

WOLLAR PROGRESS ASSOCIATION

C/O- POST OFFICE

WOLLAR NSW 2850

wollarprogressassociation@gmail.com

Anthony Ko
Project Manager
Department of Planning
anthony.ko@planning.nsw.gov.au

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Submission of Support Wollar Solar Farm SSD 9254

Wollar Progress Association supports the proposed Wollar Solar Farm, 7kms to the south of Wollar village, as a positive development in our locality that will benefit the environment and society in general.

The Wollar community has suffered significant negative social and environmental impacts caused by the neighbouring Wilpinjong Coal Mine. We are still waiting for the Department of Planning to release the final Social Impact Management Plan for the Wilpinjong Extension Project.

Wollar Public School was put into recess in December 2018 because of the loss of families associated with properties owned by Peabody Energy. This has been an additional negative impact on the future of the Wollar community.

We are very happy to finally have a development proposal on our door step that is a win-win for our community. Wollar Solar Farm will create some local training and employment opportunities in a clean work place. There is hope that this project might attract some young families back to the area and reinvigorate our community.

The project will also bring more business to the Wollar General Store and help improve its viability, as well as injecting broader economic benefits to the region.

We note that the 12- 18 month construction period for Wollar Solar Farm will create more employment than the construction of the approved extension to Wilpinjong Mine.

The Wollar Solar Farm will not create any noise or dust 24 hrs/day or have regular blasts that shake our homes and scare our animals. It will not require more trains on the Sandy Hollow Rail Line to hold us up at level crossings and keep us awake at night. It will not use or intercept lots of water and will have minimal impact on biodiversity.

It will also have no other amenity or visibility impacts.

The Association notes that the project placed on public exhibition for comment is smaller than the original concept plan. This is because the proponent has redesigned the configuration of solar panels to avoid Regent Honeyeater habitat, protect hollow standing trees and Aboriginal cultural heritage values and provide a 40 m buffer to waterways.

We note this is a larger buffer than the 20m buffer approved for open cut mining operations adjacent to the Mugnhorn Gap Nature Reserve at the Wilpinjong Mine.

We also note that the traffic impact during the construction period for the proposed Wollar Solar Farm will be far less intensive than the oversized vehicle movements needed during the construction of the proposed Bylong Mine.

The proposed Solar Farm project will not cause any major disruption to the remaining residents in the Wollar area.

The Association fully supports the advancement of renewable energy projects within Mid-Western Region local government area. The Wollar site on undulating, mostly cleared grazing land with a northerly aspect adjacent to a substation and the 330kv powerline is ideal for a large solar project.

The project proposes to feed 290MW green power with battery storage into the national electricity grid providing clean, renewable energy for about 104,926 average NSW homes while displacing approximately 515, 564 metric tonnes of CO₂.

This project will help Australia meet its commitments under the Paris Agreement 2015 and start a process of transition away from coal in the region.

Wollar Progress Association fully supports the Wollar Solar Farm and recommends that the project be approved.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read 'B Hughes'.

Bruce Hughes
President

