

# Community says 'NO' to the Mount Emerald Wind Turbines

*Community Survey Results*

To the decision makers  
'Please listen to what  
we have to say'



# Residents speak out

## *Developers claim support for wind turbine proposal*

- In 2012, the developers carried out a phone survey and reported 76% of respondents supported the proposal – even though 86% said they knew little or nothing about it.
- Nearly a third of the 400 people surveyed lived over 20km from the site and only 17 people lived under 5km.
- The developers failed to contact and consult the people who would be most affected by the wind turbines.

## *Affected residents want to be heard*

- Tablelands Wind Turbine Action volunteers felt local residents should have an opportunity to have their say.
- Under local and state planning laws there are no opportunities for residents to object to the wind turbine proposal.
- We door-knocked and mailed surveys to an estimated 700 residential addresses within 5km of the proposed site.

*This is a summary of the results and comments made by local residents.*

### PLEASE RETURN YOUR MT EMERALD WIND FARM SURVEY FORM

This survey has been commissioned by local residents concerned about the proposed Mt Emerald Wind Farm. We want to ensure the views of people owning properties and/or living within 5km are heard by those deciding whether the wind farm goes ahead.

Do you support / oppose / neither support nor oppose the Mt Emerald Wind Farm?

☐ support ☐ oppose ☐ neither support nor oppose

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\*

OPTIONAL: The following details are not for publication and are strictly confidential.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Residents at Address \_\_\_\_\_ Adults? \_\_\_\_\_ Children? \_\_\_\_\_

(If you are the owner of a vacant property, please also return the forms)

Number of workers who visit the property on a regular basis \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred phone contact \_\_\_\_\_

Email address (if you would like to obtain more information or be kept up to date) \_\_\_\_\_

DEADLINE FOR RETURN OF SURVEY FORMS: 25 MAY 2014

HOW TO RETURN THE FORM:

Scan and send to: [tablelandswta@gmail.com](mailto:tablelandswta@gmail.com)

