

Wind farm debate blows up

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PREMIER Denis Naphine could secure hundreds of jobs and millions of dollars worth of investment in his own electorate by easing wind farm restrictions.

But critics warned of a fierce confrontation if he reversed strict rules laid down by his predecessor, Ted Baillieu, who enforced the nation's most restrictive wind turbine policies.

"Dr Naphine holds the key to securing the future of his own (South West Coast) electorate," Steve Garner, the boss of Portland engineering firm Keppel Prince, said yesterday.

"Denis had to toe the party line on renewable energy, but we like to think he will be able to make a difference and help lock in the future of the southwest."

But lawyer Randell Bell, president of Victorian Landscape Guardians, said wind power was unhealthy, inefficient and ineffective.

"Mr Baillieu's policy was the best in the world," he said. "He understood the fallacies of the industry.

"If Dr Naphine reneges on that policy, I'll break his arms."

Dr Naphine did not respond to inquiries on the subject yesterday.