



New South Wales Government
Independent Planning Commission

TRANSCRIPT OF MEETING

RE: DINAWAN SOLAR FARM (SSD-50725959)

STAKEHOLDER MEETING

PANEL: SUELLEN FITZGERALD (Chair)
SIMON SMITH

STAKEHOLDER: JOHN MCGRATH
(Yass Landscape Guardians)

LOCATION: ZOOM VIDEOCONFERENCE

DATE: 10:00AM – 12:30PM
WEDNESDAY, 4th MARCH 2026

<THE MEETING COMMENCED

MS SUELLEN FITZGERALD: Mr Mcgrath?

5 **MR JOHN MCGRATH:** Yes, good afternoon, how are you?

MS FITZGERALD: I'm good, thank you Mr Mcgrath. We can hear you loud and clear, and it sounds like you can hear us too.

10 **MR MCGRATH:** Yes, thank you, I'm straight into the meeting, am I?

MS FITZGERALD: You are straight into the meeting. I'll get started with making a short opening statement and then it'll be over to you. I'd like to first up acknowledge that I'm speaking to you from Gadigal land, and I acknowledge the traditional owners from all the lands from which we're virtually meeting today. I'd also like to pay my respects to their Elders past and present.

We're discussing today, the state significant development application for the Dinawan Solar Farm. My name is Suellen Fitzgerald. I'm the Chair of this Panel, and I'm joined by my fellow commissioner, Simon Smith, and staff members from the office of the Independent Planning Commission here in the room with me today.

In the interests of openness and transparency, we'll be recording this meeting, and a full transcript will be available on the Commission's website in the next few days.

25 Mr Mcgrath, you've got a 10-minute slot to make a submission to us. I'll give you a bell at the 9-minute mark so that you know where you are in your presentation. But in the meantime, over to you, what would you like to tell us today?

30 **MR MCGRATH:** All right. Well, thank you, Suellen. I'm just representing Yass Landscape Guardians where I hold the position of Secretary, and I've just got some notes here – I've been flat out with other things.

I'll start by saying that commercial solar panel installations are very inefficient and the Panel needs to realise that reality, 17 to 23%, say they operate at 23%, say this Dinawan Solar operates at 23% at 800 megawatts allegedly, it's only 184 megawatts during the daytime. That's all you're going to get out of this whole installation.

40 There's no decommissioning legislation Australia-wide and you should be well aware of that. Chris Minns very recently has pointed out that the landholder will be responsible when the proponent goes belly up, like the recent Parkes Solar fire where the proponents walked away and left the mess, the pollution and everything. Okay.

45 These companies are \$2 shell companies. They have no interest, no financial fortitude, and I've got a list of stuff here I can email in later, including links.

MS FITZGERALD: Sure.

MR MCGRATH: Okay. Which I've just stated. Okay. Although sometimes used for legitimate business, a \$2 moniker is now widely associated with financial capacity and criminal or at least suspect activity, and that's a fact, unfortunately. Okay.

5 I've got some stuff on contamination later on, and there's a very heavy issue with contamination from solar panels. Okay. So, I've just got notes, as I said.

10 Now, road use and construction. Massive increase in traffic on country roads, and we heard last night that there will be a camp for 300 people built somewhere Bookham if Squadron Energy ever builds their Bookham wind turbines. Okay. Three-hundred extra people with a population of about 164, so it's over tripling the bloody population of the local area. Who supplies the resources for this?

15 Country roads that are made for 30/40 vehicles a day are now 100% increase, and that's how you're getting four to five-hundred vehicles on the same road. The city driver attitude, we've had a lot of dangerous issues with Hume Link which is going in right here now. People getting forced off the road, vehicle runaways, rollovers, escapes, etc. This was brought home on the Lachlan Valley Way when they were constructing the Rye Park, Bango, Gullen Range and Flyers Creek wind turbine developments. A lot of issues happened on Lachlan Valley Way and I was part of – I had issues with that as I had with what's happened here with Hume Link.

20 Okay. I've got a document I found called "This Solar Boom is a Dirty Secret – how do avoid another mountain of waste that can't be recycled." Can't be recycled. Okay. There's probably 36 tonnes of silver potentially in Dinawan with an 800-megawatt set of panels. Okay. That's going to go into the soils. If we get a fire, if we get a hailstorm, all of that straight into the soil, that's only one of the numerous numbers of contaminants that'll come out of that.

30 Basically, all these panels end up in landfill, so we're creating possibly 250 tonnes, million tonnes of solar waste by 2050 – 2050 is only 24 years away, you've got to think of that. Okay. That's a massive amount of infill.

35 Okay. Look, that's what I've got to say. There's quite some numerous issues with this stuff. When I said there's a 23% efficiency for these solar panels, if this was a hydro-electric generation system, you've got an 85 to 90% – there's a massive, that's three times more efficient than this solar installation. So, I'll rest my case, but people need to think about that. They need to think about the capacity of the transmission line to accept that 800 megawatts.

40 And I've been involved with this sort of stuff for 22 years, and it's something I've said since 2004. My background is electrical. I spent 15-and-a-half years in the high voltage industry, got an understanding of capacity of transmission lines. And they need – the Panel needs to think about the capacity of the associated transmission lines with this.

45 We've got several installations that are wind turbines – Bango's going nowhere. Crookwell 2 and 3 are simply used to draw power off the grid when there's too much

solar generation in the city rooftop solar generation. There's stuff like that that the community needs to know. Okay.

5 Well, all right, thank you very much to the Panel. I can send you my notes and a few links. Where do I send that to, please?

10 **MS FITZGERALD:** Please do. Thanks, Mr Mcgrath. You can send your notes and those links via the submission portal on the IPC's website or via email. And on the Dinawan Solar Farm matter, the deadline for those submissions is midnight on Sunday the 8th of March. So, we'd be very happy to receive –

15 **MR MCGRATH:** Always plenty of time to put submissions in, isn't there, Suellen. This is really, really bad. We just had this with pre-Christmas with a battery on Coppabella, we had about 10 days to get it in right on Christmas time. I'm sorry. The Department needs to loosen up a bit with their period of time to get submissions in. Okay.

MS FITZGERALD: Okay, thank you for that point.

20 **MR MCGRATH:** I'm not sorry, but for a fact ...

MS FITZGERALD: Yes. Thank you.

25 **MR MCGRATH:** So, just send that to the Independent Planning Commission email address?

MS FITZGERALD: Yes, that's right, yes, thank you. And we'll look at those submissions after the 8th of March. So, thank you –

30 **MR MCGRATH:** Yes, no worries.

>THE MEETING CONCLUDED