

To: Director – Energy Assessments
Development Assessment
Department of Planning and Environment
Locked Bag 5022
Parramatta NSW 2124

Name: Geoffrey Exton Ingall
Address: 8 Tebbutt Street, Quirindi
Name of Project: Middlebrook Solar Farm
Application No: SSD-10455

I do not require my details to be withheld.

I declare I have made no reportable political donations in the last two years.

I acknowledge and accept the Department's disclaimer and declaration.

STATEMENT OF OBJECTION

I am a retired farmer who regularly visits the affected area.

I object to the proposed Middlebrook Solar Farm development for the below reasons.

- **Visual impact:** I do not agree with the Visual Impact Assessment (VIA) that the visual quality of the Middlebrook Road/Marsden Park area is low. The valley is picturesque, mixing rich grazing land and attractive hills. I understand from the VIA that the panels will be very prominent from both the road and from residences further up and down the valley. That type of industry is not at all in keeping with the rural character of the area.
- **Agricultural impact:** The land that is being considered for this development is high-quality livestock production land. It is a highly unsuitable place for a development of this nature, particularly given it is outside the New England Renewable Energy Zone.
- **Vehicle-related impacts:**
 - Significant dust will be generated by the increased vehicle movements both on the public roads and the internal tracks. Dust is a complication for surrounding farmers and is problematic for both agricultural production and human health.
 - The project will result in substantially more traffic on the roads, including Marsden Park Road (which seems to have been largely ignored in the EIS), Middlebrook Road and the New England Highway. I am worried about the danger of increased large vehicle movements, degradation to the roads and the potential introduction of lower speed limits on the New England Highway (as noted as a possibility in the Vehicle Impact Assessment) that would disrupt traffic on the major road in the region.
- **Human impacts:**
 - The workers required for the construction of the project will need to be brought in from outside Tamworth. I am very concerned that this will put increased stress on the already strained health system (as flagged in the Social Impact Assessment). I regularly visit Tamworth for my medical care. It is already difficult to obtain appointments and most GPs in the town have already closed their books.
 - The EIS does not adequately deal with the impact of the substantial ongoing disruptions on locals, especially nearby farmers. The dust, noise, increased people movement, vehicles, and disruption to the setting of their homes and workplaces will cause substantial stress and unhappiness. It will also likely

exacerbate rural workforce shortages and increase costs for landholders in the region.

I am not convinced that there are any conditions that can adequately address these considerable objections. However, before considering whether to approve the development, the Department should carry out additional investigations and (at a minimum) implement conditions as follows:

- **Independent Visual Impact Assessment**, with consideration given to the quality of the existing views, and the impact of the carpark and substation as well as the solar panels.
- **Independent Traffic Study** to cross-check the strong assumptions used in the EIS and assess the need for a proper left turn lane on the New England Highway.
- **Requirement for Total Eren to bitumen and maintain** both Marsden Park Road and Middlebrook Road for the life of the solar farm.
- **Assessment of impact of increased population on access to healthcare in Tamworth**, including the cumulative impact of this and other developments proposed in the region (e.g. the Acacia Solar Farm proposal, Tangaratta Stockfeeds Feedmill etc).

*With kind regards
M. E. Ingall.*