



Mrs L Bennett

Your ref #129

12 September 2011

The Hon Brian Ellis MLC  
Chair, Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs  
Parliament House  
PERTH WA 6000

Dear Sir,

**Petition No 129 – Lack of Reticulated Electricity to Remote Communities such as Windy Harbour**

Thank you for your letter of 23 August 2011 inviting a written submission regarding the above petition that was tabled in the Legislative Council by the Hon Robyn McSweeney MLC on 18 August 2011.

My husband and I have owned a lease at Windy Harbour for over 30 years, living there for the last 16 years. The reason I am seeking power at Windy Harbour is for the same reason other residents in the State want power. My husband is 83 years old and I am 76 and we find it very hard to cope with generators and batteries etc. We would like to be like other residents elsewhere and just be able to flick a switch.

As you can tell, power at Windy Harbour is a matter close to my heart and that of the other 219 leasehold properties located at Windy Harbour. I have been labouring over this injustice for nearly 20 years. A chronology of events until 2003 is attached. Since that time applications for Royalties for Regions funding through the South West Development Commission have been unsuccessful.

ATTACHMENT

Power is considered a basic requisite for any civilised community. The lack of reticulate power at semi-remote communities in Western Australia is unjustified in this time of great State prosperity.

Windy Harbour is located in the South West between Augusta and Walpole. There are 219 leasehold properties, professional fisherman leasehold properties, a caretaker, a nature based camping ground, a public hall, public oval, playground, boat launching ramp, telephone, Sea Rescue and Bushfire Brigade. State Government agencies also choose to conveniently use the Windy Harbour settlement to service visitors to DEC's Pt D'Entrecasteaux lookout and Salmon Beach tourist attractions for waste, toilets, water and emergency assistance. In addition, all leases at Windy Harbour are endorsed by the Minister for Lands. Windy

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Harbour is therefore a significant developed settlement formally recognised by the State, not some obscure itinerant campsite and in this day and age could hardly be considered remote being serviced by a sealed bitumen road and yet it has no reticulated power.

The existing South West Interconnecting grid only extends 8.7 km's south of Northcliffe, being 19.1 km's short of Windy Harbour.

In 2003 the cost of installing reticulated power underground along the road reserve to the edge of the settlement was estimated to be \$2.4m and reticulation of the power throughout the settlement was estimated to be \$0.6m. At a projected cost escalation of 10%pa, the cost in 2010 was estimated to be \$4.6m and \$1.3m respectively.

If the State provided power to the edge of the settlement and the 219 leaseholders were required to meet the reticulation costs throughout the settlement, this would equate to approximately \$6,000 per leaseholder which is both significant and equitable compared to the per lot cost of power for a normal urban subdivision.

A petition was tabled in the lower house of State Parliament last year but I am yet to receive any response and fear the matter has simply been ignored.

The discrimination against remote residents in this State is unjustified and whilst it may be argued on economic rationalist grounds, it does not stand scrutiny in terms of equity and fairness. Perth residents and many other semi remote places in Western Australia have been provided with reticulated power without the local community (including holiday communities such as Denham, Peaceful Bay and Bremer Bay) having to meet the cost of establishing the service.

The connection of Windy Harbour settlement to the South West Interconnecting grid would also create a wonderful opportunity, allowing surplus renewable wind generated power to be returned to the grid. It stands to reason that "Windy Harbour" should be an appropriate place to generate wind power.

In closing, I request the Standing Committee investigate the State's reticulated power policy that discriminates against small semi-remote communities and review the merits of reintroducing Community Service Obligations that provided equitable treatment of Western Australian in the past no matter where they lived.

I have not been to the Ombudsman as this is a matter of Policy.

I am available and willing to address the Committee in person should the opportunity exist. I can be contacted on 9776 8379.

Yours sincerely,

*Lynne Ann Bennett*

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**Attachment 12.8.4 (1)****WINDY HARBOUR POWER - CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS**

