

Submission
No 71

**INQUIRY INTO FEASIBILITY OF UNDERGROUNDING
THE TRANSMISSION INFRASTRUCTURE FOR
RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS**

Name: Name suppressed
Date Received: 12 July 2023

Partially
Confidential

Dear Panel,

We would like to speak to (d) in your Terms of Reference, relating to Environmental Impacts.

My name is _____ and together with my wife _____, live a a 280 ha cropping and grazing property, known as _____, located at _____

We currently run 120 breeding cattle and have external Contractors sow grain and make hay, when weather events are suitable.

Currently, we turn off about 80 calves per annum.

At our back fence lies the NSW Gazetted Narragamba Swamp and this is a source of permanent water.

Our western paddocks consist of red/ brown basalt clay soils.

Our northern hay paddock, in the Cockabutta Creek Basin, consists of light black loamy soil. Adjacent to our northern fence is a drainage channel that runs from the Swamp to Cockabutta Creek.

The eastern half of the farm consists of light weight sandy granite soils.

I mention these soil parameters as the proposed projects on, or adjacent to our farm, will impact on our ability to remain in business.

The property is viable and it is our intention to use income derived from agricultural pursuits, to fund our income, for the next decade. Our current business model allows for successionist planning, in that our children can run the farm, using Contractors, with a minimum of input.

Although we support 'Green Energy', per say, we have a problem with our income stream being considerably reduced and a 'working' farm being industrialised into being an ongoing financial liability.

Perhaps, if we outline the facts, your expert panel may consider a solution.

Facts:

* Our western neighbour is to host 6 'off-shore' sized wind turbines.

Our home is 2.4kms from the turbines and our grazing cattle about 400 metres away.

The cattle would be located within the noise 'red' zone, adjacent to the turbines.

We are most worried about db(B), infrasound low frequency noise and their effects on pregnant cattle.

* The EnergyCo REZ project is to cut our farm in half, from south to north. Our cropping/ hay field will be halved and contractors cannot drive a working Combine Harvester under the power lines to a height restriction. Further, our Mudgee Contractor advises that Contractors will not place their employees under the high EMR 500 kv lines, due to OH&S considerations.

Also, to bring machinery from Mudgee, to cultivate half a hay paddock, will raise the round bale price from \$42 to an estimated \$70 per bale, making the hay exercise unviable. Sale price of hay bales has been around \$80.

* The ACEN Narragamba Solar Project Stage 1, is to be our southern neighbour. There will be solar panels 'as far as the eye can see'.

* The proposed EnergyCo power corridor, cuts through the Cockabutta Creek Basin.

Birding NSW, the organisation that supplies data to Australian Universities, conducted Bird studies in March 2022 and January 2023 and observed 16 Threatened species.

If you have some interest in the Threatened species on the farm, you may contact Treasurer of Birding NSW.

* The only way that we will be able to access our western paddocks will be to and fro under the power lines. Our western paddocks will become an agricultural island.

* We are told that the twin 500kv power transmission lines will carry so much electrical energy, that our 1.8 metre high, concrete/ steel home water tank will have to be demolished, steel fencing removed and a prohibition on flying a stock monitoring drone, during muddy seasons.

*Cropping and hay making represent the 'cream' of earnings, while cattle sales are the 'bread and butter'.

Our best guestimate will be that there will be no Contractor made grain or hay.

Cattle numbers will be adjusted to about 45 head, being grazed on our eastern, light weight paddocks. This will mean a 60% reduction in stocking rates and income.

Meanwhile, Government charges will remain constant.

We were advised at a meeting of the Dunnedoo branch of NSW Farmers, that some farmers have been denied fire risk insurance, public liability insurance or had steep hikes in general insurance, due to the Power transmission lines.

It would be most helpful if Government insured their infrastructure and 'held us harmless' in insurance claims caused by Energy producing equipment.

We hope that some of this case study may be of interest to you.

There are at least two power grid and power generator entities that are impacting on access and income at Rocklmond.

A recent analogy went something like this:

It is like EnergyCo requisitioning the engine from your favourite car.

No doubt paying you well for the engine.

When you complain that you can't drive the car anymore, they say "What are you worried about, You can still push it!"

Then RES Wind Turbines turn up and say " Not so fast, we need the tyres and the steering wheel".

What do you do with what is left?

Kind regards