To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing in strong support of the proposed Walla Walla Solar Farm. We cannot deny the effects of global warming on our planet any longer. We must act now to fight against our carbon emissions and reliance on fossil fuel energy for the sake of our planet and our future generations. In fact, I would even say we are behind the eight ball on this.

Solar is an ideal solution for this with an abundance of sunshine freely and continuously available. The site of the proposed Walla solar farm in my opinion is ideal. Whilst there have been many opinions on the quality of land, and those opposed to the solar farm will have you believe it is prime land, the fact is, it is not prime land it is class 4-6, and best suited to sheep grazing as is the current practice. By building the solar farm on this site two objectives can be achieved – continued sheep grazing and the production of much needed clean renewable energy. Even if the continuing false argument about the land being prime and should therefore be reserved for food production, was true, it is not community or public owned land, it is privately owned land and the owners are under no obligation to farm it at all. They cannot, nor should they be told what to do with their own property by neighbours or other community members. This land failed at public auction twice without a single bid prior to the current owners purchasing it to extend their own boundary.

There is a lot of noise coming from neighbouring property ‘Orange Grove’ regarding the visual effect it will have from their function centre. As I understand it there is a proposed thick vegetation buffer around the site and the site has been amended to now be set back even further from Orange Grove. It is ridiculous for a neighbour to think they have ownership of the view provided by privately owned neighbouring land. A business cannot be marketed based on the view of what someone else owns. I don’t particularly like the look of my neighbour’s house, but that is my problem not theirs, so choosing to be more about solutions and less about problems I planted a row of trees in my own paddock to screen it out. Just because someone chose to build their function centre complete with large glass windows overlooking someone else’s land does not mean the landowner should be restricted from doing what they want with their own land. Was the landowner consulted about the impact the function centre would have on their property prior to the function centre’s approval? It’s not that I am against diversification of farming practices, in fact I think it is essential for our famers to be able to earn a secondary stream of income in order to prop themselves up during times of low or no annual return due to draught or other unpredictable weather events. Having productive land is meaningless if our farmers cannot afford to continue farming it year after year in times of draught. I just think it is ironic that one neighbour can diversify but then object to their neighbours diversifying.

This project will provide both temporary and full-time employment opportunities with a flow on effect to the local economy. It is disappointing the local council did not recognise this opportunity for the local community. I trust now this application is being looked at by an independent body and not just at a local level, where family ties, friendships and emotions run so deeply, it will be looked at as a valued opportunity for the township of Walla Walla and indeed the planet.

The saying, ‘T*he sun will rise again’* has never been truer. Whilst the community are currently divided on this solar farm through fear of change and scare mongering campaigns, *the sun will rise again* and it’s energy should be harvested.