

Antony Mearns Stewart

Submission opposing Turitea Windfarm proposal

Your Honour, Members of the Board, good morning.

My name is Tony Stewart. My wife and I are residents in Kahuterawa Valley.

OUR HISTORY IN THE KAHUTERAWA VALLEY

1. We have owned our lifestyle block since 1973 – 36 years. With few exceptions, we have owned land and lived in the valley the longest.
2. I am a direct descendent to the second mayor of Palmerston North, Mr James Linton, who arrived in Palmerston North in 1871. I am conscious of my heritage, and feel a huge tie to the Kahuterawa Valley.
3. Our three children were raised in the Valley and attended the local school (Tiritea School) at a time when it was near closure due to lack of students. “Lifestyle people” such as us, helped save the school and today it has a role of approx 150.
4. We (our family) as residents of the Kahuterawa Valley, feel an affinity to the land, and we love where we live. We have a wide view of the greater Manawatu and the central North Island mountains and never cease to appreciate it.

Others may not feel this way and forego this for money – we feel sorry for those who have.

5. Being country people (living in a rural area rather than the city) still engenders the old-fashioned concept that we look out for our neighbours, and help each other. We learn new skills from others and socialise with the community, which reinforces strong bonds. This is unfortunately becoming more rare in urban areas.

It is with huge sorrow that people we have known for years have shifted their allegiance to MRP and have a different outlook. This has created a lack of trust and we have become careful and guarded when talking with them. I place responsibility for this at the door of MRP, and sheer greed.

ABOUT MYSELF

My work experience is varied, but the majority is Rural Fire Control and Building Fire Compliance and Safety. Having attended many rural fires throughout New Zealand I have a greater understanding of fire behaviour than most people.

As a past expert in rural fire control for the New Zealand Forest Service and the Department of Conservation (North Island Fire Officer), I am concerned with the fire risk, especially in the Council-owned Water Reserve where turbines may be sited. I do not see any evidence of a Fire Plan for the area? Will all vehicles entering the reserve be carrying fire equipment and will staff have adequate training in fire control? I do not believe MRP have even thought of this?

Other fire experience is Building fire protection and safety, which I am currently employed in. A large part of my daily work is testing and monitoring of fire alarms, their sound levels both maximum and minimum. We carry DB meters at all times (shown) and are constantly checking to ensure that required standards are being met.

I work on a daily basis with a sound testing decibel meter and appreciate both the high and low ends of total sound.

What, you might ask, has this to do with this hearing?

COMMENTS ON ISSUES OF PARTICULAR CONCERN

Impact of fire and/or noise travelling on slopes

Fire travels on a slope uphill during daylight hours, but this feature reverses at night due to cooling effects of the land. This condition of "rollback" has occurred frequently and also applies to **noise** on a slope, with help from inversion layers. This is discussed in the testimony of P H Guldborg, Docket 7156, page 15, lines 22-24 and page 16, lines 1-10. I will read this to you....

As an expert in rural fire, there is a change in fire behaviour between day and night on a slope. Daytime conditions allow a fire to travel up a slope, night time conditions are just *the opposite*.

Sound is the same, and therefore this situation will apply to residents in the Kahuterawa Valley where residences are lower in altitude a.s.l. than the projected WTG. At night sound will travel *down hill* during inversion conditions and residents will suffer an intolerable situation of perpetual background noise.

If you have night time conditions, with noise travelling downhill (most of us are well below the proposed WTG site), and the background levels are 5-10 DB, then the turbines will be oppressive even at the 40 DB maximum. It is not an option to close your doors and windows, particularly on a warm night, to try and minimise the sound of WTG.

After reading Peter H. Guldberg's docket 7156, I find MRPs acoustic "experts" wanting. A copy is attached for the Board.

Over many years we can say from experience that the Kahuterawa Valley definitely amplifies sound by the nature of its terrain. The hills are formed like a "megaphone" and channel sound downhill. It is possible to hear machinery many kilometres away, and also to hear music clearly at night from quite some distance away.

Kahuterawa Road

I am very concerned about Kahuterawa Road. It was never intended as a main supply route to a wind farm. In the early days we knew everyone who drove up and down the valley – the road was only tarsealed half way up. Today we share the road with horses, walkers, cyclists, runners (I have run this Valley for the last 35 years) and visiting family groups. Why should we have to share the road with heavy trucks – up to 50 truck movements a day?! On a daily basis, when driving up and down the Valley, I am always aware of the care that must be taken for the safety of recreational road users. Are there any guarantees for their safety IF MRP came into town?

Turitea water reserve

The vegetation through the Water Reserve is an important feature of that area. It evolved over many thousands of years and must not be destroyed either by fire/flood or soil erosion. I have a qualification in Landscape Management from Massey University and I fully understand the ramifications of "tinkering" with nature. I consider placing the

landscape at risk for short-term gain as a massive gamble. This city's water supply could be the casualty and I do not envy having to explain why there is polluted or no water in the taps.

Process and fairness

- (i) Why are we speaking to this when MRP have moved the goal posts? By this I mean we are being disadvantaged by a change in midstream by MRP. After three years in planning, can't they get it right? WRONG!!!
- (ii) Long after the dust has settled and all the MRP "experts" have moved on to another job, we will still be here – living and loving our relationship with the landscape.
- (iii) I consider that this hearing should be adjourned and allow MRP to get their act together, settle on their final proposal or even better, leave town.
- (iv) Why are those submissions supporting MRP following those that opposed? The original instructions placed these people as being before those who opposed.
- (v) Consultation by MRP has been almost non-existent. As residents directly affected by their proposed project, we have not seen anyone. Some approach however brief would have been of benefit – we have had to rely on the media to gauge some idea as to what is happening. As a taxpayer who is "funding" MRP, I am not impressed. In the future I would hope there will be some improvement in MRP delivery of information to those who are directly affected, whether the public support them or not.

Pride in the Manawatu

Palmerston North is often the butt of poor jokes in the media and by visitors, as a city that is "boring". We have had first-hand experience of derogatory opinions of the blot on the landscape that the turbines have created and how the Ranges behind Palmerston North have been "disfigured into an industrial landscape". To continue to install a higgledy-piggledy assortment of turbines is a disgrace and detracts from the beauty of the Ranges and the countryside of the Manawatu.

We do not have a lake like Taupo, geysers like Rotorua, a beach or harbour to distinguish us. To count on wind turbines as a distinguishing feature is a parody.

We DO have the Kahuterawa Valley and the Sledge Track to attract trampers, walkers, runners, mountain bikers, and family recreation.

Please help to keep Manawatu's heritage and this Valley the beautiful place that it is.

Thank you, Your Honour, and Board members, for the opportunity to give my thoughts.

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Att. Copy of document by Peter H Guldberg