

I hope the DPIE has a better grip on Tallawang Solar than it had on Suntop Solar. I have issues with the way neighbours are expected to police these developments. I have lost count of the number of letters we have had to write to the DPIE and developers concerning issues with the solar farm.

The bad solar saga in our area continues. They have broken the backbone of our road. It will never be the same. There is no community benefit fund, no pasture, no grazing of animals, no firebreak and big problems with runoff for neighbours because they felled every tree, filled every dam and flattened every contour bank. They ignored recommendations made by the local soil conservation service.

The farmers selling the site for Tallawang Solar are asset-rich. The rich getting richer and the less fortunate paying for it in their ever-increasing electricity bills. The infrastructure needed to transfer electricity from Tallawang Solar to the coast is costing billions.

Why we are giving our productive land over for renewables when we emit less than 2% of the world's greenhouse gases and are sending ever-increasing amounts of coal and gas overseas to be burned in foreign countries? Are these countries on another planet, with a different atmosphere?

It is tragic that most of the renewables in the REZ will be located around the small towns of Wellington and Gulgong. Easy pushovers I would say. Both are absorbed by larger councils. A lot of people in Wellington wouldn't have any idea of what a REZ is or have any knowledge of renewables, yet a huge battery installation is planned for the township of Wellington as well as millions of solar panels within a few kilometres of the town. When the Wellington Battery Installation comes up for submission and comments, the community won't be notified. The developer will decide who needs to know!

Neighbours and people within renewable communities who have issues with projects are often gagged. They are offered money or infrastructure to say nothing. Issues are being under-addressed or ignored. It is not good for the environment or community morale.

I am against renewables on productive agricultural land, in areas where farming is a lifestyle and defines the community. There is a generational farming family in the Birrawa area that will have six solar farms and two wind farms within a 25km radius of their home. The cumulative effect of multiple developments on that family will be immeasurable and so negative. There would be other families in the area in a similar situation. What is the Department thinking?

