

Re: the Jindera Solar Farm

Being members of the Jindera community for nearly 50 years, a prosperous farming area, we are extremely concerned at the advancement of the construction of the proposed solar project.

We object to the use of the fertile agricultural land, which is close to waterways, and only 100 metres from our property boundary, for the use of a solar power generation project. As farmers, and noting the shortage of arable farmland in Australia, we find it incomprehensible that fertile land is being utilised in this type of industrial development.

Further strong concerns of the potential impact to us is outlined below:

The environmental impact on the area.

Jindera is a historic town that is undergoing rapid expansion. It is amidst a valuable and fertile agricultural area, including creeks, swamps, natural wooded areas and wildlife. We are concerned about the felling of the trees and the possible hazards to the nearby waterways. We are also concerned that the impact of the reflection of the panels will affect an increase in the temperature of the immediate area.

Clearing of trees:

The proposed site requires the removal of many beautiful 200yr old eucalyptus trees.

Solar Heat Island Effect:

We are concerned about a localised temperature increase and the broader environmental impact of a solar heat island effect. (Binder, G., 2016, 'Researchers discover solar heat island effect caused by large-scale solar power plants', Physics.org)

Being too close to many residences and quality agricultural land.

The location is on the outskirts of the town of Jindera, and next to a newly established housing development, the Pomegranate Estate.

Fire Hazard:

We are concerned that if damaged in bushfire, the panels will emit toxic chemicals and directly impact the town and surrounding houses.

Devalue the land:

We are concerned about the impact to the development of the historic town of Jindera and surrounding small acreage, which is sought for country living. The locality of Jindera, close to the regional city of Albury, means that it is attractive for those seeking lifestyle blocks and this is demonstrated by the recent expansion and subdivisions happening. The location of the solar project on the fringe of this development will impact land values of those selling into it and interest to those buying into it.

The impact on our farm due to heavy truck and construction activity.

We have been advised that there will be heavy truck activity on the country road where we live for the next two years. We are an alpaca and llama breeder, and this activity will have untold detrimental effect on our animals and farming enterprise. The heavy traffic is also a concern for our own health and safety.

The poor communication of the proposed project.

Hume Shire Council

We have received no planning notice from the Council to which we may comment, despite the direct impact the project will have on us.

Company consultation process

The area we live has extremely limited mobile access, making electronic communication very difficult, frustrating and stressful.

Noting this process has occurred at the peak of the harvest season, having the time to address this issue is a very difficult proposition for many farmers.

In Conclusion.

Owing to the poor consultation process by the Council, many constituents like us had no say. The Council's decision, therefore, is not representative of the many, like us, and the development and construction of this project will not be achieved with community support. No matter how good a corporate citizen the company is, community support for this project will never be realised from the residents of this area, like us.