



**LOUISE HENNESSY**

**OBJECT**

Submission No: 196761

Organisation:		Key issues: <i>Social and economic, Land use, Energy transition, Visual</i>
Location: <i>New South Wales 2831</i>		
Submitter Type: <i>an individual making a submission on my own behalf</i>		
Attachment: <i>2024_IPC presentation 18082024_L Hennessy.pdf</i>		

Submission date: 9/5/2024 10:49:36 PM

*IPC Written Submission "Spicers Creek Wind Project - OBJECTION"*

*I appreciate the Commission accepting a written submission in addition to my presentation at Dunedoo on the 18th August 2024.*

*This submission addresses my concerns with the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure Spicer's Creek Wind Farm State Significant Development Assessment Report (SSD 41134610) July 2024 "hereafter referred to as the Assessment and Development Consent, as required with the terms of reference*

*1. Our Community*

*1.1 Elong Elong (Elong) is a very small rural community "one of the villages of the Dubbo Regional Council. We have a mix of primary producers, small 100-acre landowners and those living within the village. We still have a small but active Catholic church and Anglican church. And as with all small localities we have a Rural Fire Service (RFS). Plus, one store that has changed hands a number of times over recent years.*

*1.2 It is a location of generational farmers with their future generations planned to succeed them. But is also a very welcoming community too with many of us tree changes who are able to contribute skills within the community and the nearby major town of Dubbo.*

*2. Consultation*

*2.1 The Squadron (SQE) EIS constantly refers to "surrounding community" consultation, "community feedback" etc. I have put forward and supported with evidence in my presentation at the IPC Public Hearing that the community of Elong was missed. I am unable to guess the reason for this.*

*2.2 At the IPC hearing SQE in their closing reply referenced the Elong RFS and the Elong Progress Association. My understanding would be that any contact with either of these organisations was in 2024 and for the purpose of community benefits. I am a member of both.*

*2.3 In addition to my Hearing presentation, I wish to add that I also wrote to a Department Planning Officer on 13 February 2024 with my concerns regarding the absence of consultation with Elong. In reply, the Planning Officer offered me the opportunity to email my concerns, which I did. I have no evidence that my concerns were noted, it was some 6 months after the closing date.*

*2.4 Knowing that the Elong community did not contribute with submissions to the Department regarding the EIS, then all comments and statistics in the Assessment should have the caution that they do not represent the concerns of Elong residents.*

*2.5 In addition to my presentation, I do note that the Assessment on page 6 states the EIS was exhibited for 28 days. This is in contrast to the 2016 Wind Energy Guideline page 9, that it will be displayed for a "minimum of 30 days".*



2.6 I recognise that this is only a 2-day difference, but it brings into question the reliability and accuracy of the planning process when something so simple is incorrect.

### 3. Visual Impact

3.1 The Assessment notes that 30% of public submissions objecting the project raised concerns about the visual impact, page 22.

3.2 I have raised my concerns that the Assessment "for ease of assessment" grouped the non-associated receivers into 3 clusters, page 24. I note that those of us living in the north west sector were ignored.

3.3 My neighbour is within the 5 km range. I contest that I am within 8kms. Both in the north west sector.

3.4 My full eastern view from my home will be populated with turbines. I feel this is in stark contrast to the Assessment statement on page 68 "The Department is satisfied that the project would not fundamentally change the broader landscape characteristics of the area or result in any significant visual impacts on the surrounding non-associated residences".

3.5 Why did the Department limit the viewing to 5km and ignore the northwest area? I understand the 2023 draft wind guidelines look to a 10km distance, which would seem more realistic.

3.6 From my property you are also able to see the 33 Bodangora turbines "but this is not from my home so not significant in comparison to losing my whole eastern view.

### 4. Fire Risk

4.1 The Assessment notes that submitters raised concerns about bushfire safety and says the site is mapped as "bush fire prone", page 51.

4.2 This is a significantly under representing the bush fire risk to our area. The current risk for parts of Elong are "extreme", not "prone".

4.3 The current RFS ORANA Bush Fire Management Committee 2020 Bush Fire Management Plan (and previous 2011) in the Appendix Asset and Treatment Register lists (extract below) :-

Wattle Road Elong " Risk EXTREME; PRIORITY 1B; Likelihood " likely; Consequence " catastrophic

Elong Elong Village " Risk EXTREME; PRIORITY 1C Likelihood " Almost certain; Consequence " major

Elong Elong Community Hall - Risk EXTREME; PRIORITY 1C Likelihood " Almost certain; Consequence " major.

4.4 I have been the brigade president for the last 4 years and the brigade community engagement officer for the last 10, plus serve as a volunteer firefighter.

4.5 The above extract and my personal experience confirms that the Elong area is clearly identified as a high risk area for bushfires. We often view the Goonoo State Forest to our north west one of the main threats, and our brigade work with NPWS on hazard reductions to work towards some reduction in the risk.

4.6 The Assessment has a Recommended Condition of the provision of a 20,000litre water supply for firefighting purposes, page 52. Under the RFS Building in Bush Fire Prone Areas Single Dwelling Application Kit and large single dwelling is required to have a 20,000 litre tank. Where over the 165km of road will SQE place this one tank?

4.7 This will not address the battery storage facility concerns if there is a fire and I note that the Development Consent B40. has reference to the FRNSW requirements. As the project site is in a rural area the initial fire call response will be the local RFS brigades.



