

I strongly object to this proposal for the following reasons:

The track to our house that we drive down multiple times every day will be directly adjacent to the solar panels and we will be disgusted every time we drive past. I am concerned that the noise impact and loss of rural amenity may cause myself and my wife to move after being here for such a long time and being a base for our family. Massive conflict has been caused that can never be repaired, we can only imagine this will get worse for the community if the project proceeds further. Solar projects need to be directed to the correct place in isolated areas. This development is way to big for this area and the cumulative impact with the Walla Walla Development will turn our area from a peaceful rural location to an industrial eyesore. We have a peaceful lifestyle around busy farming pursuits and believe as Council plans state that the rural landscape character of the land should be maintained.

We do not want to see the ugly eyesore of industrial solar panels from our home.

I am concerned that our land prices may decrease causing financial concerns and associated risk may increase our interest rates. Who would want to buy land here surrounded by a solar factory our land values would certainly decrease.

I am concerned about glare which we understand is downplayed by solar companies but recent photos show some shocking glare at the Bomen Solar site. I wonder if this impact our ability to work driving in paddocks, sowing crops and undertaking farm activities.

This land is Prime Productive Agricultural land:

My Grandfather came from South Australia in 1909 as family had already settled next door and word was sent to him to come and farm due to this being prime agricultural land.

Our farm is now in its fifth generation of farming and continues to grow stronger and stronger. We have expanded considerably through the wealth of this land. The farm has successfully produced over the last century. This should not be underestimated and the surrounding land has exactly the same potential.

My family has successfully farmed the adjoining land to this development and also leased / sharefarmed the proposed development land. We have successfully farmed through droughts, floods, fire and frost as this land is highly reliable and capable to do this.

During the most recent drought when the majority of NSW and QLD were suffering, we were still able to support our fellow Australians providing feed and fodder whilst also having enough for our own stock feed. This area has great resilience.

I would like to see my family farm continue being productive in the years ahead. We do not deserve to have to suffer with impacts from a solar development on our production and my grandchildren will have to deal with potential future impacts around them.

Why is it that a recent article on abc.net.au had the following headline:

“Grain harvest tipped to be second biggest on record, as trade tensions with China escalate”
By national regional affairs reporter Lucy Barbour and Marty McCarthy



Posted Tuesday 1 December 2020

Farmers in southern NSW are harvesting one of their best crops of canola.(ABC News: Jess Davis)

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-12-01/australian-grain-harvest-to-set-new-records/12935994#>

We do not believe the landowners comments at the Public Hearing on Tuesday 2nd March 2021 as we know that land in this area achieved record yields including our property in close proximity.

Land values in this area are extremely high with a nearby property (10kms away) recently selling for \$9000 an acre. So you tell me if this land is not deemed productive, then why is this land so highly sought after in the Greater Hume Shire?

2. Consultation:

In Neoen's report item 4.1.1 Organisation submissions, it states that the proponent has taken extensive steps to involve the community and neighbouring landholders and that infrastructure will not be visible yet nil consultation occurred during the planning process with my wife or myself. Nobody from Neoen has ever visited our property to have a discussion and the company has not considered the visible impact it will have from the front of our house to across the road. As per the following photo we will have a clear view directly across Cummings Road to the development site and associated infrastructure. There is no visual screening on Cummings Road so the infrastructure will be clearly visible.

This is a photo looking from our front verandah directly towards Cummings Road that will look directly at the panels and associated infrastructure. The panels will be directly along the road and in front of the Roseworthy house that we can see from our home. That is my clothes line to the left of the photo.



3. Mental Health:

I have concern about the impact this whole development is having on our mental health. It is causing severe mental anxiety, stress and insomnia.

There has been nil concern of the impact of this development on the mental health of the neighbouring landholders.

I wake up at 2am every day, worried about what will happen and the impact of this development on my family. I worry about how we would fight a fire.

I worry about my wife's physical and mental health; which has seriously deteriorated over the past 3 years.

My wife regularly walks down the track for her health and this will stop.

The accusations of us being part of an Anti Solar campaign is absolute rubbish. We do not talk about this with are local community. We are all concerned as neighbours we will have to live with the ramifications. We are the ones that will be affected.

The reports that we will be paid handsomely is another false statement being circulated. There is quite a possibility that we will incur significant losses that we may have to seek compensation for.

There has been no support from the NSW Government to consider the impact of this stressor on the neighbouring landholders and therefore does not address the Strategic Framework for Suicide Prevention in NSW. Mental Health and Rural Suicide is a very real concern.

