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21 Sep 2018

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South Australia
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21/09/2018

Dear SA Planning,

I am a practising figurative sculptor, portraitist and former teacher in art and design in SA.

Between 2003 and 2005 I was involved in forming an independent action group THE EAGLE HAWK ENVIRONMENT GROUP which is still active but at that time was instrumental in undoing a grand plan to cover the Fleurieu Peninsula in wind farm developments. We are made up of professional persons with a greater proportion involved in health care (ie doctors, chemists, nursing, neurosurgeons) and others with environmental portfolios. Lately we have grown with new residents entering the area around Eagle Hawk Gully from which the group took its name.

The fact that myself, my group and other concerned individuals literally had to give up our lives over these years to protect the Fleurieu does not speak well for the planning laws implemented by the government at the time.

When communities and individuals have to give up years of their life and spend small fortunes on fighting development proposals as the Eagle Hawk and other concerned persons did on the Fleurieu, then the planning system is at fault.

Remember that most of the proposed developments on the Fleurieu were found to be at serious variance with good planning. In other words they should not have been proposed at all, but they were proposed and were undone at great expense to the health and finances of individuals in this iconic landscape.

We (the Eagle Hawk group) identified 13 potential wind farm sites and had input on the proposed Kemmiss Hill WF, (Origin Energy), the proposed wind farm at Newland heads (Wind Developments PTY LTD?). And the proposed, approved and subsequently abandoned Sellicks/Myponga wind farm by (Trust Power).

The Fleurieu Peninsula is now a better place, ("Adelaide's Playground" they call it) without being turned into an industrial zone of turbines of ever growing height. Good planning would have identified the iconic nature of this Peninsula and prevented a lot of grief on the part of many of its residents, myself included.

However the explosion of wind developments to the north of the State has been unprecedented in global terms on its impact on our power prices and natural and human environment.

Since the 2016 blackout SA has become an international laughing stock for its reliance on wind power.

Not only do we have the highest power prices in the world and constant blackouts of different proportions but our natural landscapes have been raped by turbines and the impact on humans and wildlife is largely unappreciated by the greater SA population that reside in Adelaide and surrounding suburbs.

I know of the environmental devastation done by the wind farms here as I keep a large network of person both in SA and interstate.

I have gathered information from these persons and what I have gleaned is a very sad story about this industry and the reasons that we have not benefited in any positive way from these things.

The devastation that the Eagle Hawk group predicted from wind farms 15 years ago has been vindicated in many ways.

We predicted, for instance, turbine fires and in fact there have been a number (four) so far in this state. When a 99 metre turbine at Starfish Hill burned and subsequently collapsed fire crews were not allowed within 1 km of the site for their own safety. With 1km set backs at place at the moment between turbines and dwellings this is concerning.

As turbines grow in height (ie 165 metres and 220 metres proposed) then danger exclusion zones would have to extend accordingly.

Are houses at 1 km from turbines (approved under currant legislation) going to be denied protection from fires or blade/tower failure if fire crews are not allowed into these exclusion zones?

This is reason enough to substantially increase set back distances of habitations from turbines.

The Eagle Hawk predicted raptor, other bird mortality at wind farms and was instrumental in having bat mortality recognised.

In our "Effects on the State" presentation to Yankalilla Council we flagged that gas was being marginalised on the grid in favour of wind. Now 15 years on we have sold our gas offshore at a time when it could be vital in providing base load power.

I know that the imperative to inflict wind farms onto our rural and natural landscapes has been justified by a "for the greater good" approach.

I do not believe in this sacrificial approach to the planning of wind farms because of the belief that they will somehow help to save the world.

After interviewing many person from around the state and interstate (as ground work for a documentary film maker) who have had to vacate their homes at a distance of in excess of 3 kilometres from turbines, I have to conclude that the planning system in SA has failed miserably in protecting the health and well being of residents.

These wind farms are undoubtedly making people sick and the denial from those promoting these industries is criminal.

The evidence that the noise and vibrations is harming humans is self evident to any who assess the testimony of sufferers with compassion and an open mind.

