

**From:** Hugh and Cathie Sutherland [<mailto:hughsutherland@bigpond.com>]  
**Sent:** Monday, 11 February 2019 11:05 AM  
**To:** ElectorateOffice LaneCove  
**Subject:** Uralla Solar Project

11 February, 2019 Deeargee Pastoral Company

1170 Gostwyck Road

Uralla

NSW 2358

The Hon Anthony Roberts MP,

I am writing to you regarding the potential solar farm development to the east of Uralla. As a project landholder I am writing to seek your support for the New England Solar Farm being developed in partnership with UPC Renewables. A special interest group calling themselves "Uralla-Walcha Community Responsible Solar/ Wind Action Group" is attempting to claim their views are representative of the general Uralla community on this issue. As a project participant who has been involved in a process of negotiation and private and community consultation over the last 14-months I can categorically state their goals relate to an agenda of self-interest rather than community interest.

Uralla as a community is seeking a sustainable energy future with a clear focus towards renewable sources of energy. "Uralla was successful in being selected to be the Z-NET Case Study Town, in particular because of its demonstrated track record in working on sustainability and the very strong support shown by its local community, business and government to pursue 100% renewable energy" (Source: [http://z-net.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/ZNET-CaseStudy\\_Uralla\\_v18.pdf](http://z-net.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/ZNET-CaseStudy_Uralla_v18.pdf)). The climate and location of Uralla is ideal for the production and transmission of solar energy. Importantly, Transgrid in their New South Wales "2018 Transmission Annual Planning Report" identified the area around Uralla as a "NSW Government priority energy zone".

The development by UPC Renewables of solar capacity at Uralla will put our town and shire at the leading edge of similar developments across the state. During the construction phase hundreds of new jobs will be created and once the project is completed the net employment benefit will remain substantially above current levels. The long-term service jobs for the project will be of high value and have a positive multiplier impact on local employment and real estate.

The principle arguments against the development appear to relate to the use of high value agricultural land and the "industrialisation" of our rural landscape spoiling their view. The potential income generation from the project for the participants and the general Uralla community is much greater than the value of agricultural output that can be achieved from the same area of land. From my own perspective the development of only around 20 per cent of our farm allows me income diversification, to consider options for my four children in my succession planning for my family farming business and a way to contribute to a positive outcome for the environment. The solar panels are certainly a different type of farming from livestock and in my subjective assessment will have "impressive" appearance that will be an attraction for tourists and visitors to Uralla.

For those of us that drive to Sydney through the Hunter Valley coal mining areas it is easy to see the impact of coal mining on the environment. With all of the debate around the Liverpool Plains and the Adani coal mine how can one small group seek to deny our town and community the opportunity to become a principle hub for clean energy generation in NSW?

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter. I would also be happy to discuss further any aspects of the development. Please feel free to contact me directly via email or phone (0427) 894 360.

Yours sincerely, Hugh Sutherland