

**POWERING PERTH'S COMMUNITIES**  
**INTERVIEW WITH ASTRID HERLIHY**  
**29 JANUARY 2010**

**Interviewer:** Margot Hammond

**Interviewer** The first question is what is your experience with the Powering Perth's Communities Project or as it was, the Eastern Terminal Project?

**AH** I didn't go to that last meeting so I can't really comment on that.

**Interviewer** OK, but did you hear about it or read about it in the newspaper?

**AH** Well, I did see an ad and also I was sent some information and I think it was in the local papers. I have had a bit of experience with Western Power because they are trying to cut down the tree at the front of my place so I really created a big fuss and the tree was saved in the end. So I am probably not too popular with Western Power but I have, over the years, complained about the butchering of trees.

**Interviewer** How have you felt that this project, I guess in terms of what you have had to do with it, has impacted you? So how has it made you concerned as a community member?

**AH** Well, yes, I am very concerned. I did mention a few times that maybe we should have underground power because of the destruction of the environment but I was told that that wasn't possible because of the rocky environment in Kalamunda. Really, I mean, I am involved in so many projects, you know, environmental and then I am an animal rights activist actually as well so I don't really know. I didn't get too much involved because I thought this is just another project that's actually driven by population growth.

**Interviewer** What do you think Western Power has done well in terms of its community engagement around its projects?

**AH** Well, I think they did well with consulting the community. The problem is, are they actually going to listen to the community? As far as I am concerned it is also for not only kind of a face save process but it is also that they are really determined on doing this no matter what and if it doesn't happen here in Kalamunda, it is going to be somewhere else. And I just sort of feel I have actually brought the State of the Environment Report from 2007 as I say, well that's just an overview but it is a big thing so I don't know if you have read it but they had quite a bit on energy consumption and power consumption and the link in this to exponential population causes. And it was also brought up in this State of the Environment Report 2007 that we should be looking at other alternatives to electricity, that more sustainable energy issues but I think that with the growing population they still think they need coal fired power stations. Well, maybe it is good if you actually download from the Seven Thirty Report last night because it was all on energy and water because that is all linked to population growth.

**Interviewer** Yes, definitely. What do you think Western Power can do better in terms of the community engagement and, as you were just saying, that we go out but we don't really listen to the community?

**AH** I just find that they do go in boots and all sometimes and really what's happening is pretty much a foregone conclusion, you know, it is just a matter of where we are actually going to put some infrastructure for more power lines.

**Interviewer** What factors do you think we need to consider moving forward with this project?

**AH** Well, the environment, that's still really the biggest issue. That the pollution caused by energy consumption and energy release so that's my

main concern and the clearing of land (that comes under environment) for more power stations so that's really my biggest issue, land clearing.

**Interviewer** OK. As a community member we are just working out how much involvement you would like to have with Western Power particularly as these projects move on and get bigger, how involved you would like to be. We have got five different levels. You can be informed - be informed about the project with balanced and objective information to assist you in understanding the problem, project options and solution; consulted – be informed, listened to and your concerns acknowledged and be provided feedback on how public input influenced the decision; involved – worked with directly throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered; collaborated – partner with Western Power on each aspect of the decision including the development of options and identification of the preferred solution or empowered – to have the final decision placed in the hands of the community.

**AH** Well certainly the last one, well certainly be a bit of all of them, but certainly the last one. I think people are pretty cheesed off because there hasn't been enough transparency really.

**Interviewer** Yes, excellent. Who else do you think we need to talk to in the community, like other community groups or environmental groups?

**AH** Environmental groups, absolutely. I am a member of the WA Conservation Group and co-groups and environment and so that's a real big issue with the Conservation Foundation, the WA Conservation Group, and they are really concerned about... and so I think all the environmental groups are really important. I know there is a bushland preservation group. I am not a member of the group but I know they raised their concerns with land clearing.

**Interviewer** So do think if we worked with the environmental groups and got an outcome that they were happy with and worked with them to actually find them a solution, do you think that's the way?

**AH** I have the perfect solution of course and that's to stabilise the population of Perth because if you double the population which is apparently inevitable, you need more power. I mean, it has to come from somewhere, you know, so I mean, I know people blame Western Power but really they are just a tool, they are just another tool in the whole process and so what I want is stabilise the population of Perth so we don't need more land clearing for more power stations and so on, so that's my concern. A friend got in touch with me some years ago and she said: do something about it, they are going to clear this land in Holmes Road, apparently there was a proposed...

**Interviewer** In which road?

**AH** Holmes Road in Kalamunda. There was a sign on the left hand side that they were thinking of putting a substation there. I don't drive past there too much but this person was concerned and I said why don't you do something, why do people ring me all the time? But they were supposed to be putting in a substation for Western Power and I don't know what happened about this project.

**Interviewer** I can find out...

I guess we have already covered this, but what is really important to you as a community member?

**AH** What is important to me is that we have an ecologically sustainable population which we clearly don't and that more deliberation is taken with population growth and perhaps Western Power could actually tell the State Government that we can't increase our population. There is something about Dick Smith – he asks is it time for a new political party about Australia's rapid population growth. He's actually launching a book in Sydney, *Overloading Australia* on Monday by Mark O'Connor and he is saying in there that he is very concerned about our ecologically unsustainable population or and also social issues. We just had a meeting with the Sustainable Population

Australia – it's a WA branch and I got a copy of this given to me and so maybe you could want to follow this up.

**Interviewer** OK. What do you think about substations and transmission lines?

**AH** Well, I used to belong to a group years ago about transmission lines and the cancer issue.

**Interviewer** Oh, yes, the electromagnetic fields.

**AH** Yes, and we actually did some tests there at night of the magnetic fields and it was a big worry and one of the people, (community member's name has been removed for privacy)...

**Interviewer** I know (community member).

**AH** And she then subsequently got on to the Kalamunda Shire Council because of this issue because she was concerned. Apparently the power line is...

**Interviewer** Near her house. Yes.

**AH** Yes, she lives in Forrestfield but they call it now Maida Vale. She preferred to live in Maida Vale because the land is more expensive in Maida Vale. So the Council there decided to make the property in Minor Way Forrestfield in the end. But she lives in the same place still, but the power lines are in her front. I knew that she was very concerned about the health aspects and there was also, in Forrestfield then, Hawtin Road and they were concerned about the power lines as well. That was years ago. Certainly the health aspects of power lines are a big concern.

**Interviewer** That's really a good point.

And the last one is really what you think about Western Power. So basically you can strongly agree; agree; partly agree; partly disagree; disagree or strongly disagree. Western Power provides reliable power supply in your area?

**AH** Well, yes, they are pretty good because someone opposite me complained two weeks ago about sparks coming from the power lines and they came within a few hours and actually repaired that and asked me if I had any power disruption. I said I hadn't used power since 6.00 that morning and I think it was 9.00 o'clock when they came and I said I didn't even know about it but obviously the neighbours opposite saw the sparks. So that was alright by me. And years ago I had fallen power lines in my front yard and I, of course, didn't have any power then. I only saw it at night actually, I didn't have any power and I rang them and they did come in the morning and fixed the power lines. So I think that's alright by me. I am just concerned about the increasing consumption of power and I just think a lot more notice should be taken of alternatives.