- March 1985 The Shire of Manjimup submitted 56 recommendations to the Shannon/d'Entrecasteaux Planning Group.
- 21 May 1985 State Energy Commission (SEC) was approached by the Windy Harbour Board of Control about connection of a power supply to Windy Harbour.
- 11 June 1985 SEC informed the Board of the cost of connection. The Board then sent out a newsletter to leaseholders.
- 8 July 1986 SEC Officers and CALM Officers did a site inspection to determine a preferred route for the power line. Then to await CALM's approval. The cost of establishing power from SEC was unacceptable by both the Shire of Manjimup and HD Evans' point of view.
- 16 February 1987 A letter from T Coulter, Chief Manager Electricity Supply informing the Shire it will commence work on the line to Windy Harbour as soon as a contribution of \$104,500 is forwarded.
- March 1987 A newsletter was sent out to leaseholders in March 1987, a minimum of 100 leaseholder details was required by SEC to guarantee fees for the connection that would be paid by leaseholders.
- 14 July 1987 SEC received 170 leaseholders details.
- 18 December 1987 SEC informed the Shire that the EPA needed to do an appraisal of the route. The appraisal would postpone the power line for about 12 months. CALM responded negatively to the proposed power line going through a National Park. SEC informs the Shire that once The Public Environmental Report is submitted and the EPA has approved path, the commencement date should be around early 1989.
- 26 September 1988 EPA rejects proposal of power lines because of impact on d'Entrecasteaux National Park.
- October 1988 Other avenues looked at by Council and Council seek support from SEC with regards to wind driven power installation.
- 21 September 1988 Letter from Northcliffe Progress Association condemning the use of a diesel power being established in the National Park.
- 15 November 1988 SECWA then decides to do another engineer study to determine a load profile and other technical aspects of installing diesel generation plant.

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Peter Shropshall, Acting Manager, Electricity Supply from SECWA requested a meeting with Dr O'Brien to discuss the tentative schedule for the environmental study for the proposed power supply to Windy Harbour. SECWA's problem is that they wouldn't commit to going ahead until environment assessment and the EPA approval had been finalised.

Letter to Dr Geoff Gallop from Shire President G Walter outlining the need for power at Windy Harbour and giving no sympathy to Government or SECWA for crying poverty. He outlined that the people of Windy Harbour were prepared to accept increase of 300% to get power connected by SECWA.

17 July 1991

SECWA writes to M Rigoll with regard to meeting with Dr O'Brien. SECWA informed the Shire that they were not prepared to proceed as proponents to the EPA.

Dr O'Brien writes to P Shropshall to give him 2 options:

1. Process previous recommendation and submit to the EPA.
2. Wrap up what has been to date and file.

26 July 1991

Shire writes to P Shropshall expressing its disappointment that SECWA would not place the proposal before the EPA to seek a decision from that Authority.

13 September 1991

SECWA write to the Shire information M Rigoll that SECWA have now decided to proceed to complete the environment study and submit an application to the EPA for the Windy Harbour line extension. This does not, however, commit SECWA to proceed with the construction of the line should approval be granted.

22 January 1992

The Shire of Manjimup had signed the 'Heads of Agreement' and forwarded it to SECWA. Cheque of \$4,400.00 for first payment is sent to Drs B & A O'Brien requesting they commence work on the project as per the 'Head of Agreement' signed between SECWA and the Shire.

26 May 1992

EPA will not proceed with an environment assessment without SECWA approval. SECWA again considered the economic viability of the project and advises their position has not changed. They suggest that Dr O'Brien consultancy be finalised 30 June 1992.

16 July 1992

Dr O'Brien informs the Shire that SECWA has made an executive decision not to proceed with new environment assessment.

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- 14 October 1999 Budget estimates provided by Western Power.
- 19 October 1999 Letter from Shire Planner to Western Power requesting Windy Harbour power be considered at same time as upgrade to Northcliffe power.
- 26 November 1999 Letter from CEO to Paul Omodei, MLA seeking funding assistance.
- 26 November 1999 Letter from Shire Planner to Telstra seeking their indication if would comment.
- 26 November 1999 Letter from Shire Planner to Transport seeking indication if Government agencies (such as Transport, CALM etc) would contribute and utilise survey.
- 26 November 1999 Letter from Shire Planner to CALM seeking indication of use service and contribution to cost. Also seeking comment on location of underground cables within the Reserve.
- 26 November 1999 Letter from Shire Planner to Shellbay Holdings seeking indication if likely to use service and contribute towards cost of connection.
- 26 November 1999 Letter from Shire Planner to Western Power seeking advice on:
- Assistance for detailed design and costing.
  - List of suitably qualified contractors for design and costing.
  - Works Western Power would allow Council to perform.
- 3 December 1999 Letter from Telstra to Shire Planner. May contribute depending how cost compares with continuation of solar facility.
- 17 December 1999 Letter from CALM to CEO indicating no need for power and not willing to contribute to cost.
- Prefer burying cable in gravel shoulder.
  - CALM would require formal environmental review on impact on the National Park and wetlands including:
    - (a) Rare flora survey
    - (b) Landscape impacts
    - (c) Management issues
- 24 January 2000 Meeting Western Power, CEO and Shire President
- Cannot hook onto southern spur.
  - Overhead power will not be considered by Western Power.
  - Aerial bundled cables not an option due to cost.
  - Suggest trenches in road reserve 750 mm deep and with orange PVC warning slabs.
  - Shire could do clearing, trenching and reinstatement.

