

ORANGE GROVE SOLAR FARM
SSD 17-8882

This submission is made to the Assessment Panel in response to the Department of Planning's Assessment Report, which recommends approval with conditions.

Background

Although not a local resident or local landholder, I often visit and work on the adjacent property, which has its residence at R8 on the project plans and is known as Orange Grove. I find it somewhat disconcerting that objections from those whose residential address is more than 10km from the site are put into a separate category in the analysis of submissions received. It seems to imply that their views are less valid, which I submit should not be the case if indeed that project is of "state significance" and therefore potentially has impacts, both positive and negative, on all residents of the state..

Visual Impact

Notwithstanding my residential address, I would like the assessment panel to consider the following issues with respect to the visual impact of the proposed development:

- By far the greatest number of viewers of the development will be those who use the Orange Grove road. The site maps indicate that there will be little or no setback from either side of the road, so these viewers will be much closer to the installation than even R1.
- How can the assessment report say that the development will have no significant impact and that "the rural character of the area would be preserved" when Orange Grove road runs right through the development without screening or setback?
- Why cannot the proposed development be setback on both sides of the road and the vegetation buffer provided to shield residence R1 be extended to provide a similar shield to the public road? The cost to proponent of such a buffer would be insignificant compared to the public benefit provided to the proponent by the granting of the proposed rezoning.
- I note that the property known as Orange Grove extends to a portion of the western boundary of the site of the proposed development. The assessment report only considers the visual impact from the location of residences. It seems to imply that owners of rural properties spend most of the daylight hours sitting on their verandah admiring the view rather than working on their land. The visual impact of the proposed development cannot be said to be insignificant from the eastern portions of the Orange Grove property and yet the proposed western boundary vegetation buffer does not extend to that portion of the site that is south of Orange Grove Road.
- The 10m bushfire access strip is not shown on the development plan, perhaps due to the scale and lack of detail. However, it is unclear from the proposed condition whether this access strip is on private land or public land when it comes to the Orange Grove frontages.

The analysis of visual impact concentrates on the view from residences, which is a city centric approach and does not give due weight to rural context of this development site.

James Flaherty