**Interviewer** Renewable energy.

**AH** Yes.

**Interviewer** Do you think Western Power communicates openly with the community and stakeholders about new infrastructure projects, so about new transmission lines and sub-stations?

**AH** Oh, I don't think so, no.

**Interviewer** No, probably 'disagree'.

Western Power listens and responds to the views of the communities about its projects?

**AH** Well, maybe partly (laughter).

**Interviewer** Western Power is committed to minimising the environmental impacts of its activities?

**AH** Oh, no, no, I don't agree with that one.

**Interviewer** 'Strongly disagree'?

**AH** Oh, yes, 'strongly disagree'.

**Interviewer** And Western Power is committed to minimising any detrimental impacts of its infrastructure on the local community?

**AH** Minimising is the key word isn't it? I couldn't really comment much on that one. Maybe I could say 'partly agree'.

**Interviewer** That's all the questions I have. Is there anything else you wanted to...? I have obviously got your concerns about the population control and the environmental aspects and particularly the health in terms of EMF, is there anything else you wanted to share like in terms of moving forward for this project?

**AH** Yes, I do have concerns in this community about butchering I call it. I think there is a substation at Midland. Is there a substation there?

**Interviewer** Yes, there is one there.

**AH** Next to the carpark there.

**Interviewer** Oh, yes, there is.

**AH** Because I actually took photos and sent them to Western Power at the time. I just happened to go to Midland and I just saw, to my horror, that they were cutting down all these beautiful trees and they were

absolutely butchering these trees, they were cutting everything down and I confronted one of the people there and I don't know what he said – but they had to cut them down because they were dangerous or whatever. They can give you a million excuses from termite to little trees or the branches as happens in Gosnells at the moment. But I did take a lot of photos at the time and I did send them to Western Power and I said I think it is absolutely appalling how you cut down these trees and I am sure they could have been saved by just removing some branches but they just went in boots and all. So, I have had a few detrimental experiences should I call them, with Western Power when it was called SECWA but they were all on environmental issues. But as I said before, we wouldn't be sitting here if we had stabilisation of our population instead of going to double the population of WA and naturally the whole of Australia. Kevin Rudd is saying we need a big Australia. I want a big Australia but not a big Australia with more people. I want a big Australia with more trees and more protection of the environment. That's all I am interested in, but do try to get the Seven Thirty Report downloaded because I think that's very important.

**Interviewer** Excellent, thank you so much for your time.

**POWERING PERTH'S COMMUNITIES**  
**INTERVIEW WITH TRISTAN AND SONJA NOTTLE**  
**30 JANUARY 2010**

**Interviewer:** Rita Sully

**Interviewer** What is your experience with the Powering Perth's Communities Project or the previous Eastern Terminal Project?

**TN** From the beginning?

**SN** Is that late 2007?

**Interviewer** Yes – well, as far back as you can remember because this has got quite a history (laughter).

**SN** We weren't involved in it before then but in late 2007 we were involved in the workshops that were conducted in Kalamunda and that's when they were calling it the Eastern Terminal and saying that it will be a terminal one day – you know, 20 years down the track they would make a switchyard first then a terminal. And so it was quite confronting because it all came out of nowhere for us and what I found interesting is you are the first person to start calling it Eastern Terminal again because they stopped using that word as if we might just have forgotten that that's what it was initially going to be. And they said, no, no, it is not a terminal anymore. We promise it is just a switchyard, it is just a gantry area and I thought well, that's great but we are not silly, we do remember it being called a terminal. And you don't have to brush it under the carpet; let's just be real and open. If it is going to be a terminal one day then let us know. And our concern was always where would it lead up to? Are you going to stop at this point – just build a terminal? Are there going to be even more things, more lines coming into it, are there going to be even more lines coming out of it; will it end up just being...

**TN** Yes, which is the nature of a terminal.

**SN** Yes, exactly. So there was just no limit placed on what would happen in the future and...

**TN** And no clarity as to the number of times... because we went to lots and lots of groups and asked lots of questions and no one once could actually say well, this is the spot we would really like to do it. They were like - well this is kind of a good spot...

**SN** A huge area and...

**TN** And it was, well, what are we talking about, are we talking about abutting on people's properties; are we talking about next to Mundaring Weir; are we talking about in the middle of the State forest which is all going to be forest anyway.

**SN** So yeah, that's a good...

**TN** So there was no one straight answer given to anybody.

**SN** They almost said to us that oh, no, we haven't chosen a site yet and that's fine they haven't chosen one particular site but we are not silly either in that. You don't spend years and years and I mean the history goes back 20 years doesn't it?

**Interviewer** Yes, yes.

**SN** You don't spend that long on a project and think there can't be some key signs that you have already identified as possible locations for whatever you feel like doing, whatever this project will turn into. So it would have just been great if they could have said to us, yes, this is the entire area it could be in, but these are some key sites.

**TN** Yes, this is the preferred area and we could actually look at that.

**SN** Yes, because there has to be many areas within that site that it couldn't possibly be in and make sense.

**TN** Well there was actually one issue with that and it was that they hadn't actually set any key sites yet they got the EPA out to look at a certain area. And the EPA can't do a broad sweep they just do certain pockets so obviously if they are getting the EPA out to look at a specific area they have got a specific interest there, but they didn't tell us about exactly where that is and we know that there is that area of Hacketts Gully that's been fighting over for years and years and years and you know, we sometimes get the feeling that Western Power is just chipping away and chipping away at them until eventually they just go – oh, I am so sick of fighting, because they are doing it year after year after year.

**SN** It's exhausting.

**TN** And it would be really, really tiring.

**SN** Also what the purpose of the project was - we kept getting confused because sometimes they would say it is to power Perth, sometimes it was to send power back out or sometimes it was just to distribute, like lessen how much power is coming in and make sure... Oh, that's right, make power more stable in this area and I just thought well, what is the reason for this. I mean, give a proper reason why you need to do this. It can't be to the strength and the power in this area because a switchyard doesn't do that does it? That's just a...

**TN** Redirect.

**SN** Yes, step down the power and re-direct it, is that right?

**Interviewer** Yes.

**SN** So we kept getting different answers about why the project was needed which again, long term planning, I don't know, it doesn't make sense to me.

**TN** And she does a lot of planning (laughter).

**Interviewer** No, that's all very important information and quite consistent across – I guess the frustrations that a lot of people have shared that there is that inconsistency of information, so that's spot on, that's perfect. I guess following on from that: So how has this impacted on you (and that can be really broad as in it could be whether frustrations with the utilities in general or just really just the frustration of core project, how it has been done. How has it generally impacted on you?

**SN** We don't tend to think we hate Western Power or that we blame the entire company for the faults of the project because I think that doesn't make sense to do that, or we don't hate all utilities (laughter).

**Interviewer** It can be completely broad – it can be that from my perspective it has just been a really disappointing experience or from a broader community perspective it has been enlightening or it could be anything.

**SN** Well certainly from what we have experienced – we are part of the action group to stop the project from going ahead so we had to spend a lot of time just trying to work on it and having meetings and things so it has actually impacted us personally anyway.