4.8 My health background was with the NSW Ambulance Service with over 18 years as a senior Superintendent. Vital to this role is membership and participation in both the Local and District Emergency Management Committees. I have also spent considerable time with the NSW Health Counter Disaster Unit. I understand that local first responders would be overwhelmed, in terms of resources and equipment, with any fire within the project site.

4.9 These issues raised above combine to present a significant fire risk to the local community. The project site is some 50 plus km from the nearest major town back up. If the project were to go ahead then local first responders (such as the RFS) would require orientation and familiarisation exercises on a regular basis throughout the life of the project.

## 5. Emergency Plan

5.1 The Development Consent B46 and B47 details an emergency plan.

5.2 Whilst the project is under construction there will be a large workforce on the site. The issue for me is the on-site supervision when the project is operational. The current documentation identifies a total of 10 staff will be required.

5.3 During discussions with SQE this year I have asked what rostering arrangements will be in place for these 10 staff? Will there be 7 days a week coverage or will it be Monday to Friday 9-5? Who will be on site to monitor and rectify issues, even just smaller ones such as a small contained chemical spill.

5.4 In paragraph 8.10 I refer to the SQE comment that the host landholder will be there to alert them in case of an emergency.

5.5 In my first discussion with SQE, in regards to this issue, they referenced a major fire in recent years heading towards the Crudine wind project. SQE advised the decision maker was in Canberra at the time and eventually had to return during the emergency. This raises a concern on the ability of staff left on site to respond to an emergency incident.

5.6 Condition B46(g) that requires "primary and alternative site contact" details "who may be reached 24/7" will be ineffective if the decision maker is not in a position (such as away from the site as in 5.5 above) to make real time decisions in an emergency.

## 6. Noise and Vibration

6.1 To me this is a major issue "not just from the construction but from the constant motion of the blades. The blade sweep and the generator noise. This will be an unending noise while the wind blows. And when the wind blows and turns the blades more than 90km an hour they will have to be braked. I am confident this is not a quiet process.

6.2 The EIS states that noise may be audible at some of the dwellings, they have a chart that depicts a 35 decibels line. There are no lines which depict ZERO decibels, SQE were also unable to provide an answer when asked. This is unacceptable. A constant industrial noise has no place in a rural area with primary production of stock vital for farmers livelihoods.

6.3 The SQE EIS originally had the working hours stated as a 6 day week with 7 am to 6pm on Mondays to Fridays. During winter a portion of this work will then require lighting. However, the EIS then goes on to say that work may be done on a Sunday if it is windy during the week. This opens up every Sunday to construction work as the site was chosen because it IS windy.

6.4 The Dept's Development Consent however, B5 page 10, changes these hours to 7am-6pm Monday to Friday and 8am to 1pm Saturday. But B7 gives an opt out condition, again.



6.5 In regard to operational noise monitoring the Development Consent, B15 page 11, reaffirms the EIS that the noise will be tested within 6 months of commencement of operations.

6.6 This is far to late. I would expect that noise testing would be done both daily and with evening readings and communities (ALL neighbouring communities) given reports each week " if not daily.

## 7. Health Impacts

7.1 The Assessment does not address any health impacts on humans or stock. This is an issue ignored by both SQE and the Department.

7.2 SQE in my first meeting with them, February 2024 answered that there was no research on health impacts. At my second meeting with SQE, March 2024 alongside my neighbour, SQE representatives referenced the AMA 2014 statement. By this time, I was able to have searched and found the 2015 Select Committee on Wind Turbines and their references to medical research.

7.3 This Committee's report has an extensive coverage and challenge to the 2014 AMA statement.

7.4 Whilst I have a Bachelor of Commerce and a Master Health Management, 23 years employment in health " I am not a scientist or doctor, and I am not pretending to be.

7.5 But I can see there is a growing body of contention in regards to the health impacts of turbines. I think that this seriously needs acknowledging and addressing.

7.6 When SQE tell me, initially, there is no medical research, and then subsequently there is " and it is the AMA 2014 one page statement it breaks down any credibility of the company. I have raised this with SQE with no response.

## 8. Waterways and Water Use

8.1 Water is one of the scarcest resources in western NSW with our area only coming out of a 7-year drought in 2022.

8.2 There is an extraordinary amount of water required to construct this project. Farmers and locals within the villages, for example Elong, struggle regularly to have even enough domestic water, when rainfall is below average.

8.3 This use of water in a dry climate will make the project a "bad" neighbour.

8.4 Of note in my property is the Baragonumbel Creek which the runs through the project site and through my property, flowing into the Talbragar and Macquarie River systems. I rely on this creek, as do my farmer neighbours, for stock water after if has filled following heavy rains. There are many natural dams along this creek that are a source of water for stock. My concern is the erosion of soil and the creek bed with construction of the turbines and the building of new roads and tunnels throughout the project site. And the risk of contamination if there was a chemical spill or oil leak, for example.

8.5 I have raised this in my IPC presentation in August. This is further to my presentation (you know 5 minutes was not very long!).

8.6. The Development Consent has operating conditions B20 page 12. The Baragonumbel Creek does not flow all the time " only after heavy rains. I question the modelling that was the basis for SQE's EIS and ask was it peer reviewed and checked?

