

SAVE CENTRAL



Acclaimed Artist and Poet to Advocate on Behalf of Heritage Backcountry Landscape

Early this week — either Monday 25 June or Tuesday depending on the Court schedule presided over by Judge Jon Jackson — artist Grahame Sydney and poet Brian Turner will give evidence on Meridian Energy’s Project Hayes. If given consent, the 176-turbine proposal will be the largest onshore wind farm in the world.

Internationally respected in their fields, Sydney and Turner embody in their art and views iconic Otago values of twilight, space and thought. Sydney was awarded the Order of New Zealand Merit for Services to Art in 2003, the same year in which Turner served the first of his two-year term as Te Mata Estate Poet Laureate. Their advocacy of the virtues of southern landscape have in recent years made them known well beyond their fields, with the Minister of Lands, Energy and Climate Change, David Parker, paradoxically pledging his support both for Project Hayes and protection of ‘Grahame Sydney landscapes’.



Hinterland III: Will David Parker protect this Grahame Sydney Landscape?

Sydney and Turner will in this case speak on behalf of backcountry New Zealand: the Rock-and-Pillar-Lammermoor upland, bisected by the historic Old Dunstan Road, which is the proposed site for the 176 turbines, 150 kilometres of new roading, five substations, carparks, laydown areas and transmission which collectively constitute Project Hayes. An estimated 1.82 million cubic metres of displaced soil is required, and Meridian plans a further 113 turbines at such stage as the State-Owned Enterprise has successfully influenced the Dunedin City Council to make its district plan more malleable. Project Hayes lies in near vicinity to TrustPower's Mahinerangi Wind Farm, which has similarly been estimated at 1.86 million cubic metres of cut soil, though the roading proposed is 37 kilometres, and the exact number of turbines has not yet been specified.

The poet and the painter belong to an umbrella environmental movement, Save Central. Save Central is committed to addressing the long-term energy interests of Otago-Southland and the wider South Island, in respect of threats posed not only by wind farms but also hydro, subdivision, tourism and agriculture. Proposed subdivision of 'Outstanding Landscape' in Poolburn presently also threatens the wildland character of Otago, as hydro on the Nevis River. Other members of Save Central include ex-All Black Captain and vocal environmentalist Anton Oliver and film producer, Jay Cassells. Oliver has been outspoken in his criticism of Meridian Energy's tactics in national media, in the *Sunday Star Times* calling the company a 'national disgrace'.

For more information on the court appearance of Grahame Sydney and Brian Turner, contact:

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