**TN** Decoding the codes.

**SN** Yeah, and that was exhausting just mentally having to do that when you work full time and do the other things on your property, having to spend more time on something that you are actually very passionate about and really frightened it would go ahead.

**TN** Yes, there was a lot of fear and a lot of fear from everybody because we moved up here because want to be that further away from all the rubbish that goes on. And we understand that we use power and that the city needs it and most people have air-cons and plasma TV so we understand that it's all necessary but when there are so many industrial options, why put an industrial project in a conservation area? That just always never made sense. And it is like, well, you move up here and you try to escape it and then suddenly it is chasing you and then. Then at the end, because once it is done you can't go back to the forest, there is no going back and in 50 years' time going oh, well, let's tear it down. You know, it will take another 200 years for the forest to regrow. So, once it is done that's it. And also the fact that if that starts then that sets the precedents for something else. And it is like, OK, well you have a terminal there which technically isn't creating power so it is not like it is a polluter as such unless something goes wrong. So then does that set a precedent for light industrial and people would argue, well, why couldn't you?

**SN** Yes, why couldn't you have the oil that you have at terminals, how could you have that but you can't have... I mean, we couldn't have a milking station, a place that holds milk on our property because...

**TN** Yes, we are limited to something like six hoofed animals on our property because of water catchment and it is the same water catchment area that one of the proposed, or so called proposed sites.

**SN** Yes, and that didn't make sense either – how can that be possible. You know, we are restricted and I am happy to be restricted in what we do. We are up here to save what's left and if we can conserve it. It just seems so wrong that you can put that kind of industrial, like Tristan said, in a non-industrial area.

**TN** And also another representative - who was one of the previous people – like they did outright lie to us because I asked a question in one of the meetings and I said: what's Western Power's policy for the high lattice towers to the distance from properties? And they said minimum of 500 metres

from a house. And I was like: well, how come there is the property or several properties on Alderside Road going on to Mundaring Weir Road where it goes directly overhead? They said, oh, no the towers were there first and they built later. And I thought, no, because there are some pretty old houses and there are some off Campbell Road East I think where they go right next to them. And these are old houses. And it was like – well don't lie to us, just say, we would prefer to keep it a certain distance but sometimes we might not be able to, something like that, because that is pretty scary thought. We are also in the process of setting up a business which is going to use the beauty of the hills as part of the business so if we suddenly had a high lattice tower going through our property or directly viewable from our property, we would have to move because we would not be able to do what we want to do with our block.

**SN** Yes, I wouldn't want it to be near us anyway. We came up here to have a clean life, not to have cancer stuff near us in this area. We are both passionate about the hills obviously, but also we live with dieback on our property every day and sometimes when we really think about it it makes us pretty depressed. It is a pretty awful thing to live with having to control that and see it spread and you know that with this kind of project there is no way you can stop dieback from spreading. Whatever controls you put into place it has got a life of its own and there is no solution to it. We especially need to save any jarrah we have got left; we can't cut it down. There is no little of it left and it is going to die if we are not careful.

**Interviewer** I am just taking some notes as well just as a backup because even though it is recording, I want to make sure that I have captured all the points so I have just listed things like: dieback concerns; visual impact; electromagnetic fields and just overall the inconsistency of messages...

**SN** Yes, once Western Power lied to us we just thought, well, how can we trust? And there was someone else I think, a Western Power representative and they could be really gruff so maybe if you are going to be using people they should be open, nice people. We are not attacking you.

**Interviewer** (Laughter).

**SN** And we are not attacking them, we are just really upset about the project and whoever faces us we never thought, oh, it's your fault, like it is not your fault Rita, we just know that you are here to listen to our concerns and so, we are not going to be bashing you over the head with it. We just want to have some answers.

**Interviewer** Yes, absolutely, that's totally fair.

So, after all that, is there anything that you think that Western Power perhaps did well that we should continue with, or if not, then that's OK too, but is there anything that you think perhaps we should have focused on a little better or that we did perhaps at some point get right or anything in general?

**SN** I liked a lot of the visuals that you did, the descriptions of how it might look. You know, we want details, we know it might go over our heads in terms of the technology and the infrastructure or whatever, but it actually makes us more involved in the project. We need to know the detail of what's going to be happening there. So I liked that bit of it – that really worked well.

**Interviewer** That's great. That's good to know because we are focusing a lot more on the visual representation so people get a much... so it is a little bit more real.

**SN** So, when we first heard there was a gantry there I thought, I'll have to Google a gantry, I have no idea what a gantry is or what it would look like. So it is nice to have a bit of information to inform people, not just say there is going to be a gantry, a gantry structure. What kind of structure, what does it look like? What's its function?

**TN** How much space does it take up, how tall is it?

**SN** And how much land do you need to clear around it, how does it sit there? Those kinds of details would be great.

**Interviewer** That's good. OK, and so what do you think Western Power could have done better?

**TN** Well, the original meetings that we went to there was something like 1,000 of us that called Western Power because I had just heard via someone else about the letter in the mail about this proposed thing, so that was the first I heard about it. So I called and said, so what's going on about this because someone had shown me this thing and they said, oh, we have invited the community to be involved in this. And it was like, well you have only sent 1,000 letters out and the population of the Kalamunda Shire is around the 40 to 50,000 mark and then you have got Mundaring who is affected and then you have got Armadale who is also affected. So, that's well over 100,000 people with only 1,000 letters distributed in this area. And they said, oh, well we are only letterboxing the people that we think are going to be key affected. And then, when you look at where the distribution of the letters were it was very much in that area where they said, oh, no, we don't know whether we are going to do anything there yet. So that was another issue because it was like, well, you have said we don't really know where we want to put it but we know what we would like and this is kind of a nice area but we haven't made any firm decisions yet your letterboxing area is backing up to where you say you don't really know where you want to put it. So that was kind of like a double whammy (laughter).

**Interviewer** Yes, you're right.

**TN** And it just felt like it should involve the whole community, the whole of the Kalamunda Shire should be notified about this and we spent many weekends (another thing which took up a lot of time), many weekends getting petitions at the local Saturday markets and the number one response was: What?? They are going: What? And it was absolute shock and we had thousands of signatures. I don't know where they ended up and whether they

are still in your archives as records. So, there was a lot of time spent trying to actually inform the public ourselves because it wasn't being done by Western Power. And I believe everyone should know about it and I even got dozens of signatures from people down in the city who might not even come up to the hills but they know the hills exist and they know it exists as a nature sort of area. And they don't like the idea if they are taking a visitor from overseas on a trip to Mundaring Weir they don't want to go, oh, there's the Eastern Power Sub-station. So that doesn't make sense.

**Interviewer** No, absolutely. No, that's all valid, so in that context it is really just that open communication.

**TN** Yes, it just wasn't open and we could tell that they knew more than they said they knew.

**Interviewer** No, that's all clear. So in that context, moving forward, what factors do you think should we consider bearing in mind that this part is about how would you like to engage? So, if we have to do something - because the project has been deferred - and in terms of anything that we need to review is not till 2017 so if we need a solution, then we have to have that by 2012. But once again, there is nothing - we don't have a site, we don't have anything, we are really starting at the very beginning - and this process is about how does the community want to be involved if we have to do something. So it's about engaging in the engagement model. So what factors do you think we should consider in that context? So whether it's environment - I mean, I won't lead you on how you want to answer the question - but that's sort of the idea.