8.7 Will the bunds be overwhelmed in heavy rain? Across our area we all experience different rainfall patterns " which we note each time there is a heavy rain.

8.8 Who will be on site to both monitor and manage any bunding stress in a heavy rain?



8.9 This is not an urban area where often an emerging issue with drainage is identified by the community first and they are the ones to alert authorities.

8.10 SQE must have the urban community in mind as when I raised the issue of monitoring, in case of an emergency such as a turbine fire, the response was that the landholder/host would be able to alert them. Later in the conversation SQE made reference to "other" alert systems that may be in place.

8.10 I understand key hosts already have plans to move when the turbines are operational and key aspects of the project are planned on absentee landlord land. So, there will be very very few still living across the 165km of roads of the project site.

8.11 A different approach is needed to ensure the integrity of our creeks and waterways. Testing and monitoring needs to be open and transparent and available to all of us living downstream. This will allow preventative action by farmers. We check our stock daily and actively monitor creek changes in both rain and drought.

8.12 I request Condition B20 to be expended to include daily monitoring and daily production of results readily available to those in our community that depend upon our waterways. A monthly grab sample will not protect stock drinking (daily) from contaminated waterways.

8.13 We would also need to be reassured that water sampling testing was handled by technicians that were independent and qualified.

8.14 With the number of roads and turbines, and their footprint, crossing the area our creeks form and flow monitoring is vital.

8.15 I would request the specific turbines that are in the creek formation area the flood risk area be moved, for example WTB 17 and 97.

## 9. Social Issues

9.1 This project, before even a spec of soil has been turned, has created tension in our community. The gag clauses in contracts and the current media attention given to a local solar project host has got backs up.

9.2 For small rural communities to remain resilient social cohesion is vital. Our community and neighbouring ones have faced bushfires, drought and plagues over the past decade. This project is creating division.

9.3 The Assessment ignores the impact of this project on the community. When governments spend large grant monies in areas to improve cohesion, inclusion and resilience introducing a significant change that has already damaged the community seems hypocritical.

## Conclusion

I live in 262 Wattle Road Elong Elong and have owned this property for 25 years. We live completely off grid with stand alone solar since 2011. Our home runs all the "modern day" appliances, but we have to make adjustments from our city lifestyle every day to allow the system to work. We regularly (except through the drought) would have to rely on our back up generator if the day was cloudy or raining.

We find this system inefficient and very expensive. It flavours my opinion of renewables. I do appreciate the difference between solar and wind generated power.

They are a short term excessively costly band aid to save our planet. They are not net zero and their production, construction and operation are an inefficient way to provide energy for Australian consumers.

In addition, they do little to boost our Australian industries as the majority of components are made offshore.

## Conclusion



**New South Wales Government**  
Independent Planning Commission

*These are my objections in the absence of any consultation “ but I would like to add what we also have to contend with “ the reality of the social impact these projects inflict upon communities who did not sign up for this rezoning.*

*Louise Hennessy*

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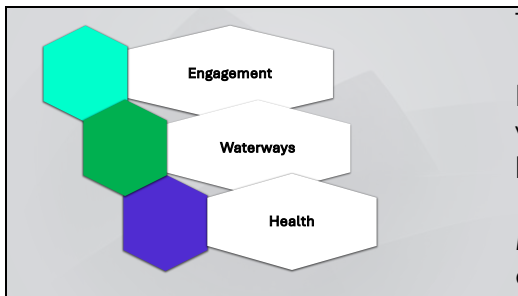
Slide 1



My family live here - 7.8 km away from 117 turbines Eaglesnest Elong Elong

The **north west visual** impact is not addressed in the Dept's Assessment Report page 24-25. My eastern view from my home will have the horizon full with turbines. As will my neighbour who is 4km closer.

Slide 2

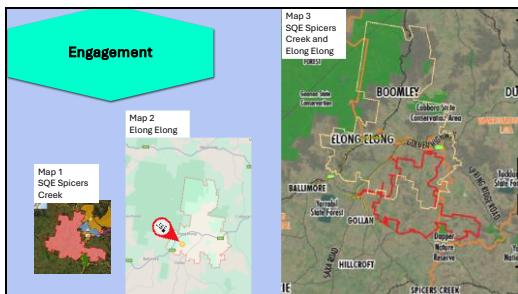


Today, though I am focusing on

Engagement  
waterways  
health

My background is in community engagement across the Central West Orana area and 23 years in health.

Slide 3



the project footprint

The Elong footprint

have overlaid both

**Elong is a significant part of the project**

The 2 main entrances to the site are in Elong

Slide 4

**5 Engagement**

39. The Department publicly exhibited the EIS from 28 July 2023 until 24 August 2023 (28 days) on the Department's website.

40. The exhibition was advertised in the Dubbo Daily Liberal and Mudgee Guardian and The Australian, the Department wrote directly to landowners up to 8 km from the project site, notifying them of the proposal and exhibition dates. The Department visited the site and surrounds on 16 to 17 October 2023 and 2 February 2024 and met with non-associated landowners.

41. The Department also consulted with relevant councils and government agencies and members of the community during its detailed assessment of the project. The Department notified and sought comment from EnergyCo and Transport for New South Wales (TfNSW) in accordance with the Transport and Infrastructure SEPP, as discussed further in section 5.3.

