

Objections to Gundry Industrial Solar Farm Development

1. *Insufficient information and planning in regards to decommissioning of the development:*

With no estimate of the cost of decommissioning, and the only obligation listed as “The law regarding decommissioning will be followed at the time”, there is no guarantee of total rehabilitation of the site. Thus, there could be a high risk of degradation of toxic electronical components if not required to be removed once the life of the project has ended, leading to toxic contamination. Contamination would render the land unsuitable for future subdivision development, along with agricultural usage. Furthermore, contamination of the Gundry Creek (which runs throughout the proposed development) would be likely. The creek flows into the Wollondilly River, part of the Greater Sydney drinking water catchment, and also provides a vital habitat for local wildlife.

2. *Severely underestimated fire risk and emergency planning:*

The high risk of fire throughout summer months has been severely downplayed, with a substantial lack of planning and mitigation as a result. Highly inadequate water resources for firefighting are proposed for the development. As an Agricultural Consultant, grazing vegetation is not a complete solution to remove all of the vegetative fuel load present. There is no effective measure for controlling a mass solar panel/electrical battery fire, with even a small fire initiated by malfunction of electrical infrastructure likely leading to a catastrophic event due to the size of the project. No consideration has been given regarding the superheating effect of solar panels (with panels heating to 65 degrees, in-turn increasing air temperature by a minimum of 6 degrees), which exacerbates the already extreme risk of fire.

Local RFS brigades are not trained and equipped with the correct respirators to combat the toxic fumes from electrical fires, hence a large fire cannot be controlled effectively on-site. There is an extreme danger of toxic fumes spreading in the event of the fire, with a significant risk of health effects for the 100 residences located within a 4km radius of the development. Additionally, RFS has indicated that RFS personnel will not be allowed access to the development in the event of a fire due to safety concerns regarding entrapment within the solar panels.

The Gundry Plains are renowned for the strong westerly winds (gusts of 96km/h recorded twice by Bureau of Meteorology at Goulburn Airport in September 2024), significantly increasing the likelihood of a fire spreading rapidly to the east into dense bushland (located less than 1km from the development boundary) in the Mountain Ash Range. For context, a grass fire which occurred in March 1985, was initially lit at a property located on Braidwood Road, and burnt rapidly eastwards as it could not be contained. The fire burnt from Braidwood Road into the bushland of the Mountain Ash Range. Furthermore, Koorringaroo Road is also located on the

Eastern Boundary of the development. It is a dead-end road, with escape access a major concern in a fire event for the approximate 40 locals that reside along with road, with minimal consideration for severe increase to their lives and homes.

3. ***Gundary is a Rural/Residential Area:***

Our family home where I was raised is located on the Gundary Plains, as the fourth generation on the family lifestyle block. There are approximately 100 residences located within a 4km radius of the project, including our hobby farm. My upbringing was an inspiration and foundation for my passion in Agriculture and my current career, as I studied a Bachelor of Agriculture at Charles Sturt University Wagga Wagga, and I am currently employed within the industry as an Agronomy Consultant. As a first preference for a career, I would have returned to our farm, however it is not large enough to support my parents let-alone myself, with my father also working full-time off farm as the income is negligible from our small cattle operation. I regularly return home as I now reside in a large inland city, as I love being involved with the farm, and miss the space and privacy the area offers. Our neighbours are also hobby farmers, who have purchased lifestyle farms due to the idyllic landscape of the area. The Gundary Solar development severely undermines the visual appeal of the area, with further angst from the noise of construction and solar panel movement anticipated, ruining the very appeal which continues to attract new residences and potential subdivisions for rural/residential lifestyle blocks.

4. ***Lack of long-term jobs, and local inadequate local funding:***

An estimated 12.5 long-term jobs are estimated for the project, along with \$250,000 of funding over the lifetime of the development for the local community. This is incredibly underwhelming considering the project size.

5. ***Reduction of land value:***

Visual impact and ongoing noise, along with the potential for pollution from toxic chemicals released from electrical infrastructure will have a significant reduction in land value. Reductions of up to 30% have already been reported.

6. ***Contamination of Livestock Grazing Areas:***

It is a requirement of the Livestock Production Assurance (LPA) Program to declare if livestock have been exposed to chemical or physical contamination risks from equipment or infrastructure which may be degrading with age, with examples listed as solar panels or electrical transformers. As the project infrastructure begins to break-down, this could potentially exclude livestock from grazing the development area due to contamination of primary products. Without the option of grazing this

would substantially increase fuel load from vegetation during the remaining lifetime of the project and significantly reduce the potential for grazing after the life of the development. There is also a concern for the contamination of drinking water for livestock located downstream of the project from the Gundry Creek, which flows through the proposed development.

7. *Proximity to Goulburn Township:*

The proposed Gundry Solar Project is located within 10km from the regional city of Goulburn, which is obviously within the 10km SEPP boundary of the city. There is also another proposed solar development, the Merino Solar Farm, which further deteriorates the visual attraction to the area, along with any further lifestyle development.

8. *Lack of Sunlight*

The area is not an appropriate location for efficient solar generation due to the renowned overcast conditions in the Southern Tablelands. Bureau of Meteorology data between 1975-2010 indicates an average of 88.4 clear days per year. This is only 24.2% of the year, greatly limiting resource efficiency for power generation.