**TN** I think if it is going to be an absolute fresh start like from the very, very beginning, new project managers, new everything, then if there are certain sites where they are thinking well that could be good, then invite the community to actually see the site, actually take them there, do a little outing and take them there and explain why they think this is a good option, why that weighs up better than some other things that may be thought about and try to actually make people understand why they think it is a good option. Because

the only thing that we could think was a good option about that potential Hacketts Gully site for Western Power was the fact that it was going to be cheap because it is State Forest and State Forest is another name for Crown Land. So it is basically land reserved for Government works and so therefore they wouldn't have to buy it, it would probably be some lease arrangement or whatever or maybe just given over whereas if they had to have a 20 acre or 20 hectare site or whatever down in the coastal plain they would have to purchase it. So that was the only driving force that we could see behind why they wanted to do that because it is just a hell of a lot cheaper and far easier because you don't have to worry about going around too many homes. So, I think definitely more community involvement. I am sure everyone's said that.

**SN** Yes, so yes, more. Even just making sure we stay informed through letters because some people don't have the internet. Making sure that the people that don't have access to your website and know what's happening and put on your website all the different stages and all the information possible so that we can all stay informed that way. If you are going to make any major decisions then have a community meet, it doesn't have to be a big workshop, it could just be audience and a few people and discussions or we can all throw in some questions at the beginning and you choose which ones you can answer and those kinds of things. And also maybe think about having some key community representatives that you contact who can speak for the community because there are a lot of people who feel passionate about it but they might not have the time or the energy or whatever to follow it through on these things. And it doesn't all have to be from the SETS group by the way (laughter).

**Interviewer** I understand.

**SN** There are people on there who are not anti, they just need to understand the project and they do, they are way ahead of what are. People from Stop Eastern Terminal substation group are very good at what they are doing and those kinds of key people and maybe like a business representative from people of the businesses in the area.

**Interviewer** Yes, that's a really good point and just to share the feedback. Obviously you are a cohesive group which is good but I think one thing that's come out, which has been a really great idea which we certainly hope to explore as a result of this, is exactly that - there are clearly people who want to be involved in a genuine and authentic way at that engineering point, because I guess the challenge for us in what we were sharing earlier with a couple of the people that came in the morning was that purely to try and get an understanding is that we know - exactly to your point - it is not necessarily always about workshops and all that because you have got to find a balance, people have got to get on with their lives as well but there has got to be a way to keep the community informed and clearly there are people that we are identifying that genuinely want to be involved which is great because that's a perfect balance, particularly with engineers – they like to share that kind of information – why don't we champion that. I think that's a great idea because our challenge is not in the sense that we are not thinking, we are thinking about it very deeply so of course there a lot of complexities in regards to some technical requirements on building the infrastructure and that's I think in past, where people have really grappled with how to share that information. But I think if we can tap into this knowledge that's up here as a way to channel that to the community, I think that might be a solution. And this is what's emerging out of this whole process which I think is really positive.

**SN** And I suppose another outlet then could be jointly with those representatives is to get information to the community paper that feels more real, not just one-sided from Western Power, not just one-sided from us, something that represents both our views and sees that people are being heard. You can't write a letter to 50,000 people. I am not sure if you could but it gets expensive so you couldn't do it every week to keep them updated.

**TN** Whether we want to see that much paper use...

**SN** No, maybe try and think of ways of maximum reach without being one sided or biased.

**Interviewer** Yes, without it coming from two separate sources. I think it's a matter of really tapping into those. I think the most efficient way to tap into those community channels is – the big advantage here is that it is a community, it is a really strong community and that's brilliant because that way we can channel into different groups on how... and once again this is what's sort of emerging because of course another side of the challenge is of course you have other communities that aren't obviously as cohesive or as well connected and that's OK too because they are new or they are newer areas and whatever, so we will find different ways to engage at that level. But here we have really identified a way so hopefully there are some opportunities there.

**TN** I think that one underlying thing about people that live up in the hills is that they live up in the hills because they really want to and because they love what the hills represents so that, just in a sense, brings everyone together in that one consistent train of thought. So then when they see anything that's going to be compromised about the beauty of this area then they say, whoa, watch out.

**Interviewer** Yes, and that's really evident and I think that that's really important and that, once again, for me anyway it shows a pattern, it means that it helps us to shape the way that we work with the community.

What level of involvement would you like to have as a community member? You have more or less shared that I guess in how you have said, be it the efficient ways of communicating and you have a particular area of interest but also counting on other people, trusted members in the community to share, is there anything else just to expand on that or do you feel we have perhaps covered that point already?

**TN** Pretty much.

**SN** Yes.

**Interviewer** The next one is we use or we have embraced a model, if you like, of what we call community engagement through the International Association for Public Participation and they have various levels of engagement and I just wanted to get an idea of what level you think that you would like to be involved at. They have got five levels, if you like, and so I'll just read them out to you and you can let me know which one works best and I can show it to you if you would like to read it yourselves.

The first level is to be informed: to be informed is to be kept informed about a project with balanced and objective information to assist you in understanding the problem, project options and solutions. So that's to be informed. To be consulted: to be kept informed, listened to and your concerns acknowledged and be provided feedback on how public input influenced the decision. To be involved: worked with directly throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered. Collaborated: partner with Western Power on each aspect of the decision including the development of options and identification of the preferred solution and lastly empowered: to have the final decision making placed in the hands of the public.

So then you have got informed; consulted; involved; collaborate and empowered.

**SN** I think empowered sounds great but I think it is a bit ridiculous.

**Interviewer** (Laughter).

**TN** Realistically I think 'collaborate' because...

**SN** Yes, I think so too.

**Interviewer** Which is partner with Western Power in each aspect of the decision including the development of options and identification of the preferred solution.

**SN** Absolutely.

**TN** Yes, because unless you are an electrical engineer then we don't know.

**Interviewer** That's OK, there have been people from a completely broad spectrum of how people want to be involved. Just to share with you, with most people, their first reaction is well 'empowered' would be the best but then they chose either between 'consulted', 'involved' or 'collaborate'.

**TN** Maybe 'empowered' in a certain aspect of it like if Western Power does decide that they want it in Hacketts Gully after all this which would be such an amazing surprise, (laughter) but five years later they decide yes, that's where we want to put it, then we shouldn't be having a referendum about stupid daylight savings, we should be having a referendum about whether they are going to put an Eastern Terminal in the middle of a State Forest which is known priority to water catchment. So it should be, in that respect, location should be totally up to the people. All the other nitty gritty stuff has to be to the experts and we don't need to know about that so long as it is not going to affect us adversely or anyone adversely. That's my opinion (laughter).

**Interviewer** That's great, that's really, really important.

**TN** The Government wastes a huge amount of money on that kind of thing and so this is really important.

**SN** A referendum or something.

**Interviewer** Just as an aside, we are very proactive in putting a response into the Strategic Energy Initiative and I have actually shared that with John as well and Garry and Tony that this is it, this is our opportunity to share and we have certainly been very proactive in sharing that. We have got to think about different ways to look at energy infrastructure.