Source: DPHI Assessment

The Assessment writes

they displayed on their web site for 28 days

Advertised in the Dubbo paper, Mudgee paper and the Australian.

And they wrote to those within 8 km of the project

Slide 5

**Engagement with Elong Elong (Elong)**

Elong is a rural farming area and has only one 'store' that currently operates as a fuel service station and post office for the whole of the Elong community.

There are no operating letterboxes attached to households in Elong, other than through The Store

It was once a thriving agricultural store supplying all the local primary producers with most of their production needs – grains, fertilisers, fuels, fencing and farm tools etc.

Over more recent times there has been a number of ownership and staff changes.

Squadron Energy (SQE) also relied upon the mail for notification.

Needless to say - the Daily Liberal, Mudgee Guardian and The Australian are not delivered to Elong.

Squadron say they posted letters too.

Well, Elong residents do not have individual letterboxes. We have the one Store.

If a name or envelop was not correctly labelled - it was not received.

There has been no audit or governance to ensure letters were received.

**Did any one receive a letter?**

Slide 6

**Table 5.1 Identified Project Stakeholders**

Stakeholder Group	Stakeholder Description
Local Landholders	Landholders with the potential to host WFO and/or project infrastructure.
Neighbouring Landholders	Neighbouring landholders within 8 km of the potential turbine locations.
Community Services and Community Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local Community:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Goolma</li> <li>Gulgong</li> <li>Dunedoo</li> </ul> </li> <li>Community Services:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dunedoo Lions Club</li> <li>Mid Macquarie Landcare</li> <li>Wellington Landcare Club</li> <li>Goolma Landcare Club</li> <li>Central West Investment Group</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Government - State and Federal Agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commonwealth:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Department of Planning, Industry and Environment including:</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Source: SQE EIS

**Engagement with Elong Elong (Elong)**

- Those hosts, those with Neighbourhood agreements and those who did not sign up - they kept to the letter of their contracts with SQE and did not disclose to locals with in Elong - The 'gagging'.
- Neither SQE nor Energy Co came to Elong during the consultation period.

SQE say they identified stakeholders in the towns of Goolma Gulgong Dunedoo

And community services Dunedoo Mid Macquarie Wellington Geurie Central West

No mention of Elong



Slide 7



I am a member of the Council Villages consultative committee

The plans for SQE where 1<sup>st</sup> raised in Dec 23.

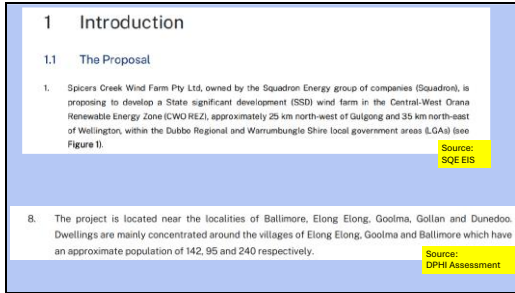
Committee members are gagged by the Terms of Reference until the Minutes are released. That was Feb 2024.

So, in January this year I looked for locals in our Elong area with real knowledge of what was proposed. I found none.

Hosts  
those with Neighbourhood Agreements  
and those that did not sign  
- all kept to their contracts and stayed gagged.

I wrote to all state and federal members to alert them Elong was forgotten.

Slide 8



SQE's proposal introduction.

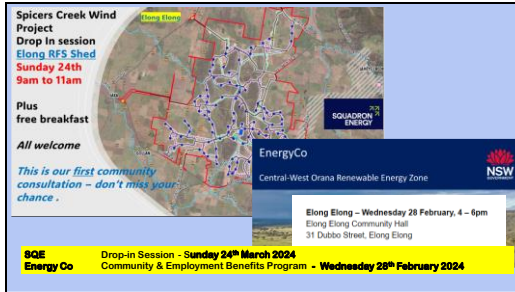
Even if Elong locals did receive a letter they would not have responded as the town Gulgong is in another LGA and Wellington some 63km away.

The Dept's Assessment is closer in identifying the locations impacted, but still not accurate

But - the population statistics are only representative of those living in the **villages!!!**

Those impacted the most are on agricultural land and the Dept has ignored them.

Slide 9



In Feb Energy Co and March SQE made it to the consultation table

The consultation horse had left the stable

Slide 10

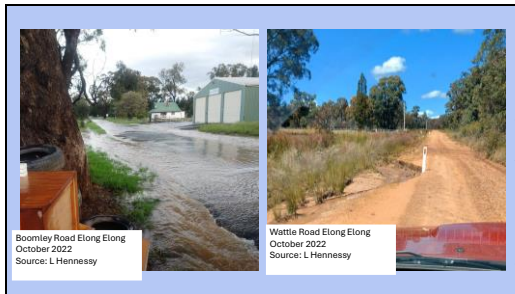


My next potin is waterways

The Assessment states SQE are using the Blue Book to manage stormwater.

The Blue Book states Rural and bushland changes have the potential to adversely affect areas downstream.

Slide 11

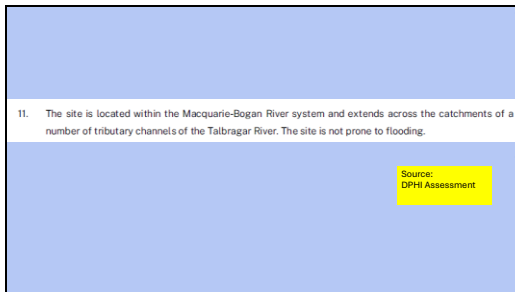


Dubbo council grades our roads and these are the results of small grading changes to them.

