I wish to object to the Walla Walla Solar Farm being proposed by a French company that has no interest in the wellbeing of the Walla Walla agricultural community. This is purely financially driven with no concern showed to the nearby farmers. What has happened to the beautiful Bordeaux region in France where the scenic hills and vineyards are now covered in solar panels we do not want here. This is the largest solar farm development in NSW taking 605 hectares of valuable agricultural land and located 850 metres away from a nearby farmhouse. The proximity of the solar farm to Orange Grove Gardens is a mere 1.8 k’s. This is dangerously close and the heat and glare emitted from these solar panels is detrimental to people and animals on neighbouring farms. Our summers have always been hot with temperatures reaching 40 degrees in February so 700,000 solar panels made of silicon, aluminium and copper would certainly push up the temperatures in that vicinity. You would not be able to put your hand on a solar panel in February Ms Poulton. This is detrimental to the environment and birds certainly could not live there especially when the land has been cleared and two dams have been filled in. This makes the Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy questionable. 120 nesting boxes are not going to bring back the squirrel gliders, brown tree creeper and flame robin because the noise of 45 heavy truck movements a day and 200 light vehicles per day plus 9 over dimensional movements over 20 months will frighten the birds away and the loss of mature trees leave them without a habitat.

There are no merits to this proposal as the long term impact is substantial. It has been seen that sheep do not graze underneath the panels because of loss of vegetation. Plants cannot grow under hot conditions and the reason that vegetation could have been noted by Mr Love is because this has been an outstanding good wet year. As I stated before you need to monitor these sites in February. Sheep need trees with shade not solar panels so it is rubbish to suggest that sheep could graze under the panels. Maybe toy sheep!

The fire risk is a worry with the heat emitting from these panels which could spark a fire. A 10 metre asset protection zone is not a sound buffer as sparks fly through the air especially when there is a 100k wind roaring. Lightening is a real problem and a cause of many country fires. The amount of water that is needed for this project is a major concern and it would need to be sourced from further afield than Culcairn and Walla which leads to more truck movements and more dust and dirt. It is estimated to be 833 truck movements of water.

The decommissioning of this solar farm needs to be noted also. It would take another eight months to remove the solar panels and dig up the underground cables and who is going to guarantee that this will happen. What if this company goes broke. There has been no planning on how the land will be restored. What happens to these 700,000 solar panels? I do not want to leave a mess for my grand children because of poor foresight. There is expected to be 60 to 80 million tons of waste expected from solar panels in 2050. Is this good for the environment?

Manufacturing solar panels requires toxic chemicals such as hydrochloric acid and hydrofluoric acid and the refining process produces silicon tetrachloride a toxic compound so imagine what toxic carbon emissions are released from 700,000 panels.

Solar farms take up a lot of space. To produce one megawatt of power up to 4 hectares of land is needed. The land degradation and the glare from these farms is unbearable in out hot Australian summers. There is also electromagnetic interference which can impact the farmer’s navigational tools. Solar farms cause more damage to the environment than good as well as ruin people lives.