**IPCN Objection Submission**

**Culcairn Solar Facility (SSD 10288)**

**Jim Parrett**

Dear Andrew and Zada

I am writing a submission in a forlorn hope that I may just be able to change your current way of thinking around large solar arrays and what they are doing to our community. I could write a lot of technical jargon however this has not been either read or acted upon in previous correspondence with either DPIE or IPCN. Actually communication is going to be my first point.

**Communication**

This is one of the most maddening things for us out here, the affected bystanders of your decision process, the lack of return dialogue from both DPIE and IPCN to date is nothing short of appalling, your decision process is affecting our current lives daily, and the future of our children and grand children’s lives and we get no poignant dialogue from any of you, it is galling to say the least. We understand that you may be busy, however one imagines you don’t put in the hours we do on a daily basis and we are having more pressure placed on our precious time in a vain attempt to stop this travesty and undermining of our lives and our businesses.

It really needs to improve, please.

I wont even go into the total lack of communication from the developers as I have said it all before however it appears no one is listening, I no longer communicate with my neighbour (Glenellen Solar), this is not my undertaking, the silence disclosure placed on them by the foreign developers is draconian and has placed us all in an interesting zone of neighbourhood living to say the least.

**Size of Development**

The size of this development and in conjunction with all four in our LGA is nothing but extreme, we note that DPIE try to mask over the impact, by stating that it is only 0.59% of the LGA agricultural footprint, however be reasonable, this comparison should be based on IAL land which all of the proposals are located in, not just general agriculture. You could also base it on the land that produced during the 2018/2019 drought, look at ABARE we were one of a very few areas that managed to provide food to this lovely country of ours, why don’t DPIE compare that as their % reckoner, why would they it wouldn’t help sell this horror story.

That aside what about breaking down and seeing the impacts that affect the neighbourhood and local farms, we can all use statistical analysis to prove our point however DPIE’s is all one way traffic to manifest this travesty in our back yard.

Keep in mind we are not anti solar, we are currently negotiating for a 5MW solar unit for our own property which will take up about 8ha of our land and if everyone did this there would be no impact on infrastructure, no impact on adjoining landholders and no impact on the local environment. We are the last on our local transmission line and have been informed by the local power authorities that we would be able to supply surplus to the grid on a daily basis, so therefore helping with the interesting energy targets set by the government, diversifying our business not just cashing up on the next trend set by our governments and not impacting our local environment or neighbouring landholders and their businesses, it makes sense and keeps all the money in Australia and not to some overseas shelf company who care not one drott for us here.

If you think that more is better at least place some reasonable expectations for the local community, our lives and our businesses and place a maximum size on these industrial plants, no more than 100ha per landholding, it may just then have a chance of blending in with our local environment and landscape, although I even think that size is too big.

You also need to remember that solar facilities can be placed elsewhere with minimum impact, whereas we can’t transfer our prime agricultural food bowl elsewhere, it is here for a reason, as with previous dialogue, one day you will realise this error in judgement when you are struggling to put food on the table.

**Opportunity**

In one context I can’t blame the landholders who have signed up for this latest bandwagon, the money being offered is nothing short of ridiculous, and before anyone labels that we are only jealous of their windfall you have to take into account that we were also offered the same deal for our properties by the proponents, many of us chose not to take that path for all of the reasons we keep putting to you.

Personally, I had a good look at it as I have some challenging health issues and it would be an easy fix, however a 40 year career in Natural Resource Management gave me the insight that this was not right for our area on such a grand scale, we still have to live here and conduct our businesses. I couldn’t undertake such a project that would affect my neighbours and the local environment as these developments will.

You also need to look at the background of some of the landholder proponents and their ability to farm. For instance the already approved Walla Walla Solar facility, both properties permanently leased out or share farmed, not a farmer amongst them, the same can be said for the two properties involved in the Culcairn submission, both properties have been leased out to local farming families long term, not farmed by the landholders themselves, and you wonder why us that do farm for a living are so distraught.

**Large Scale Solar Energy Guidelines**

In the original draft guidelines which we were of the opinion were not in favour of the landholder at all, however had a few items of protection for us as landholders, you can imagine our dismay when the adopted guidelines came out and had removed those items that protected us and just made the task of the developers even easier again, the entire process is to weighted to the developer and not protecting long term tax paying constituents.

I could go on, however time negates this currently, as I am about to embark on a 5,000km round trip to help out someone I don’t even know by taking a load of hay to drought stricken outback Queensland and I wont be back until after the submission cut off date, where are the landholder proponents in this undertaking, no where to be seen, you would find if they were that way inclined they wouldn’t be signing up for the solar bandwagon on our doorstep.

Regards

Jim Parrett

Dip Land Management

Rural and Environmental Services

Lewana Park

Jindera, NSW, 2642

0428 609 835