

To: Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (NSW)
RE: SSD 5915545 – Merino Solar Farm

Objection Submission Lodged by:

Thomas Henry Fahey
62 Laggan Road
Crookwell NSW 2583

Dear NSW Planning,

I formally object to the proposed Merino Solar Farm SSD 5915545 application.

I am 90 years old. I was born in Crookwell NSW and still live here today, I still hold land classified as a lifestyle block at Hawthorne Tree Road, Grabben Gullen NSW 2583.

My income was derived from 500 acres of generational livestock and cropping, including potato farming. I later gained second employment with the Southern Tablelands County Council, assisting in the establishment of electricity lines across the Crookwell region from 1988 to 1995. I then operated a successful business in Crookwell until retiring at 75 years of age.

I consider myself well placed to object to this solar development, based on what I have witnessed throughout my lifetime.

I object to the “Net Zero by 2050” policy in its current state of failing.

At what cost will Australians truly benefit if overseas companies are subsidised to destroy our land?

How can the loss of productive land be justified — land that Australians went to war to protect? My grandfather, father, and their brothers fought in war to defend this country and our freedoms. These values are enshrined in our National Anthem.

I respectfully request that the Government pause all large-scale energy infrastructure projects until fair, just, and realistic policies are in place. Priority should be given to rooftop solar — I was proudly one of the first in Crookwell to install solar panels on my home. That is where solar belongs: on rooftops, close to where the power is used.

Community Engagement Failures Witnessed

Over my lifetime, energy infrastructure developments — particularly wind farms across Crookwell, Taralga, and Gunning — have come at great cost to regional communities. Friendships were torn apart, decades-long relationships were lost, and communities were divided. That division still exists today.

Now Crookwell’s landscapes are dominated by wind factories (they are not farms). Developers continue to treat our land as if it is disposable. I ask you to use your authority to stop this process and get it right before more damage is done.

Personal Impact on My Family

For the past four years, I have supported my daughter as an impacted resident. Since February 2025, I have helped her stay informed through media coverage of solar farm developments and talked on the challenges State Significant Developments put ordinary Australians under. The pace and complexity of these fast-tracked processes are extremely difficult for ordinary residents to follow.

My daughter's home will be severely impacted by the Merino Solar Farm, with panels starting approximately **700 metres from her residence** and **200 metres from her boundary fence**.

The visual impact of **870,000 solar panels**, **100 acres of battery storage**, and associated transmission infrastructure will be overwhelming. It is negligent to assess this without decision-makers physically visiting the site — yet the current guidelines do not require this.

I was present at her home when the EDPR representative arrived with a neighbour agreement. I witnessed first-hand the distressing conversation she endured while fighting for her right, as an Australian citizen, to say no to this development.

I am proud of my daughter for standing up to what can only be described as corporate bullying. Her property was given a “low risk” rating through a flawed visual assessment process. In reality, the impact is clearly medium to high, and she — along with other residents — deserves fair treatment and equal consideration.

Request

I respectfully request that the Department **reject SSD 5915545**.

My sincere hope is that this matter is resolved before I pass, so that I may know my daughter's rights — and the rights of all impacted residents — were upheld.

Thank you for considering my objection.

Yours faithfully,

Thomas Henry Fahey
Crookwell NSW