



**GREG SINCLAIR**

**OBJECT**

Submission ID: 200419

Organisation:	Key issues: <i>Land use compatibility, Other issues</i>
Location: <i>New South Wales</i>	
Attachment: <i>Greg Sinclair - IPC Submission.pdf</i>	

Submission date: 25/09/2024 7:42

*Please find submission attached. Thank you.*

---

A man's home is his castle, his farm is his kingdom.

I first must say that I'm very supportive of green energy & understand the need for Australia to meet its internationally pledged targets & to reduce carbon emissions. I also understand that electricity production is the major cause of greenhouse gas emissions in Australia and therefore there is a need to look at renewable energy projects.

I am sixty years old & I have worked in and around the agricultural industry all my life, both in corporate and private enterprise. I am currently a Senior Agribusiness Manager for a major financial institution in Tamworth and a licensed Stock & Station Agent and Real Estate Agent. I have held many senior positions during my career including State Sales & Operations Manager with Landmark. This gives me knowledge of the impacts to both the primary production sector and the valuation of farming land.

Agricultural land is a finite resource, especially good productive country in Australia. We must be incredibly careful to protect farming land and allow it to sustainably continue to produce food & fibre for future generations. As a child, growing up on the land, I was taught that you can't grow grass & have trees. This statement has proven incorrect and shows how wrong the knowledge of the time is with the benefit of hindsight. My point to this is, if we do go down the solar panel path on prime agricultural land, how are we ever going to get it back to the country it was before? I'm sure you have all had electricians, plumbers or builders attend your house and depart leaving a multitude of wires, screws, offcuts & other garbage strewn about. This project will be no different in terms of the detritus except on a much larger scale and on soil which cannot be swept or vacuumed and which is then held out to be available for immediate grazing of sheep and a future return to farmland once the industrial solar project is decommissioned. Excuse the pun, but that is rubbish. Whilst the developer has suggested the country can be returned to its current state – which regardless of the land classification is undoubtedly the blue ribbon district of Tamworth – it is too great a risk to take to assume this land can be cleaned up when there will be hazardous waste products & compaction over 30 years by a predominantly non-local workforce who do not care about the future sustainability of the land as a farming enterprise. I am concerned that allowing a solar project will essentially lock this country out of primary production forever.

The developer has also tried to demonstrate that the solar project will not be negatively impacting on the local environment & community. My understanding is there are no Australian studies on the impacts of solar farms on neighbouring land values & therefore the developer has essentially used this as an excuse to ignore the pleas of neighbours for compensation. As mentioned earlier, my professional career deals with rural landholdings. Those farms are the superannuation of rural property owners and the dollars are significant. To not take into account the impact on valuations on those neighbouring blocks is to me the most galling of all the developer's assertions. Farmers are in general conservative people

who do not like making a fuss. How are they meant to challenge a multi-million dollar foreign company? And why must it be the neighbours who find proof of lowering of land values rather than the developer having to safeguard the value of the neighbouring farms?

I ask the Commissioners to think carefully about approving the Middlebrook Solar Farm. You are the gatekeepers of what Australia will look like in the next 50 years. You are setting the precedent for Australia's future so I understand the magnitude of the responsibility you hold. Please take into consideration the farming land which is a finite resource – is there a better substitute site? If not, how is the developer going to compensate neighbours for the loss of amenity & future potential impact on land values? As Mr Kerrigan in The Castle would say, it should be on just terms.

Greg Sinclair  
Loomberah