

Submission- Turitea Wind Farm

My name is Kevin Kelliher and I have been a resident of Palmerston North all of my life.

I am opposed to the proposed Turitea Windfarm in it's entirety but I wish to state I am not opposed to windfarms per se. I believe windfarms are a wonderful source of renewable energy but I am opposed to the location of this windfarm for the following reasons.

1. The majority of the proposed 122 turbine windfarm is located in the Turitea Reserve which is just that a 'Reserve'. The definition of Reserve in the Concise English dictionary is 'to put aside or keep, to retain or secure, and a tract of land reserved for special use'.
2. The Turitea Reserve is just that a tract of land reserved for special use. Not only is it the city's main water supply but it is also a place of significance offering a large area of rugged natural beauty, virgin native bush, flora & fauna. To allow the Reserve to be altered drastically for windfarm usage is in my opinion wrong and imprudent.
3. With the proliferation of windfarms on the skyline in the Manawatu over recent times surely it is wise to protect one area of such special significance to the city for this and future generations. It is my belief if this proposal is approved in any shape or form that once the windfarm is operational many locals will question with hindsight why this was ever allowed. Once it is in place the windfarm will be there forever and the Reserve and skyline from the city will no longer be a place of natural and unspoilt beauty, but rather a place of previous natural beauty spoilt by manmade devices.
4. The Reserve is a windy and at times inhospitable area but it is this that makes it so significant. I am concerned if the windfarm proceeds due to this very windy environment that there could be over time widespread erosion due directly to the removal of topsoil which will cause irreversible damage to the fragile ecology and plant life of the Reserve. Specialist experts during these hearings have reassured us all that there will be only a very small chance of large scale erosion or silt being washed into the water supply dams and contamination of the city's outstanding water supply however there can be no 100% certainty of this and I believe those specialist experts also know this.
5. For those of us who know the Reserve well and have spent any amount of time there, there is already erosion due to slips, wind erosion & ongoing damage by animals. Surely to tamper with this fragile natural environment with large scale development does not make sense if we are all (as we believe in this country) guardians of the natural environment we live in. I would rather see the Reserve protected in it's current form and usage for this and future generations.

6. In 100 years from now or less when this city has grown significantly and has become a major provincial city I believe the Turitea windfarm will be referred to as a 'Blot On The Landscape'. Now is the time to make the correct and wise decision and deny approval for this development in it's entirety.
7. I have followed the proceedings of this hearing with close interest. It is interesting to note that a previous City Council without any prior consultation and behind closed doors saw fit to change the permitted uses in the Reserve to allow windfarm development and then announced to the citizens what it had done. Interestingly we have now seen the current PNCC spend \$470,000 of the ratepayers money on legal counsel and specialists in what appears to me as an about turn in now opposing this proposal. The Council's current stance only came about when it became aware of the obvious huge local opposition to the proposal upon the close of submissions. I now question if that previous and the now current elected Council are embarrassed about that decision to allow a windfarm development and hence the reason for their now obvious opposition. I believe this opposition is indicative of the majority of citizens opposition, although as we well know the majority mainly remain silent.
8. I also feel empathy for those people who have built homes on lifestyle blocks close to the Reserve who I am sure were never aware that there could ever be a huge windfarm development on their doorsteps in the city owned Reserve. I make it clear I do not reside in the Turitea or Aokautere area but as a real estate agent of 20 years experience I know if this windfarm proceeds those properties within close proximity will undoubtedly suffer a significant depreciation in property values once a windfarm is operational. It is my understanding people attempting to sell properties in the immediate area are finding buyer resistance because of the proposed development and any nuicanse whether perceived or real. Surely these property owners have rights to have their property values protected.

Summary

In summary I believe this proposal is unwise for the reasons I have outlined and I say this both as a local of Palmerston North and as a lover of the current status of the Turitea Reserve. (i.e a Reserve- a special place of local and national significance.)

Finally I wish to say I do not doubt Mighty River Powers good intentions to produce more clean green electricity for this country from the proposed windfarm development but ultimately the decision resides with the Board to make the correct decision for the wishes of Palmerston North and it's citizens for the longterm future of the city and the Turitea Reserve.

End.