**SN** Absolutely. That's one of the things from a while ago. So they make the final decision, is that right, in how funds are being spent on energy infrastructure? The strategic... the economic...

**Interviewer** The Economic Regulatory Authority, the ERA, they obviously provide that overarching guidance on how we are to invest in projects and so we need to meet those guidelines and those guidelines as the name says, are very much economically driven so...

**SN** I think that's very much a concern for us because you can't just make a decision on economic grounds any more these days. Right now, if you choose the cheapest option for anything, no doubt it is not environmentally friendly and we can't keep going the way we are going. This Government could be an incredible Government if they just start maybe learning towards more the Green things. It just takes one Government to make a difference.

**TN** And we are not talking 'Greenies' we are just talking of a sustainable option.

**SN** I don't know if there is any way of doing this but whatever the decision making process is and ERA's power and the ultimate power of wherever the decision is made, economic grounds shouldn't be the only way of judging a project's viability or whether you should go down that path. It is just not the right way of doing things any more and the world is shifting towards that idea. So if we need to spend a little bit more money then that's the way it should be because we are trying to save things for the future. We won't have a future if we keep going the way we are going anyway. It brought

it all back when you said that and I thought oh, that's right, I remember all that kind of jazz as well.

**TN** Just an aside sheet to that economic aspect of it and if it did go ahead in a water catchment area – it has been proven all over the world that if you chop down forest around water catchment, around the watershed protection zone and you have reduced runoff. We have already got massively reduced runoff anyway because just the drying climate, now if that got reduced again, then the Water Corporation is suddenly going to go, well, hang on a sec, we haven't got so much water in our dams any more so they are going to have to up the price of water - it should be like gold - but it is going to create a false sense of economy because of all the other things that are going to be indirectly affected.

**SN** Good point.

**TN** And then the maintenance of an area in the hills. Every single year if you have got high lattice towers of 20, 30 or 40 metre clearance zone through these corridors, they are going to have to be cleared and fire broken every single year so you are going to have to hire contractors for that and more diesel being used and more chance of spreading dieback, more measures that are going to have to be taken to try and prevent that spread if there is any going to be taken. Whereas if you have it in an already built up area where it is just bitumen and concrete, it is not a lot of maintenance. It is one of those things like the other day someone was saying the most efficient car in the world is a Hummer and I thought are you kidding. Then they said, well a Hummer will last 40 to 50 years; the parts are almost indestructible that you rarely ever have to replace them; yes, it guzzles a lot of fuel but no one takes into account that if you buy a Holden Barina in 40 years time you are probably going to have to have four of them and so the manufacturing of it to start off with is the biggest outlay and then the general running of it is secondary to that. For this, the general running of it is going to be almost as much as because it is going to have to have so much upkeep.

**Interviewer** Yes, I guess those are the things that people lose sight of because there is so much short term thinking so it is almost like a natural instinct with those sort of things. No, there are definitely big things that we have to always consider.

OK, so 'collaborate' in terms of the idea scenario, would that be the response?

**TN** Yes.

**Interviewer** As you know, we deal with a number of people in the community, obviously the community groups, the councils and what have you at various levels, do you think any group in particular come to mind that we should also be thinking about and communicating with? We certainly try and reach out to groups such as the Conservation Group up here and have informed them about this exercise, so do you think there is anybody else that we should be...

**TN** Obviously tourist groups in the area. I mean, that is a huge potential impact; whoever does all the tracks and Mundi Biddy and Bibbulmun Track, that kind of thing. I know that comes under tourism as well, but whether that is separate, because all those trails and paths and things like that are going to be worth 'squat' if you are walking past built up sort of things.

**SN** Unless there is a small business association around here, but I don't think there would be. I don't know.

**Interviewer** I mean the fact that you have said tourist groups clearly that's an important stakeholder as well.

We have covered a lot of information. The next few questions we may have already gone over, but I'll ask them just to make sure that you are comfortable because we ask everybody the same questions. What is really important to you?

**TN** With regards to the project?

**Interviewer** In regards to the project, this process, what's important to you?

**SN** Honesty and just clear information and we want all the information, we don't want it to be filtered through say to the SETS Group just because they are more interested. I think, for example, someone said they received a letter in January 2009 from the Minister for Energy and they said that some of the tie in options that Western Power are considering are just taking it out of the forest and putting it down into the Swan coastal plain, so this is coming from the Minister. I mean, you might not be in control necessarily of the feedback loop and so, OK, this one person received a letter and it is like OK, well that's one option, that's great because so far Western Power has never said that to us. So we want all the information. We don't want some people getting more than others. Everybody needs to have the same amount of information because then they can decide how interested they are going to be. If they want to learn a little bit more about their electronics or whatever it is, the infrastructure or the engineering they can do that. But if I want to read and I don't understand it that's great too. So just honesty and everything, we want it all.

**Interviewer** Perfect, that's great.

What do you think about substations and transmission lines?

**TN** Well, can you clarify the question?

**Interviewer** Well, it is one of those things, where just the first thing that comes to your mind. There is no right or wrong answer. We have once again had the whole spectrum. And I guess just to add, the exercise for us once again is there is clearly a lot of things we have got to do better and I think, particularly as we go through the questions I'll share with the rationale behind it because it is about how we communicate and the things we are saying as

well. I think the way you were going to answer the question is telling, so just answer it as you think.

**TN** Well, for me it is kind of an irrelevant question because I don't make decisions like this on emotions. Like that's an emotive question so you are wondering whether will go: oh, I hate them; I can't bear the thought of them. It is like, well, I don't actually want to live next to one, I know they have got to exist because I know you have got to transport power around so I understand that they are totally functional and they have got to be somewhere but I don't ever believe that they should be anywhere near where anyone lives. I think, in a free country, you should choose the right to be able to live away from stuff that will cause cancer and that along with all the other aspects that go along with it. So I have no dislike to them. I think they would look a lot better if you grew some wisteria, I think that would look really pretty. Other than that, no, I have got no opinion.

**Interviewer** That's fine, that's an answer.

**SN** That's a good answer. I will stick with that one.

**Interviewer** And what do you think about Western Power?

**TN** I do have an opinion about that only because today is a classic example. Our power went off from 8.00 o'clock until just before we came here actually. We never got a notification to say that it was going off. I know this isn't your department, this is just... I had to ring a neighbour to... because first of all I rang the number at the top of the Synergy bill, I rang the Faults and so I got put through to someone because there was no faults in the area and then sort of got through to someone and I said, is there any reason? He said, no there's nothing listed. He then said, have you checked the metre box and I said, I was walking up there to check it at that moment and it was all completely off so I rang one of my neighbours and he was like, yes, I just got a note a couple of days ago to say that it was going off. I thought, well, where was our note, and if you ring up Faults shouldn't they know? Shouldn't it be on

a computer to know? Then an hour later I rang up and it did come up. Also we are getting underground power put in on our property. In an emotive kind of way we don't like overhead power lines going through our property and we are spending a fair whack of money to get that all put underground, all drilled underground so no trees have been lost; it has all gone straight underneath them. So we are dealing with Western Power quite a bit to get certain things set up and so we get a call from someone the other day who obviously hasn't been just talking to the other department because five times he asked me in this five minute phone call, or implied that I hadn't paid for what I was going to pay for and we couldn't go ahead unless I paid for it. And at the end I just had to say: I paid my deposit in about September last year and I paid the amount in full in November last year. And he said, oh, that's great, that's great and I said, well, why isn't there any liaising from different departments and I know that happens a lot in Government organisations, I know the communication lines often aren't very open and that's not really an issue for general day-to-day power stuff but if you are just trying to deal with it as a company, and I know it has got its outbranch of Synergy and stuff like that so that probably makes it even more complex, it is still better than dealing with Telstra though. (Laughter all round). That's one plus.

