

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

Name: Sue Forsyth
Address: 9180 “Glenora” New England
HWY Wallabadah 2343
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 object to the proposed Middlebrook Solar Farm development.

I am a farmer with property on the New England Highway near Willow Tree and Wallabadah. I often visit friends who farm land within sight of the proposed development.

I recognise the importance of the transition to renewable energy and am supportive of solar projects in general. However, I believe they should be placed appropriately, within the zones set out by the State government, in areas unsuited for other types of production and where local landholders will be little affected by their impacts. The proposed location is outside the New England Renewable Energy Zone. It is also valuable, productive agricultural land. The nature of the landscape and road network in the valley means that there are many residences and farms that will be directly negatively affected by the development.

In addition to these overarching objections, there are a number of specific problems with the proposed development:

New England Highway

The extra traffic on the New England Highway during the project could lead to delays and greater danger for the region's residents and travellers. As someone who regularly travels on the highway, I believe that the impact on the road surface and traffic flow needs to be better understood on the basis of realistic assumptions, and more adequately addressed by upgrades to the road network.

Dust

The project will generate substantial dust which will affect the physical and mental health of nearby residents, reduce the visual amenity of the valley, reduce road safety and affect agricultural production.

Visuals

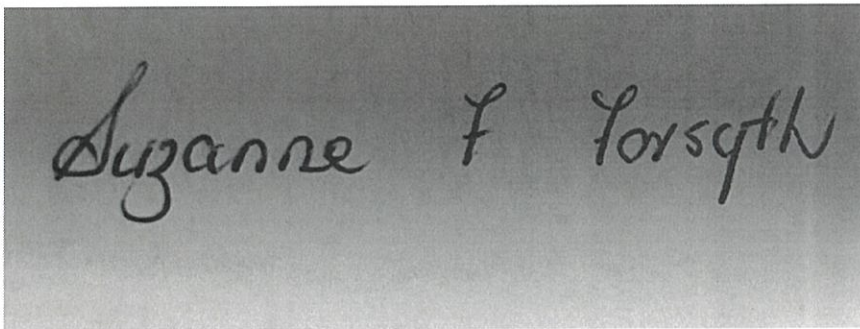
The industrial development will diminish the valley's rural character and make it a less desirable location for the next generation and reducing land values for existing landholders. Its positioning on a slope makes visible to a large number of nearby dwellings as well as from several roads.

Wellbeing

I am concerned about the disruptions during construction, increased traffic, noise and general change to the nature of their home and outlook having a negative impact on the mental health of my friends in the valley and their neighbours.

Services

The workforce needed to construct the solar farm will put additional strain on services in nearby towns, such as accommodation and healthcare, which are already stretched in the region. This is noted in the Social Impact Assessment, but the developer has not adequately explained how it will mitigate the effects on locals of further demand for these services.

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in black ink. The signature reads "Suzanne F Forsyth" in a cursive script. The background of the box is a solid dark grey.