

namely the unique beauty of the large granite boulder strewn Southern Strathbogie Ranges, and in close proximity to our agricultural property and those of our other dissenting neighbours. A number of enormously tall wind turbines would be installed along a ridge overlooking and clearly visible from our residential and farm buildings.

The company's main Australian representative, director Andrew Lawson (contact: a.lawson@feraaustralia.com.au), has held a number of meetings commencing last year with local communities in the area at three separate locations – the Ruffy Community Hall, the Upton Road CFA building, and the Molesworth hall. Although very keen to showcase the benefits of the project, in my view (and that of many others) he has shown total disregard to the widespread dismay at this prospect exhibited by local residents. Fera has failed to listen to the valid concerns of the local community, who have repeatedly expressed their strong opposition to such a project in this pristine ecological area. The secretary of our local group of dissenters to the project comprising 100+ people and/or families [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] said recently in an e-mailed report in reference to a meeting organised by this community group in the small town of Molesworth, '*...in common with Highlands was the community attitude towards Fera, they feel that they had not been well informed by Fera and have serious concerns as a result*'. The general community feeling is that the proposed often steep terrain location, scattered as it is with visually striking large granite boulders, and rich farmland, interspersed with areas of timber, is completely unsuitable for such an installation.

Beginning with the most specifically relevant to our personal situation and then moving on to more general concerns, in particular the many objections include - but are not limited to - the following -

1. Of prime importance is the fact that the suggested location is not within a designated Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) for Victoria. Surely landholders and communities outside these specified areas are entitled to expect they are safe from these monstrous environment and community destroying installations.
2. The Southern Strathbogie Ranges region of Victoria is a possible future tourism mecca, if not that already in a relatively minor way. As background relevance to this statement, see a quotation from a letter written on (19.8.23) to the *Australian Financial Review* by [REDACTED] [REDACTED] one of the fellow owners of the property with myself - [REDACTED] [REDACTED] includes as its sixth reason, ***“Long and Winding Road. I reckon this is the most beautiful drive in the whole state – Seymour to Ruffy via the backroads (my emphasis – [REDACTED]). It’s the 35 km long way from the floor of the Goulburn Valley following creeks up to the small hamlet of Ruffy perched in the Strathbogie Ranges. Along the way, one passes through historic sheep stations, fords creeks that cut through hard granite, and drives over crests of hills revealing stunning valleys below dotted with granite tors.” Mitchell LGA has also proposed that part of the area (which incidentally comprises ours and surrounding properties – [REDACTED]) be designated with a Significant Landscape Overlay, where any building on ridges will be banned. It will not only be the majority of the local landowners who do not want to see the destruction of the landscape with the erection of both wind turbines and transmission lines, but any other visitors to this region from the rest of Victoria and the country at large.’*** (Again my emphasis – [REDACTED]). Those small landholders

(many are retirees) who have gravitated here, particularly around the Ruffy and Highlands areas and further afield along the Goulburn Valley Highway towards Yea and beyond to Alexandra, have come here to escape the hustle and bustle of city life and enjoy the benefits of the peaceful scenic surroundings. They have no desire to have their vision blighted by the enormous unsightly WEF installations, and which would have a negative downward pressing effect on their properties' value. Wind turbine installations have already been seen to reduce the tourist value of locations, particularly in Europe.

3. As hinted at in the Discussion Paper, as a possible negative effect of the proposed wind turbines and overhead transmission lines associated therewith, their presence could very well make it difficult to manoeuvre the necessary equipment to fight any adjacent bushfires. In addition to that there is also a significant danger that sparking in the massive number of extra kilometres of electricity wires required could even be a contributing factor to such fires, especially when close to trees. It is common knowledge that to date these have often been the cause of devastating fire events throughout this continent.
4. Danger to wildlife – wildlife around here includes koalas, rock wallabies, kangaroos, echidnas, wombats, platypuses in Hughes Creek, wedge-tailed eagles, hawks, owls, and a diversity of the usual smaller birdlife – cockatoos, galahs, rosellas, finches, wrens, dotterels, blackbirds. In the case of wedge-tailed eagles, we all know the extreme danger to that vulnerable species presented by the monstrous wind turbines (e.g. the documented devastating experience at the Cattle Hill wind farm in Tasmania, which is supposed to have

an eagle protective device in place, but which obviously does not work). This danger would not only happen in the operating stage, but where land based wildlife is concerned, in particular during the highly disruptive construction stage.