**Interviewer** That's OK, that's all valid. That's perfectly valid. So we are on the home stretch and I have a few more questions that are the 'strongly agree', 'agree', 'disagree', 'strongly disagree' and 'unsure' responses. So we have got Western Power provides reliable power supply in my area?

**TN** Well, I mean in general yes it does.

**Interviewer** So 'agree'?

**TN** Yes, if I had got a thing in the post then it would have been fine. We would have been able to plan. So we know it has to happen, we are not objecting to that. It is just it would have been cool to know.

**Interviewer** Minor detail, yes, I can understand that. I will follow it up because there are things that we need to know basically because otherwise we can't fix it so it is important to know so I will follow that up.

Western Power communicates openly with the community and stakeholders about new infrastructure projects? So 'strongly agree', 'agree', 'disagree', 'strongly disagree', 'unsure'?

**TN** It could only be 'disagree'. It is not like any worse than that because yes, it does inform, but it is a bit like a lecturer informing.

**Interviewer** That's right. Bear in mind that we are going to have transcripts of this so your context will be captured, don't worry.

Western Power listens and responds to the views of the community about its projects?

**TN & SN** That would have to be 'strongly disagrees'.

**Interviewer** Western Power is committed to minimising the environmental impacts of its activities?

**TN** I would have to go more than 'strongly disagree'.

**Interviewer** What about if I put a really big cross there?

**TN** It would probably have to be a really big one because I don't think that's even been a consideration. It has been a consideration because there is a legal obligation to make it a consideration but, to be honest, I don't think Western Power and whatever sources are pushing Western Power to do this have thought that that's an issue at all. And I am sure if the Kalamunda just laid down and went, oh, yeah, that's fine, it would be there. It would have been done ages ago. So definitely a big cross.

**SN** Yes, it would be there now.

**Interviewer** Western Power is committed to minimising any detrimental impacts of its infrastructure on the local community?

**TN** I haven't seen any evidence of it so I can't give you an informed answer.

**Interviewer** An 'unsure' is just that. You don't feel confident you have enough information to answer it.

**SN** I mean, you can look around and say no because you can see some clear things in the suburbs or even going down South and you see those poor farmers with the lattice towers going through their property, but I think you can always see a bad example quite easily because they are the ones you remember. The good examples are probably well hidden, I wouldn't even know they are there, so I don't have an answer.

**TN** Can you read the question once more?

**Interviewer** Western Power is committed to minimising any detrimental impacts of its infrastructure on the local community?

**TN** I am thinking of along Leach Highway where they have put 120 KV lines but I couldn't quote you on that and I know there is a cancer cluster, a breast cancer cluster on either side of the road where they are still within that belt of radiation or electromagnetic field. So, there is nothing been done to try and improve that. Whether that would be - I know, cost wise and viability wise we know because we just did it, getting directional drilling is not cheap but if that was sunk well, well underground and I have heard that it is not as efficient, but that would be protecting that community.

**SN** Yeah, you are right.

**TN** People are still living right there.

**SN** It is more important that electricity remains efficient in its transfer and it is more important...

**TN** And if that's sacrificing human's lives then I think that's not really an ideal situation.

**SN** Yeah, right.

**Interviewer** So 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree'?

**TN** I think we are going to have to go for 'disagree'.

**SN** Yes.

**Interviewer** That's fine. OK, that's it.

**SN** Can I ask some more questions?

**SN** That would be great. Just thinking back to I think it was the year before last when in one of the processes Western Power asked for four submissions from people and there were over 600. We have never seen any evidence of them, no drawing out of key things have come through or no communicating back to us whether they are just sitting in boxes gathering dust or whether they went through some great, huge process and people really listened. So, it would be great to hear back from Western Power on the effort that we put in - where is it going?

**Interviewer** No, that's an excellent point and that's probably a little bit my fault. I probably should have said that in this exercise, the people who wrote the submissions are exactly who we reached out to. So we have them. We have listened and we have gone through them. So that's who we reached out

to for this interview process and also we have got a session on February 11<sup>th</sup>...

**TN & SN** We can't make it to that.

**Interviewer** It's basically just augmenting what we are doing here. So we have got the interviews, so we have got a whole range of activities. To make sure that we capture we have got the ad in the paper so we are trying to capture as much to your point where we are really trying to reach out to as many people as possible. So we hope that we still get a good turnout and representative turnout but once again, the exercise is to listen. It is not about sharing any information. I am just going to be sharing the same. At that session it is just a different kind of forum to do it so that's at that exercise and that group from the 600 plus submissions, we have reached out to those people specifically. But to your point, you are right, there had been no acknowledgement or any sort of report that identified any sort of patterns or what have you, so we should certainly do something like that. I definitely believe that. I think that's just a common courtesy and a good practice.

**SN** That's right. I mean, you asked for them and people put a lot of time into them and I know it's a big job, 600 is a lot to look through and a lot to summarise but it would be great to know what people said and just to know where it is going to go or is it just going to sit in your office. Because it would be great if it went to the Minister and people really heard what we are saying – EPA and everybody involved in this project, not just us.

**TN** And make sure that with these submissions, even though it was a different named project, that they are still relevant submissions to this because to Western Power it is a new start, to us it is the same ballgame so we do feel like a tennis ball going back and forward with all this stuff. So we want to make sure that that's very clearly put on the website that there has been those submissions and even though it is not directly about what we are talking about right now, even though it is...

**Interviewer** Well, we are, we are trying to look back on history and get to a point and recognise that history and actually what's important which we shared before as well what we will do at this session is that we will have a history board. So we are going to put up all those milestones of when that letter was sent; of where we said we are not going to use that land; we are not going to use the terminal and then the next letter that we sent – oh, by the way we are going to use it and everything that's transpired, so we are going to have what we call a history wall and we do have an independent facilitator that's coming, but once again to listen and capture that information. So once again, it is not just about Western Power and the community, it is somebody who is trying to bring the shared history together (laughter).

**SN** Actually if you are going to be doing that there that would be a great thing to put on the website because those are the kind of things that I would really like to see as well. I want to see why that happened, what decision was made in the first place that led to the second, the poor people with the second letter and all that stuff, people need to know that because a lot of people don't even know the full history so that's great.

**Interviewer** I think it is going to be a very, well, I think there is going to be a whole range of experiences: confronting; lot of reflecting I think; revealing, so I think it is going to be a really – well, I hope it is a little bit of liberating experience as well. I hope what comes out of it is that the community recognises that we did take notice and maybe we didn't do a good job, well, I know we didn't do a good job of really being better at addressing that. So we hope we go through that process and once again, it's perhaps not as tangible in terms of how we are moving forward but hopefully people will get a better feeling about that we are trying to make some progress.