The LEFT Photo is in the Elong village with storm water pouring down the road and flooding through the local RFS shed

The RIGHT photo – my road – with a 3 ft gully down the middle of the road.

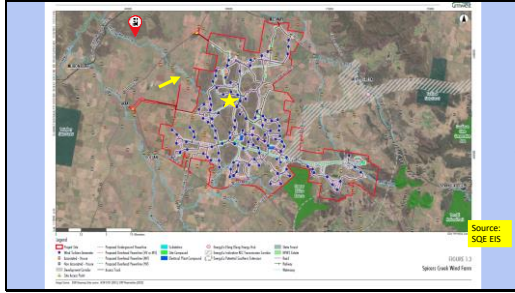
Slide 12



The **Dept Assessment** notes that the site is within the Macquarie –Bogan River system.

They say - **The site it not prone to flooding**

Slide 13



SQE's main EIS map

You can see my house

The yellow arrow – is the Baragonumbel creek

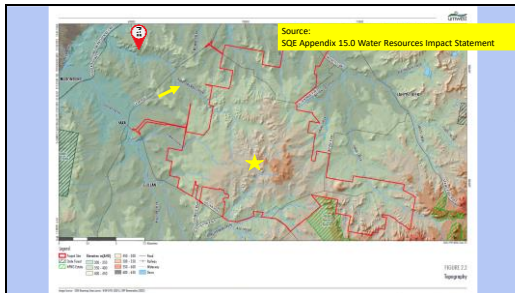
The Star - where this map says the creek ends

The star end point has **both turbines and the dirt roads crossing the creek**

I am referencing the Baragonumbel Creek as that flows through my property

- I have 1<sup>st</sup> hand knowledge of it
- but the issue is for all the creeks
  - within the site and
  - downstream of the site.

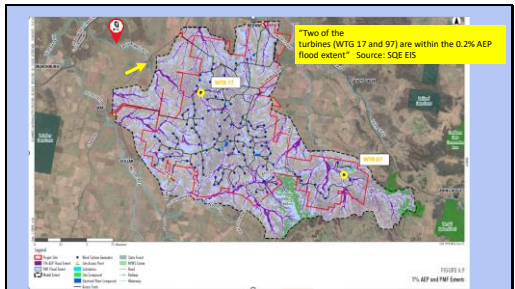
Slide 14



SQE's map from Appendix 15 Water Resources Impact Statement

The end point of the creek, **the star**, now **extends all the way through the project.**

Slide 15



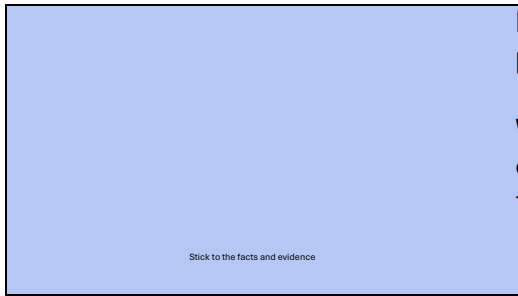
SQE says 2 of the turbine sites, 17 and 97, which I have labelled could have some flooding impact.

**Both the Dept and SQE limit their scope to the project site.**

As the Blue Book notes - downstream is also a concern.

And it is.

Slide  
16



Locals know the course of the water on their properties. It has been the same for generations

**What evidence will be accepted** if the water course changes because of the 165km of roads the 117 turbines pads?

Slide  
17



Changing the course of a small creek may have little impact **within the project site.**

But after heavy rains 7.8km **downstream** the impact can be catastrophic for  
- stock  
- crops  
- And most importantly the safety of the landholder.

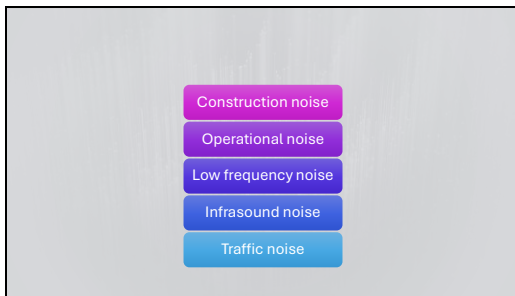
Slide 18



My last point is the impact of the turbines on **both human and stock health.**

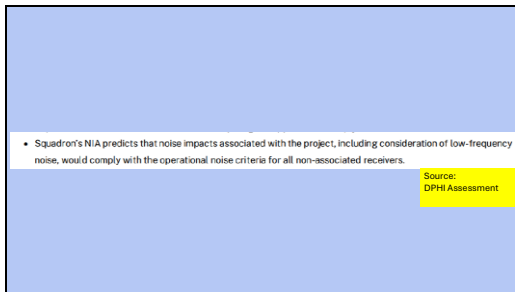
This is an area of contention – and it is not fully addressed by either the Dept or SQE

Slide 19



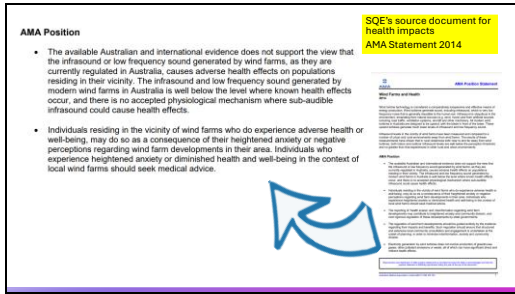
5 types of noise are discussed in these 2 pages.

