



Speech By Shane Knuth

MEMBER FOR DALRYMPLE

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ADJOURNMENT

Mount Emerald Wind Farm

Mr KNUTH (Dalrymple—KAP) (10.27 pm): Many residents of my electorate are questioning and are very upset about the Mount Emerald wind farm development proposal by Ratch, a Thailand based company, over an area of prime residential and agricultural land on the Atherton Tablelands. Residents' views are not being heard by the state as they have been given no legal right to object or even make submissions. Residents have been forced to do their own survey, and I now table a summary of that survey with transparent objections.

Tabled paper: Document titled 'Community says 'NO' to the Mount Emerald Wind Turbines—Community Survey Results' [5635].

I also have in my hand nearly 300 survey forms, only 10 of which are in favour of this development. I also table a petition, bearing over 1,000 signatures, opposing this massive wind farm development.

Tabled paper: Non-conforming petition regarding the proposed Mount Emerald Wind Farm [5636].

The community has overwhelmingly rejected this disaster in the making. It is a massive experiment over a prime wealthy farming area. Is the government intending to foist the development upon an unwilling public? Is the government listening? Nearly half of the survey respondents raised the issue of declining property values. Already, over \$1.5 million has been wiped off property values in one lifestyle subdivision alone—a 30 per cent loss in some cases.

Ratch, a Thailand based company, hides behind Mount Emerald Wind Farm. It has made no commitment to the community, no commitment to compensation for lost property values, no commitment to compensation to ratepayers for road damage, no commitment to reimbursement of farmers for the losses incurred due to the inability to aerial spray and no commitment to residents suffering adverse health effects. Ratch has not assessed the economic loss to this farming community at all. Will the government take responsibility for this mess? These factors need to be taken into consideration before any decision is made.

Ratch is intending to subject residents to industrial noise much higher than would be allowed for any other project in rural Queensland. Questions are not being answered. Will residents be able to sleep? Council experts advised council to refuse the project and said that susceptible residents two to three kilometres away would be affected, and at greater distances also. This also puts the 1,200 Lotus Glen Correctional Centre inmates and staff right in the firing line. Will the government shut down the turbines or close the prison facility when there are noise problems? There are already two approved wind farm developments in Far North Queensland. Why would the government approve a third at huge cost to the community for very little benefit? This project will provide power only when the wind blows and massively increase electricity prices. The subsidies are ripped from electricity users pockets while profits are paid to foreign owned corporations. If the government wants green

power, then it should support the Tully Millstream hydro—real power—baseload which has the support of the community. Many thousands of people live and work within 10 kilometres of the project. This project will do a number of things—decrease property value, impact on prime agricultural land and increase electricity costs whilst profits go overseas according to the LNP senator—

(Time expired)