**TN** I think also if this is done right and with community consultation, it will gain loyalty to Western Power and respect to it because when I lived in Sydney for a handful of years and, as you are probably aware, there is multiple energy providers and Perth will have to go that way eventually, it's just it has to, it can't just stay with the one or one and a half,

how do I describe it? So once that diversifies, and people have a choice who they choose, and then they are going to go, well Western Power did well by me, they listened to what I want so I'll stick with them, and people are very loyal when they are treated well.

**Interviewer** I agree.

**SN** And to be able to suddenly switch and we had the same price, I probably would switch just because dealing with them with this and just with other things that we are trying to do on our property, it is really convoluted whenever you deal with Western Power so it would be great to try someone new.

**TN** Yes, so I think that's an important issue and it is not for now but it is definitely going to be the future.

**Interviewer** No, you are absolutely right. Those are all very valid points. So thank you.

**TN & SN** Thanks so much.

**Interviewer** Oh, my pleasure, thanks for making the time. Once again, we try to be as flexible. Yesterday we were out here during the day and we had a couple of people because the time suited them. We are here next Thursday as well, but into the evening as well. So, we have had not a bad response, I would like more people so if you feel that the experience was worthwhile and there are people who are still thinking whether they perhaps didn't have time before but they do now, please spread the word in the community because we will be here all day and evening.

**TN** It's probably just that getting tired of it thing because of all those other times. I mean, we have covered that, but people might say, well, we turned up to all these things and chatted about it a million times and

nothing got resolved, so people are probably thinking oh, well someone else is going to deal with it this time hopefully (laughter).

**Interviewer** And I hope these sorts of activities like the transcriptions, so we are really being very transparent and putting it onto our website so it is not anything that's separate, once again small steps to recognise that I would like to think that we are serious about this. So thank you very, very much again for coming.

**TN** Our pleasure, you're much nicer than we thought you'd be (laughter).

**Interviewer** What did you think I was going to be like (laughter)? Fancy wasting my Saturday afternoon!

**POWERING PERTH'S COMMUNITIES**  
**INTERVIEW WITH BARBARA STEEMSON**  
**4 FEBRUARY 2010**

**Interviewer:** Margot Hammond

**Interviewer** What is your experience with the Power Perth's Communities Project or the previous Eastern Terminal Project?

**BS** We have been lied to. I can give you letters that were put out in 2002 saying that the previous site was not going to be used, was going to be put back into the National Estate and it hasn't been, it is still on the register. We found the pink flagging tape - it was clearly delineating the Western Power Site, didn't know anything about it, blah, blah, blah. Treat people like mushrooms, particularly the hills people and they will get really, really cranky. The process has been patronising in the extreme, the people from ERM were charming but I don't think one of them left their computer and their GIS programme and actually walked through the ground that they were proposing to use. All they were doing was ticking boxes for Western Power and everybody knew what they were doing and it's really insulting.

Western Power stood up at the meeting and said: It doesn't matter where in this huge designated area, it is going to cost about the same. My husband works with mining projects, the guy up the road is a stock broker; they can tell you to the cent how much it costs to establish a project. You know, don't treat people like idiots, be honest, make clear plans, don't ask us to say, oh, yes, we approve of something if we don't, because we don't. We want to know what you are proposing and then we will discuss it.

**Interviewer** Yes, thank you.

**BS** That's probably more than you wanted to hear.

**Interviewer** No, not at all, I want to hear exactly your experiences. And so how has this impacted on you?

**BS** In what way?

**Interviewer** Obviously you are feeling lied to and there is no transparency in our communication. Do you want to be involved moving forward?

**BS** Yes, I believe Perth is a growing city, it needs to have this new 330 kilovolt line coming up, everybody knows... I mean, that's why I asked for the distribution report. Every substation in the Perth district is at capacity or under load continuously, you need more facilities, but when you talk about a switchyard and then you clear a site that's going to be more than capable for a substation and you have plans for a substation marked in this report, let people know what you are doing. How does it make me feel? Look, I want to be engaged in the process because I think it has got to happen but I know you can't please everybody. I am a realist, you know, it has got to be done, I don't go to bed sweating guts all night, it's just give us some plans to work with and we will go from there.

**Interviewer** Thank you. What do you think Western Power has done well?

**BS** You have put your people out there to talk to people but they haven't said anything. What have you done well?

**Interviewer** If you can't think of anything that's OK.

**BS** Look, your staff are charming. Western Power has been great. Who was the other guy – the consultant was good, the ERM people were good, you have engaged good people but they haven't been able to speak openly, or it appears they haven't been able to speak openly.

**Interviewer** What do you think Western Power could have done better?

**BS** I think I have made that quite clear. Transparency – give us some concrete plans, be honest about what you’re planning to do. Like I said, you tell people where that south-east terminal sits and people will be a lot happier. OK, what they are worried about is that you are going to start a switchyard and you’re going to change it into something else.

**Interviewer** OK. What factors should we consider moving forward?

**BS** Transparency, planning, you have done the education campaign thing, you have had the community meetings, I was away overseas when they were on so I didn’t get to those. I don’t know – protect the brand, get out there and you need that 330 kilovolt line, you need it for load spreading.

**Interviewer** In terms of planning, would you be interested in actually hearing directly from our planners to, I guess, find out more of the technical information around bringing it back a step and saying: what is the objective of the project before we actually look at finding a solution? Is that something that you would be interested in?

**BS** Yes, and I think everybody understands that Perth is guzzling power at the rate of knots. I don’t think a lot of people understand about the infrastructure needed and maybe you could propose alternatives like wind turbines but I don’t think people are going to like that idea in the hills and they are not efficient in the hills because we don’t get enough regular flow of wind. I don’t know how you go around that. If people have got the information and it is clear and transparent, they can choose to be outraged or disinterested.

**Interviewer** Yes, very true.

In terms of what level would you like to have in this project what we have used is the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) and it is an international association that only looks at community engagement. So they have a spectrum of five different levels of engagement and we are using this because it’s, I guess, world recognised and also it’s objective and it is

something that people can I guess find out information about themselves as well as it is not just something that we are using in-house, so we really wanted to use something that is recognised.

So the five levels are – and I will read through these and then if you want to have a read because it is easier, let me know: informed - be kept informed about a project with balanced and objective information to assist you in understanding the problem, project options and solution; consulted - be kept informed, listened to and your concerns acknowledged and be provided feedback on how public input influenced the decision; involved – worked with directly throughout the process to ensure the public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered; collaborated – partner with Western Power on each aspect of the decision including the development of options and identification of the preferred solution or empowered – to have the final decision making placed in the hands of the community.

**SB** Can I have a look? Well, to be perfectly honest, everybody would love to be collaborating but how many people did you say you were involving – 668?

**Interviewer** Well, they are how many we have invited. We have only had nine choose to do interviews but we are also having the Community Session next Thursday to which people are also invited.