Some of the things that we have heard in the community have been heart wrenching.

4. Screening:

Regarding Neoen's report item 2.3.4 regarding site suitability, and that the proposal is not highly visible; and that natural screening occurs along Cummings Road. I would like to refer you to the below photo. The paddocks on the right of Cummings Road is where the panels will be located. The paddocks on the left of Cummings Road is our property "Roseview".



- There is no mention of dense screening on Cummings Road. The panels will be visible from the road
- The glare from the panels will impact on the visibility of drivers. Especially when the sun rises in the East in the morning.
- I am significantly concerned about my grandson who catches the bus on this road every day and there are also many other buses.
- Without screening drivers will be distracted and it will be our family that travels this road all the time that will be at greater risk.

5. Fire risk:

I have been a member of the RFS for many years and was previously a captain. I believe that this development will cause a severe bushfire risk in view of the trees along the creek heading to the Rural Lands reserve and the Culcairn town. The Gum Swamp is also nearby and would be a severe bushfire threat. It is concerning that the site will contain hazardous battery storage near the gas pipeline and I wonder if a catastrophic bushfire was to go through how any fires could be

appropriately managed in this area especially due to the creek being a difficult area to access. It is not fair to put neighbouring properties at increased risk as I understand rural firefighters would not enter the site and would only wait until the fire exits the property to combat fires. The fact that HAZMAT responders are required and aerial response may be needed may inhibit a timely response to avoid spread.

An adequate bushfire protection plan for Solar farms has not been considered as there the "Planning for Bushfire Protection Guide, November 2019" for building on Bushfire prone land. 8.3.5 Bushfire Emergency and Management Plan. The site is next to bushfire prone land.

Recent fire on proposed development in December 2020. Able to easily access the site to prevent a massive fire front that would of headed towards my son's land and home.

The local brigade "Culcairn South West" is made up of volunteer fire fighters. The brigade is not equipped with equipment to respond to a fire on a solar development. Do not have the specialised equipment; health risks involved and safety with fighting a fire in this development. Possible entrapment due to the wire fences surrounding the property.

We do not believe that the company nor landowners are establishing a very good relationship with the Culcairn Southwest Rural fire brigade through their actions with the recent fire and also lack of consultation or even recognition that they are the closest brigade to the site. They say in their documents that Walla Walla is the closest brigade but this is not true.

I have been in the Rural Fire Service for a very long time and have been a captain and have a very strong concern that this solar farm could end up a catastrophic disaster.

It also concerns me that the only person speaking on behalf of the Rural Fire Service in relation to this project is actually the landholder making a huge financial gain.

Further investigation with the Emergency Services Commissioner needs to be a serious undertaking especially considering the bushfire prone land and that there will be hazardous battery energy storage situated near a major gas pipeline.

6. Weed Management:

Weeds have been poorly managed in the past on this property as evidenced in the Holbrook Landcare Article. As stated in the article, the landowners removed the sheep so that they could combat the weed Silverleaf Nightshade.

Hairy Panic is another weed of concern that will also pose a threat if a fire took hold as it will build up around infrastructure and fencing.

<https://holbrooklandcare.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/JSchoff-Case-Study.pdf>

A copy of this document is attached and shows the issues of the Silver Leaf nightshade and problems with stock that could occur in the future. We do not believe that this weed will be suitably managed in a grazing rotation and the weed has been managed by cropping that will cease on this property if under panels.

7. Impact on local businesses:

Our grain has been sent locally to Uncle Toby's at Wahgunyah and also to Sanitarium.

Unfortunately Uncle Toby's would find it difficulty to develop a "SOLAR MUESLI BAR" and Sanitarium a bowl of solar bix.

There will be a decrease in the need for local transport companies to transport grain, fodder and livestock.

There will be a decrease in purchases at the local stock and station agents as less fertiliser and animal products will be required.

Less agricultural equipment will be required, therefore less need to upgrade; less equipment to be maintained and fixed.

Farmers spend most of their money back into their land, purchasing machinery, improving their land and infrastructure and have annual spending in the community. Once the construction is finished this is gone, the cropping chain from farm gate to supermarket disappears, much is not being considered.

I would like to conclude in saying that this development being so large in size with a surrounding shape should not be located here.

It should be in the west where agricultural production is low and there will be less impact.

This development must be at least smaller with significant mitigation, tree lines and protection for neighbouring farmers. It should not be here at all.