31 JAN 2011

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SHIRE OF KOJONUP					
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The Shire of Kojonup.

Dear Councillors,

Re: The Flat Rocks Wind Farm Proposal.

The proposed Flat Rocks Wind Farm may have long-term detrimental effects on the population of the Carnaby's Black Cockatoos (also known as the Short-billed White-tailed Black Cockatoo).
This species is deemed to be vulnerable to extinction and is listed as SCHEDULE 1 (Fauna that is Rare or likely to become Extinct).

"As little as 50 years ago, flocks of Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo were said to 'blacken the sky as flocks passed over head'. This is a sight we no longer see as numbers of Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo have more than halved in the last fifty years and continue to fall.
Only one chick is raised each year and the majority do not survive to the age of two. Already locally extinct in some areas, threats to nesting and feeding sites, persecution and competition for resources continue to push the species to its limit.
Over the last century the south western landscape has become increasingly fragmented and degraded. This has resulted in fewer nesting and feeding sites and as a direct result fewer chicks are surviving to breeding age and population numbers have declined by over half.
Many plant species are being wiped out by dieback (*Phytophthora cinnamoni*) and this is further reducing the abundance and quality of native food resources." *Birds Australia fact sheet.*

The problem will be the length of the fence of proposed wind turbines and its orientation which is directly across the annual migration path of Carnaby's Cockatoos. Pairs of Carnaby's migrate from the western coastal plain to this area and through this area to find suitable nesting hollows – a rare commodity nowadays with the reducing numbers of large hollow Wandoo. A number of primary nesting groups are found in this area, the most notable being the Wandoo woodland at Tunney.
Pairs migrating further inland will need to cross this ridgeline twice – the return trip with a newly fledged juvenile if they have nested successfully.
It should be noted that Carnaby's pair for life, hence if one partner is killed one important breeding pair is removed from the already depleted numbers.

An internet search on the pros & cons of Wind Farms revealed some worrying statistics from the pages of HealthLink.org – a commendable community health group in Massachusetts, U.S.A.
Though arguing for non-coal power generation their section on "Myths about bird collisions" actually reveals some disturbing facts from scientific studies.

"A bird will collide with a given wind machine about once every 8-15 years; higher incidences may occur in locations with large concentrations of waterfowl or in areas of high migration."

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This information does confirm that birds do occasionally die as a result of wind farms and the associated power lines.
Are there going to be kilometres of power lines stretching across the countryside from this Project, or will the lines be buried?
If these statistics can be applied to this Wind Farm it could be argued that from this paragraph that between 5 & 9 birds could be killed each year from the 74 turbines.
Even if one Carnaby's was killed per year it would have a significant impact on the breeding population.

Other vulnerable species in this area are the Forest Red-tailed Black Cockatoo and the Australasian Bittern.

I believe that power generation needs to be located close to the centres of highest energy use – closer to the coastlines or along the Darling Scarp overlooking Perth, with Solar being far more reliant than wind.

Thank you for considering my input into your decision making and the maintaining of community harmony.

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