



# It's back ...

Hello Everyone,

As many are aware, Winterbourne Wind have finally dropped their Amendment Report, as part of the Response to Submissions, after over 18 months and 5 extensions.

We have gone through the (over 2800+ paged) documentation, and we have a summary of concerns below.

For more detail, we will compile a more lengthy comment on our website over the coming days (see over for a link to these comments).

All relevant documents are at >  
[www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/projects/winterbourne-wind-farm](http://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/projects/winterbourne-wind-farm)



## Have your say

We encourage all residents of Walcha to make a submission to the amended Winterbourne Wind project - if you have not done this already, please set aside some time to do so.

**The Submission period is from Tuesday 8th October until Monday 4th November**

To have your say on this document, you must log in through the NSW Planning Portal **BEFORE Monday 4th November**.

You will need to log in or create a user account in order to make a submission - just follow the prompts (see QR link >)



A *useful tip* is to write your submission before hand, and upload that file.

If you need help, please reach out to [us@voiceforwalcha.com](mailto:us@voiceforwalcha.com).

**We want to help our community ensure that all concerns with the project are heard by NSW Planning and the developer, so that if the project proceeds, its negative impacts are minimised.**

## Our finding *thus far* ...

### The project is too big

1. **Construction period has been extended from 30 months to 52 months.**

Increased impact **on other local businesses.**

Increased impact **on tourism.**

Increased impact **on community.**

2. **Workforce of 390** during construction period.

Winterbourne Wind aim to source 1/3 of this from Walcha/Uralla (“aspirational target”).

*Where will local businesses and Walcha Council get workforce and tradespeople from?*

**Impact on locals' access** to services and trades.

**Increased pressure on short and long-term accommodation.**

This will lead to an increase in rental prices and displacement of local renters. It will also impact local tourism, and accommodation availability for events and visitors to Walcha.

3. **1655 over-size over-mass vehicles and their escorts to travel down Thunderbolts Way from Uralla and out to the project over 20 months (peak construction).**

Thunderbolts Way and the local roads do not have approval for use by these vehicles, as noted in the Winterbourne document. Approval from relevant authority *is still required*.

**Pavement design is not adequate for these types of vehicles.**

This will result in Thunderbolts way being in constant state of disrepair and maintenance. Will the safety of commuters on this road, **including school children** be compromised? These vehicles will be travelling through Walcha – via Derby St and Jamieson St – **what are the safety and amenity impacts?**

These OSOM vehicles will **be travelling to Walcha 'before and after school bus time'**. This may coincide with peak traffic on Thunderbolt's Way. The amendment report talks about how the OSOM vehicles will slow for buses and school children on bikes and at bus stops and use CB radios to communicate with bus drivers!

**Where will the empty OSOM vehicles be travelling upon on their return journey?** These movements could potentially impact other major arterial roads in our local area.

4. **Source of Resources (gravel and water)**

**is still not known.** It is still unknown what construction material will be able to be sourced from the onsite gravel and the suitability of the water is still unknown.

If the proposed amount of gravel and water can not be sourced, as hoped by Winterbourne Wind, there will be significantly more heavy vehicles on the road that have not been included in the Traffic Impact Assessment.

800MegaLitres of water is going to be required and potentially sourced locally. **Do we know the impact on shallow water tables to local neighbours?**

5. **Cumulative Impact – the date for commencement of construction has been pushed back to the end of 2026 and construction will continue for 52 months.**

Construction is likely to coincide with up to 10 projects around Armidale and Tamworth. **What will be the cumulative impact on roads and the drain on the workforce?**

What will be the **social impacts** of the influx of workers to the region?

**Winterbourne still have not considered Ruby Hills** in their Cumulative Impact Assessment.

## The Project is in the wrong spot

1. The closest turbine is approximately **6km from the Walcha township**. Projects should be at least 10km from Walcha, as proposed in the Planning Departments Draft Guidelines.
2. **Access to the project for construction vehicles is going to severely impact** the local businesses and community of Walcha.
3. **Biodiversity Impacts are still at an unacceptable level** as a result of the location of the project in an extremely sensitive area adjacent to the World Heritage Area, Oxley Wild Rivers National Park and Wilderness areas.
4. Vehicle access to the project is via 31 intersections with the Walcha local road network. **10 of these intersections do not have the required sight distances** (ie. They are not safe).
5. Light project traffic will be coming through the middle of town via Fitzroy St and Derby St potentially endangering pedestrians and local traffic.
6. **Unacceptable risks** to road users in the project area including school buses.

## The Developers do not have the support of the Community

1. **Engagement by Winterbourne Wind has been ineffective and the wider community have not been made aware of the changes made to the project.** To date, they have not addressed the community regarding the Response to Submissions despite 74% of Walcha LGA objections to the original EIS.
2. **There is still no decommissioning plan or bond. Winterbourne will self-assess and put together a decommissioning plan 5 years before the project will need to be decommissioned.** This leaves the landholders and the community at risk of abandoned wind turbines at the end of the project life.

## Trust placed in the hands of an untrustworthy organisation.

1. Many of the mitigating features of the project rely on the **self regulation of activities by Winterbourne Wind**. This would be adequate if there was a prior demonstration of professionalism, respect for community, and ability to adhere to rules and regulations.
2. The Community Benefit Fund (VPA) **operational payments don't start until the project is 'fully commissioned'**. They can progressively commissioning turbines and have the option of building the project in stages, so it could be many years before the community sees any money beyond the first payment, and certainly not before 2030.
3. On numerous occasions, Winterbourne Wind have shown a **complete disregard for rules**, or an inability to adhere to them;
  - 5 extensions requested by WW for the Response to Submission, **but not one of the requests were put in writing**, by 14 days prior to deadline, as explicitly required by the NSW DPIE
  - **Requests for information** by community members during the response to submission period **have not been answered**.
  - Information in the EIS, as well as the Response to Submission, has been shown to be missing, misleading, or clumsily written. Copy and pasting (for example), has led to reference to the "solar project" etc, etc.
  - *On and on ...*
4. Many of these mitigating factors of the project, that are to be **self regulated by the proponent, relate to safety of community members on the road, as well as dealing with decommissioning obligations**. They also relate to the safe and responsible care of valuable biodiversity in the region during construction.

If an organisation is unable to properly deal with these requirements **BEFORE determination**, they will be even less motivated to deal with them properly **AFTER approval**.

**!! IMPORTANT !!**

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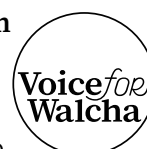
### NSW Planning Portal

All relevant documents can be found here, plus this is where you can make a submission. Just follow the prompts.



### VfW Summary Information

We will be continuing to update this page as more information comes to hand.



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