**SB** I have a feeling with what we were this was ‘consultation’ and it wasn’t very successful because you asked very guarded questions and unless you wanted to sound like a complete idiot, there was only one answer you could give. Whoever wrote the questions was very smart. I think most people want at least involvement and collaboration. ‘Empowered’? You are responsible for running the network and there are so many different stakeholders who are going to have their own special needs and I don’t see that ‘empowerment’ can work but I think a lot of people would find happy ground between the two I mentioned.

**Interviewer** Yes, the 'involved' and 'collaboration'?

**BS** Yes.

**Interviewer** Excellent, thank you.

Who else do you think we should be talking to in the community in terms of are there other community groups or environmental groups that you know of? Obviously we are speaking with the SETS group. There are a lot of environmental approvals we must go through so we work very closely with Department of Environment and Conservation, the Conservation Council, Environmental Protection Authority. Are there any other groups that you know of that you know of that you think we should be including in this process?

**BS** No, that's sound fine.

**Interviewer** What is really important to you, I guess, as a community member?

**BS** About what?

**Interviewer** About the engagement process but also... living in this community. Obviously this community is quite special in terms of it is a different environment up here and that's why a lot of people choose to live up here. So, what is important to you in this community, in the Kalamunda community?

**BS** In terms of this process, that's we don't end up with a substation that we drive past all the time. You are going to need to build one somewhere, we need to know where it is going to go and we all would like to have some input where it is going to go. If there is not going to be a substation I don't think you have got probably a problem with a lot of people. If it is only ever going to be a switchyard, but reading this (indicating), that's what you believe. What we want is a practical solution to the problem but people need to get out there and walk on the ground, see what they are going to destroy if

they are going to use a 20 acre site and people need to understand what is lost.

**Interviewer** What do you think about substations and transmission lines?

**BS** They are a necessary evil.

**Interviewer** That's a common theme.

**BS** Well, none of us want one in our backyard. I have 23 acres, I love it to death, I have got two bush blocks at either end, minimal clearing, I don't want big steel girders running over my property, big steel pylons running over my property, nobody does.

**Interviewer** Yes. The next questions are more survey-like so you can 'strongly agree', 'agree', 'disagree', 'strongly disagree' or, if you are unsure then just say 'unsure' because that is just as an important answer as the other ones.

Western Power provides reliable power supply in my area?

**BS** 'Agree'.

**Interviewer** Western Power communicates openly with the community and stakeholders about new infrastructure projects?

**BS** 'Strongly disagree'.

**Interviewer** Western Power listens and responds to the views of the community about its projects?

**BS** 'Agree'. I agree with that – you're listening.

**Interviewer** Western Power is committed to minimising the environmental impacts of its activities?

**BS** Well, we will see about that, won't we?

**Interviewer** 'Unsure'?

**BS** Well, I haven't seen you do anything up here so I don't know.

**Interviewer** Western Power is committed to minimising any detrimental impacts of its infrastructure on the local community?

**BS** There again, when you put in infrastructure it is used by people outside Western Power. The access roads you have put in under power lines are used by all sorts of people for access to the bush. Can you control that? No, you can't. So whatever that answer is.

**Interviewer** 'Unsure'?

**BS** 'Unsure'. Look it is a very difficult issue. Tracks in the bush are a necessary thing but there is such population pressure in Perth and such a need for recreation that our Department of Environment and Conservation aren't actually tackling particularly well. So we are inundated with mountain bikes, with motorbikes, with four wheel drives, with various other things. Most people are just out there for a good time, but it brings litter, dogs, the odd fire bug, you know. So it is important to us in the hills, particularly people who live out further that if you are going to be ensuring your access, that you take care of it.

**Interviewer** I've made a point of that because it's a really good point in terms of what we can look at doing to make our...

**BS** We talk to the Department of Environment and Conservation rangers on a regular basis because my husband rides horses and you go out to some of these areas and these guys are just in despair.

**Interviewer** Yes, and it really is a big issue for us, but that's not to say we can't do something about it.

Well, that's all the questions I have. Is there anything else that you wanted to share with me?

**BS** No, I think I have shared more than adequately.

**Interviewer** No, that's good, this has been really helpful.

**BS** Like I said, the process that was engaged in before, this map that was given to us (indicating) – we are all also remarkable document keepers in the hills so you need to be very wary when you give us something. Somebody stood in front of a meeting and said it doesn't matter where in that area we put it is going to cost about the same. Well, you know... and blind Freddy could work out where they wanted it and where they were going to have it and that's exactly where they did. There were previous models developed in the consultation process in 2002 I think, one of them was down in Lockwood Road which involved a site that had been logged previously so it wasn't virgin bush which is almost impossible to find up here anyway with the amount of logging that's been done. But, consultation, it needs to be done properly and like I said the ERM people were charming, they were very earnest but I would almost lay money on the fact that not one of them got out and walked around the ground. Okay - we live in the ground, we do walk around the ground and to see bush cleared when there can be pretty ordinary scrub used... I understand that the power line has to go through and I think the necessity is there and people be honest about Boddington paying for half. People just don't like to be lied to that's what it comes down to.

**Interviewer** No, well I guess this is what this process really is about, really being transparent, finding out what is the best way forward because I mean, we can't go through this again.

**BS** Well, I sincerely hope not, for everybody's sake I sincerely hope not. But really I think Western Power needs to be honest about exactly what they want, make a commitment to what they want, give clear plans to people to understand what you are doing, what the damage is going to be, how you plan to control access problems, and then consult with the people. Nobody is going to trust you. I can tell you right now – nobody is going to trust you after the last episode there is some real faith to be regathered.

**Interviewer** We are learning that very quickly.

**BS** Yes, sorry.

**Interviewer** No, it is good, it is helping us.

**BS** Just how lucky are they in their staff.

**Interviewer** Thank you.

One of the things that we have been grappling with is if we have a community reference group and that's made up of say 15 community members that everybody is comfortable from the community to represent them, how do we, I guess, tackle those technical issues like we were talking about before in terms of the planning, in terms of bringing everybody up to speed so they are comfortable with the technical information we are sharing and one of the interviewers had a great idea in terms of whether we have little sub-groups of say five people in the community who were engineers and they are now retired or they have that sort of technical background, one that has people who have an environmental background and actually doing these little sub-groups so that we can take those five people at a time on that part of the journey and then documenting it all on the website for the community. Would you feel comfortable with that?

**BS** More than comfortable with that, but I would also state that all of us use computers and not any of us have understanding bar .01 percent of how they actually work. Most of us still find it a miracle that you turn on the

switch and the light goes on. You don't need an understanding of how you run your grid for us to realise that we need the grid. What we need to understand is what you plan, how you are going to do it and what future plans are for the site. As I said, it's the substation that worries people, not necessarily a gantry not necessarily anything else. I think that's an ideal solution but for the majority of people they trust you with the network, you have done, apart from a few unfortunate pole fires, a fairly good job with the network. It's coped remarkably well with the enormous stresses and strains but developing infrastructure you have a technical set of points that you have to satisfy. If you don't satisfy those the Government will crucify you and so will the insurance companies so, do we really need to know about that? I don't know. But there would certainly be a group of retired engineers who would love to get in there and ferret and find out what's going on.

**Interviewer** OK, thank you very much. That has been very, very helpful.