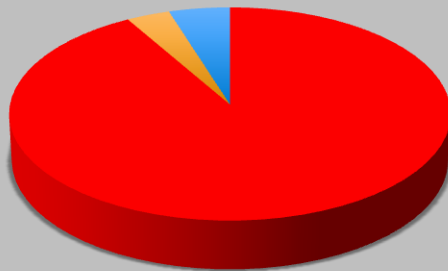
Fax to: 07 4093 3716

Drop off at: Bridges Cafe / Walkamin Store

Post to: PO Box 1335, Walkamin 4872

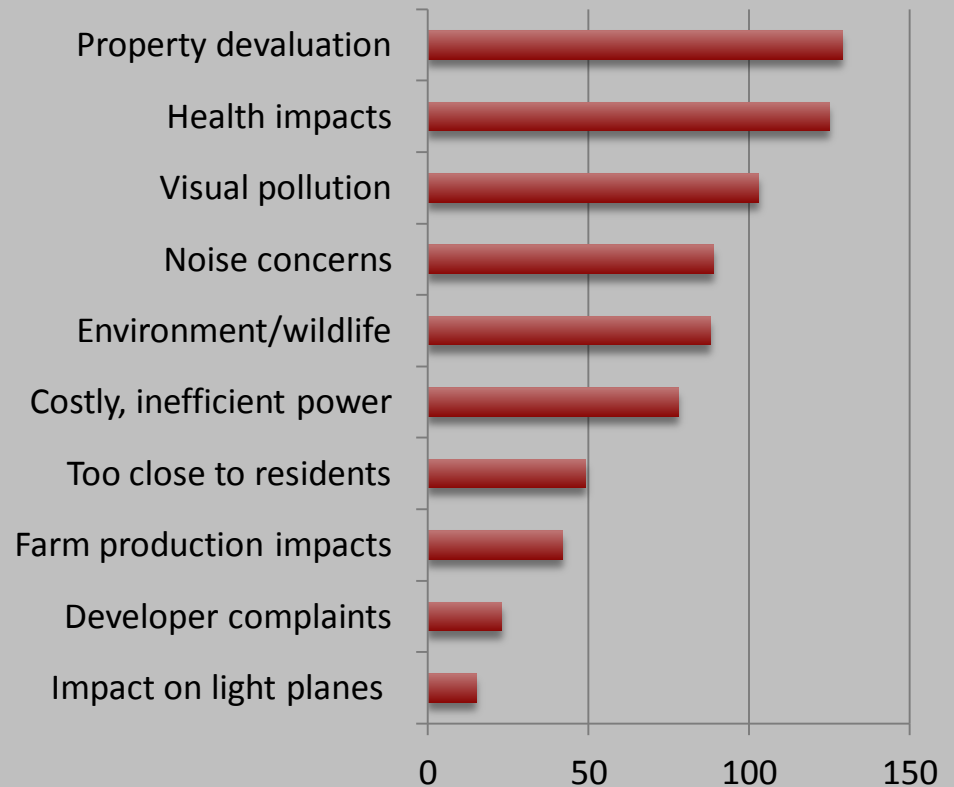
# Summary of results

- A total of 288 surveys were returned. Of these, 264 households opposed the wind farm. **They represent 564 adults, 144 children and over 1000 farm workers.**
- Ten households supported and 14 households neither supported/opposed the wind turbines.



- Opposed to wind farm (91.7%)
- Support wind farm (3.5%)
- Neither support/oppose (4.8%)

## Top Ten Issues Raised



Number of households



# 1. Property devaluation

The most common issue raised was declining property values (45% of households).



- ◉ 'Houses are already hard to sell. I have experienced this.' *Rangeview resident*
- ◉ 'My property has devalued by 20% if I wished to sell today. I built my house to take in the natural beauty of the range not to look at a wind farm.' *Rankine Drive resident*
- ◉ 'Very concerned that our home will be devalued which will impact on our future retirement.' *Nadia Close resident*
- ◉ 'We do not want the value of our property to go down, nor do we want the continual noise. Why can't it be placed in a more remote area away from a residential area?' *Rankine Drive resident*

***These comments reflect falling property values around the site. In the past year more than \$1.5 million has been lost from the rateable value of Oaky Creek properties alone.***

## 2. Health Impacts

**Health issues were raised by 43% of households.**



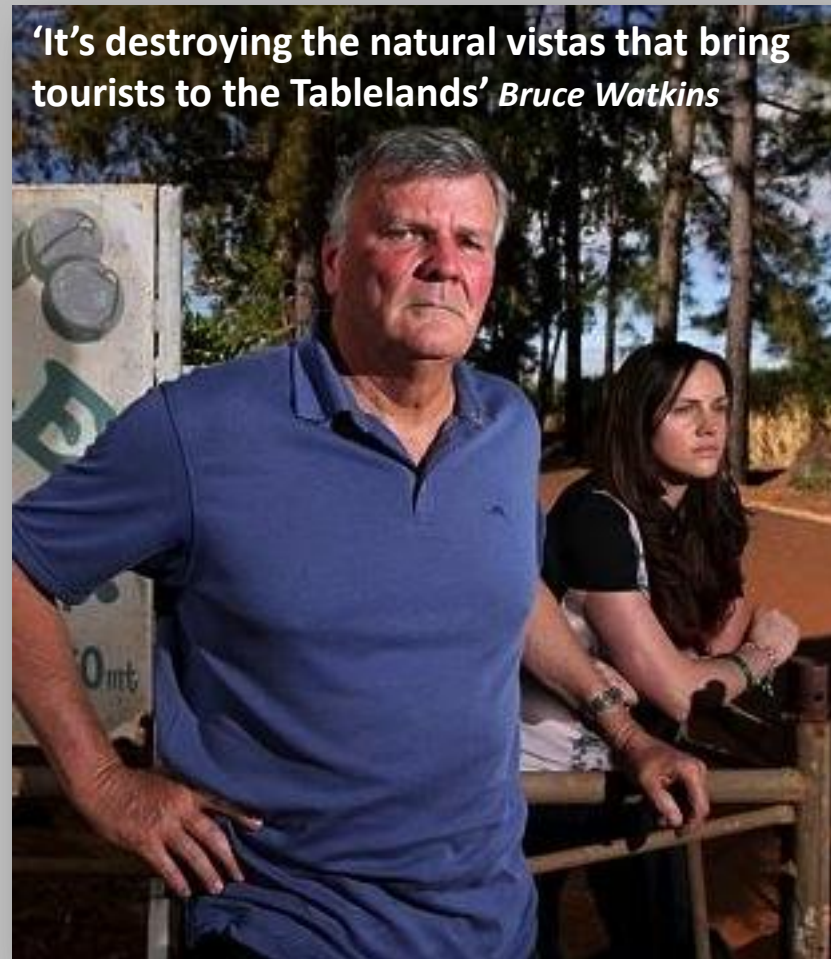
**'I'm a cancer survivor and I'm very worried about my health. I don't want to live under turbines'**  
*Shellie Ackland*

