

Planning Services

29 August 2018

Department of Planning and Environment

GPO Box 39,

SYDNEY NSW 2001

Attention: Director - Resources and Energy Assessment

Dear Sir/Madam,

***Submission regarding the Proposed Springdale Solar Development -
Application No. 8703***

I'm writing to you to express my concerns over the proposed solar development which is to be situated right next to my family's property. Below, I have highlighted some of the key concerns I have with this gigantic industrial feature which aims to destroy the beautiful scape that is Sutton.

- Our home, built in the 1800's' is situated on an elevated area of land which is much higher than the screening site which aims to 'block the solar farm out'. Not only will me and my family be subject to the site of these metal structures; but we will be subject to the glare that will reflect off the approximately 350,000 solar panels. This poor attempt at rectifying the eye sore that will be the solar panels will not do. We live in a quiet, peaceful rural environment and I am concerned about the noises of major construction and then of the potential running noises if the proposed development was approved.
- Our driveway is 3kms long and extends right through the centre of the proposed development. Will our driveway be impacted because of the heavy vehicles and the 200 mobile workers employed during the peak of the construction period? We have been told it will not be used and if it is than this is NOT acceptable. I and my family need to use this road to make our daily travels to and from work, school, among other places... all of which are in Canberra. How safe will our driveway and the roads be for my brother, a learning driver?
- Linking with the road problems above, I am also worried about the number of large trucks and extra vehicles, all needing to meet a deadline. These trucks will be driving along Tallagandra Lane, Mulligans Flat Rd and East Tallagandra Lane, all of which are main roads for the residents of Sutton and surrounding areas. This area is not isolated, we have many neighbours, most with kids around my age who are just

starting to drive. Our roads barely cope with our local traffic and I believe the extra traffic the proposed Solar development would bring would cause immense problems for all residents. Also, with the high development rates Gungahlin ACT, located only 10 minutes away, I have noticed more and more ACT cars using the shortcut along Mulligans Flat Road/ East Tallagandra Lane, through Sutton village to get to the Federal Highway. The proposed Solar development traffic would only add to the already poor road conditions, which have low maintenance. What solution would the developers have for such a problem? This does not only affect me...it affects anyone who uses these roads.

- As I have highlighted above; our driveway is 3kms long and is the sole entrance point for me and my family of five. Solar developments, as reported by energysage, can reach temperatures of as high as 65°C (energysage, 2017). It has been reported that solar developments of such a size could cause fires. If a fire were to start, my family would only have one place to go.... That would be straight up the driveway; straight through the solar development, straight through the fire. This is a potential hazard that **has not** been addressed.
- What are the unknown short-term and long-term health effects that result from living 300m from a solar development spanning approximately 350,000 panels? Solar technologies are a health hazard to people who have electromagnetic hypersensitivity (EHS). These are people who get sick from electromagnetic radiation in very small amounts, such as what comes from cell phones, computers and other electronic appliances. The examples listed are producers of very small amounts of electromagnetic radiation. So, what would happen if someone was subjected to 350,000 solar panels worth of electromagnetic radiation? These are the questions that need to be answered. Such products as lead paint and arsenic were once thought to be safe but we now know they cause many problems including skin cancer and brain damage. How do we know that high levels of radiation won't cause similar problems? And what if my parents decide they would like to sell their property? A prospective buyer may perceive such a large solar development to be dangerous. This would result in a dramatic drop in property value.
- I am very concerned for my parents potentially reselling our home and the value of my parent's property decreasing significantly. In my opinion, any prospective buyer will view the proposed Industrial Solar Plant as not a nuisance, not as an eye sore, but as something that could render our lovely home as unbuyable. To purchase a home and land in direct sight of nearly 470 acres of solar panels would turn even the most optimistic buyer away. My family along with the others living in this area have a wonderful lifestyle balance. We live close enough to a major city

that I can easily work and go to university but then just as easily come home to a beautiful, quiet rural area. I know my parents would never have considered living here with myself and my brother and sister if they had known of the possibility that a potential Solar Plant could be built so close to their home. And why is this area being considered when is not in one of the three (3) Potential Priority Energy Zones in NSW identified in the NSW Government Submission on AEMO's Integrated System Plan March 2018. With 100% of NSW currently in drought and so many struggling rural communities, would it not be more beneficial to build in a place that will boost such isolated communities.

- The EIS indicated the "Field surveys identified the presence or potential presence of several threatened species within the Site including Golden Sun Moth (GSM) (*Synemon plana*), Superb parrot (*Polytelis swainsonii*), Dusky Woodswallow (*Artamus cyanopterus cyanopterus*), Scarlet Robin (*Petroica boodang*) and Varied Sittella (*Daphoenositta chrysoptera*), amongst a range of other bird species, many of which were assumed to be present based on habitat characteristics."

We have on our property over 2000 planted native trees to provide wind breaks for our livestock, as well as shelter for the surrounding birds and wildlife.

I am concerned about the "Lake Effect" these Solar Industrial Plans possibly have.

Written in the position paper on Solar Energy by the American Bird Conservancy "Large, commercial solar energy facilities appear to be an "evolutionary trap" for birds who perceive them to be bodies of water on which they attempt to land.

Insects, the prey of insectivorous birds, are also apparently attracted by this so-called "Lake Effect." and "Depending on the type of solar facility involved, deaths can occur from birds being incinerated by concentrated beams of sunlight, or killed as they make contact with the hard solar panels or surrounding ground as they attempt to land (Upton, 2014).....there is cause for concern, particularly when it comes to their impact on threatened and endangered species" (Scientific American 'Solar Farms Threaten Birds' By John Upton, Climate Central on August 27, 2014).

A Federal investigation report "recommends improving bird death by clearing vegetation around solar towers to make the area less attractive to birds". The removal of vegetation would result in high amounts of land erosion. Such erosion would give rise to increasingly contaminated water supplies. This would not only affect my family, it would also affect our livestock. Erosion, whilst a major issue, is not the only problem we face in terms of water contamination. It has been suggested that chemicals used to clean the solar panels is a potential hazard, as well as potential chemical spillages. Any spillages could result in water contamination. This would not only affect our dams and our own water supply but the water supplies of our neighbours and the Yass Valley water catchment. In the 13 years that we have lived here, our driveway has been under water 3 times during floods and these flood waters all end up in the Yass Valley water catchment.

In closing, I have seen the amount of stress my parents have been put under due to the possibility of this proposed Solar Plant being approved. I can understand their angst; imagine driving down your driveway to your historical home through the middle of an industrial size Solar development which someone else is reaping the benefits from. Not only will we lose our peaceful rural views, but my parents also face the real possibility of their only asset being dramatically devalued and they will be considerably and negatively impacted. For those reasons and the reasons, I have listed above, I am **opposed** to this Solar development.

Yours sincerely,

Jack Hassall

"Tintinhull" Cottage

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SUTTON NSW 2620