

SUBMISSION TO INDEPENDENT PLANNING COMMISSION
SPRINGDALE SOLAR FARM

I make this submission as a local resident of Sutton and a landholder that is affected by the proposed development.

I co authored the Sutton District Community Association Inc (SDCA) submission and appeared at the IPC hearing on 29 January on behalf of the Association. I have also had input into the Sutton Solar Action Group (SSAG) submission, but thought it also important to make a personal submission to the IPC.

I live in property R18 (257 Browns Lane, Sutton) and have lived there since 2008. Whilst I cannot see the development from my living room window, (due to trees on my property), when I walk approximately 30 metres from my front door down my driveway, I have a clear view of the proposed site over both properties, R2 and R35. In that area I also have a set of horse/cattle holding yards which we use on an almost daily basis as well as a set of stables that are likewise used extensively by us, meaning that I am in this vicinity on my property on a regular basis. In three of our paddocks on the western side of our property, which we use for horse riding, the proposed site is clearly visible, as it is from two our paddocks to the south of our house.

The site is also clearly visible from the time I drive into my driveway until I reach the point approximately 30 metres from my garage and front door.

The view of the site from my property, will not be able to be screened by any of the proposed vegetation screening due to the height elevation of my property in relation to the development and the undulating nature of the development site.

I find it highly disappointing and in fact offensive, that not once in the almost four years this development has been in the planning, has a representative of the developer/s or the DPIE made inquiries about the extent of our views of the development. Any assessment of our visual impact was obviously done on a computer, hundreds of kilometres away from my property. Simply speaking to a number of the long-term resident's and farmers in the area and asking why the site was referred to by them as "the ditch", would have given them some idea of the topography of the site.

Consultation -

As has been pointed out by numerous residents, the consultation with the local community by the developers (both Renew Estate & RES) as well as the DPIE has been almost non-existent.

As the IPC would be aware, the development was held up for approximately 19 months because the original developers, Renew Estate, were supposed to be undertaking sub-surface archaeological testing on the site as part of the Aboriginal Heritage Impact. It is now known that that work was never carried out and subsequently the DPIE will allow the new developer (RES), to undertake that work post approval, despite the objection lodged by the Ngunawal and Ngambri elders.

Throughout that 19 month period, the local community, through the SSAG, was forced to contact the DPIE on a number of occasions, to find out what was going on, as we had heard nothing from the developer throughout that entire time.

The IPC would also be aware, that out of frustration, the SSAG, through the Member for Goulburn, Wendy Tuckerman, met with the Planning Minister the Hon Rob Stokes, who on a number of occasions throughout our meeting, apologised to the community representatives about the project dragging on for so long and the community being kept in the dark by the developers and the DPIE.

The IPC may also be aware, that Mr Mike Young from DPIE advised Dianne Burgess by phone on 30 April, 2020 that the DPIE has been "lied" to by Renew Estate about the required sub surface archaeological testing. In a further conversation with Mr Young on 26 June 2020 I specifically asked if the actions of Renew Estate would be considered in the DPIE's assessment process, even though the development had been handed over to RES. Mr Young advised that it would be treated as one process and RES would not be able to argue that they were the actions of the previous developer for which they were not responsible. We supported that outcome as RES had informed everyone that they had had a complete handover by Renew Estate, so we understood that to mean, that RES's has undertaken its due diligence on the project, which should have alerted them to the significant shortcomings in Renew Estate's consultation and their inaction and misinformation throughout their time in charge of the development.

What I find reprehensible, is that **the deception by Renew Estate, and in Mr Young's words, the lying to DPIE, and the fact that the Minister felt compelled to meet with local residents and apologise to them to allay their concerns, has been airbrushed from the history of the project and does not even rate a mention in the Assessment Report.**

The actions of the DPIE from the time of the close of submissions, in August 2018, until the completion of the Assessment Report, should be subject to an independent inquiry.

What sort of message does this send to developers, if in their dealings with the DPIE, they feel that they can lie to the DPIE, however those actions can go unchallenged and unpunished?

This action displays a significant cultural problem within the DPIE and should be very concerning to the Minister and his Government.

This is why the SDCA submission recommended that the DPIE make some comment about the lack of consultation throughout this project.

Traffic -

The IPC will note from many of the original submissions to the EIS and also the SDCA's submission and evidence at the recent hearing, the major concern being raised by the local community is about the proposed route for development traffic.

I note the NSW Centre for Road Safety website states -

"Crashes involving heavy vehicles are often serious because of their size and weight, regardless of who is at fault. While their numbers make up only 2.5 per cent of NSW motor vehicle registrations and 8.3 per cent of kilometres travelled by all NSW vehicles, heavy vehicles are involved in about 17 per cent of all road fatalities".

As a person who has devoted the major portion of my working life to the protection of life and property, I will not stand silent if NSW Roads and Maritime and the Yass Valley Council

believe they can develop a safe Traffic Management Plan using the DPIE's proposed route for the development.

And as a local road user of 13 years, who frequents the Sutton Village, the amount of traffic and in particular heavy vehicle traffic in this vicinity is already at dangerous levels. One only needs to spend some time sitting on the veranda of the Sutton Bakery to watch and hear the numerous trucks that traverse the village streets. Every local has at least one story of a near miss where push bikes, motorcycles and family vehicles, compete with the heavy vehicle traffic on local roads and over a 50 year old volunteer built causeway, that are ill equipped to deal with the traffic.

As pointed out in the SDCA submission and evidence, any vehicle larger than a small truck, cannot traverse the causeway without going over the double unbroken lines and larger trucks, particularly those with a bogey, cannot traverse the Bakery corner, particularly heading south, without likewise crossing the double unbroken lines.

To even consider that it might be appropriate to develop a Traffic Management Plan for the proposed route would be totally irresponsible and a significant threat to every road user and pedestrian in the area.

I also note that the developers' investigated the use of Shingle Hill Way as a potential route, however rejected that idea. I support that decision, as Shingle Hill Way has a 10 tonne load limit and the approach to the causeway over the Yass River from either side, is a narrow roadway with double unbroken lines, as is the causeway, and the approaches to the causeway are blind to traffic travelling in either direction until you get close to the causeway itself. As there is no possibility of any heavy vehicles being able to move to the side of the road on either approach if a large vehicle/truck was coming in the other direction (see attached photo), Shingle Hill Way would be a dangerous route and is not a suitable alternate route for the development.

Other routes are available for consideration however the developers have sought not to explore those options. I believe **the IPC should give the developers no option, but to explore alternate traffic routes before any approval for the project is considered.**

I do not believe that this project is so vital to the NSW economy and community that our community's safety should be compromised by development traffic.



Shingle Hill Way causeway

Mark Burgess