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PERSONAL SUBMISSION

To the Board of Inquiry

Re: Turitea Wind Farm

on behalf of Leigh and Gary Dome.

516 Turitea Road, Palmerston North.

Good afternoon Your Honour and commissioners.

1. You are already familiar with our residence at 516 Turitea Road and aware of our personal worries regarding the Turitea Wind Farm and its potential threats to our everyday and quite possibly every night lives.
2. You are aware of the proximity of proposed turbines to our home and the inherent concerns they raise in our minds – with respect to noise and visual amenity.
3. The many submitters in opposition to the Turitea Wind Farm proposal that appear before and after me will voice similar concerns to us and that is because we share similar lifestyle values and identify closely with the land we live on and that provides the backdrop to our daily lives.
4. To avoid repeating myself to the Board, and to give you fresh personal insight, I would like to give you a slightly different perspective and let you walk in the shoes of an adversely affected party – me.
5. I say adversely affected (not **potentially** adversely affected) because the Turitea Wind Farm proposal has dramatically altered the way I have lived my life in the past year and to a lesser extent for the past three years.
6. I am not looking for sympathy would like you to appreciate the sense of vulnerability and helplessness we have felt throughout this consent process. The Mighty Power versus the little people – if you will.

7. As you know I personally, have spent many days attending this Hearing and countless hours reading the extensive evidence and submissions prepared by all parties for your consideration.
8. I embarked on this huge undertaking with one thought in mind – Quite simply, I never wanted to lie in bed at night, kept awake by the thrumming of nearby turbines thinking ... I wish I had done more to stop this.
9. I have made this time commitment at the expense of my business and my leisure time - it has been a fascinating and sometimes frustrating experience. None the less, I'm pleased I have been able to participate in the process.
10. People who support this huge project may label me a self serving NIMBY but as the turbines most likely to affect our home are planned for what is effectively our front yard – it would be more accurate to call me a NIMFY.
11. This particular NIMFY is happy to be vocal when it comes to protecting our patch. The place we call home, our haven, our retreat (yes, even on windy days).
12. It is the place we cherish for its views modified or not, borrowed or not. We love its serenity and its sense of community – all the values that are threatened by the proposal here in front of us.
13. Lifestyle block owners have been criticised for “playing on our land”. Let's look at some definitions here from the Oxford Dictionary:

Lifestyle *n.* way of life of a person or group.

Play *v.* Amuse oneself, enjoy oneself, frolic, have fun.

If we are to take this criticism literally, we are guilty as charged.
14. If we, and many others, had remained silent, apparently the Applicant would have happily built three turbines on Bryant Hill within 800 metres of my and my neighbours' homes.
15. Was that a test of our awareness and the strength of our opposition? Did the planners not realise how many residences existed in the vicinity? Or was it an arrogant show of indifference?

Regardless of the intention, the ‘sacrificial lambs’ were removed “as a response to residents’ concerns” – in other words a public relations mission accomplished.

16. Is it any wonder we, the adversely affected parties, have become somewhat cynical and suspicious??
17. As a result of the time (unpaid I might add) I have invested, I regard myself as well informed when it comes to this project and its effects not only on my home and my neighbourhood, but also on my community.
18. We have all sat here for hours listening to well paid experts - many of whom are imported from other cities or countries, with little understanding of our community, some of whom could not correctly pronounce local place names. They have told us what we as residents, should or could tolerate or find acceptable.
19. Having witnessed many of these experts present their evidence, I have come to the somewhat cynical assumption that some take a "if you can't convince them, confuse them" position.
20. I think I'm a reasonably well informed and not particularly stupid lay person but even I cannot comprehend the intricacies of noise evidence. With all respect to the Board, I certainly hope you can.
21. How are we, as the people who would have to live with these turbines, to understand what possible noise effects, we will be subject to??
22. We are expected to accept the NZS 6808 Noise standard will protect us but as has been proven recently with Te Rere Hau and Makara wind farms – we cannot rely on acoustic experts, their predicted noise levels or the compliance to conditions. Where is the protection for the people once the power company propaganda road show leaves town??
23. I don't know what the difference between 35 dBA and 40 dBA sounds like but I know how good tranquillity sounds – and I like it!
24. We have regularly resorted to using the applicant's photomontages to help inform other residents and visitors alike, of the visual effects of this extensive proposal. They have been, without exception gobsmacked. Whether they live locally in Hokowhitu or Highbury, Ashhurst or Linton - they are entitled to know the enormity of this project. It makes me wonder how many people in this city are similarly unaware – many thousands I would suppose. And should it be my responsibility to inform the community?

25. Had this proposal been more effectively publicised, I'm sure the number of submissions would have far exceeded 702 and this Board of Inquiry would be listening to personal submissions until Christmas (that could still happen!)
26. I have been grateful that certain experts have supported our concerns but aghast that professionals in the same fields of expertise can present such diverse findings when faced with the same scenarios.
27. Again with respect to the Board, I hope you can successfully sort the wheat from the chaff.
28. We, the present and future generations of Palmerston North are relying on this Board to make the right decision to protect, not only our city's already tenuous reputation, but more importantly our highly valued lifestyles and our precious landscape.
29. Our future is in your hands.

Thank you.

3 September 2009