

Question:	Response:
1. <i>How and why was the Merino site selected?</i>	Most sites in Australia would have sufficient solar yield for a viable project. Interested landowners to host the project and keeping the costs of construction down are the key considerations at the early stages of site selection. In this case, as identified by EDPR, in their February 2025 newsletter, key factors were: • Access to existing high voltage transmission networks (reducing the need for extensive transmission work upgrades) • Limited vegetation due to historical grazing on the land (reducing impacts and offset obligations) • No land mapped as Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land (BSAL) or as Land Soil Capability Class 1, 2, or 3 (ground truthing is required but this indicates the site is not ‘important agricultural land’) • The site is close to Goulburn’s local workforce (providing local employment opportunities) and other ancillary services such as lodging and food providers.
2. <i>Why was the site even considered when it does not meet the standards of the DPIE+Large+Scale+Solar+Energy+Guidelines_22-8-22 from the very beginning?</i> <i>Without referring to each point today I'll just do one:</i> - <i>Goulburn is a regional city</i> - <i>the panels start within a 6km radius of the City's Post Office</i> - <i>did that not raise any red flags that the site selection is wrong?</i>	As shown in the Solar guidelines, the selection of a suitable site is usually a balance between agricultural values and ecological values. Sites that are in between these two extremes can be justified. State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021 provides for the specific consideration of renewable energy Projects in regional cities, including Goulburn. While these provisions do not prohibit solar development in these areas, a consent authority must not grant development consent unless it is satisfied that the development: a) is located to avoid significant conflict with existing or approved residential or commercial uses of land surrounding the development, and b) is unlikely to have a significant adverse impact on the regional city’s—capacity for growth, or scenic quality and landscape character.

	The detailed environmental investigations are considering the potential for the Merino Solar Farm to impact the residential and commercial uses, plans for growth and scenic quality. Part of the purpose of the EIS process, currently being undertaken, is for the project to undergo a rigorous and merit-based assessment as per the State Significant Development Guidelines. Amenity impacts (primarily noise, traffic and visual impacts) are being investigated to ensure that these can be managed for nearby residential and commercial land uses. Visual impacts will also be considered at a local level to assess the impacts from local viewpoints. Mitigation can be applied to the project in the form of setbacks as well as screen plantings for example, where impacts warrant this (i.e. where high or moderate impacts are identified). Through discussions with the Council, to date, we have not identified any growth areas of relevance to the proposed location, but consultation is continuing. EDPR Australia are also actively working with the Goulburn Airport to ensure consistent development in line with Council's expectations.
3. What date/year was the scoping report data collated?	The Scoping Report was published on 6 June 2023. The Scoping Report was carried out by another consultancy agency.
4. Why is there so much missing data on the residents addresses in the SR annexure documents?	The Scoping Report and the Addendum Scoping Report are high level documents that intend to set out the assessment pathway. The EIS phase, which includes results from community consultation, will present more accurate descriptions of the existing environment, including residences, and impacts predicted.
5. How without the address listed in the annexures, how did you accurately map residents onto your EIS resident map? - Was the information deliberately not included in the annexure documents, so we as residents could not consult with one another to make sure all residents know about Monaro Solar Farm DA?	The addresses and associating receiver numbers are not included in community correspondence (such as letters to neighbours) for privacy reasons (as there are members of the community who do not wish for this information to be circulated with the wider community so freely). There are Appendix items that outline residence and receiver numbers that are supplied to DPHI for their knowledge. This information is not deliberately withheld, and we are more than happy to work with