- ◉ 'Not enough credible research done to show that wind farms are harmless' *Tolga resident*
- ◉ 'Health issues ... are at the same level of understanding as asbestos was in 1915. Something is wrong but the cause is unknown' *Rangeview resident*
- ◉ 'We holidayed on the west coast of Tasmania 10km from the Woolnorth Wind Farm. The constant dull hum of the turbines was such that I was severely sleep deprived which was quite stressful and instead of R&R we had to cut our holiday. I don't want them this close to our home' *Rangeview resident*
- ◉ 'It will put my family's health and wellbeing at risk' *Rangeview resident*
- ◉ 'Worried about property values and sleep loss, as I suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder (veteran on medication)' *Arriga resident*

***Community surveys have shown that similar turbines installed in Victoria and South Australia have impacted the health of residents up to 10km away.***

# 3. Visual pollution

Visual impacts were raised by 36% of households.



- ◉ 'Blight on the landscape' *Chewko Road resident*
- ◉ 'They are massive, unsightly objects which emit noise' *Channel Road resident*
- ◉ 'They are ugly, noisy and don't belong in areas like Mount Emerald. How would the developers like to look out of their houses and see and hear those terrible contraptions?' *Carbeen Road resident*
- ◉ 'They are an eyesore. They are not reliable. They are too close to our home' *Channel Road resident*
- ◉ 'Too many turbines in such a concentrated area providing no long term benefit to the region, yet imposing a visual eyesore in the middle of the Tablelands and most likely more expensive power supply' *Lindgren Close resident*
- ◉ 'The visual impact will be horrific and the effect on our wildlife will deter tourism' *Turnbull Drive resident*
- ◉ 'Mount Emerald is just beautiful. To ruin it with these monsters is criminal' *Rankine Drive resident*



# 4. Noise concerns

Noise impacts were raised by 31% of households.



**'I live 5km downwind from the site.  
In southern states turbine noise has  
been recorded out to 8.5km.'**

**Sharon Cleall**

- ◉ 'Strongly opposed, because we had to sell our family dairy farm at Ravenshoe (12 years) as the noise from the windmills was debilitating and the constant bang bang was terrible to try and sleep with' *Rangeview resident*
- ◉ 'The noise will drive us crazy' *Rangeview resident*
- ◉ 'Can we be guaranteed noise will not be amplified by mountainous terrain? Also the turbine hills and our valley below creating an echo?' *Oaky Valley resident*
- ◉ 'Would Queensland Government allow these noise levels anywhere else where people live so close?' *Oaky Valley resident*
- ◉ 'By the developer's own admission the noise emitted will be above what is already experienced by the activities of a rural/farming community' *Channel Road resident*

Why? WE HAVE EXPERIENCED THE NOISE - IT IS DISTURBING TO THE EARS AND IS CONSTANT - THE LEVEL OF 'INTERFERENCE' TO THE SENSES i.e. - HEARING, THINKING, COPING WITH EVERYDAY LIFE IS UNLIVABLE. ALL THIS HAS ALREADY BEEN PROVEN - ✓

# 5. Environment/wildlife

**The impacts on the environment and wildlife were raised by 30% of households.**

- ◉ 'Pristine bushland – untouched. We should be preserving this unique bushland' *Chewko Road resident*
- ◉ 'Destruction of pristine environment. Last remaining stronghold of the Northern Quoll' *Rankine Drive resident*
- ◉ 'Now we can hear birds singing. When they go up all we are going to hear is wind mills' *Channel Rd resident*
- ◉ 'Environmental vandalism' *Chewko Road resident*
- ◉ 'Kills birds, bats and other wildlife species. Desecrates and pollutes the mountain ranges and many more reasons' *Channel Road resident*
- ◉ 'I am a local horse rider and have spent a lot of time on Mount Emerald and surrounds. A massive project like this will destroy the ecosystem up there and ruin the beauty of the Tablelands, not to mention thousands of residents will be affected.' *Rangeview resident*



**Conservationists believe the developers are allowing economic considerations to over-ride their legal responsibilities to protect the site's endangered plants and animals.**



