

To the Independent Planning Commission Panel.

I took the opportunity to speak to the panel so have already raised concerns. I am resident R5a and the owner of Orange Grove Gardens. I have spoken about the impacts I believe that will be detrimental to the potential survival of my business in both my original submission and when speaking on Thursday.

There are a couple of things I would also like to further raise, as I still strongly believe these have not been addressed.

**Fire:** This is of concern as with the Walla Walla Tip fire it travelled in a West/Nwest direction, if a fire was to begin within the solar Project my business and homestead are potentially in the direct path as this is predominately the way the wind moves. In speaking with Transgrid if either a Sheep or Corellas chew the wires ( Corellas are a major concern and not mentioned at all) the best case is it will short out, the worst case is that of a fire starting. This does not place much faith as there has been no local consultation with the Rural fire services and local members have been advised they do not have to enter. In the event of a fire it would need to be supported by either Culcairn or Albury/Thurgoona or Lavington. Which is then a time delay due to distance on responding to the fire. After hearing Bill speak, fire vehicles cannot turn around and issues at Bowen should be considered, this only heightens our concern. Please see the 2 pictures below and the weed growth at both sites **does not** show well maintained vegetation and weed control, posing further fire concerns

Coleambally last May 2019 with the weed growth underneath the panels



Darlington point Sept 2020 has weeds and Paterson's curse to the height of the panels.



Disturbing the soil, this has been something we have continually been advised is minimal, not sure if I agree, picture of Finlay South under construction. It does not look like vineyard to me



**Heat Island Effect-** The Shepparton study is based on 1MW, when you put one person in a room it makes no impact, place 100 people and heat compounds and all of a sudden the room temp changes. Why if these have been in place for over 10 years that studies have not been done to record the effect of cumulative heat, in summer 2019 the temperature did not drop below 40 for 3 weeks straight with night time temps remaining in the 30's. How will this impact the heat generated if the air temp does not drop below 30 for weeks on end, night or day? This is 300MW not a 1MW, so while it creates a base of increase temp, will the cumulative effect be much greater?

### **Recommendations of Consent**

Maintaining Agricultural Land capability: The land is classified as rural land – to allow an industrial project to go ahead, the sell has been on maintaining livestock under the panels. Again ref Bowen, Animals wool has been caught in the mechanisms, eating of the wires has been raised. While the intent is clear © below gives the proponent an out if it is “not practicable” This development has been based right from the start on sheep running under the panels, the proponent should be accountable for meeting DSE(Dry stock Equivalent) to ensure the maintaining of the agricultural capability.

### **LAND MANAGEMENT**

13. The Applicant must maintain the agricultural land capability of the site, including:

(a) establishing the ground cover of the site within 3 months following completion of any construction

or upgrading;

(b) properly maintaining the ground cover with appropriate perennial species and weed management;

and

(c) maintaining grazing within the development footprint, **where practicable,**

unless the Secretary agrees otherwise.

### **Nosie/Dust and Visual**

The below indicates the guidelines for noise, but the dust and visual has no quantifiable guidelines to determine what is acceptable. There is a dust and glare issue again at Bowen which is also angulating land, more similar in landscape to this project than those Projects built in Colemably, Balranald, Darlington point all being built on flat land. We are 9 stories elevated with hobby farms and homes built on the ridge to the east. How do they minimise glare? How do they really minimise dust and what is acceptable?

### **Noise**

18. The Applicant must minimise the noise generated by any construction, upgrading or decommissioning

Activities on site in accordance with the best practice requirements outlined in the Interim Construction

Noise Guideline (DECC, 2009), or its latest version.

#### Dust

19. The Applicant must minimise the dust generated by the development.

#### Visual

20. The Applicant must:

(a) minimise the off-site visual impacts of the development, including the potential for any glare or reflection;

(b) ensure the visual appearance of all ancillary infrastructure (including paint colours) blends in as far

as possible with the surrounding landscape; and

(c) not mount any advertising signs or logos on site, except where this is required for identification or

safety purposes

I also question the removal of 200,000 panels yet the capacity has not varied. On request, the company is unable to provide the panel for us to research this correctly. The boundary on the Southeast corner has not moved. While there is a setback and 95 hectares is to remain in agricultural production. Then why not move the boundary??