	the community to identify their associated receiver numbers (and have been doing so throughout the EIS process).
6. Why was your topography mapping all measured on a 'flat display' surface, creating an optical illusion? Eg. you have our property R5 listed as "low impact" - how can we be a low impact when solar panels will be all we will see 250 metres from our home. Una from EDP confirmed over 1 million panels that go up a hill that will be so intrusive to my and my family's health and wellbeing?	The visual assessment methodology is highly standardised and prescriptive. We have limited ability to alter it and for it to still be acceptable for submission to the DPHI. There are two main tools used, I think you are referring to: 1) View shed / heat map – this uses the contour mapping to show where a block of 2.9m would be visible from. It is a theoretical worst case as it doesn't factor in any screening provided by existing trees and structures 2) Wire frame modelling – this uses a 180 degree panorama from the primary residence and counts the number of cells that the solar farm would occupy. This better represents the actual view as it takes in distance from the site. It is still a worst case as it doesn't take in existing plantings. The panorama has the effect of 'flattening' the landscape however, and we know that many community members we spoke to didn't think this was accurate. The low impact rating takes in other factors including viewer sensitivity. The final assessment tool is a 'photo montage' that uses actual photography to show better what the view would look like. A moderate or higher impact rating will mean the project must consider mitigation options. The wire frame can be used to plan where visual screen plantings will have the most benefit in reducing the impact rating.
7. Why hasn't the slope of the hill in which the solar panels (2.9 metres in height) be placed on, that will climb in height, why hasn't this openly been reflected in your topographic mapping, to reflect the truth to the visual impact assessment from the beginning ?	As above, both View shed / heat map and the Wire frame modelling use contour mapping. The intention is to reflect the topography accurately. To date, the visual assessment has used 5m resolution Digital Terrain Model (DTM). As the project progresses, this may be replaced by more accurate site survey data.
8. Why were only 6/190 + residents interviewed in the consultation process: How can that reflect any accuracy in your reporting when it equates to 0.0031% of the impacted residents listed in the scoping report: Please note since the data is	Section 5 (p.38-57) of the Scoping Report outlines the engagement process undertaken and the guidelines that were followed.

<i>obviously outdated, aligning with Goulburn's community growth, the percentage would now be a negative result.</i>	The engagement was undertaken in accordance with the following guidelines: • Department of Planning and Environment Large-Scale Solar Energy Guideline (DPE 2024); • State Significant Development Guidelines (DPIE 2022); and • Undertaking Engagement Guidelines for State Significant Projects (DPIE 2022).
<i>9. How many times has NGH been upfront and advised their potential clients, e.g. EDP, before their investors start the process that they have picked the wrong site? Was that communicated to EDP from the beginning?</i>	NGH staff have significant industry experience and provide advisory services to our clients in navigating their projects, from early constraints analysis through to detailed impact assessment of projects. In many cases, we have advised that sites have high constraints and assisted to support the decision about whether or not a project proceeds.
<i>10. There has been no proper communication or consultation to satisfy the requirements of the community consultation/engagement process, and it has not met the standards outlined in the guidelines. - as per your previous email that needs to be clearly stated in your report please.</i>	Consultation is still being undertaken, and the engagement process will be described in detail in Chapter 5 of the EIS. Notably, consultation and engagement are conducted in line with the SEARs requirements that were received from DPHI, as well as in line with relevant industry government and industry body guidelines (such as the DPHI NSW Large-Scale Solar Guidelines, the DPHI Community-Benefit Sharing Guidelines, CEC Engagement Guidelines, and more). Some of the consultation activities that have occurred include: • An online engagement survey to understand community perspectives of the Project • In person consultation sessions at the Soldiers Club and Goulburn Marketplace • Face to face meetings with impacted landholders, community organisation and government stakeholders • Signage around the area to notify the community about the project and consultation sessions • Public notices placed in the local paper • Letter drops (sent on two occasions to receivers within 4km)

	• Phone calls and emails to notify impacted receivers (where contact information was locatable and provided) • Project update emails sent to all stakeholders who signed up to distribution list • Project website • Project materials, including FAQ documents, Project fact sheets, and newsletters (available in person at events as well as facilitated on the Project website) • Avenues for the community to engage directly with the EDP Australia team, through both email and phone methods. These details have been included on all materials and correspondence.
<i>11. Will NGH (and or their employees) receive a bonus or royalty or gifts from EDP if the development application is approved?</i>	NGH were engaged by EDPR through a competitive open tender bid process. There are no bonuses, royalties or gifts received by NGH or its employees for the successful approval of the project. Our invoices are paid monthly in line with work undertaken and are not based on whether or not the project receives approval.
<i>12. In reference to your website article done on the NSW Walla Walla site, I find it hard to read that your colleague refers to the host solar and battery storage properties as "showing business initiative". From my perspective and what I have researched, we all have a very different view on that statement that I would be open to discuss with you and your NGH colleague in more detail if you're at all interested.</i>	Believe you are referring to the statement, that the project involved “enabling the innovative landholders to secure additional income streams and improve the resilience of their farm businesses” on the NGH webpage for the Walla Walla Solar Farm? Happy to discuss this in more detail, however, it is essentially just stating that the host landholder may receive a benefit from hosting the project through receiving a diversification of their income stream, which may protect from business disruptions such as drought or animal viruses.