

Planning Services

27 August 2018

Department of Planning and Environment

GPO Box 39,

SYDNEY NSW 2001

Attention: Director - Resources and Energy Assessment

Dear Sir/Madam,

Objection Submission regarding the Proposed Springdale Solar Development, Application No. 8703

I write to lodge my **objection** to the proposed Springdale Solar Development based on the listed points hereunder. My family property immediately adjoins the proposed development that is to be placed as the dominant industrial feature in the scenic rural valley currently featuring peace, tranquility and rural views.

Fire Risk, Safety, Water & Access to my home:

If a bush fire was to start in the proposed solar area beside my historic 1800's built home my only exit would be blocked and my family trapped. This is **NOT** acceptable. My driveway is the only exit from my historical home and it goes right through the middle of the proposed development. What safe guards and provisions do the developers propose to put in place to allow my family to exit safely and without being harmed if this was to occur?

If the solar development is approved, the extensive amount of electrical equipment required would significantly increase the risk of bushfire. Will the developers have a permanent and adequate water supply on site to stop a bush fire if this was to happen? My family and our surrounding neighbours would need our own dam water supplies to protect our properties in the case of a bush fire.

And what security measures are going to be put in place to prevent my family from accessing and being exposed to the solar development as we drive in and out of my home. What will prevent my family from being negatively impacted because of this?

The EIS states *"3.2.10 Security fencing Security fencing would be installed around the perimeter of the solar farm to an indicative height of up to 2200 mm, subject to final design which would seek to minimise the visual impact of the fencing while ensuring that it is appropriate for security and safety purposes. A*

series of security cameras would be installed on the perimeter fencing and would be fitted with infrared sensors to provide 24/7 coverage of the Site boundary."

Fencing around the perimeter but not along my driveway.

Health:

I wonder about the yet to be determined health effects of living next to a solar development of this size? Can the developer guarantee in writing that there are no negative effects attributable to living next to a solar development of this size?

What may be the possible, yet unknown side effects of being exposed to this many solar panels? I have heard that a solar development of this size can change the temperature.

My husband and I have three (3) children and the very thought of them actually living only 300 metres from this development, and also working our property immediately adjacent the development - it just horrifies me. My family could be exposed to a development that may be harmful or even deadly. As asbestos was once thought safe, and marketed as a "magic mineral", is now an infamous public health menace.

Cleaning chemicals:

The area I live in is a high wind corridor and the chemicals used to clean the panel will have the potential to end up in my home's drinking water. What protection is proposed to stop this from happening and to prevent these chemicals from being washed into my tanks and dams after rain and flood waters?

The EIS mentions "a once in a 100-year flood" - however in the thirteen (13) years my family has lived in this area we have experienced and recorded major flooding three (3) times. This area is identified in the EIS as leading to the Yass Valley water catchment. What safeguards are proposed to be put in place to prevent the Yass Valley water catchment and our drinking water from being contaminated?

Visual:

My historical home and our preferred new home site are both situated on an elevated area, higher in altitude above the proposed development and only 300 metres from two (2) of the proposed development boundaries.

The developers say they propose to plant screening trees. My husband has taken a GPS reading which confirms our current historical home site is **7 metres higher** than the proposed screening area. The developers have proposed 5 litre pot size plantings which is totally impractical in the short term and may never screen the development from my current home even in the long

term. This would need to be changed to very large screening trees and even this may not work. Certainly there is absolutely no chance of screening the solar industrial site from our higher elevated new home option position. I consider that the visual aspects of this proposed development are being brushed over and dismissed in a very patronising way by the proponent developer.

The proponent employed photographer accessed and photographed our general view area as seen from our current home. Selectively, it seems, the photographs then given to us only depicted the view to our East. The southern view photos have not been supplied and the proponent now says they were never actually taken. The south view highlights an uninterrupted elevated view of where the proposed solar development is planned to be. Both myself and my husband were present when these photographs were taken and we recall that the photographer took a GPS reading of the location. Why do the developers deny these were taken? That because they are so incriminating as to the detriment that we will suffer is our conclusion.

* Page 99 of the EIS, *Table 23: Operational visual impacts to identified receptors states as our home as V14 – Resident with Sensitivity to Change HIGH, Magnitude of Change HIGH and Significance of Visual Effect HIGH.*

* The EIS states that “A total of fifteen visual receptor locations were identified to represent viewpoints for the assessment of potential impacts on views as a result of the Project. Of these, the significance of the visual impacts were assessed as high for one residence”.

This residence is my historic home.

