I grew up in Walla Walla and continue to visit regularly as my family have lived there for over 30years. I object to the proposed Walla Walla solar farm for following reasons:

1. The proposed site is situated on prime agricultural land and will have a significant impact on surrounding farmers, many of which have been farming in the area over many generations. I am not against renewable energy, it is certainly a necessity that we need clean energy and now, however there are many other sites in rural NSW that would be more suitable for the solar farm. There is a new report that is currently being prepared that is expected to show the agricultural land to be extremely good quality, this report and the current figures need to be taken into account before a decision is made.
2. The solar farm will create jobs, however there is no guarantee that locals will be employed where possible and no guarantee that workers will be accommodated in the local small towns such as Walla Walla. If this does not happen the argument that the solar farm will boost local economies is questionable.
3. The loss of habitat of many local wildlife (eg squirrel gliders, brown tree creeper and flame robins) and also the destruction of nature and established flora and fauna is concerning. A considerable amount of land will be cleared and dams filled. Have in depth studies been done on this and given careful consideration? The placement of nesting boxes for the bird species will in no way replicate or replace the natural environment for the bird species that has been lost. The impact seems to be underestimated and consequences undervalued.
4. The high fire risk the panels will pose is inevitable and unavoidable. In the height of summer , temperatures can be consistently in the mid 40s. The potential of fire is already a huge concern for communities in the area who have already endured some truly devastating fire events. Adding further risk is stressful for local residents and the consequences are potentially life threatening to local towns, people and wildlife. In the light of recent fire events in NSW, we should be seriously looking at deceasing risks in fire prone areas, not increasing risks and exacerbating potential fire events.
5. There has been no communication or explanation about what will happen to the panels at the end of their life cycle. Will nearby farms be used as a dumping ground for the panels? Most likely. What is the impact this will have of surrounding farms? There are too many unknowns and not enough transparency.

Consideration needs to be given to people, community and wildlife not just economics and money.