5. Of concern also is the drop in property values for the soon to be unwanted properties bordering wind turbine host properties, and without the benefit of the financial rewards enjoyed by the host properties. The question arises, 'is the government or anybody else going to provide any form of compensation for this obviously extremely unfair situation?'
6. Disposal of the infrastructure when it reaches its use-by date (sometimes as short a lifespan as 20 years!) is understood by many to be an enormous problem (see attached transcribed recent letters to a newspaper). In addition there is documented evidence that companies can change ownership during the life of a facility, and subsequent company owners apparently often eschew responsibility for this problem.
7. As stated in the Discussion Paper, and also by Fera Australia, the wholly foreign owned company mentioned here, likewise has also said that the installation of the turbines will result in local job opportunities. This is definitely not a feasible consideration, as tradespeople in this local area are already notoriously in short supply, and it is apparently a similar situation in other regional areas of Australia. An example - [REDACTED] (the writer of the letter to the AFR quoted above) has been waiting for our regular plumber to come to the farm to fix her leaking roof for over three months now, but he is too busy to come! In addition my partner and I have been waiting for six months for our local regular builder to find time to start work on a bathroom renovation project in

our house on the farm. As confirmation of the already dire situation in relation to the dearth of skilled tradespeople, I heard on ABC Radio while driving from Seymour to Melbourne on the Hume Highway on Saturday morning, 16.9.23, that workers on the extensive unsightly solar farms adjacent to the Hume Highway between Benalla and Glenrowan have had to be brought in from Ireland! It would not surprise me if workers from Italy were needed to be similarly imported by Fera for the turbines. And even if there were enough people willing to work as tradespeople, there will be all too many jobs available in the building sector due to the large number of new homes promised to be built by the Victorian State Labor Government - presumably to accommodate the flood of immigrants allowed into the country. (Stop press No. 1, Monday, 25.9.23: Since writing the foregoing, no doubt to exacerbate the situation, we now hear on the ABC TV Evening News [Sunday, 24.9.23] that the premier of Victoria, Daniel Andrews, has announced that our nearest town, Seymour [one hour by train to Southern Cross Station in Melbourne] is to be the focal point of a large new 'affordable housing' venture! Stop Press No. 2, Wednesday, 27.9.23: On the day following former Victorian premier Daniel Andrews' sudden unexpected resignation, a report has appeared in *The Age* newspaper: '*Skilled migrant call on green energy*', with an official announcement by the Electrical Trades Union and the National Electrical and Communications Commission that there is a shortage of such workers necessitating bringing them in from overseas, a situation which it is said is certain to delay the renewables rollout. Anyone of sound mind must surmise that this will exacerbate the housing shortage - and with the building of new homes even more similar tradespeople will be required. This situation seems like a bit of a merry-go-round to me).

8. Another concern is the possible danger to aviation, especially light aircraft employed in crop dusting and other pursuits? Mangalore airport is in fairly close proximity. And is it possible or even permissible to spray around the turbines anyway? I have heard it is not.

9. There is a precedent for a successful campaign to prevent such a disaster occurring as outlined in the foregoing questions and statements. Some years ago (c. 2008) a group of landholders in the McHarg Ranges granite hills area close to Tooboorac, south west of Seymour (so not very far distant from here), were able to convince the state government that that area was completely unsuitable for installation of a proposed wind farm, for a number of valid reasons.

Now moving on to more general objections to renewable energy per se, especially wind energy -

1. Manufacturing of the required infrastructure necessitates an enormous increase in the mining of critical minerals, some of which are toxic and this would surely add to the problem of safe and effective disposal of the infrastructure at end of life, which may be as short a period as 20 years. The problem of disposal of nuclear waste would seem to pale into insignificance beside the former prospect. The enormous amount of extra mining required would appear to be extremely harmful to the environment.

