

Submission
No 111

INQUIRY INTO RURAL WIND FARMS

Name: Mr John Carter and Mr Colin Dooley

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Partially Confidential

Parliamentary Inquiry into Rural Wind farms.

Goulburn 1/10/2009

Submission by John Carter and Colin Dooley.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to address your Inquiry.

You have heard and will hear a lot about the effectiveness and the effects of wind-farms.

Colin Dooley and I are different because we represent the only families that have actually lived beside a wind farm in NSW for 11 years. Others may conjecture—we have experienced. Our comments are based on actual factual experience.

We follow your terms of reference in order.

1. Role of utility-scale wind generation in:

- Reducing greenhouse gas emissions generated by electricity production
- Producing off peak and base load power.

The inability of inland wind farms to achieve what is claimed.

We opposed Wind farm 1 – We were told that it was a trial and that there would be no more wind farms in our area. I have had both Peta Seaton and Katrina Hodgkinson separately seek the economics of Wind farm 1 under FOI--all to no avail. Clearly it is an embarrassment to the Government. **[Omitted by resolution of the Committee]**

THERE IS INSUFFICIENT WIND IN THIS AREA TO RUN A VIABLE WINDFARM.

The comment “Predicted high energy generation of these turbines” on page 4 of the initial submission for Wind farm 11 illustrated a naive or deceptive approach to the whole project. A dispassionate analysis of the 11 year performance of Crookwell Wind farm 1 would illustrate the economic insanity of erecting turbines in this area.

Professor Michael Dureau, CEO of the Warren Centre at Sydney University told me that “No Australian wind farm with any landmass between it and the South Pole will ever be profitable”.

2. Locating rural wind farms to optimise wind resource use and minimise residential and environmental impacts.

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Scenic vandalism for no purpose.

Despite several requests I have never sighted the ‘independent’ (Canadian, Dennis Williamson from Victoria) assessment of the visual impact of 55 turbines being inserted into the valley to the

South of Lake Edward. I love this valley; I have planted over 40,000 trees over 50 years. If there was a proven case that the public good was an overriding factor I would have to accept the desecration—However, despite 8 years of requests for the results of the Crookwell Wind farm 1 “trial” they have never been released. I don’t believe that either Upper Lachlan Shire Council or the Department of Planning has attended to its obvious responsibility to evaluate the trial and release its findings.

Health risk

My wife has experienced strange problems with her health. She developed severe pain in many muscles. She had trouble sleeping... In August 2006 she was diagnosed as having Polymyalgia Rheumatica and put on Cortisone treatment—which she has had to maintain ever since. This removed the pain but then she developed vertigo, numb left finger, and numb left side of her mouth, flickering focus and then severe headache. When tired her face would turn scarlet, left hand would go a purple colour and upper arm would ache.

I read about a US complaint called Wind Turbine Syndrome on the Internet. Dr Nina Pierpont has become a World authority on the subject. I checked the listed symptoms and many fitted those listed above.

We are in a proven electromagnetic bubble which emanates from the nearest tower (2 kms. away).

I contacted Mr. Tim Strachan at The Energy Store, Bondi as I had read of his work with electromagnetic problems. I made an appointment and Mr. Strachan made a pendant for my wife on the end of which is metals and crystals enclosed by plastic.

Since wearing it (from December 6 2008) most of the symptoms have disappeared. She is sleeping better than for years. None of the above symptoms have occurred when she is at our unit in Sydney.

We are all aware of Leon Anable’s death from cancer. He was the closest to the wind farm.

No turbine should be erected within 3 kms of a dwelling on health grounds. Will provide material for future health deterioration claims.

Bushfire Risk

A submission to Upper Lachlan Council by Councillor Barlow has highlighted the cases of fire arising from wind turbine malfunction in the predominantly bushfire free Northern Hemisphere. The proposed development is in a very bushfire prone area. A turbine malfunction on a summer day with heavy westerly wind could see the Southern Highlands wiped out. 1965 and 1983 saw such events—now, as population density has multiplied, the damages claims could run into \$ billions.

Ice Throw, Blade Failure and Tower Collapse

Councillor Barlow’s submission lists the disasters in the Northern Hemisphere from the above causes. I find the siting of turbines within 250 metres of the busy Crookwell/ Goulburn road quite astounding. Either no one has done any homework on the danger or the developers and Department of Planning are quite irresponsible—or both.

3. Impact of rural wind farms on property values.

Victimisation of the Dooley/ Anable Family

The Dooleys have owned Elmgrove for over 160 years. The noise from the wind farm at night affected Rose and her husband, the late Leon Anable. Leon died of cancer and his wife and

family used to sit up at night with him as bleeding incidents occurred and an ambulance was immediately required.

The proposed development will surround them and render their land practically valueless for subdivision or sale. Upper Lachlan Council Planning has already pointed out to another neighbour that subdivision will not be approved where a dwelling is within 2 kms of a turbine.

An officer from Union Fenosa **approached a Goulburn valuer to value Elmgrove. I am informed that he told the valour that \$600 /acre would be a suitable value!!**

Inability to subdivide obviously reduces the value of the land despite absurd claims to the contrary by developers.

I remain disgusted at the proposed treatment of the Dooley/Anable family at Elmgrove by the proposed erection of turbines F1,2,3,4,5,6,13,14 &15.

Removal of TV reception.

In 1998-9 when our TV disappearance was investigated, it was proven that we are in an electromagnetic bubble that emanates from the turbines 2 kms away. We had to erect a satellite dish to get reception and are still unable to get Wollongong TV—instead we get Alice Springs with its limited relevance to our interests.

4. Mechanisms for encouraging local ownership and control of wind technology.

No sane person would put money into wind technology away from the Southern Ocean in Australia.

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Bob Carr –“We could cover all NSW with wind farms, kill all the Kookaburras and still not generate 10% of our power needs”.

Mach Hooke “ To equal the output of a coal fired power station we would have to erect a wind turbine every 200 metres on the road between Melbourne and Sydney.”

This is the reason that Crookwell 1 and the proposed Crookwell 11 have already had four owners in an ongoing game of “drop the handkerchief until Government bails us out”

5. The potential role of energy generated by rural wind farms in relation to the Australian Government’s proposed Renewable Energy Target.

Their impact will be negligible. See reasons above.

6. Any other relevant matters.

The apparent complete lack of investigation by the Department of Planning.

We have seen a chain of four financially questionable companies sell their investment in these two local wind farm sites in a bewildering display of “Drop the handkerchief”. The first applicant for Crookwell 11- Gamesa was investigated and found to have capital of \$1100! There was a raft of shelf companies underneath with no value. The recent non payment of local contractors by the developers of the Gullen Range Project illustrates the flimsy economic standing of the developing company involved there.

Now, two years on, we find Union Fenosa vastly increasing the height of their proposed turbines on a lower elevation than Crookwell 1. I was in Sydney and missed the “information” evening put on in Crookwell on 6th November by Union Fenosa Wind Australia ---on their request for a modified DA.

I am informed that the night shed very little light on the proposal. This caused me no surprise as I am certain that there is no light in the proposal—just a continuing con act. I wrote to the Minister for Planning and the Department seeking answers to a series of questions. I received no answers—just advice that Crookwell 11 was to proceed...

If it wasn't for risk to our health, the damage to the scenery and depreciation in land values, this is all material for a farce. Union Fenosa has been either unwilling or unable to answer the questions asked by local residents. The Department has been “overseeing” a sham. I believe that the Department of Planning has failed completely in its regulatory role and is either incompetent or in the hands of the developers. It is my intention take the matter to the ICAC.