- 14 November 2000 Fax WA Solar to Director Corporate. Information available for \$15,600.
- 17 November 2000 Letter from Director Corporate to WA Solar indicating will progress questionnaire without confirmation of costings.
- 19 December 2000 Letter from Director Corporate to Twintech confirming details of quote.
- 21 December 2000 Letter from CEO to all lessees outlining alternatives and enclosing questionnaire.
- 31 December 2000 CEO and Director Corporate presentation at Windy Harbour Advisory Committee AGM on alternatives and questionnaire.
- 31 January 2001 Submission lodged by the Shire to the SWDC for assistance in the Warren Blackwood Action Statement.
- 16 March 2001 Letter to the Hon J A McGinty MLA, Minister for the South West providing background and seeking State Government Financial Assistance. (Copy to the Hon E S Ripper MLA, Minister for Energy).
- 22 March 2001 Agenda item presented to Council outlining results from questionnaire and recommendation adopted by Council essentially to proceed with the design and environmental study and to defer construction until such time as the State Government provided some financial support.
- 31 May 2001 Letter to the Hon J A McGinty MLA seeking a response to the prior unanswered letter of the 16 March 2001. (Copy to the Hon E S Ripper MLA, Minister for Energy).
- 13 June 2001 – Letter from the Hon J A McGinty MLA stating "Currently there are no funds available to assist in the establishment of reticulated power at Windy Harbour". However, the Government does intend to establish a Regional Investment Fund for major capital works in regional areas. This may be a future source of funding for the project given the growing demand placed on the area by visitors and the requirements for emergency services provision". The SWDC to assist once RIF is established.
- 14 June 2001 Letter to all Windy Harbour leaseholders providing an update on progress regarding power and advising response from Hon J A McGinty.
- 3 October 2001 Letter to Western Power regarding several issues identified by Sinclair Knight Mertz from a preliminary route investigation.
- 6 November 2001 Article included in the Windy Harbour newsletter providing an update on progress regarding power.

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- 17 July 2002 Letter from Telstra indicating support for design function to be undertaken by Sinclair Knight Mertz to facilitate co-location of infrastructure.
- 31 July 2002 Group meeting with South West Development commission and representatives of Windy Harbour to develop employment outcomes likely to assist future Regional Investment Fund application.
- 15 August 2002 Meeting at the office of the South West Area Consultative Committee to consider funding for Windy Harbour power. Those present were:
- Commonwealth Government (Hon Geoff Prosser and SWACC staff)
  - State Government (SWDC staff)
  - Local Government (Shire of Manjimup staff)
  - Telstra
  - Western Power
  - Windy Harbour leaseholders representatives
- 30 August 2002 Shire Chief Executive Officer officially requests a revised quote from Western Power.
- 25 September 2002 Meeting with Don Punch, South West Development Commission, to consider alternative development options for Windy Harbour and in doing so address the power and other services shortcomings.
- 17 October 2002 Petition lodged by the Hon Paddy Embry "Asking that the Legislative Council communicate the wishes of the petitioners to the State Government and further calls on the State Government to work collaboratively with the Commonwealth Government and State Government Agencies to appropriate sufficient funds to ensure that the electricity is provided to the community of Windy Harbour and the large number of people who live and visit this area".
- 28 October 2002 Sinclair Knight Mertz engaged CALM to commence to undertake the necessary botanical (rare flora & fauna) study as part of the overall design specifications.
- 26 November 2002 Letter to Western Power lodging a formal complaint in respect of their failure to provide a quote for reticulated power to Windy Harbour. Requests for a quote were previously made on the 30 August, 20 September, 15 October and 22 October 2002.
- 10 December 2002 Request from the Legislative Council Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs – Petition Subcommittee seeking additional information from the Shire of Manjimup.
- 6 January 2002 Response to the Hon Christine Sharp MLC, Convenor Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs Petition Subcommittee.

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response to a residents concerns at lack of progress on provision of reticulated power to Windy Harbour.

3 August 2003

Copy of letter from the Hon Eric Ripper, Deputy Premier, Treasurer & Minister for Energy to Mr & Mrs L Bennett stating *"Given the comparatively low and seasonal demand for power in Windy Harbour, and the significant costs of building the infrastructure required to bring power from Northcliffe, Western Power is unable to justify the necessary expenditure in the context of other supply priorities in the State."* ....

*"As an alternative source of power, you may also wish to consider renewable energy as a means of meeting your household's requirements"....*

5 September 2003

Statement by the Hon Paul Omodei, Member for Warren Blackwood, to the State Assembly stating *"I implore the Government to consider the plight of people in the south west and to supply power to Windy Harbour."*

4 November 2003

Release of "Preliminary Environmental Impact Assessment for Windy Harbour Power Supply and Fibre Optic Cable" by Sinclair Knight Mertz.

11 December 2003

Report to Council on updated estimated project costs.

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