

OBJECTION to Birriwa Solar Farm Amendment (SSD-29508870)

I am a farmer and landholder in the Dunedoo district, and I hold grave concerns for the future of farming in this area given the proposed solar, wind and transmission line projects.

Not unlike the original EIS report for the Birriwa Solar project there are a lot of vague statements noting the need for detailed design or further refinement. How can the impacted community be expected to make our final comments on design with so many unknowns?

The impact another proposed accommodation camp, nearly the size of Dunedoo, will have on the surrounding landholders will be immense. The proposed Merotherie main camp site for the CWO REZ Transmission project is not more than 3.5km from the proposed ACEN workers' camp. The cumulative effects are too much!

The EIS states the workers camp would use 125,000L of water per day which will be trucked in if a local water source is not located. Water in our district is a highly valued commodity, especially when we are facing another El Nino, and stock and domestic use has priority. To have to truck water from Windemere Dam only means more heavy vehicles on the road!

The solution for sewerage and general waste is sketchy at best. Our local councils have enough difficulty providing these services to the general population let alone covering the ACEN workers camp requirements.

It is said that shuttle buses will transport workers from the camp to the construction site daily but there is no mention of how the workers will get to and from the camp when their allocated work days start and end?

Emergency services in rural Australia are stretched. Doctors and nurses are hard to find and keep in country areas. It is suggested that the camp will have a medical centre with an onsite nurse but I assume in an emergency the local ambulance service will be called and the patient will be transported to a local Emergency Department (possibly Mudgee or Dubbo). There are already large wait times to see a doctor either at their surgery or in the ED.

Most of the towns in this area are manned by one police officer, who is often in charge of more than one town each shift. There is provision for security guards for the workers camp but if there is an incident where the police are needed, they may be at least an hour away, and leave our towns unmanned.

The soil at the proposed site of the accommodation facility is "low capability, low fertility", but "highly sensitive to disturbance". I believe any interference to this land should therefore be avoided. If there are problems with erosion that does not only impact the primary site but has the potential to cause major issues downstream.

The bushfire assessment requires a 50,000L static water source (tank), storz outlets and fire hydrants for firefighting use at the camp. Where would the water come from for the fire hydrants? Does ACEN expect the closest Fire & Rescue and Rural Fire Service units to defend the village if there was a fire emergency? Considering towns the size of Coolah and Dunedoo have their own Fire & Rescue Units and those with smaller populations are protected by RFS should ACEN not have to provide full time protection from fire? Both of these organisations

are staffed by local business owners and employees who take time out of their lives to serve their communities.

The impact of the 25-30 staff required to build the accommodation camp would be sizeable. There is not a lot of short term accommodation available in the local area, and to block that out for 3-7 months will hurt the regions tourism industry. Not to mention the extra 180 semi trailer loads to establish the facility and what that will do to the local road network.

The proposed workers camp will impact 3.25ha of Superb Parrot habitat. On top of the direct impact on 8.62ha of Koala habitat and 0.48ha of foraging habitat for the Large-eared Pied Bat throughout the rest of the project. Surely impacts on the environment such as these cannot just be "offset", especially in areas outside the project area.

A project of this size, with so many potential impacts, should not be permitted to rely on desktop studies; it is too important to the local community!

Sincerely,

Emma Bowman