't want to. The Senate Enquiry into Health Effects of Wind Farms reviewed many very important issues and as a result recommended a halt on further developments until further studies could be carried out. Please listen to these recommendations. There is an abundance of evidence showing a need for very strict guidelines and set back between turbines and residences. The Planning Department has access to this information and should be held accountable for any problems arising should they grant approval for this development. The Flyers Creek area is a developed settlement with many houses and a school in the project site. 36 non-host residences sit within a 2 kilometre range of the 44 proposed turbines. These people are powerless in the wake of this wind farm development and are at the mercy of Infigen. We are not, as some host farmers suggest against green energy, nor are we jealous of their income. Our argument is over the siting of the towers. When they are positioned with blatant disregard of their neighbour's lifestyle and property values a conflict is bound to arise. Please protect us. We need a minimum 2 kilometre set back and firm honest regulation and monitoring of noise levels.

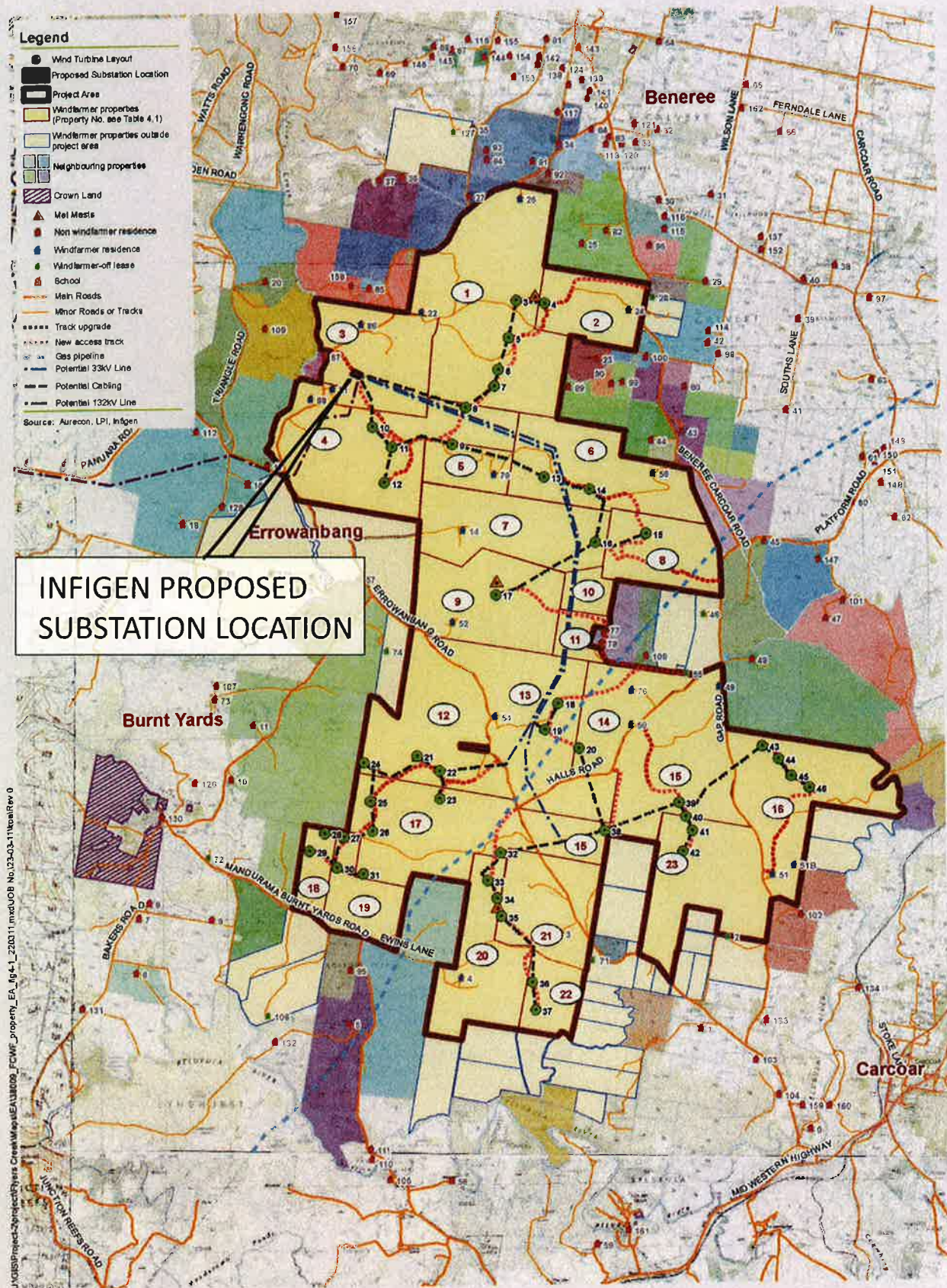
Please put a stop to this development. Our future quality of life and property value is at stake.

Sincerely

Di & Chris Colman  
1711 Errowanbang Road  
FLYERS CREEK NSW 2798

T: 02 6366 7216  
M: 0429309968  
E: [dicolman@bigpond.com](mailto:dicolman@bigpond.com) Infigen Map Residence 87





Flyers Creek Wind Farm Environmental Assessment

FIGURE 4.1: Property Map