However more and more acousticians are providing scientific evidence that demonstrates the harm noise and vibration is doing to impacted individuals.

However greed and ideology have blinded those who have had any power in influencing the planning process in terms of wind farms in our landscapes.

The result, as I have said, is that SA is an international laughing stock with its runaway wind power insanity. Rural communities have been torn apart and bird, bat and other aspects of the natural environment have been destroyed with knock on effects that will last for decades even after these towers are decommissioned and lay rotting in the landscape.

Our own Eagle Hawk group was responsible for the first University assessed study into the stress wind farm proposals were having on the Fleurieu communities at the time.

Another ground-breaking study, focussing on the rural communities north of the state, will soon be released. I believe and it demonstrates the harm done to individual's health and to the cohesion of rural communities.

So what about this "for the greater good" approach to the planning of wind farms?

I know from my own personal research that the wind energy from SA has so destabilised the energy grid in the last decade that in fact more carbon has been produced from the coal-fired stations in Victoria as they have struggled to cope with fluctuations in wind power output by running in spinning reserve much of the time.

It is to be seen if the new batteries will help this issue but it may take another decade to get back to square one and by that time many of the wind farms will have deteriorated and need replacing.

So what has been the "greater good" that has come from this sudden proliferation of wind turbines on our landscapes? No greater good I would say except for greedy energy companies and the politicians who have used the

turbine as a symbol of the global warming religion, and to further their own brief ambitions.

Smashing good planning rules, to further the wind industry, as 15 years of Labor government has done in this fragile State has been as meaningless as sending troops from Australia to fight in Vietnam. A useless war that could never be won that killed countless young males and sent as many home with deep psychological damage. In retrospect there was no greater good there but there were then in the 60's quite a few conscientious objectors who got it right at the time.

What this present planning system must do if it has any competence and shred of integrity is to take steps to first kill the wind farm developments dead in their tracks and then to undo the damage already being done.

Start with an immediate set back of 5 kilometres between wind turbines and habitable properties.

Serious noise problems have been recorded at more than 8km from turbines in certain topographical situations but this 5km would be a start.

I recently heard from a planner active in this state that they were not expecting, now, with a change of government, any significant changes to the planning system re wind farm developments. This is a big worry. We have a new government that has a moral responsibility to review the planning process. At the last State election Weatherill said that the election was an election based on the energy policies of the respective powers and assessed by the electorate. Clearly the Marshall government has an moral obligation to overhaul a system which has impoverished the state .If the planning system does not change then this new government would have failed in this obligation.

I am predicting that class actions concerning noise and health impacts against all those responsible (wind companies, councils, etc) are just a step away as this useless industry comes unstuck and individuals have to resort to the law where planning has failed.

Corrupt, inept planning systems and wind farm companies will be the own architects of their undoing. Every time a new wind farm is built too close to houses and rural communities a new band of people become educated about the fraud of these things. The government cannot simply make a legislation that wind farms are here to stay and we have to get used to it and expect every citizen in rural Australia to cave in.

People in rural areas are getting informed and will not go along with this massive fraud any longer.

City dwellers are largely ignorant of the true negative impact of wind farms and the wind industry has used this to their advantage. People are as ignorant as they are selfish and the whole point of good planning laws is so that one part of the populace does not take advantage of the other.

Adelaidians live in a bubble and are not aware of the vital link between a healthy city and a healthy rural environment that sustains that city.

Try putting one single turbine in a parkland in Adelaide and see how quickly the torpid public will awaken to the reality of this fraudulent industry. I bet you could squeeze one in somewhere using the ridiculously pliable planning system as it stands.

In more enlightened times artists were valued for their input and ideas on matters of state. Bernini and Michelangelo helped to shape Florence and Rome.

A planning system without an eye for beauty and balance is a sick one.

Ideology, which has been the sole driver of the wind industry world wide, is always the enemy of beauty and a planning system that does not acknowledge the assistance that competent artists could offer is a weak one.

Start with a 5km set back immediately implemented and stop further damage to our landscapes, wildlife and persons while we can re think the whole future vision for our State which is being almost irretrievably desecrated at present.

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