My historical home is 300 meters from the boundary containing the industrial style development structures. Not even in my wildest dreams did I ever contemplate that my family would be living next to and accessing through a large scale industrial development. I have lived in my rural lifestyle family home for 13 years and many other similar minded people either lived here or have come to this idyllic location since we arrived. I find it completely at odds with responsible planning outcomes that we would become threatened with the unnecessary and contradictory "dumping" of a major industrial enterprise in our midst. It is neither fair nor reasonable, given that both state and local government agencies have historically supported and approved the rural and rural residential development that we value and possess, that we would now be expected to be content to both access through and reside happily next to this incredibly large industrial site with its both known effects and yet unknown possible detrimental side effects.

The developer's expectation that I will be satisfied to substitute my present natural pasture and bush land view to a commercial landscape of 350,000 solar panels, 22 power conversion stations, an electrical switch station of 4,500m², a control and maintenance building and the

associated roads and car parking infrastructure for an operational life of 30 years is completely unreasonable and not acceptable.

Glint and Glare:

The EIS has used a DISCUSSION PAPER prepared by the Department of Planning (DoP2010) as the basis for its conclusion that solar panels do not produce noticeable glare and that the glare compares to existing roofs and or building structures. I absolutely dispute this interpretation in making such claims.

People who live adjacent to much smaller solar developments have identified the glare from the solar panels as having a significant impact on their daily lives (Described by Local resident Jennifer Howlett in the Canberra Times Article 7 March 2014 – *“Bright lights put living with solar farms in perspective”*).

The Springdale solar proposal is to install 350,000 solar panels, including galvanised steel structures to support them, 22 power conversion stations, an electrical switch station of 4,500m² and a control building. Located approximately 300 meters from my house, these will massively increase the present level of glint and glare generated from the site and which is currently nil.

Traffic:

All the equipment needed to build this development, being transported in by approximately **75 heavy vehicle movements per day**, will have a huge and significant negative impact on the existing roads. Maintenance on the roads in our area by the council is minimal and not designed for this type of traffic.

Tallagandra Lane is mostly unsealed, containing a single vehicle width culvert. The proposed required usage of this road by the developer will provide an **unacceptable safety risk** to all residents. As well the proposed usage of the narrow East Tallagandra Road which will endanger both local residents and the many cyclists that frequent it. The road through Sutton Village, across the small culvert, past the Post Office, Bakery, Sutton Primary School, and the Child Care facility is also not suitable for this many extra heavy movements per day.

The additional noise of the extra traffic and constant use of compression braking by the heavy vehicles will be unacceptable, particularly outside the Childcare and the Bakery.

There are no pedestrian crossings for the children to cross the road safely outside the school and the childcare centre on the proposed route where the heavy vehicles will be driving.

The roads in our local district are stretched to the limit and are not coping well with our normal development growth let alone with a massive increase applicable to this proposal.

Sutton Chatter (May 2018) reported that:

The developers of the proposed Springdale Solar development have confirmed that there will be, "Up to approximately 75 heavy vehicle movements per day during the peak material delivery period....". More than twice as many as initially advised.... It should also be recognised that these heavy vehicle movements are on top of the already advised up to 400 light vehicle movements per day to and from the site...."

Dust:

My home is only 300 metres on 2 boundaries away from the proposed development and it will be subject to the substantial dust that will occur because of the many trucks and vehicles during the construction stage that the 200 person workforce will bring. This dust will cover my home and get inside of it, on the clothes on my washing line and end up in my tank water when it rains. The same water my family drinks and washes in.

What measures are proposed to be put in place to prevent this from happening?

Noise and Vibration:

Page 125 Noise and Vibration of the EIS calls my historical home R2 with the table 42 on Page 133 showing exceeding of noise in all 3 categories: Site Establishment, Piling/Foundations and Assembly.

The EIS states: "Construction activities are predicted to comply with the recommended noise management levels at most receiver locations with the exception of four receivers, R1 360 Tallagandra Lane, R2 156 Kiaora Lane, R3 141 Tallagandra Lane and R5, during certain construction stages. An exceedance of 11 dB(A) has been predicted during the site establishment stage at receivers R1, R2, R3 and R5. During the piling/foundations stage exceedance of up to 10 dB(A) have been predicted at R1 and R2. Exceedances of up to 4 dB(A) are predicted at R1 and R2 during the assembly stage."

This is **NOT** acceptable. What measures are the proposed Solar developers proposing to prevent this happening?

Footprint:

I have seen that the proposed plan has slightly changed because of the tests completed but there has been **no change** from my property boundaries. The proposed development, as initially proposed, remains right on the boundary between my historical home and the landowner.

We have requested information regarding the distance between our boundary and the solar panels, but the developers have not passed on this information.

We are the home **most impacted** by this proposed development and yet we have not been given answers regarding our concerns about the proximity of this development to our home.

The developers have made no attempt to move the proposed development away from our home and away from our driveway.