# 6. Costly, inefficient power

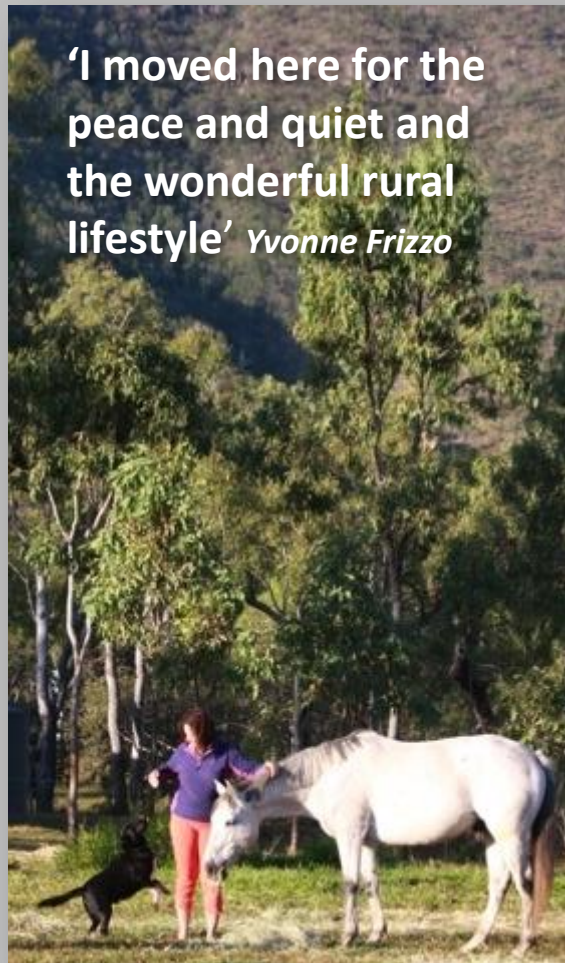
## Costly and inefficient electricity was raised as an issue by 27% of households.

- ◉ 'I don't like government-sponsored white elephants littering the landscape. This development is planned under a flawed framework (RET scheme)' *Rangeview resident*
- ◉ 'The footprint of this facility does not appear to be commensurate with the energy it is claimed will be provided' *Rangeview resident*
- ◉ 'I believe projects like this should have to stand on their own – not have government grants' *Tolga resident*
- ◉ 'Taxpayer-funded fraud by multi-national foreign company' *Chewko Road resident*
- ◉ 'Yet to see any figures supporting their stand alone capabilities. Is the taxpayer helping to fund them and maintain them through subsidies? Any more comments, I would need a soapbox and two hours of your time.' *Carbeen Road resident*
- ◉ 'I see no gain for the local community, State of Queensland or the Federal Government' *Rex Rd resident*