Slide 20



SQE '**predicts**' they **would comply** for operational noise criteria.

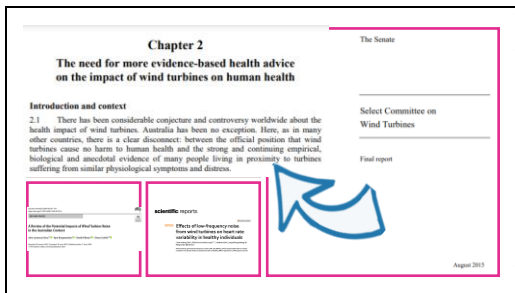
Slide 21



Meetings SQE have only presented the **one page 2014 AMA statement in regards health impacts**

A one page media statement is not a research document and it neither present facts or evidence in regards to the health impacts on humans.

Slide 22



This is my final slide

There is a growing controversy of information around about the health impacts of turbines.

I concur with the **2015 Commonwealth Select Committee on Wind Turbines**

There is a need for more evidence-based advice on the human health Impact.

And our local farming community also need reassurances of the same for their stock.

***I appreciate you coming to our community and listening.***

***My main message is more work needs to be done.***

***It is not OK to just say impacts will be minimised when we are talking about the livelihood and lives of our farming communities.***

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4.1 The Assessment notes that submitters raised concerns about bushfire safety and says the site is mapped as 'bush fire prone', page 51.

4.2 This is a significantly under representing the bush fire risk to our area. The current risk for parts of Elong are 'extreme', not 'prone'.

4.3 The current RFS ORANA Bush Fire Management Committee 2020 Bush Fire Management Plan (and previous 2011) in the Appendix Asset and Treatment Register lists(extract below) :-

Wattle Road Elong – Risk EXTREME; PRIORITY 1B; Likelihood – likely; Consequence – catastrophic

Elong Elong Village – Risk EXTREME; PRIORITY 1C Likelihood – Almost certain; Consequence – major

Elong Elong Community Hall - Risk EXTREME; PRIORITY 1C Likelihood – Almost certain; Consequence – major.

4.4 I have been the brigade president for the last 4 years and the brigade community engagement officer for the last 10, plus serve as a volunteer firefighter.

4.5 The above extract and my personal experience confirms that the Elong area is clearly identified as a high risk area for bushfires. We often view the Goonoo State Forest to our north west one of the main threats, and our brigade work with NPWS on hazard reductions to work towards some reduction in the risk.



4.6 The Assessment has a Recommended Condition of the provision of a 20,000litre water supply for firefighting purposes, page 52. Under the RFS Building in Bush Fire Prone Areas Single Dwelling Application Kit and large single dwelling is required to have a 20,000 litre tank. Where over the 165km of road will SQE place this one tank?

4.7 This will not address the battery storage facility concerns if there is a fire and I note that the Development Consent B40. has reference to the FRNSW requirements. As the project site is in a rural area the initial fire call response will be the local RFS brigades.

4.8 My health background was with the NSW Ambulance Service with over 18 years as a senior Superintendent. Vital to this role is membership and participation in both

