

21 August, 2018

Planning Services
Department of Planning and Environment
GPO Box 39
Sydney 2001

Attention: Director - Resources and Energy Assessment

Dear Director,

Re: Objection Submission to the Proposed Springdale Solar Development

I have many reasons for submitting my opposition to the proposed Springdale Solar Development.

Impact on Residents

I am witnessing firsthand the impact this proposed development is having on local residents. My daughter and her family, who are directly impacted, have been supporting a parent with dementia whilst also undergoing intrusive and intensive testing as a possible living donor for her sister. What added stress must this be causing, all the while trying to keep her own affairs and young family together in a healthy state. Not to mention the endless hours given over to writing a submission such as this. The magnitude of the proposed Springdale Solar development is having a huge negative mental health toll on my daughter and her family and on many neighbours and residents living in the Sutton area. If the proposed solar development was to proceed, where is the guarantee that the landowners and those adversely effected will receive adequate compensation? And what guarantee is in place to ensure that funds are available for any such compensation and who would evaluate compensation?

Location

Surely in our vast country there is a better place for a solar development of this magnitude. I understand that location need not be close to the area that the power is needed, that the power can be transmitted at the flick of a switch. I understand that there are three suitable areas for solar in NSW which meet the suitability criteria but Sutton is not one of them. Do these three designated areas have an impact on the many families who have chosen a rural area, close to a major city to raise their families? Sutton on the outskirts of Canberra offers a wonderful, happy lifestyle, safe and healthy environment for many families. Many of the families currently living in the area have been raised by their parents in such an environment, understanding and respecting the culture and diversity of such a lifestyle. Planting trees and protecting what they know, hoping to see the same environment flourish for the enjoyment of future generations.

Health Risks

What possible future health problems may occur as a result of living near a massive Solar Development? We have seen the impact of lead paint, asbestos, various chemicals and drugs previously used and thought safe only to learn, years and sometimes decades later, the devastating effect on humanity and the environment.

Bush fire danger

I am concerned about the possibility that workers employed will have no experience of the potential fire hazards which directly relate to this rural setting. One concern is the use of welding equipment during

the construction phase particularly given that the entire state has been declared in a state of drought and fire restrictions are due to commence as at 1 September. The proposed area frequently experiences high winds. If a fire was to start in the proposed Solar Plant, what preventive measures will be put in place to control this and prevent it from spreading to the surrounding neighbours and to Sutton Village? I am also concerned that my family members only exit from their property will be blocked and that they will be trapped and nearby land holders may also have their usual escape route restricted due to the congestion created by the employees and their vehicles during the proposed solar development construction.

Bus Stops

I am very concerned about the children living in the surrounding areas who utilise the local school bus to get to and from school. The school bus picks up in the morning and then in the afternoon drops off along the proposed solar developer's planned route. Dropping and picking up children on roads which have no designated or signage area for the school children to stand safely, along the same roads the proposed solar developments heavy laden vehicles will be travelling. Children do not process what they see and hear as well as adults, their lack of experience causes perceptual difficulties resulting in uncertain reactions when confronted with traffic. Children have a third narrower peripheral vision than adults and have trouble judging the speed and distances of approaching vehicles. Some very young children cannot differentiate between moving, stopped or parked vehicles.

Pedestrians

I am concerned about the possibility of road traffic accidents and injuries for the local vulnerable group of road users, their children, the pedestrians and the cyclists in the Sutton Village and on the proposed solar development route. The Sutton Village has both Primary and Preschool aged children who may experience difficulty when crossing roads. There are no marked pedestrian crossings in the village for the children and parents to cross the road. Although younger children may look before crossing they do not have a developed understanding that a vehicle they can see may not be able to see them. Children may not recognise that it is difficult to be seen by a driver that they can see. Children do not think to use sound to work out where traffic is coming from. Many residents ride horses to local pony club events and to the Sutton Pony Club grounds but currently there is no signage suggesting that horse riders may cross the road. The increased risk of accidents is a very real possibility on the rural roads which are just not suitable for the anticipated additional extra traffic.

Roads

The road conditions in this area are already hazardous for the locals, without the increased traffic during construction. The dust plumes, gravel surfaces are irregular and roads narrow in sections and I believe the material used on some of the access roads is of inferior quality. Recently I counted 13 guide posts which had been struck down within 7kms of the proposed solar development. I have seen no police enforcement presence in my 50 years of travelling these roads. Who will police the substantially increased traffic and the possibility of trucks speeding to meet deadlines? Just today I was forced to the verge by a large truck. This happened on a road with a passing lane, not a narrow country lane.

The Tallagandra Lane and Sutton roads may see an increase by many more users as road work is commencing on the Barton Highway. The Barton highway is the usual route for commuters who travel from as far as away as towns Young, Harden, Boorowa, Binalong, Bowning and Yass and these road works will cause major delays for all travellers. Tallagandra Lane and the route through Sutton Village is already used when the Barton Highway is closed as a result of a significant traffic accident and I believe the highway expansion will indirectly result in many opting to use this alternate route. Ambulances and vehicles carrying patients for dialysis and medical appointments needing to meet crucial deadlines and these may also use the Tallagandra Lane route. This will place further

restrictions to their travel times, causing additional stress to both drivers and patients. The possibility of the proposed Solar Development with its additional traffic will only cause further major problems on roads that are already deemed dangerous.

Will the proposed solar development employees understand the complexities of driving near our ever present kangaroos, and particularly due to the current dry conditions? As a passenger returning from a solar meeting, I witnessed 14 kangaroos on the road, not to mention the numerous dead ones on the edges of the road. The NRMA notes the high number of accidents in the region, as a result of both hitting kangaroos and because of the inferior road conditions.

Time Frame / Weather

What is the proposed time frame for the completion of the proposed development? Many factors may inhibit the construction stage ie weather, allowances should be considered when notifying residents of an estimated construction time frame. And what happens when there are fogs until 11am during winter, when daylight is minimal and when there are frosts until the same time? How much Solar can be generated during these months when there are shorter days? Is this the best place to spend our tax payer's dollars?

Debris

The actual site for development has been flooded at least three times in the last decade, during flood times large quantities of debris build up along existing fence lines. At the moment though there is no evidence with our present drought conditions. It is presumed that the flood will occur again and if the proposed Solar Development is approved and the area screened, who will clear this debris? Will it be left to create fire hazard in drier times? And who will release the poor old owl this time, when he gets caught in the razor wire which will surround the solar development?

My own household strongly supports renewable energy, this is evidenced by the large number of solar panels on our own home and by the large acres of tree planting we have undertaken in an endeavour to do our bit to support the environment. Our solar panels though do not adversely impact our neighbours or the surrounding area, their lifestyle or their property values. For these reasons and those listed in my letter **I am opposed** to the proposed Springdale Solar Development and ask that very careful consideration be given when choosing appropriate sites for Solar developments, particularly of this magnitude.

Yours sincerely,

Eveleen Golding