



KAREN FOX

OBJECT

Submission ID: 199763

Organisation: N/A	Key issues: <i>Land use compatibility, Biodiversity, Visual, Other issues</i>
Location: 2340 New South Wales	
Attachment: Attached overleaf	

Submission date: 9/22/2024 1:23:03 PM

Please see attached documents. I object to the industrialisation of prime agricultural land.

Australia lost

*I watched Australia crying from its heartland yesterday
Commissioners from the big smoke, independent so they say
But under the badge of our government, these top brass
How independent could they be, some may reasonably ask*

*Generational farmers, humble and well spoken, some with degrees
Lawyers and solicitors among them
All bought to their knees*

*Pleading for the right to feed and clothe the nation
And for their homes and land
Their livelihood and sanity
In the commissioner's hands*

*Their foe from overseas is supported by the government and planners
And unbeknown to many of them, Australian taxpayers*

*The finite resource our prime arable land
Another couple of thousand acres to be industrialised
The trees and habitat removed
If only the squirrel gliders could be asked if they approve*

*They spoke of forever chemicals contaminating the soil
Showed images of destruction where the fight had already been lost
Were told that independent samples did not need to be received
Seems that the glossy advertising had already deceived*

*Of decommissioning uncostered or secured
That would forever leave the reminders buried underground*

*And after hours of the speeches, straight and from the soul
A couple of half-truths from the planner put them all on hold*

*They were hoping for a miracle from the big suits
Who had never found in the farmers favour before
But with the precautionary principle ignored
Perhaps when they go hungry they will think about it more*



Submission - Middlebrook Solar Farm

SSD-10455

22/9/2024

Dear Commissioners,

After sitting through the Public Hearing on the Middlebrook Solar Factory proposal last Thursday, which affects us directly as we are sandwiched between three other proposals - all of which threaten our home, safety and way of life, along with over 650 affected neighbours - the dismay at the process led to this verse.

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I found it was the only way to put this man-made impending disaster into words.

The absurdity that there is no conflict of interest with Commissioner Dr Sheridan Coakes working for the renewables industry does not pass the pub test, anywhere, but the public have come to assume that the corruption is so entrenched that we are no longer suprised.

That the Department of Planning representative Iwan Davies could, with a few sentences of non-truths, dismiss the reality of the testimonies was breathtaking. In particular the admission that no independent soil samples have been asked for - the department believes the advertising of the proponent, and that is exactly what the EIS is - was damning. We all know they have been told to hasten this disaster, but do they have to be so blatant?

The acceptance of the very vague and not legislated decommissioning by, well whom, when the ownership of the development may change hands many times, but that the decommissioning is "tied to the land" backs up the Premier of NSW Chris Minns statements in parliament earlier this year that the farmers/landowners are responsible for the cost of decommissioning:

Budget Estimates 2023-2024 – PC 1 – Hon Chris Minns MP – 21 February 2024

NSW Parliament

22 February 2024

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LuQ9uA1Q10I&t=1s> - transcript:

Chris Minns MP: No. Obviously, well, best practice is that it's reflected in the original price paid to the owner of the property, **remediation costs are part of the price**, whether it's the yearly fee paid to the landholder or some kind of upfront payment. Where the government can come in and provide clarity to the land user is to **give them the calculator** and the information that they need.

(*The "calculator" to establish the debt of the landowner is still in draft form).

Robert Borsak MP: Well, do you think that developers of solar farms, for example, should be required to pay a bond?

Chris Minns MP: Look, I wouldn't propose that. I'm not sure what that would do to the **economics of the model** * If in the end we're producing or the landowner is comfortable or confident enough to be assured that they're receiving enough **remuneration to cope with not just the rent of the property, but also the decommissioning**, then it may not be required.

(* So the "economics of the model" are more important than ensuring that the landowner has no certainty that the decommissioning costs are guaranteed? The wealth transfer is more important?)

From the current **NSW Large-Scale Solar Energy Guideline 2022**

https://shared-drupal-s3fs.s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/master-test/fapub_pdf/

[Lisa+Drupal+Documents/16007_DPIE+Large+Scale+Solar+Energy+Guidelines_26-9-22.pdf](https://shared-drupal-s3fs.s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/master-test/fapub_pdf/Lisa+Drupal+Documents/16007_DPIE+Large+Scale+Solar+Energy+Guidelines_26-9-22.pdf)

Quote: Applicants do not need to disclose any commercial terms of these agreements.

Therefore, the NSW State Government, much less the local population and taxpayers of NSW have no knowledge of the decommissioning arrangements and there are no guarantees at all that there are funds secured.

*Quote: The owner or operator of a solar energy project **should** be responsible for decommissioning and rehabilitation, and this **should** be reflected in a host agreement with*

the landholder. This agreement **may** also prescribe assurances to fund decommissioning, including ongoing evidence that the applicant has the capacity to fund decommissioning activities.

The above is a guideline only and it includes two “shoulds” and a “may”. This is hardly a legally binding guarantee that can be relied upon. Are the people of NSW relying on the goodwill of overseas developers or that the landowners will be bankrupted if the funds are not available, as below?

Quote: *If an **applicant or landholder** fails to meet the decommissioning and rehabilitation obligations prescribed by the relevant development consent, the department can use its enforcement powers under the EP&A Act to address any breaches of the consent conditions.*

From the document above:

Decommissioning and rehabilitation principles

- 1. The land on which a large-scale solar energy project and supporting infrastructure is developed **must be returned to pre-existing use** if the project is decommissioned.*
- 2. **If operations cease, infrastructure (including underground infrastructure) should be removed** unless there is significant justification for retaining it.*
- 3. Land must be rehabilitated and **restored to pre-existing use**, including the preexisting LSC class, if previously used for agricultural purposes.*
- 4. The owner or operator of a solar energy project **should** be responsible for decommissioning and rehabilitation, and this **should** be reflected in an agreement with the host landholder.*

Clearly from the information disclosed at the public meeting the infrastructure below 500mm is not being removed, in contravention of the guidelines, and without any independent samples how can the community know what the soil is to be returned to, assuming this is even possible given the likelihood of forever chemicals and other contamination?

Again we see the word “should” twice. Why is this not “must” or “will be”?

As a concerned local resident I have everything to lose.

As an Australian I am concerned about our food security, food integrity and its effect on future generations along with the economic the health of both our country in relation to affordable energy and our export markets.

This concern extends to all of our children and our way of life.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs Karen Fox.