

**Submission
No 156**

**INQUIRY INTO IMPACT OF RENEWABLE ENERGY
ZONES (REZ) ON RURAL AND REGIONAL
COMMUNITIES AND INDUSTRIES IN NEW SOUTH
WALES**

Organisation: Voice of Cabonne Committee

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From: [Voice for Cabonne](#)
To: [Portfolio Committee 4](#)
Subject: Re: Inquiry into the impact of renewable energy zones (REZ) on rural and regional communities and industries on NSW - Witness invitation [Voice for Cabonne]
Date: Thursday, 9 April 2026 8:24:59 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image006.png](#)

Hi Frances,

Thank you for the call today and providing the opportunity for us to share our experience regarding the community impact of renewable energy zone development, particularly in relation to the proposed Kerrs Creek Wind Farm and our dealings with RES as the project developer.

While we understand the importance of renewable energy and the role it will play in Australia's future, the process surrounding this project has highlighted serious concerns about how these developments are being planned, communicated and managed within regional communities.

This process has been ongoing for a number of years, and despite the fact that not a shovel has gone into the ground, it has already caused a significant amount of stress, uncertainty and disruption across our community.

From our experience, the engagement process has been deeply frustrating. Meetings have often been scheduled at impractical times, poorly communicated to affected residents, and at times appear to proceed without adequate preparation. Information provided has frequently been inconsistent, incomplete or later revised, and expectations seem to shift as the project evolves. This has left many landholders and neighbouring families feeling as though they are constantly trying to catch up with a moving target.

One of the most concerning aspects has been the way local knowledge and lived experience are too often disregarded. Relevant information provided by local residents is frequently overlooked, while desktop assessments and theoretical modelling appear to be given greater weight than on-the-ground facts. This creates a process that feels disconnected from the reality of the landscape, the community and the long-term implications of these developments.

There are also many people within neighbouring communities who, in our experience, have never been properly informed of the intentions of renewable energy companies or the full extent of the impacts these projects may have - not only on individual properties, but also on local towns, businesses and the broader social fabric of the region.

For a project of this scale, the ongoing lack of clarity has been extremely difficult to live with. The final turbine layout has never been clearly communicated, despite the fact that the project footprint has the potential to affect more than 130 properties within a 5km radius. It seems counterintuitive that a project with such a widespread impact can continue to progress while so many fundamental details remain unresolved.

There has also been widespread concern about the way negotiations and consultation with neighbouring properties have been handled. For many, this has not felt like a fair or transparent process. At times, community members have felt subjected to pressure, intimidation or dismissive treatment when trying to raise legitimate concerns. This only deepens the sense of distrust and division already created by the project.

Equally concerning is the way messaging around these developments can at times minimise or gloss over the very real impacts being experienced by affected communities. Simplified narratives and selective information can create the impression that concerns are exaggerated or unfounded, when in reality many people are dealing with serious and ongoing uncertainty about their homes, properties, livelihoods and future.

The emotional toll on families, landholders and the broader community cannot be underestimated. Mental health impacts and stress levels in rural communities are often already significant, and processes like this only add further strain. Yet these social and emotional pressures are too often treated as secondary issues, rather than as serious and legitimate consequences of large-scale development.

Beyond the immediate social impacts, there are also long-term environmental and infrastructure concerns that deserve far greater attention. In the case of Kerrs Creek, there are significant concerns around impacts on waterways, flora and fauna, and the broader health of a vulnerable ecosystem. The water usage required for cement production and construction in already sensitive environments is often not given the scrutiny it deserves. There are also likely to be substantial impacts on local roads and transport networks, as well as on heritage values that are too often overlooked in the push to progress these projects.

It has also been difficult to maintain confidence in the project when the projected scale, footprint and value appear to shift over time. This creates confusion and leaves affected residents uncertain about what information is accurate and what the true long-term implications may be.

What has become increasingly clear is that there is often a disconnect between how these projects are assessed on paper and how they are experienced in real communities. Country towns are not simply dots on a map or parcels on a planning overlay. They are interconnected communities, built on long-standing relationships, local knowledge and shared trust. When projects are imposed without meaningful engagement or understanding of that dynamic, the consequences are felt far beyond individual landholders.

We are asking government to step up and take greater responsibility in how renewable energy zones and associated projects are planned and approved. Renewable energy development must not come at the expense of the people and communities expected to host it. Better site selection, clearer communication, stronger accountability, more rigorous environmental scrutiny, and genuine community consultation must be central to the process from the very beginning.

Communities need to be listened to - not simply informed after key decisions have already been made. The long-term social, emotional, environmental and economic impacts of these developments deserve far greater consideration than they are currently receiving.

Thank you for taking the time to consider our experience and the very real impact these projects can have on regional communities.

Kind regards,

The Voice for Cabonne Committee