

I would like to formally object to the Culcairn Solar Development.

My relationship is the operation of a mixed farming enterprise encompassing meat, wool, grain and fodder production over 720 Ha. The business is located as a direct neighbour to the proposed development on three sides resulting in 6km of direct frontage to the site.

With this in mind there are a number of disturbing factors surrounding the development. From the approval process to this point, the site and size of the proposed development and cost.

The government departments to this point have showed little to no understanding of farming business's or indeed understanding of their own department's core business, with the exception of the GHC.

The DPI's initial failure to correctly identify the classification of land as highly productive, instead reverting to old data to make an assumption is a glaring example.

Follow this by the Department of Planning and Environment, which ironically has in its recommendation for the approval of the project, has shown minimal planning or care for the environment. For instance, the not so sudden closure of the coal power stations, the last one scheduled for 2035 and the new energy push has seen the department sway from logic and reason.

The proposed site is not even within one of 3 renewable energy zones, nor is it 10km away from the next approved development. This was one of the Departments old guidelines.

Furthermore the department has ignored the GH Councils position opposing the project. Given that the council is the voice of the community this is particularly disappointing.

Care for the environment is also lacking, given the proposed removal of ancient gum trees and the associated destruction of an entire ecosystem that comes about with the establishment of an industrial estate.

The proposed site is 95% plus Arable in a reliable high rainfall area, lending itself to mixed farming operations and has proved itself as a sustainable production base, even through the recent drier years.

There are other areas within the state with far less agricultural production ability, as already identified by the government. **MOVE IT!** and in doing so make the Developer pay for the poles and wire.

There are many and varied the costs involved with the proposed project, some which have already been born since learning of the proposal 3 years ago.

Social and personal costs have already occurred with the fracturing of friendships and uncertainty within the community.

New and old neighbours have invested heavily in the area with the belief of the agricultural surroundings being maintained as per government zoning. The proposed development will greatly diminish the visual amenity of the area.

The introduction of an industrial power plant to an agricultural area poses a significant environmental cost and strain.

The real threat of increased air temperature, (heat island effect), increased wind speed, increase of water runoff and erosion, panel glare both night and day, are all stark realities associated with this development and to this point lack scientific research and measurable constraints to manage them.

The sheer size of the proposal being 892ha is both unsustainable and not warranted for these reasons. Given that research into the heat island effect has only been carried out on 1Ha plot sizes, resulting in the rise of air temp by 3degrees, the exacerbation of this area to 892ha and the accumulative effect are untested.

Again the size of the project, with the clearing of the land and the flat plain surface of the panels will result in increased wind speeds from the project site. This, with the combination of increased air temperature results in increased evaporation and plant stress for neighbouring properties. This equates to less production and profitability for neighbouring land owners.

An increase in water runoff with guttering or erosion effect will both denude and scare the landscape. Again the panels are designed to trap the most amount of sunlight achievable by pivoting throughout the day. Lack of sunlight leads to poor plant growth, and by the panels design water is shed to a central point instead of evenly over the ground, thus creating erosion.

Given the proposed site proximity to water ways and the materials used in solar panels, pose a real threat to the environment - both toxic and currently unrecyclable.

The increase in fire risk is of real concern given the size and lay out of the proposal, not only to near neighbours, but the wider community. The security fencing and the connection rods between the panels ensure the area as a death trap and as such will not be entered. With this in mind the fire needs to exit the facility before RFS will engage. Given the proposed area of 892 Ha and the proximity of the site to the townships of Culcairn and Walla Walla, this is a major problem.

Devaluation and restrictions on neighbouring properties due to the introduction of an industrial estate is of major concern. Again people have invested in a rural zoned area with the belief it will stay that way. 8 foot security fencing, panel glare, inverter noise, increased traffic, disruption of farm machinery and animal movement, increase in criminal activity along with the already mentioned concerns are not desirable.

The neighbouring properties are being asked to burden the load of such a development with all the negatives and uncertainty, with little to no compensation.

In summary points of concern as follows:

- Inconsistency in planning instruments.
- Lack of measureable constraints or guidelines.
- Agriculture already a renewable resource.
- Large overseas developers that don't live here.
- Host landowners don't live on site.
- Financial ramifications for adjoining and near neighbours.
- Lack of visual screening around the entire development.
- Adjoining / near neighbours in holding pattern – can't sell now or during construction.
- Cumulative impacts of Walla, Jindera and Culcairn Solar Projects – asking the same people geographically to take the strain of construction and operations.

- 34 residences within 3km of the subject land.
- What is the government's contribution to the development, via grants, subsidies?

There is nothing socially, environmentally or economically sustainable about this project.

Stephen Pumpa