

Lot 10 Umberumberka Creek Road

Silverton.

NSW. 2880

29th March 2016

**Subject: Proposed Silverton Wind Farm project**

Dear Mr Dyer,

I spoke to you in mid- February regarding the proposed Silverton Wind Farm project and my concerns for the families living on the properties which make up the proposed site and also my concerns for the Village of Silverton. You asked me to let you know what happened at the AGL (proponents) CCC meeting, held 25<sup>th</sup> February 2016 and to write two lists for you: one of what issues our community would like resolved with AGL and one of why the wind farm should not go ahead.

I apologise for not responding to your request sooner, but things became hectic after the meeting of February 25<sup>th</sup>. At the meeting, AGL announced that, on that very day, they had lodged an application with the Department of Planning and Environment for an extension to the lapse date of the project, from 24<sup>th</sup> May 2016 to 24<sup>th</sup> May 2021.

The Request for Extension to Lapse Date was then placed on public display from 7<sup>th</sup> March to 18<sup>th</sup> March. AGL notified a number of people, Silverton and Broken Hill stakeholders, on 7<sup>th</sup> March that this had happened and that anyone could lodge a submission regarding the document up until 18<sup>th</sup> March 2016.

I wrote a submission and went on to the Department of Planning and Environment website to lodge it, only to find that the document was not on public display in Silverton, only in Sydney, Wentworth and Broken Hill. I discovered this anomaly on the weekend of 12/13<sup>th</sup> March and immediately sent an email to the Department of Planning and Environment pointing out the problem, who agreed to accept submissions until Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> March. At least six families in Silverton do not have access to a computer and, on further investigation I found that these people had not been contacted by AGL by mail or any other form of communication. I contacted AGL who claimed they were not aware that some people did not have computers and that they also did not know of any community notice board in Silverton. AGL agreed to send hard copies of the Request for Extension document, but they mailed them to me at my post office box in Broken Hill and inferred that as a CCC member it was part of my role to pass on information to other community members and basically passed the buck for their own tardiness. Anyway, the hard copies arrived Friday 18<sup>th</sup> March, which gives people no time to respond by mail, so I have (as part of my CCC member role) delivered as many hard copies as possible and offered my help to submit electronically. I have also contacted a number of people who I noticed are not on AGL's email list. AGL emailed the minutes of the last meeting on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> March and I note with interest that a post meeting note is included making themselves look very good for sending out the hard copies and informing

everyone that the Department of Planning and Environment agreed to accept submissions until that same date (24<sup>th</sup> March). It was I who approached the Department and asked for the extension, not AGL. AGL would have quite happily let this just slide past, hoping no one would notice. AGL also states in the answer to my question regarding notifying residents of Silverton of upcoming meetings etc. that they have regularly notified residents by mail and CCC members have also contacted residents. This certainly has not occurred for some time and with meetings becoming less frequent, so are AGL's attempts to contact residents and landowners in Silverton. As I mentioned previously, there are also a number of people missing from AGL's email list and I noted that four emails were returned to me when I responded to a group email during the public display of the Application for Extension to Lapse Date document. I am not impressed with the way AGL has conducted itself in this issue and certainly is a cause for concern to Silverton.

Getting back to my original reason for contacting you. I have spoken to a number of residents about the lists you have requested and our combined concerns are as follows:

### **Should the wind farm go ahead, what do we want resolved?**

- We would request that the turbines be placed as far away from the residences of Silverton as possible. We have tried to compromise with AGL to have a minimum of 6kms from Silverton or the nearest residence, but AGL will not guarantee anything. Given that AGL has approval for 282 turbine sites and only intends to use 80 or less, we do not think it is unreasonable to expect them to use the sites which are the furthest distance away from any residences. Our reason for this request is so that any noise or possible health effects are kept to an absolute minimum. We also want the turbines as far away visually as possible. Silverton is a Village which exists on tourism and the hills this wind farm is proposed to be built on are beautiful, pristine and very much part of the attraction to Silverton.
- Haulage of components to the site needs much more consideration. Silverton's only industry is tourism and with only one road to the Village, the transport of turbines causing hold ups in traffic has the potential cause irreparable damage to businesses in Silverton.
- There needs to be much more investigation into the effects of siltation into our water storage. Once the ground is disturbed, any rainfall will cause huge amounts of silt runoff into creeks and then into Silverton's water storage at Umberumberka Reservoir.

### **Why the Wind Farm should not go ahead**

- Silverton is a significant town in Australia's mining history. It is where BHP was formed and the mine lease registered. This project will destroy the heritage value and character of Silverton.

- The hills (the Barrier Ranges) on which the wind farm is proposed are beautiful. There surely can be no justification for blasting them to pieces to form level bases for turbines. These hills are pristine and part of the reason so many people visit Silverton. Silverton has spectacular views of the Barrier Ranges and it would certainly suffer if the hills are defaced.
- The Barrier Ranges are home to a new species of lizard, the Barrier Range Dragon. All the management in the world cannot protect any species of animal or bird from the construction process of such an industrial project.
- There are also a number of endangered species of flora on the site. Again, we fear these species cannot be protected during construction.
- Water is in critical shortage once again in the Broken Hill/Silverton region. This project will require massive amounts through construction, which the Silverton Community feels is not justifiable.
- There is much concern for the damage that will be caused to the surface of the land once construction begins. If heavy rainfall occurs during the construction phase, runoff of silt could cause major problems for Umberumberka Reservoir which already has a huge siltation problem. To date, we have not been provided with satisfactory siltation/erosion mitigation information.
- AGL has proven time and time again that this company is not to be trusted. There is no community consultation, there is no consideration for this community. AGL is quite comfortable lying to this community. They told this community they would not apply for an extension to this project when they took it over from EPURON and here we are fighting to stop their second extension application.

Thank you for considering this submission. Silverton is very dear to the hearts of those who live here. It is our hope that future generations will have the opportunity to live in and experience this iconic village as we have up to now.

Attached are the minutes and attachments from the last CCC Meeting held 25<sup>th</sup> February 2016 and also a submission from Albert Woodroffe, Silverton resident and artist.

Yours sincerely

Helen Murray

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Silverton.

NSW. 2880

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