

I write this objection as am strongly aware of the stress, anxiety, conflict and emotional turmoil being created by the proposed solar developments in our shire and further afield. The developments are opportunistic and I believe will be detrimental in the long term to our healthy and financially strong community if they proceed. If approved I feel that conflict and stress seen by solar developments in other communities will only increase here through construction and operation. This opposes the aims of the renewable energy action plan. We must see through the clever marketing and use proven research on similar scales to draw out the true ramifications.

Our family declined to be involved in a nearby solar development due to so many issues with a main reason being significant objection from community.

The place for these massive large scale solar developments is on arid less productive land. Government should push solar to Renewable Energy Zones deemed to have these characteristics.

I oppose these developments as I know how agriculturally valuable land in our Shire is in comparison to other areas of our state. Solar is not agriculture. I think largely the term "agrivoltaics" are a marketing strategy as with much of the other information developers provide.

Drought has brought suffering in other areas whilst Greater Hume has agriculturally prospered. This area has supported drought and fire affected areas providing lost feed and fodder. We have seen minimal pasture for the last 2 seasons but cropping here has provided a valuable feed source due to suitable rainfall. Once under panels sowing and hay crops will be unable to occur. The value of this land in Greater Hume is being muchly underestimated.

Government Ministers responded to us that NSW would undertake Important Agricultural Land Mapping to protect agricultural land in our state yet this lays dormant, stagnant and undetermined for over 2 years.

While the Important Agricultural Mapping lays dormant NSW DPI are aware old and incorrect soil mapping has caused problems yet NSW Planning is still using this soil mapping as basis for assessment. Why on earth then has the DPI made no comment in relation to this project?

The application for this proposal says the land is Class 4 and Class 6 under the old and incorrect land soil capability assessment scheme.

Our family has undertaken contract work on some of the land proposed for this development. That land is productive and in our view is much better than the class 4 definition and too good for solar. The loss of just hay production on only part of the land will cause a loss of hay contracting work for us with great value over the life of the development. My view is the economic loss to agriculture over the long term of the development is being underestimated including post farm gate. Why should business like ours and that of Orange Grove be the collateral damage in exchange for short term construction benefits to other business.

They market the retention of agriculture through the grazing of sheep but how will this occur on the class 6 land defined as severe to very severe grazing limitations if we want to believe such information? It is not correct. And if climate change is to continue where will the pasture come from to feed these stock? I am curious why some developers advise they do not graze sheep for WHS issues and how can appropriate husbandry take place with sheep under panels. Further research is required.

Recommended conditions advise that grazing is to be maintained where practicable. Who and what determines if grazing is practicable, and if not how is agricultural retention guaranteed. With our experience we would question the ability to continue sheep production to the level suggested when under panels with the loss of the capacity to sow grazing crops and undertake haymaking.

Why is legislation, policies and plans that promote the protection of agricultural land being simply eclipsed by permissibility of the Infrastructure SSEP. One of the Greater Hume LEP's aim is to protect and retain productive agricultural land. A Greater Hume Shire RU1 zone objective is to maintain the rural landscape character of the land. They determined these objectives for a reason and this land is productive.

I deplore the wording of the recommendation where it states that the development is not inconsistent with the objectives of the RU1 zone noting 2 of the objectives which I actually believe one of which is incorrect and that the land will suffer from fragmentation and alienation, but also omits the following objectives that this development contradicts being:

- To encourage sustainable **primary industry production** by maintaining and enhancing the natural resource base.
- To **minimise conflict between land uses** within this zone and land uses within adjoining zones.
- **To maintain the rural landscape character of the land.**

Large Scale solar is far from aesthetically pleasing and I believe contradicts the RU1 zone objectives. I have now visited many solar farms all are ugly, industrial, daunting and visually confronting and most of them had noticeable weed burden beneath the panels. I have also viewed construction being extremely different to a peaceful rural outlook.

The only way to somewhat retain the agricultural landscape is to absolutely surround the development with many rows of mature trees on every single boundary of the development. The Clean Energy Council and the Shepparton independent witness to the Victorian Planning Panel - Ken Guthrie also recommends that heat flow both by radiation and convection can be substantially reduced by suitable screening with a buffer of dense vegetation surrounding the solar farm that should be visually dense from the ground to higher than the top of the PV array at its highest point.

Tubestock trees are problematic as they take many years to grow and will not meet any mitigation measure for years to come. It puzzles me how the department could ensure the landscape screening minimises views within 3 years and I believe clarity is required to define the meaning of "minimise views" and what measure would be in place to determine what is acceptable. If views of the infrastructure remained after the 3 years what action could be applicable to negate the loss of visual amenity. The departments conditions should say that trees should be visually dense prior to construction and operation to ensure the mitigation can meet its measure.

I question how such an impact on the environment can supposedly save the environment. To me it appears hypocritical, all the products required to construct this development are mined from the ground. We have amazing ecology in our area, many species of wildlife, migratory birds, and the nearby gum swamp. How will offsets and making payments actually overcome the true impact on our local environment and ecology? I strongly doubt there has been enough research undertaken to truly determine the impact to the environment.

In regards to noise, dust, glare and potentially other items, just to request the developer to minimise the impact is unacceptable. There must be measurable parameters to which the applicant must adhere. In regards to the conditions stating hours of work I cannot understand how the applicant could be allowed to determine what is inaudible for a non associated receiver, how would they know if they are not at their location?. Bomen Solar development is currently the subject of significant glare being investigated by the EPA. I would therefore question the impact of glare on elevated areas such as Coach Road and the number rural residential properties in that location or other elevated areas?

I am extremely worried for the risk to our family of volunteer firefighters after the past recent events. Workplace Health and Safety issues will affect the site with firefighting and these issues should be consulted with the local brigades and considered at the time of determination, not when it is too late in a Fire Management Plan. If firefighters cannot enter the development surely the greater risk to the community should form part of the approval process especially considering nearby bushfire prone land.

It concerns me that there is little clarity about whether the power generated is actually required to meet the needs of supply and what happens to this massive footprint when technology changes and it becomes obsolete or inefficient. We have heard about solar grid issues and instability already, if foreign owned companies leave town or go broke how can decommission by landowners be assured. Financial guarantee of decommission should be a condition of approval.

I am usually of the view there is a happy medium with most things, but I believe the developers in our area have not truly listened to the surrounding community, it has been more about marketing than

mitigation. An example is the location of the substation that is far closer to the non associated receiver at R2 than to the associated landowners that receives a financial benefit.

Finally I really believe that should any of these solar developments be approved there will be further detrimental ramifications that we will see in the future such as waste. If we really want sustainability, and believe that our changing climate is a reason for renewable energy development then we also need to understand that climate is the main issue for food production and therefore should be protecting agricultural land and securing food and fodder production for the future.