

WOLLAR PROGRESS ASSOCIATION

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Submission of Support Wollar Solar Farm Modification (SSD-9254-Mod-4)

Introduction

Wollar Progress Association (WPA) represents the Wollar community, closest to the proposed project. We have a good relationship with staff managing the Wollar Solar Farm and have appreciated the quality community engagement and support through the community sponsorship program.

WPA appreciates the opportunity to submit feedback on the proposed Wollar Solar Farm Modification 4.

We consider it a failure of the planning process to have not required the establishment of a Community Consultative Committee (CCC) for this SSD project. WPA has a long experience with engagement through the CCC for the Wilpinjong Coal Mine and find that the mandatory quarterly meetings provides the community with regular, formal access to mine staff with regular reporting.

Without a CCC for the Wollar Solar Farm, community engagement, while appreciated, is random and often has to be instigated by WPA. A more formalised CCC process would be beneficial to both the community and the proponent.

WPA supports the proposed expansion of the battery energy storage system (BESS) at Wollar Solar Farm. The key concern is the cumulative assessment of traffic movements on Wollar district roads and through Wollar Village.

Support for project

WPA fully supports the objectives of the proposed Modification 4 to expand the battery storage capacity on site. The proposed increase of the BESS capacity from the approved

30MW/30MWh to approximately 280MW with approximately 2 hours of storage duration will have significant benefits for the transmission and distribution networks in the district.

We note that the Wollar Solar Farm is well in advance of the approved Central West Orana Renewable Energy Zone (CWOREZ) projects and will be supplying renewable energy to the existing grid. We support that the project is highly beneficial through:

- Assisting Australia's energy transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy. Contribute to achieving net-zero emissions by 2050 by providing storage and discharge of renewable energy during time of high generation/low demand, and high demand/low generation.
- Providing frequency control and ancillary services to the transmission (and distribution) networks in the area; therefore, providing security of supply and safeguard the energy network.

We also support the objective to employ local people and anticipate that an active community member on the WPA committee is likely to gain employment at Wollar Solar Farm soon.

Traffic Impact Assessment

WPA has concerns that the Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) has failed to identify the cumulative impacts of increased traffic and large vehicle movements through Wollar village and from the east on Main Road 208.

The TIA report as lodged under Appendix D also fails to identify that pre-construction earthworks have already commenced for the neighbouring CWOREZ Barigan Creek switching station. The cumulative impact assessment needs to be updated with new information provided by ACERZ, the contractor in charge of the construction of the CWOREZ transmission infrastructure.

The TAI fails to identify the number of heavy vehicle movements regularly using Main Road 208 from the Bylong Quarry through Wollar Village to coal mines and other construction activities to the west via the Ulan-Wollar Rd. There are also many mine contractors and an increasing number of tourists, often towing caravans, using the Wollar-Bylong road.

Wollar district residents have consistently raised concerns about dangerous driving, including speeding, associated with contractors and large vehicle deliveries to the various large industrial projects and construction activities increasing in the district.

It is imperative that the planning process for increasing industrial activities surrounding the remote rural Wollar district properly assesses cumulative impacts of traffic movements and road conditions. This should not be left to negotiation with local government while local road users bear the brunt of poor road conditions and poor driver behaviour.

We have experienced previous poor planning decisions in the region in regard to increased traffic movements and deteriorating road conditions. The onus should not be left just to individual proponents but should be an integral part of general land use planning for the region.

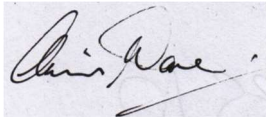
Recommendations:

1. That the proposal be approved with the requirement to set up a CCC with the Wollar community
2. Update the TIA with new information on CWOREZ activities and missing data on road use through Wollar so that the full cumulative impact of the project be understood.

WPA trusts that our recommendations will be taken into account in the assessment of this project.

For more information please contact us at: wollarprogressassociation@gmail.com

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Ware", on a light-colored background.

Chris Ware
President