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NSW Dept. Planning and Environment.

Re Sandigo Solar Farm.

Dear Sir,

I would like to have input into the proposed Sandigo Solar Farm.

#### GENERAL

I am an immediate close neighbour of this property and many of the assumptions and statements made by Accent Environmental are incorrect.

At the start of the report there is reference to environmental weeds on this land, and then the term "weeds" is used several times, as if to denigrate this land and portray it as weed infested and worthless. This is the exact same land type as Geppert's recently paid nearly \$2000 per acre for on their western boundary. It is prime farming land. By Accents definition all Australian farming land would be "infested" with environmental weeds and of limited value, and one would assume, of no consequence should an industrial developer choose to use it.

The "scattered" paddock trees referred to are normal densities for farming areas in NSW.

Reference is also made to "vast open areas". If you live a closeted life in a city you may think so, but in reality this is a closely settled area and was part of the closer settlement schemes particularly after WW2.

Neither is the land "flat". There is a definite and measurable slope and the change in elevation from the Sandy Creek to Mark Geppert's woolshed is significant. After heavy rainfall, sheets of runoff water regularly flow over the highway.

#### FIRE

Accent say this is NOT fire prone land.

Thats not correct. There have been large bushfires in the area. Around 1972 a large bushfire started on "Aberfeldie", new years eve I believe, and travelled with such speed that wheat crops were burnt in strips. Again in the 1980's a fire started on the Boree Creek - Sandigo Road and, fanned by horrendous winds, travelled toward Kywong. On that occasion the only reason we were not burnt out was because the farm where this development is proposed was fallowed, and that large firebreak saved our farm. There were subsequent court cases for each of these fires and large settlements followed as everyone locally well knows.

#### 2-5

I live in close proximity to this proposal and landscaping and screening **are** necessary.

In summer or drought conditions eucalypts lose their leaves and a strong wind can defoliate them and any screening effect from the trees on our property is diminished greatly. It is not my responsibility to provide amenity to these developers on my property with my vegetation..

Glare from these easterly and north-easterly facing panels is inevitable unless they are screened effectively. This will effect me and highway traffic.

Because the site slopes significantly towards the highway the effect will be to elevate the panels as they move up the hill to the south. This will be unsightly and the glare a real traffic hazard.

Landscaping and visual screening **must** be placed on the eastern and northern sides of this site.

#### 3-9

Fire management.

Mention is made of access for RFS tankers access. Do I take it from this that locals will be required to provide fire security for this multi-million dollar scheme? If they expect this I think they are mistaken.

It needs to be a requirement that adequate equipment and manpower be provided by the development operator to provide their own fire security.

Significant fire breaks, properly maintained should also be mandatory.

#### 3-13

Rehabilitation requirements should be set in stone **now**. Not three years before expiry of the scheme.

There is no surety that the same operators will be in charge in three years time let alone forty years time.

Rehabilitation agreements determined now must apply to all future owners and operators, and be water tight.

In the mining industry companies are often stripped of assets and there are no funds for cleanup or rehabilitation or compensation, and that's if they are still solvent.

Governments and taxpayers are then left to foot the bill. Politicians are too keen to climb on the current fashion bandwagon but are never around when the proverbial hits the fan.

#### Rates

This proposal has minimal ongoing benefit to the ratepayers, and as it will no longer be farmland it should be rated differently and heavily as a direct benefit to the shire.

#### Sandy Creek

Sandy Creek has non- permanent, non-flowing, unreliable and irregular supply.

It is part of the Sandy Creek Water Users Association irrigation water delivery system.

Often the only water in it is that water which members have pumped there from the Old Man Creek.

There should not be any expectation that access to this water is freely available or available at all.

#### Summary

If schemes such as this were truly viable then massive Government subsidies to see them implemented would not be necessary. I suspect much of this money finishes up in foreigners hands and quite likely in foreign government's hands.

It is nonsense to me that a so called "green" electricity source is encouraged to locate on prime farming land and not in the arid, depopulated areas where it belongs.

The recently past Blue gum fiasco keeps coming to the fore in my mind.

An absence of rigorous planning and protection of the diminishing farm land resource, and arbitrary expedient decisions by government will rightly have repercussions on our politicians, I believe sooner than they think. And rightly so.

I don't support the development.

I will pursue and argue protection of my amenity.

Yours Faithfully,

S. Bruce Donaldson.