

15th September 2023

**Ross Peasley
10 Top Knot Place
Woodlands Ridge Estate
MUSCLE CREEK NSW 2333**

RE:- MUSWELLBROOK SOLAR FARM – SSD-46543209

The Proper Officer,

Please find my letter herein of my formal objection of the proposed development being the new Muswellbrook Solar Farm SSD-46543209.

As a resident of 30 years of Muswellbrook, a local business owner and Statutory Land Surveyor of 23 years I present my concerns hereafter from a local homeowner as well as someone who has held multiple positions in the local community as well as an integral part of the development of Muswellbrook over the last 30 years.

As a general comment about the development, I struggle to see how it can be deemed “State Significant.” The installation of a Solar Farm has little effect on replacement of and assurance of continuity of reliable electricity source when compared to the existing base load power provided from Coal fired power stations. The project appears to satisfy a political agenda with little to no concern of its’ locality and the merits of the Muswellbrook township.

My primary points of concern for this objection are: -

1. The closeness of at least seventy (70) quality established residences on rural residential sized Lots to the subject site. There is evidence that property valuations have declined by up to 20% because of a Solar Farm project being in proximity in different parts of the world. These 70 quality residences, based on recent sales in the past 2 years averages at around \$900,000. This equates to about \$63 Million in property values. In the event of the Solar Farm being approved it will be in the best interests of all residents to have independent licensed valuations undertaken as a benchmark to assess the impact of the Solar Farm project and presented formally to the proponent.
2. As a long time Professional Consultant in the Muswellbrook Shire there is a clear lack of land to be developed for future residential purposes. Although the subject land is currently zoned rural and environmental there is an opportunity to re-zone this land potentially like the land in Woodlands Ridge to satisfy a demand for housing in Muswellbrook. This demand is important for Muswellbrook to allow for growth, labour market shortfalls to be filled, young families to live locally and have their children grow up in the area help populating the schooling system and integrating with the local community socially and economically.
3. Based on the Information Sheet issued in February 2023 you mention up to 200 permanent jobs will be created during the construction phase. How do you qualify this is a benefit to the local community? If you look at every single large development over the last 20+ years the majority of construction-based staff DO NOT live in Muswellbrook and will commute from the Lower Hunter Valley, Central Coast as well as FIFO interstate where they can fly into Newcastle airport then get a shuttle bus to Muswellbrook.

4. On the same Information Sheet, you make note of "Generation of local economic activity during construction and operations and diversifications of local revenue streams." What are these? If I speak to the Muswellbrook Chamber of Commerce, will they have a detailed schedule of what you refer to?
5. Has the owner of the site assessed all potential uses of the land? As noted in my concern #2 herein, surely the re-zoning of the land for residential purposes could be a "Higher and better use" of the land. Has there been a cost benefit analysis performed to assess this, which I would expect be undertaken as evidence to the Shareholders of the company that own the land.
6. My final concern is the access to and from site and current road infrastructure and impacts on the existing Muscle Creek Road from the Highway to the site. Muscle Creek Road has been maintained by long standing contributions from Muswellbrook Coal pursuant to Development Consent conditions imposed by Muswellbrook Shire Council. The maintenance has been primarily re-patching and "band-aid" fixes to a road that has been heavily moulded by large trucks hauling coal for many years. This has caused deformities in the pavement and is evident when we experience rainfall periods. The table drain on either side of the road fail to drain properly which causes sheets of water inundating the Muscle Creek Road pavement and potential road hazard. As part of the road infrastructure assessment which I note is being undertaken as mentioned in the EIS I presume this will be taken into consideration.

Yours Faithfully



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Ross Peasley
Registered Land Surveyor ID.162
under the Surveying and Spatial Information Act 2002