

Proposed Bell Bay Wind Farm Development

Subject: Proposed Bell Bay Wind Farm Development & Assessment Criteria

Introduction;

Approximately 160 people at Bell Buoy Beach (and a comparable number at Beechford) will be living between 1-3km from what may be the largest and most powerful wind turbines in Australia, no studies prior to construction will adequately gauge what the long-term impact of these turbines will be. At a minimum the visual impact will be extraordinarily large, as well as the impact on quality of life for residents. Numerous studies have shown (mentioned in the 2015 Senate Estimates Enquiry into wind farms) that there are negative health effects for those living near wind farms. Infrasound, light flicker (which will be prevalent for 6 months of year to Bell Buoy Beach residents) due to the location of the turbines on the headland. Noise, during the day which has been described as akin to listening to a dripping tap all day; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s_CZIfiFPwk.

Property prices will be adversely affected also, how could they not be? An Equis representative mentioned during the first community consultation session at Beechford that they don't consider property prices when developing wind farms, another representative mentioned that they didn't have a wind farm of a similar size anywhere that they could compare this proposal with. This should be deeply concerning to all that are in the immediate vicinity of the project.

Some further points for consideration;

Health Concerns: The Senate Environment and Communications References Committee report on wind turbines from August 2015 identified several health issues linked to wind farms, including sleep disturbances, headaches, and other symptoms caused by turbine noise and infrasound. The proximity of this project to local residents raises significant health concerns. The proposed towers are to be the highest in the country (up to 270m). Residents will be in a 1-3km range from the proposed site, this is far too close for towers of this size. I note the Equis Environment Policy and Planning Framework in the notice of intent states; *Safeguard the health, safety and security of those affected by the businesses which Equis operates*. What will Equis do in the event that the 270m turbines cause significant negative health impacts within the community? Can Equis guarantee that there will not be adverse health effects?

Wildlife Disturbance: Wind turbines can pose a threat to local bird and bat populations, potentially leading to declines in biodiversity.

Property Values and Aesthetic Impact:

- **Reduction in Property Values:** Properties near wind farms often experience a decrease in value due to visual and noise impacts.
- **Aesthetic Changes:** The visual impact of such large turbines will irreversibly alter the landscape, affecting residents' quality of life. Light flicker/disturbance

may also be significant with 270m turbines, with initial mapping of the sun movement during the year show that for six months of the year, the sun will rise directly behind the wind turbines in the line of sight of all the residents of Bell Buoy Beach. The same will be for residents of Beechford, who will experience this at sunset for six months of the year. This visual impact alone is unacceptable.

Community Division:

- **Economic Inequality:** Financial benefits are often limited to landowners hosting turbines, while the nearby residents will more than likely suffer negative impacts without compensation. There can be no adequate compensation for the destruction of the natural habitat and aesthetic qualities of the region, nor the devaluation of properties in the local area.
- **Lack of Effective Consultation:** The community consultation process needs to be more inclusive and transparent to ensure that all concerns are addressed. Not all residents of Bell Buoy beach were informed of the proposed project and found out via a local Facebook group, this is far from acceptable.

Assessment Criteria & Recommendations:

1. **Comprehensive Health Impact Assessments:** Conduct thorough, independent health impact assessments and provide adequate compensation pathways in the event of negative health effects.
2. **Effective Noise Mitigation & Monitoring:** Ensure and guarantee audible noise and infrasound will not be generated. Establish continual noise monitoring systems managed by independent authorities.
3. **Environmental Safeguards:** Implement stringent environmental protection measures to safeguard local wildlife and habitats. Independent survey of all species present and ongoing monitoring of the surveyed species for the life of the project.
4. **Community Engagement** Engage in transparent, meaningful consultation processes.
5. **Visual Impact Assessments:** Require independent visual impact assessments and mitigation strategies, such as vegetation screening and landscape integration so that the turbines will not cause a negative visual impact to the surrounding communities. Provide digital renders of the site from multiple vantage points in the locality so that residents can gauge properly the visual impact of 28 turbines that are nearly the same height as Centrepont Tower in Sydney or the Eiffel Tower in Paris.
6. **Regular Environmental Audits:** Conduct regular, independent environmental audits to ensure compliance with all regulations and guidelines.
7. **Adaptive Management Plans:** Develop and implement and guarantee adaptive management plans in direct consultation with residents that allow for modifications in response to new information or unforeseen impacts. For example, if noise generated reaches a certain level, then the turbines are switched off. If light flicker occurs at certain hours, then the towers do not operate during those times. The towers don't operate overnight to

avoid negative impacts on the sleep of residents. Compensate residents in the event of any of these negative impacts occurring.

8. **Comprehensive Risk Assessments:** Perform comprehensive risk assessments for potential impacts in regards to bird strike and ongoing monitoring for the life of the project.
9. **Economic Impact Studies:** Undertake detailed economic impact studies to evaluate the effects on local property values and provide compensation mechanisms. Ensure and guarantee no negative effect on property values. If so, fair compensation for affected residents.
10. **Transparent Reporting:** Require transparent reporting and public disclosure of all monitoring data and compliance reports to keep the community informed for the life of the project.
11. **Conduct a thorough assessment of the overall economic impact of the project:** What is the projected service life, who is responsible for replacement or decommissioning of the turbines? What is the direct benefit to the local and wider community? How much taxpayer subsidy is required and what is the total cost to the taxpayer including associated battery farm and transmission line corridor? Is the actual wind resource consistent and suitable? Who are the direct customers? Will there be a measurable positive impact on power prices for everyday Tasmanians?
12. **A thorough independent assessment of the fire risk with large scale battery storage and the wind farm:** Will fire suppression be installed in each turbine and the battery facility? What is the composition and size of the battery farm? What would the environmental impact of a fire be? What infrastructure or capabilities will TasFire require to fight a fire within the windfarm or if a turbine or battery storage facility catches fire?

Wind farms are industrial by nature and should be in industrial areas, not prime, pristine coastal land that is a home to so many. Relocation of the project must be a consideration during the assessment process of the project. Surely an industrial area like Bell Bay would be more suitable, or somewhere in the vicinity of Curries River Dam? Building such a large project, with no real-world studies or data from comparable projects (because none exist) is not acceptable.

In closing;

13. **Assessment of Alternative Locations for the Project;** Seek a location that negates any health or financial related impact on local residents.

Charles & Caroline Millen

Bell Buoy Beach