RU6 Zone:

I believe the proposed Solar Development should be put on hold until the Yass Valley Council identifies and decides its vision for the area regarding proposed RU6 Zoning e.g. what the Council would like to see done with the land in this area and if the proposed solar development in this area would be the best use of the land. The proposed Solar development is not a farm and its land use is not consistent with the rural land use in the surrounding area.

No doubt we all have the responsibility of supporting alternate energy generation and ensuring its promotion. But surely highest and best use of geographic sites is first and foremost. It is beyond my imagination that the proposed site as solar generation use is its highest and best use. The undoubted effect on adjoining and general area property values - what study has been commissioned in that regard? And what method of compensation is proposed in that regard? And who will determine this?

Benefits:

I believe the benefits have been overstated.

The developers offered a financial compensation package that looked to address the negative affect the proposed development would have on my family. This package was put to us on two occasions. On both occasions it was rejected outright by us and similarly by our neighbours who border the proposed solar development.

A third time the developer offered practically the same agreement first offered to us. This time it was in the form of a deed of agreement. The group of neighbours were told this document wasn't meant to "scare us". We were told it was only confirming their offer and we could sign

it if we wanted or not sign. We were told if we did sign it and change our mind it was easy to cancel. The developer said it was written in plain language that was easy to understand and that we “didn’t need to have a solicitor look at it”.

The developer representatives at our first meeting agreed that our property **would be devalued** if the proposed Solar Development was approved. However, in the second meeting this comment was denied by them.

The fringe rural population surrounding Canberra has grown dramatically. Property values have kept pace with the reliable Canberra upward trending property market and families have enjoyed the idyllic lifestyle they craved in the scenic tablelands countryside. With proximity to their urban workplace, education and amenity that is unmatched elsewhere in Australia. Approval should not be given to a development proposal that flies in the face of what an ordinary person would ever have ever considered being built in such a location.

The EIS relies on Renew Estate to consult, negotiate, listen to and act upon the community's concerns to ensure the successful integration of this development into our community. Both my husband's and my experience in dealing with the developer to date leads me to the conclusion that the developer has not carried out this function.

I ask myself what substantial benefits for NSW and the local community? Obvious benefits will perhaps be for the site land owner, the developer and the ACT. I believe those employed for this development will mostly spend their money in the ACT and not in NSW - and further that many of the listed benefits in the development application will not be received by the local NSW area but more so by the ACT. Our residents will bear the long-term economic pain with property values being reduced markedly.

Contract allocation source and a possible shortage of construction workers in the ACT and surrounding region would require labour for this development to be brought in from other areas.

Drought:

I consider that I share the majority view in saying that this important project is geographically misplaced and given also that New South Wales is currently 100% drought declared I am convinced that our tax dollars and investment funds would be welcome and best allocated to general broad acre rural areas which are suffering financial hardship and need alternative income to offset their sole reliance on farm income.

The residents of the Sutton area have the luxury of driving 10-15 minutes to Canberra, with a population of over 350,000 and where job opportunities are numerous. This is the exact opposite for land owners living in a small populated area which do not have this option.

The NSW Government Submission on AEMO's Integrated Systems Plan - March 2018 on Page 10 the Figure 3 shows a map with three (3) Potential Energy Zones in NSW identified – Hay, Dubbo and Armidale. Stating the South-West Energy Zone containing particularly strong solar resources.

* **Sutton located 10 minutes from Canberra is not one of those identified zones.**

It is my understanding that electricity can be diverted to different destinations at the flick of a switch. And that distance is not a major factor. Why is it then necessary to even contemplate the Sutton heavily populated rural zone? There are undoubtedly low population sites adjacent suitable electricity carrier lines that would meet selection criteria and that would welcome a solar industrial installation of the mammoth size proposed.

Compensation:

I am **strongly opposed** to this Solar development. But if approved, and as the adjoining property owner closest and most impacted by the proposed solar development, I strongly believe my family is entitled to full compensation for all losses suffered. This compensation must include all loss attributable to this development. Such factors as listed below must be considered but not be limited to:

- * decrease in the value of my property;
- * loss of the future value of my property;
- * compensation to include the special value of the land to myself and my family;
- * loss attributable to the disturbance, mental stress suffered, health and anxiety caused to my family;
- * compensation for all and any additional costs my family may experience as a result of this Solar development;
- * compensation for all costs and disadvantages suffered should my family decide that relocation is the only acceptable alternative to remaining next door to an unacceptable neighbour situation.

I thank you for the opportunity to object and really do hope on this occasion that you will understand and allow the want of the ordinary people to prevail and accordingly reject this proposal in this locality.

Yours sincerely,

Jacqui Hassall

“Tintinhull” Cottage

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