2. Of concern is the fact that the majority of the infrastructure is manufactured in China (again see one of the articulate attached transcribed letters on this subject). Being largely reliant on a certain sole country

which may not always be benevolently disposed towards ourselves does not appear to be the wisest of moves, for obvious reasons. So far there is no evidence of the infrastructure being manufactured in Australia.

3. Australia's contribution to global carbon dioxide emissions is said to be only in the region of a mere 1.5%. This is compared to other countries such as China's, which at 27% of CO₂ and 33% of greenhouse gases is the world's most prolific emitter. There is expert advice available that whatever drastic environmentally destructive steps Australia may take to reduce their minimal output by installing 'unreliable renewables', it will be unlikely to lower that 1.5% figure to any observable extent. Thus we would be destroying much of the environment in order to achieve what? Virtually no result. By contrast, our coal, gas, and iron ore exports to China undoubtedly contribute to that country's enormous emission levels. It is doubtless worth noting that, despite the scaling down of gas exploration here and phasing out of domestic use, in 2022 Australia's gas exports to that country alone amounted to a whopping A\$18.27 billion. Therefore rather than reducing humanity's carbon footprint on the planet, through our exports we could be said to be actually contributing to it. Surely this fact - wedded to our obsession with installing 'unreliable renewables' in our own country - has to be seen to be a case of mere virtue signalling.
4. Of obvious concern must be the huge burden to Australian taxpayers of the enormous Government subsidies paid to the windfarm companies, most of the

latter based offshore - for instance in Italy, Denmark, and even China. They obviously wish to avail themselves of the generous subsidies available to them in this country, while siphoning off the profits to their own native countries without financial benefit to the one providing the subsidies. Fera Australia would be one such company.

Personally speaking I am totally against the exclusive introduction of 'unreliable renewables'. As stated above, enormous taxpayer funded subsidies are required to initiate and maintain these monstrous blights on our landscape, which - when the wind does not blow and in the case of solar panels when the sun does not shine - fail to generate adequate amounts of power to service the ever growing population (the latter due to the questionable practice of a continuance to allow high levels of immigration beyond Australia's ability to accommodate it, both with affordable energy and housing). On a recent drive past the enormous WEF adjacent to the Hume Highway near Goulburn, NSW, the massive blades were not moving at all. On a drive into Seymour on Saturday (23.9.23) the blades were barely moving on the 15 wind towers in the Cherry tree WEF along the Goulburn Valley Highway just to the east of the town. Battery storage is supposedly necessary during these times, but it is said that this is extremely expensive to install and only holds a minimal amount of power. The turbines in the Cherry Tree wind farm are clearly visible at a distance of about 10 kms (as the crow flies) from one of the elevated paddocks on our property. The mind simply boggles at the future prospect of a large number of proposed turbines, estimated to be twice the height of these, along a clearly visible ridge overlooking our farm and residential buildings, in the total ruination of the presently uniquely beautiful visual landscape

(as outlined above at the beginning of this letter in the quoted piece from [REDACTED] to the AFR).

The point to make here is that one really wonders when the company and the Federal or State Government who may agree to pay handsome subsidies to it will get it through their thick skulls that we, the residents of this scenically beautiful area, do not want these blights on the landscape in any way, shape or form – FULL STOP, END OF STORY. If you must, find some other scenically boring and insignificant flat area to place them, but not here. However, why not ditch your total reliance on ‘unreliable renewables’ altogether and instead support the inclusion of nuclear small modular reactors (SMRs) into the mix? These could be placed primarily on the site of defunct coal fired power stations and utilise the transmission facilities already in place at those locations. It has been stated that of the 20 countries included in the G20 group, 19 if these use varying percentages of nuclear power in their energy mix, Australia being the only one not doing so! Why should this be the case?