#### Appendix 2 Assets Register

Map Reference No	Asset type	Asset sub type	Asset name	Asset Location	LGA	Display area	Likelihood	Consequence	Risk	Priority	Treatment number
1	Economic	Tourist and Recreational	Taronga Western Plains Zoo	Obley/Newell Hwy	Dubbo	Dubbo South	Likely	Catastrophic	Extreme	1B	2
2	Human Settlement	Special Fire Protection	Ridgecrest Christian Centre		Wellington	Wellington South	Likely	Catastrophic	Extreme	1B	1
3	Human Settlement	Residential	Sappa Bulga/Minore Subdivisions		Dubbo	Narromine	Likely	Catastrophic	Extreme	1B	4,9;10
4	Human Settlement	Residential	Wattle Rd	Elong Elong locale	Wellington	Wellington North	Likely	Catastrophic	Extreme	1B	6,7;11
5	Human Settlement	Residential	Kintyre Estate	BlackButt Rd	Dubbo	Dubbo South	Likely	Catastrophic	Extreme	1B	3,5;7,8
6	Human Settlement	Special Fire Protection	Cudjogong River Caravan Park	689 Burrendong Dam Road	Dubbo	Wellington North	Likely	Catastrophic	Extreme	1B	12
7	Human Settlement	Residential	Elong Elong Village		Wellington	Wellington North	Almost certain	Major	Extreme	1C	6;13,7;14;18;19
8	Human Settlement	Special Fire Protection	Lake Burrendong State Park		Dubbo	Wellington South	Almost certain	Major	Extreme	1C	16;21
9	Human Settlement	Special Fire Protection	Mookerawa State Park		Wellington	Wellington South	Almost certain	Major	Extreme	1C	17
10	Economic	Infrastructure	Dewars Trig	Goonoo Nature Reserve	Dubbo	Dubbo East	Almost certain	Major	Extreme	1C	15
11	Human Settlement	Other	Lake Burrendong State Park Kiosk NSP	Kiosk 486 Fashions Mount Rd Mumbil	Dubbo	Wellington South	Almost certain	Major	Extreme	1C	20
12	Human Settlement	Other	Elong Elong Community Hall NSP	Dubbo Street, Elong Elong	Dubbo	Wellington North	Almost certain	Major	Extreme	1C	20
13	Human Settlement	Residential	Villeneuve Subdivision Narromine	Tomingley Rd	Narromine	Narromine	Likely	Major	Very High	2A	30
14	Human Settlement	Residential	Rosewood Estate		Dubbo	Dubbo South	Likely	Major	Very High	2A	22;23
15	Human Settlement	Residential	Ballimore Village	Golden Hwy	Dubbo	Dubbo East	Likely	Major	Very High	2A	5;24;6;19
16	Economic	Infrastructure	Mogriguy Repeater Tower	Alton Park - Godwins Lane	Dubbo	Orana	Likely	Major	Very High	2A	15
17	Economic	Infrastructure	Cumbarella RFS Repeater	Cumbarella - Ballimore Rd	Dubbo	Dubbo North	Likely	Major	Very High	2A	15
18	Human Settlement	Special Fire Protection	Wambangaiang Environmental Education Centre		Dubbo	Dubbo South	Likely	Major	Very High	2A	5;27;21
19	Human Settlement	Residential	Geurie Village		Wellington	Wellington North	Likely	Major	Very High	2A	6;25;26
20	Economic	Tourist and Recreational	Burrendong Botanic Garden and Arboretum		Wellington	Wellington South	Likely	Major	Very High	2A	8;32
21	Economic	Tourist and Recreational	Mookerawa State Park		Wellington	Wellington South	Likely	Major	Very High	2A	17
22	Economic	Infrastructure	Mt Wellesley Communications Towers		Wellington	Wellington South	Likely	Major	Very High	2A	15
23	Economic	Infrastructure	Globalstar Australia Pty Ltd		Dubbo	Dubbo North	Likely	Major	Very High	2A	28
24	Economic	Infrastructure	Mt Bodangora Communications Tower		Wellington	Wellington North	Likely	Major	Very High	2A	15
25	Human Settlement	Special Fire Protection	Western TAFE		Dubbo	Dubbo South	Likely	Major	Very High	2A	27
26	Human Settlement	Residential	Mugga Downs Estate		Dubbo	Dubbo East	Likely	Major	Very High	2A	29;7;30
27	Human Settlement	Residential	High Park Subdivision Narromine	High Park Rd off Mitchell Hwy	Narromine	Narromine	Likely	Major	Very High	2A	4;14;30

the Local and District Emergency Management Committees. I have also spent considerable time with the NSW Health Counter Disaster Unit. I understand that local first responders would be overwhelmed, in terms of resources and equipment, with any fire within the project site.

4.9 These issues raised above combine to present a significant fire risk to the local community. The project site is some 50 plus km from the nearest major town back up. If the project were to go ahead then local first responders (such as the RFS) would require orientation and familiarisation exercises on a regular basis throughout the life of the project.

## 5. Emergency Plan

5.1 The Development Consent B46 and B47 details an emergency plan.

5.2 Whilst the project is under construction there will be a large workforce on the site. The issue for me is the on-site supervision when the project is operational. The current documentation identifies a total of 10 staff will be required.

5.3 During discussions with SQE this year I have asked what rostering arrangements will be in place for these 10 staff? Will there be 7 days a week coverage or will it be Monday to Friday 9-5? Who will be on site to monitor and rectify issues, even just smaller ones such as a small contained chemical spill.

5.4 In paragraph 8.10 I refer to the SQE comment that the host landholder will be there to alert them in case of an emergency.

5.5 In my first discussion with SQE, in regards to this issue, they referenced a major fire in recent years heading towards the Crudine wind project. SQE advised the decision maker was in Canberra at the time and eventually had to return during the emergency. This raises a concern on the ability of staff left on site to respond to an emergency incident.

5.6 Condition B46(g) that requires 'primary and alternative site contact' details 'who may be reached 24/7' will be ineffective if the decision maker is not in a position (such as away from the site as in 5.5 above) to make real time decisions in an emergency.

## **6. Noise and Vibration**

6.1 To me this is a major issue – not just from the construction but from the constant motion of the blades. The blade sweep and the generator noise. This will be an unending noise while the wind blows. And when the wind blows and turns the blades more than 90km an hour they will have to be braked. I am confident this is not a quiet process.

6.2 The EIS states that noise may be audible at some of the dwellings, they have a chart that depicts a 35 decibels line. There are no lines which depict ZERO decibels, SQE were also unable to provide an answer when asked. This is unacceptable. A constant industrial noise has no place in a rural area with primary production of stock vital for farmers livelihoods.

6.3 The SQE EIS originally had the working hours stated as a 6 day week with 7 am to 6pm on Mondays to Fridays. During winter a portion of this work will then require lighting. However, the EIS then goes on to say that work may be done on a Sunday if it is windy during the week. This opens up every Sunday to construction work as the site was chosen because it IS windy.

6.4 The Dept's Development Consent however, B5 page 10, changes these hours to 7am-6pm Monday to Friday and 8am to 1pm Saturday. But B7 gives an opt out condition, again.