# 7. Too close to residents

**Concerns about the close proximity to homes was raised by 17% of households.**



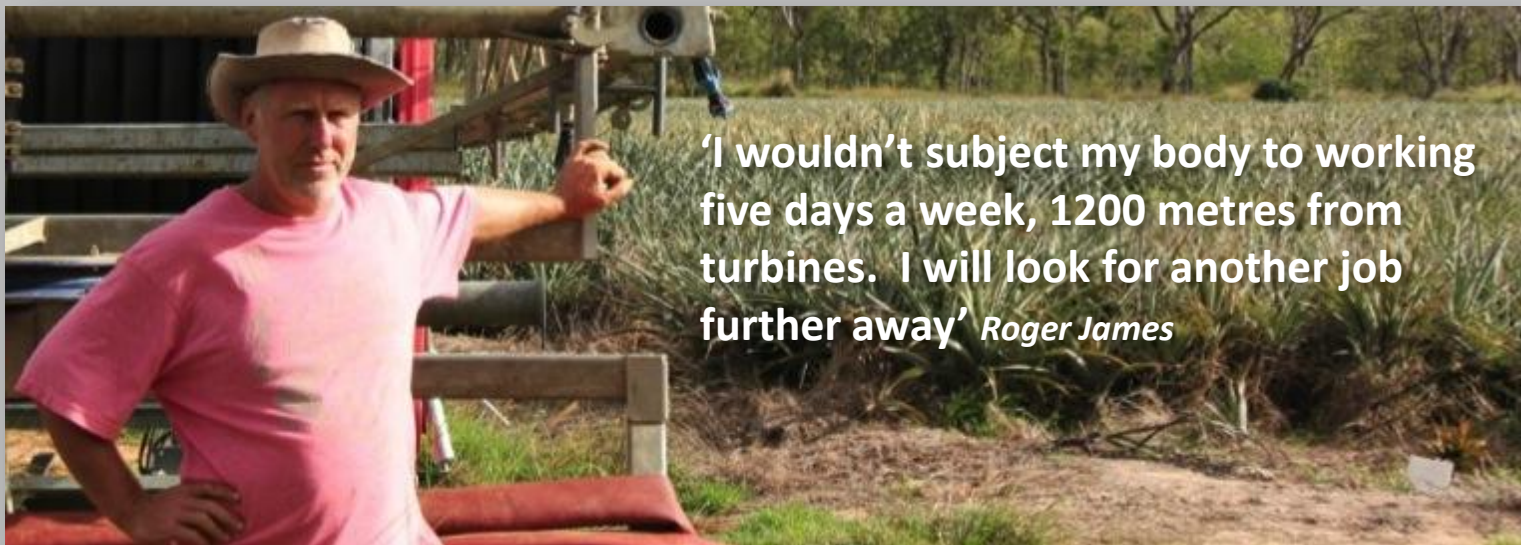
- ◉ 'They are wanting to impose ... an industrial power plant upon the residents of this area' *Channel Rd resident*
- ◉ 'We have visitors and guests from most of our capital cities and overseas visiting us frequently to enjoy our clean and quiet environment' *Tolga resident*
- ◉ 'The people proposing the wind farm and politicians supporting it do not live in the vicinity of the turbines as we do – as well as hundreds of other families' *Tolga resident*
- ◉ 'If there is any reasonable doubt (which there is) then wind farms should definitely not be erected anywhere near populated areas' *Oaky Valley resident*
- ◉ 'The close proximity to the large number of residences, businesses and farms is unacceptable. Large buffer zones have been set in other states and countries, yet these are being disregarded in this case' *Tolga resident*

Why? IT'S AN UNNECESSARY, UGLY, EYESORE THAT  
DECREASES PROPERTY VALUES AND ONLY SEEMS TO  
HAVE GREAT SUPPORT FROM PEOPLE WHO WOULD  
LIVE NOWHERE NEAR IT.

# 8. Impact on farm production

**The impact on agribusinesses was raised by 15% of households.**

- ◉ 'The construction phase will bring farming to a halt due to road blockages' *Channel Rd resident*
- ◉ 'Varieties of farming production severely impacted' *Oaky Valley resident*
- ◉ 'It will impact on the earning capacity of surrounding businesses' *Channel Rd resident*
- ◉ 'Who will compensate us for property value declines, interruptions to being able to farm?' *Channel Rd resident*
- ◉ 'They are ugly, noisy and don't belong in areas like the proposed site of Mount Emerald. Put them somewhere where they will not harm or destroy people's livelihoods' *Carbeen Rd resident*



**'I wouldn't subject my body to working five days a week, 1200 metres from turbines. I will look for another job further away'** *Roger James*



# 9. Developer complaints

**Concerns about the developers and the process were raised by 9% of households.**

***Residents who bought properties in Port Bajool's Oaky Valley subdivision expressed their anger:***

- ◉ 'Developer sold blocks to us. Covenant states nothing over nine metres to be constructed. Our land value has dropped already. Developer is now selling for a third to quarter of advertised price.'  
*Oaky Valley resident*
- ◉ 'We live 2km from proposed site. It's devastating ... we have built our lives here' *Oaky Valley resident*
- ◉ 'If there is no problem with wind turbines, why do we have a gag clause prohibiting us from objecting to the wind farm? Shame on them. We were initially advised, and so were many others, that we would neither see nor hear the turbines. What a con!' *Oaky Valley resident*
- ◉ 'Will we be reimbursed by subsidies given to those who sold us the land and now want a wind farm in our same subdivision?' *Oaky Valley resident*

***Other residents raised poor consultation and their lack of trust:***

- ◉ 'The whole process of research by the developer has not been transparent or up front' *Filippo CI resident*
- ◉ 'We are within 3km of the turbines – have had no consultation at all' *Marnane Road resident*
- ◉ 'The \$200,000 (community benefit fund) is a bribe. We citizens will pay for it all the way, which most of us can't afford' *Moffat Drive resident*
- ◉ 'Port Bajool and RATCH have not been open and honest in their information. Their concern is for the money - nothing else' *Rangeview resident*
- ◉ 'Poor local planning with no community consultation' *Rankine Drive resident*
- ◉ 'We will be paying for this long after I pass this earth' *Rangeview resident*

