



## YOUR LETTERS

### Hearing is not listening

I was in attendance at the open discussion last Monday evening about the TFI effluent ponds.

I would like to congratulate Ceri Johns and the other affected residents for their tireless persistence in seeking answers and demanding action.

My community and I are currently campaigning against the installation of a monopole at Northern Heights.

I know firsthand how difficult it is to maintain traction, to stay encouraged and try to succeed in a Goliath vs David battle whilst also keeping work commitments and living your 'usual' life.

While an NBN tower and a series of effluent ponds are two different developments, the themes are the same - the community raised concerns about the development and they opposed strongly, the council and the DAP approved the development regardless.

Based on what was voiced at the meeting it sounds like the community were told that their concerns about health risks, decreased property values and the perceived impacts on their scenic amenity were baseless.

All arguments I have heard too.

Yet the real stories, the actual experiences from the residents after the fact, are very different.

They feel sick (headaches, rashes, sore throats), they cannot sell (and so are trapped in the stench) and their lifestyles have been greatly impacted (they are unable to open up their houses, enjoy the outdoors, BBQs and Christmas).

To all the nay sayers, what do you say now?

But more importantly, what recourse do the affected residents now have?

Who is going to compensate them? And they should be compensated.

At the meeting TFI emphasised their ongoing commitment to fixing the problem, they championed the need for everyone to work together on finding a solution, requested that the community bear with them and acknowledged residents' experiences.

The focus on moving forward as a team to reach an odourless town seems admirable.

Everyone loves the idea of a united force conquering all but the past cannot be ignored.

At the end of this TFI will have honed a world-class system, they will be looked to by industry partners and competitors as ground breakers, companies will want to follow their trialed and tested systems.

What will the residents have to show for being taken involuntarily on this journey? For

being guinea pigs?

All they will have to refer to is months of stress and misery and, if the promises are true, clean air once more - something they should never have lost in the first place.

TFI stated several times that they cannot go back, which I concede is true, but we can all learn a lot from this debacle.

Wouldn't it be nice if resident's concerns regarding developments were actually heard, if council used their powers to instil true compromises and mutually beneficial approval conditions, that large scale developments with the potential to negatively impact were located away from homes, that councillors aligned themselves fully from the outset with the communities they are elected to represent.

If these things happened Murray Bridge would be a much fairer and nicer place to live.

Ceri and the others deserve the community's support and encouragement, what they are enduring and the actions they are taking will be of benefit to us all.

We will have them to thank for an odourless town once more.

Mel Horne,  
Murray Bridge.

### Wanting the same result

Last week over 100 Murray Bridge residents attended an informative community forum discussing the Thomas Foods International (TFI) effluent odour issue.

I was pleased to be approached by local residents to chair the forum, and all-in-all the forum was an open and honest discussion between TFI, the community and relevant government agencies.

I believe TFI provided an in-depth presentation informing the community of the measures currently being undertaken by the company to improve the current odour situation facing residents on Mannum Road.

I have been actively involved in the issue, meeting with and speaking with a number of residents, ongoing dialogue with the Environment Protection Authority and Rural City of Murray Bridge and numerous site visits to TFI and Pahl Farm since the issue was first raised in November 2012.

During the numerous meetings and correspondence with TFI, the company has informed me they have invested over \$500,000 to improve the current situation and reach promised odour levels.

All involved want to see a conclusion to this issue and are working together towards a better outcome.

I am committed to seeing an improvement in the conditions and will continue to work with TFI, the EPA, the council and the State Government to ensure this matter is finalised.

If anyone has any concerns, I urge them to make contact with the Hammond Electorate office and arrange a time to meet.

Adrian Pederick,  
Member for Hammond.

## No concerns over tower

In response to the concerns about mobile phone towers raised in your newspaper, international health authorities say there is no convincing scientific evidence of health risks, including cancer, for children or adults from living or working near a mobile phone base station.

The current World Health Organization (WHO) fact sheet on base stations and wireless networks says:

“Considering the very low exposure levels and research results collected to date, there is no convincing scientific evidence that the weak RF signals from base stations and wireless networks cause adverse health effects.”

A comprehensive review by the UK Health Protection Agency’s (HPA) independent advisory group on non-ionising radiation (AGNIR) found there was no evidence of adverse health effects from mobile signals below international safety standards:

“There are still limitations to the published research that preclude a definitive judgment, but the evidence overall has not demonstrated any adverse effects on human health from exposure to radiofrequency fields below internationally accepted guideline levels.”

Importantly, the HPA also warned people not to rely on the Internet on matters of health and safety:

“On many issues, including matters of health advice, people need to be discriminating and check that advice on the Internet is from a reliable source.”

The general lack of understanding in the community about how mobile phone technology operates and the complexity of the science involved, is why people should rely on the advice of independent health authorities such as the Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency (ARPANSA) who set the national safety standard.

ARPANSA are constantly evaluating the research in this area and have developed a range of fact sheets on electromagnetic energy (EME) to provide advice to the community.

The fact sheets can be viewed at: [www.arpansa.gov.au/eme/](http://www.arpansa.gov.au/eme/)

Chris Althaus, chief executive officer,  
Australian Mobile Telecommunications  
Association.

## Double talk over land, water

I would like to know why 67 out of 69 SA Legislative Council Members, the politicians who represent us, have recently voted against a bill to protect prime agricultural and cropping land, urban and conservation lands, from mining and unconventional gas companies.

Politicians, who represent we ordinary South Australians, believe it is okay for min-

ing and unconventional gas projects to occur in our prime farmland, our backyards and land already set aside to be protected for future generations.

They have chosen to sacrifice our state to these companies, the majority of which I believe are foreign owned.

If there is any short term financial gain, it is insignificant compared with keeping our sustainable, uncontaminated water resources intact, and having a clean, green food bowl, (which I understand the Premier, Minister Gago and others love to mention).

SA only has about 4 per cent of prime agricultural and cropping land. I understand that the Yorke Peninsula people are presently fighting an open cut mine that will leave 2000-3000 hectares of prime cropping land ruined forever. For what?

About 15 years supply of copper and iron ore. I believe that mining jobs account for about 2pc of the total workforce in Australia whilst agricultural jobs account for a much higher percentage.

I understand that Beach Energy and Ouro Preto Resources have the potential to contaminate the aquifer that supplies the Limestone Coast - town water supplies, farms, businesses, your place and mine. I don't believe you can de-contaminate an aquifer that has been contaminated (Look at what is happening in eastern Australian states and the USA).

It makes no sense to put our essential resources at any risk of contamination.

We as a community need to lobby our councils and politicians to protect our essential water and prime agricultural land.

Heather Gibbons,  
Robe.

## Vale Ivon Wardle

On Thursday, we learned of the passing of a legendary South Australian, former Liberal for Murray Ivon Wardle.

Ivon was a dedicated and hardworking Member of Parliament, representing the people of Murray for over nine years.

After leaving politics, his tireless work and dedication to aged care over the years became an inspiration to many.

Ivon became a Member of the Order of Australia for his service to the South

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Australian Parliament, to the community through the Uniting Church in Australia and to aged care - an award well deserved.

His passion, dedication and enthusiasm for the Murraylands was second to none and he will be greatly missed by many.

On behalf of the SA Liberal Party I extend our sincere condolences to his family and friends.

Adrian Pederick,  
Member for Hammond.