

Submission
No 35

INQUIRY INTO RURAL WIND FARMS

Name: Ms Fiona Taylor

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"And there we were...as far from any human aid as if it were the moon"
Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

Sir,

I am making this submission to express my opposition to the establishment of wind generated power stations in scenic and significant landscapes. I consider it a great privilege to live on the Monaro whose landscape has remained fundamentally unchanged since white settlement. What more tangible and accessible link to our past can there be, and what more valuable to preserve for future generations, than a magnificent landscape unblemished by industry or close settlement. The landscape represents a physical link to generations who have come before, not only for those who have a history here but for everyone.

Beyond the degradation of an iconic landscape (would Banjo Patterson have been so enamoured of the Snowy if it were overshadowed by turbines? Does the Man from the Boco Rock "wind farm" have the same ring?), the industrialisation of rural landscapes has real negative impact on property prices. Tree changers and city investors are now significant players in the rural property market, particularly in the prestige end where a percentage reduction in value equates to more dollars. To these groups the existence of a neighbouring windfarm is a real negative and properties are priced accordingly. Properties being sold hosting wind turbines have the income stream to offer, so once again the fundamental problem with wind development appears, the neighbouring properties suffer all the negative impacts with no amelioration for loss of landscape amenity, loss of lifestyle and the loss of value of their property.

As no doubt you would be aware, the establishment of wind generated power stations and let's face it, surely this is a more accurate term to use, causes enormous rifts in rural communities. Friends and families find themselves on opposing sides of the issue, the entire social fabric of rural communities is being torn to shreds because the majority of the community is required to live with the downsides of wind power generation whilst a minority receives the financial benefit. It is increasingly debateable that the benefits of wind generated electricity outweigh the costs imposed on the landscape, local communities and neighbouring landholders. How can anyone argue that measures such as these are saving the environment when they so clearly devastate some of the most beautiful, iconic and unchanged landscapes in the State.

Fools rush in where Angels fear to tread. Surely before we impose these enormous structures on our landscape, structures that we have no guarantee will ever be removed, we should take the time to carefully examine the alternatives and to consider how our actions will appear to future generations? Landscape and wilderness are two commodities that will only be in increasingly short supply and high demand. Why don't we preserve and place a real value on them?

Yours faithfully

Fiona Taylor