The below clause indicates that after they have approval that they can submit changes to plans, programs, strategy and upgrading with approval by the Secretary. Which indicates that to place the 95 hectares in panels, they will not have to go through the whole process as it is within the boundary of the development. Potentially without any consultation

A request is made that a condition or clause is considered: **The 95 hectares set back on the south east corner cannot have solar panels placed on it for the life of the project.** I have in a letter from FRV that this was done to protect my business, if this is true than this must be considered given the clause below negates any protection to that setback

#### Revision of Strategies, Plans and Programs

2. The Applicant must:

(a) update the strategies, plans or programs required under this consent to the satisfaction of the Secretary prior to carrying out any upgrading or decommissioning activities on site; and

(b) review and, if necessary, revise the strategies, plans or programs required under this consent to the satisfaction of the Secretary within 1 month of the:

- submission of an incident report under condition 7 of Schedule 4;
- submission of an audit report under condition 9 of Schedule 4; or

- any modification to the conditions of this consent.

### **Updating and Staging of Strategies, Plans or Programs**

3. With the approval of the Secretary, the Applicant may submit any strategy, plan or program required by

this consent on a progressive basis.

To ensure the strategies, plans or programs under the conditions of this consent are updated on a regular

basis, the Applicant may at any time submit revised strategies, plans or programs to the Secretary for

approval.

With the agreement of the Secretary, the Applicant may prepare any revised strategy, plan or program

**without undertaking consultation with all the parties** referred to under the relevant condition of this

consent.

Notes:

- While any strategy, plan or program may be submitted on a progressive basis, the Applicant must ensure that all

development being carried out on site is covered by suitable strategies, plans or programs at all times.

- If the submission of any strategy, plan or program is to be staged, then the relevant strategy, plan or program

must clearly describe the specific stage to which the strategy, plan or program applies, the relationship of this

stage to any future stages, and the trigger for updating the strategy, plan or program.

**Mental Health and the community** – a speaker that spoke for the project mentioned the mental health of the landowners and not having the stress of future income, it is concerning that the mental effect that this process has had on neighbouring landowners and the community has not been given the same consideration. In the departments recommendation it clearly identifies that within 5km, 41 people objected while only 14 people were for the project. Does this not speak volumes about how this local community feels about this project. Not to mention that at the local High school Students are not allowed to talk about the proposed Solar Farm. How is that helping mental health when families for and against the project have children that are bystanders in this process.

It was also raised that Orange Grove Gardens the function centre was set up for survival of the farm. This is not the case, my background is hospitality, I decided to set this up because of the resources of the established gardens and this was my trade. I married a farmer it did not mean I had to be a farmer. It also gave me the opportunity to contribute to my family while raising my boys. I borrowed

the money myself and set up the function business, then moving into Eco Tourism separate from the farming business. I did this without any impact to the natural resources, farmland or neighbouring properties.

FRV made a comment that the Community contributions would be available to businesses like Orange Grove. I question that the council would see this in the same light, or would other community businesses would deem it fair if I am seeking access to this money. The same as we were not offered the \$10k, we read it in a council document that we had been offered. What is said to council and the department is not what is being told to the neighbouring properties or the community.

The last point I would like to make is that it is disappointing that the important agricultural mapping has not been released; there are no guidelines and measurable parameters for Visual and dust yet Bowen, which was written by the same company NGH, have identified serious issue in relation to visual Fire and livestock. There are no independent reports/research and we are expected to take on face value what a company indicates to be true.

We also received an email last week to contribute to guidelines of engagement for these projects. It seems all a little late, especially when this will be one of the biggest projects within Australia. It is not low lying 4000 panels at the Albury Tip. It is 700000 panels on undulating land, panels sitting 4m high. This is not Balranald, Finlay, Coleambally that all need irrigation to farm, this is high reliable rainfall country that should be protected for the use it is currently classed as.

Trish Feuerherdt

Orange Grove Gardens