

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Wind Farm developer ignores residents' concerns**

*18 May 2005*

The President of the Molonglo Landscape Guardians (MLG), Margaret Ritchie, says she is not surprised to hear that the developers of the controversial Molonglo wind-plant are planning to push ahead with the development near Queanbeyan despite Palerang Council's recent refusal for two additional wind-monitoring towers on the site.

"It is typical of the disregard EHN Oceania have shown towards local residents' objections", said Ms Ritchie.

According to the Molonglo Landscape Guardians, the wind-plant would contravene both NSW State guidelines and Local planning policies that place restrictions on wind-farms near towns and villages, or on prominent ridgelines. Palerang and Greater Queanbeyan Councils, together with State and Federal MPs Steve Whan and Gary Nairn have opposed the wind-plant due to its inappropriate location.

"By rejecting the application of the two additional towers Palerang Council have shown they are listening to and responding to their ratepayers' concerns about the wind-plant. It is just too close to people's homes. It is a pity that EHN choose to ignore these concerns and plough on regardless", she said.

Ms Ritchie also disputed the claim by EHN that they were continuing to consult with the local community over noise and visual issues.

"Nobody should be fooled into thinking that EHN are serious about consulting with the community about this proposal," she said.

"EHN held meetings in Burra, Carwoola and Queanbeyan early last December. Those meetings were each attended by upwards of 80 people, the vast majority of whom opposed the wind-plant. They restricted our input by handing out 20 numbered cards to the audience and only card-holders were allowed to ask a single question each. As an example of community consultation, it was a complete farce," Ms Ritchie said.

"Since December, they have released two so-called newsletters, the last was published in March and was only sent to people who registered on their database. If you are not prepared to hand over personal information to EHN, you are excluded from the process. As it is, their newsletters tell us nothing informative, only that they are conducting further studies," she said.

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"The Open Days EHN promised to hold in January have still not occurred. If EHN think that stringing residents along and putting out the occasional, glib press release will placate residents, they are very much mistaken. We are prepared to fight them all the way," she said.

Bruce Cotton, whose Carwoola home would be closest to the turbines if they went ahead, said he is not aware of any attempt by EHN to consult further on the noise problems.

"There were noise monitors in place last year but we've heard nothing since they were removed. We'd like some answers on the noise issues, not simply a denial of the problems," said Mr Cotton.

Burra resident, Wendy Bell, said that she and a handful of other local residents were contacted by EHN's landscape gardener in January to discuss screening.

"They seemed to be saying that if we planted trees now, in 20 or 30 years' time they would screen our view of the turbines, but they would also screen our whole view of the mountains. Its hard to see how you could successfully screen 125m structures on top of the Molonglo ridgelines, when the turbines could be seen from the other side of Canberra," said Ms Bell.

Residents from the 1000 homes surrounding the site have formed the Molonglo Landscape Guardians Inc to fight the wind farm proposal.

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