6.5 In regard to operational noise monitoring the Development Consent, B15 page 11, reaffirms the EIS that the noise will be tested within 6 months of commencement of operations.

6.6 This is far to late. I would expect that noise testing would be done both daily and with evening readings and communities (ALL neighbouring communities) given reports each week – if not daily.

## **7. Health Impacts**

7.1 The Assessment does not address any health impacts on humans or stock. This is an issue ignored by both SQE and the Department.

7.2 SQE in my first meeting with them, February 2024 answered that there was no research on health impacts. At my second meeting with SQE, March 2024 alongside my neighbour, SQE representatives referenced the AMA 2014 statement. By this time, I was able to have searched and found the 2015 Select Committee on Wind Turbines and their references to medical research.

7.3 This Committee's report has an extensive coverage and challenge to the 2014 AMA statement.

7.4 Whilst I have a Bachelor of Commerce and a Master Health Management, 23 years employment in health – I am not a scientist or doctor, and I am not pretending to be.

7.5 But I can see there is a growing body of contention in regards to the health impacts of turbines. I think that this seriously needs acknowledging and addressing.

7.6 When SQE tell me, initially, there is no medical research, and then subsequently there is – and it is the AMA 2014 one page statement it breaks down any credibility of the company. I have raised this with SQE with no response.

## **8. Waterways and Water Use**

8.1 Water is one of the scarcest resources in western NSW with our area only coming out of a 7-year drought in 2022.

8.2 There is an extraordinary amount of water required to construct this project. Farmers and locals within the villages, for example Elong, struggle regularly to have even enough domestic water, when rainfall is below average.

8.3 This use of water in a dry climate will make the project a 'bad' neighbour.

8.4 Of note in my property is the Baragonumbel Creek which the runs through the project site and through my property, flowing into the Talbragar and Macquarie River systems. I rely on this creek, as do my farmer neighbours, for stock water after it has filled following heavy rains. There are many natural dams along this creek that are a source of water for stock. My concern is the erosion of soil and the creek bed with construction of the turbines and the building of new roads and tunnels throughout the project site. And the risk of contamination if there was a chemical spill or oil leak, for example.

8.5 I have raised this in my IPC presentation in August. This is further to my presentation (you know 5 minutes was not very long!).

8.6. The Development Consent has operating conditions B20 page 12. The Baragonumbel Creek does not flow all the time – only after heavy rains. I question the modelling that was the basis for SQE's EIS and ask was it peer reviewed and checked?

8.7 Will the bunds be overwhelmed in heavy rain? Across our area we all experience different rainfall patterns – which we note each time there is a heavy rain.

8.8 Who will be on site to both monitor and manage any bunding stress in a heavy rain?

8.9 This is not an urban area where often an emerging issue with drainage is identified by the community first and they are the ones to alert authorities.

8.10 SQE must have the urban community in mind as when I raised the issue of monitoring, in case of an emergency such as a turbine fire, the response was that the landholder/host would be able to alert them. Later in the conversation SQE made reference to 'other' alert systems that may be in place.

8.10 I understand key hosts already have plans to move when the turbines are operational and key aspects of the project are planned on absentee landlord land. So, there will be very very few still living across the 165km of roads of the project site.

8.11 A different approach is needed to ensure the integrity of our creeks and waterways. Testing and monitoring needs to be open and transparent and available to all of us living downstream. This will allow preventative action by farmers. We check our stock daily and actively monitor creek changes in both rain and drought.

8.12 I request Condition B20 to be expended to include daily monitoring and daily production of results readily available to those in our community that depend upon our waterways. A monthly grab sample will not protect stock drinking (daily) from contaminated waterways.

8.13 We would also need to be reassured that water sampling testing was handled by technicians that were independent and qualified.

8.14 With the number of roads and turbines, and their footprint, crossing the area our creeks form and flow monitoring is vital.

8.15 I would request the specific turbines that are in the creek formation area the flood risk area be moved, for example WTB 17 and 97.

## **9. Social Issues**

9.1 This project, before even a spec of soil has been turned, has created tension in our community. The gag clauses in contracts and the current media attention given to a local solar project host has got backs up.

9.2 For small rural communities to remain resilient social cohesion is vital. Our community and neighbouring ones have faced bushfires, drought and plagues over the past decade. This project is creating division.

9.3 The Assessment ignores the impact of this project on the community. When governments spend large grant monies in areas to improve cohesion, inclusion and resilience introducing a significant change that has already damaged the community seems hypocritical.

**Conclusion**

I live in 262 Wattle Road Elong Elong and have owned this property for 25 years. We live completely off grid with stand alone solar since 2011. Our home runs all the 'modern day' appliances, but we have to make adjustments from our city lifestyle every day to allow the system to work. We regularly (except through the drought) would have to rely on our back up generator if the day was cloudy or raining.

We find this system inefficient and very expensive. It flavours my opinion of renewables. I do appreciate the difference between solar and wind generated power.

They are a short term excessively costly band aid to save our planet. They are not net zero and their production, construction and operation are an inefficient way to provide energy for Australian consumers.

In addition, they do little to boost our Australian industries as the majority of components are made offshore.

**Conclusion**

These are my objections in the absence of any consultation – but I would like to add what we also have to contend with – the reality of the social impact these projects inflict upon communities who did not sign up for this rezoning.

Louise Hennessy