However, keep the fossil fuel power supplies going until it is safe to wind them down, ensuring there is no interruption to cheap and reliable baseload power supply to the collective. Otherwise total chaos will ensue, there is no doubt about that. In relation to the abovementioned question of the premature closure of coal fired power stations and the phasing out – even total elimination - of natural gas exploration and its use, see one opinion on an online website: *‘Society has a shelf life of three days. Without water, food, power, internet, mobile phones, refrigeration, air conditioning, insulin, etc., people go crazy. To allow this insanity is unthinkable. The human cost is unthinkable. That it is allowed, based on fantasy, complacency, ignorance, and ideology, is beyond belief. No-one is immune to consequences. It doesn’t matter what one believes. The reality*

of a grid collapse is going to make paupers, thieves, criminals, murderers, of everyone who experiences the reality of a total collapse of society. There is no reset button. Once this happens, all the excuses and gob-smacked navel gazing idiots' opinions won't matter. Everyone will know what life was like as long ago as 1851 for weeks at a time – even months or years. This is a civilisational collapse moment. That more do not understand the consequences is proof of general population incompetency to think critically.'

On the foregoing I rest the case of myself and others of like mind – it would be worse than crazy to allow the premature closure of coal fired power stations - and this wedded to an encouragement, even enforcement, of a conversion from petrol fuelled vehicles to EVS and electrification of households, thus requiring massively increased amounts of electricity to run, and exacerbated by a population increase due to an influx of immigrants - without adequate provision for a safe, effective and slow transmission to a well planned power supply mix with a secure baseload.

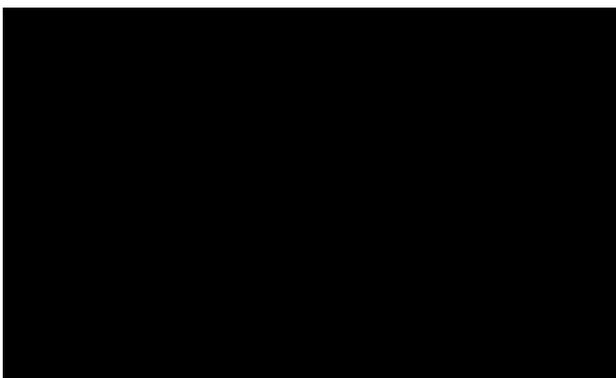
It might be pertinent to finish up with a sample of thoughts relevant to this argument from an article by contributor Gemma Tognini in *The Weekend Australian* newspaper's *Inquirer* section of last weekend (23-24.9.23) –

'If your energy source is resulting in this level of environmental damage, there's nothing green about it...Australia, where it seems the damage of renewable energy sources are conveniently ignored by those pushing an "only renewables" agenda...Australia needs the cleanest, greenest energy mix available that doesn't cause environmental carnage, plunge millions of people into energy poverty or send business bust. So far we're not really ticking that box. There is a place for renewables. A place. That being said, put aside for one moment the empty promise of cheaper power delivered with love by the sun and the wind. It's rubbish, we know

*it's rubbish, there's nowhere in the world it has been delivered and that's before you remove the enormous subsidies at play and see the real cost for what it is....Some say (the renewables industry – LS) is losing ...what we call in my day job its social licence to operate: trust and relationship with the communities in which they work. The industry has a reputation problem and it's getting worse....**The primary reason for this is because of the undeniable damage to the environment renewables are causing.** (My emphasis – [REDACTED]).....I believe that everyday Aussis have had a gutful of the spin that renewables are 100% clean, there is no harm to the environment and there is glorious cheap power for all....Community groups are galvanising in areas where there are proposals to take large tracts of land and clear them (yes, clear the land) to put in solar farms and the like. Communities quite rightly are saying no....The other matter that frustrates me greatly is the fact that Australia has the opportunity here to learn from what has worked and what has failed spectacularly in Europe and other places. Yet we don't seem to be learning....Has anyone else had enough of this? I sure have....Labor and the Greens, once defenders of Australia's environment under Brown and his cohort, are facilitating **unparalleled damage via an obsession with ideology over facts** (my emphasis – [REDACTED]) and a net zero target that's looking less and less possible to achieve.'*

I think the forgoing says it all.

Yours Faithfully,



Encs.

1. Letter to the Editor of the *Australian Financial Review* [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
2. Letter to the Editor of the *Australian Financial Review* by [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
3. Letter to *The Australian* [REDACTED]
4. Letters to *The Australian* [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