# 10. Impact on light planes

**Impacts on light planes and air space were raised by 5% of households.**

- ◉ 'There is significant aerial spraying in our area and spray drift is a very real health concern for our family and livestock' *Tolga resident*
- ◉ 'Spraying in our surrounding area would be a risk and airport flight path? We strongly oppose the Mount Emerald Wind Farm' *Rangeview resident*

Why? DEVALUATION OF PROPERTY AT RANGEVIEW, VISUAL AND NOISE POLLUTION, DETRIMENTAL EFFECT ON FLORA AND FAUNA, LOCALISED CLIMATE CHANGES, DANGER TO AIRCRAFT GIVEN CLOSE PROXIMITY TO MARCEBA AIRFIELD, IMPACT ON HORTICULTURE PRODUCTION IN THIS AREA.

Why? These turbines are going to be massive. I think they will be dangerous for health, wildlife and aircraft, not to mention having to look at them. Definitely don't want.



# Other negative impacts



'It will severely impact upon the ability of other landholders to carry on or develop their businesses'

*Cr Marjarie Pagani*



'The turbines create a great fire risk for surrounding communities. Our volunteer brigade isn't capable of dealing with industrial sites like this'

*Bernadette Iraci  
Springmount Fire Brigade*



'This area relies heavily on agriculture and tourism – the wind farm will affect these industries which will impact on our local community'

*Di Spring,  
Walkamin store owner*



# 3.5% support the wind farm

---

**Ten households (3.5%) supported the proposed wind farm.**

- ◉ 'Wind is free so use it'
- ◉ 'Clean renewable energy'
- ◉ 'We have a 50% transmission loss due to our distance from a power station'
- ◉ 'Local jobs and benefits for local support services during construction'
- ◉ 'Reduces need for dirty coal power stations'

**Fourteen households (4.8%) neither supported/opposed the proposal.**

- ◉ 'Not sure of complete science about the effects'
- ◉ 'I support sustainable and renewable energy sources. Wind farms are a great idea, but this one isn't.'
- ◉ 'I do not have a balanced overview of the for and against the wind farm'

***We believe these residents need more information about the limitations and the social and economic costs of wind turbine facilities in order to make an informed decision.***

# Petition results

A petition objecting to the wind farm was displayed over five local market days. Over 1000 people queued up to sign it and make comments.



- Beautiful one day, ruined the next!
- Save our beautiful hillsides!
- Too bloody ugly! Put them somewhere else
- Don't destroy our landscapes, wildlife and communities
- Leave our mountains alone
- We need 100% guarantee no health risks
- Very concerned about health effects – DON'T DO IT!
- Destroys health and lifestyle
- Not economically viable
- We need more hydro, not wind
- Who do I shoot first!
- Very expensive way to produce electricity
- No sleep. No advantage. No way!
- No subsidising of wind power
- Waste of taxpayer money
- Inefficient monstrosities
- Wind power = higher electricity bills
- Not energy efficient – a scam
- Too close to too many people
- Find a new place – don't ruin beauty
- Noisy – please move to unpopulated area
- Put in Canberra, lot of wind there
- Not the right location
- A bloody con job
- Go somewhere else
- For whose benefit?
- Save the wildlife
- **Please stop this**

# REFUSE the Mt Emerald turbines

---

- *The survey shows residents have strong emotional and economic investments in the area around the Mount Emerald wind turbine site.*
  - *They are well informed about the negative impacts, and are not afraid to speak out strongly against it.*
- 
- 'If the wind farm does proceed and if there are the side effects (financial, emotional, health, environment) then once again it is the community that has to bear these, not the developers. How can it be right that a few people can override the wishes of the people? Who is going to clean up the mess?' *Channel Road resident*
  - 'The consequences of this calamity rest firmly at the door of the developer – but also at the door of our Local, State and Federal Government representatives if they support this disaster-in-the-making. Mount Emerald Wind Farm Pty Ltd is a \$2 company so I know who will be left carrying the can - and I know for sure where we will come knocking' *Oaky Valley resident*

***We call on our elected representatives and decision-makers  
to listen to Tableland residents:  
REFUSE the Mount Emerald Wind Farm proposal.***