

30 November 2020

Environmental Assessment Officer
Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
Level 30
320 Pitt Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Submission – Glennellen Solar Farm SSD9550

I Melinda Delaney, declare that I have not made any political donation in the past five years.

In reference to the above mentioned proposed planning development of the Glenellen Solar Farm I wish to formally submit my objection based on the following:

1. Loss of significant agricultural land and its immediate and long term detrimental impact on neighbouring farm land

It is essential in our current climate to preserve viable land for agriculture to continue to provide an important primary industry for the wider population of Australia. Australian farmers need to be supported in their endeavours and recognised for their valuable contribution to the Australian economy. The proximity and size of the proposed solar farms of Glenellen (and close proximity to proposed Solar Farms of Jindera, Walla Walla and Culcairn) will inevitable have a tremendous impact on neighbouring farming activities through, but not limited to: increase of heat generated by solar panels, dust impact, erosion of soils, lack of weed control, increase bush fire risk, water runoff issues, inability to access adequate public liability insurance, inadequate road infrastructure and devaluation of land etc.

2. Economic impact of the development

Few landholders will receive economic compensation for lease of their property whilst other neighbouring farms will be adversely impacted. In the event that this valuable agricultural land is repurposed to an industrial site, this land will be used to generate income for a largely international investment portfolio, with equipment purchased from international suppliers. Whilst there maybe an initial increase for employment during the construction phase, this is not the case for the 30 year lifespan. The economic cost for the Australian economy through lack of agriculture would include a 30 years of reduction in farm economic output through the sale of ag commodities, employment of contractors in carrying out those agricultural activities for example: contract harvester, weed spraying, truck transport, stock & station agents, tractor supplier, local diesel mechanic, stock hand, fencing contractor etc.

3. Impact on the welfare of regional farmers

Recent drought and fires have had an adverse effect on mental health. The recent drought has tested and proven the resilience of farmers in this area banding together to tackle the fodder shortage up north. Burrumbuttock Hay Runners is a prime example of how Aussies can help one another. The lack of empathy and consideration that this proposed development has had on the local community is of concern. Farmers who were once friendly neighbours for years (some families for generations) have been left on opposing sides. There is no financial compensation for farms adjoining the development but there is a

clear financial disadvantage. Throughout this planning process there has been significant emotional hardship faced by many farmers and neighbours that will be impacted directly if this Solar Farm was to be approved. Farms in this area are not huge land holdings therefore there will be a significant number of families that will be impacted adversely, which will have a detrimental effect on social and mental welfare.

4. Impact on the native habitation, vegetation and significant aboriginal cultural heritage of the proposed site.

The proposed development will not only clear hectares of prime agricultural land but will also result in the destruction of native habitat and vegetation in the area. It is proposed that a number of dams will be filled in. Vegetation will be affected by the lack of sun reaching soil which will result in soil erosion and therefore interference with natural water run-off. There are Squirrel Gliders, which are considered vulnerable in NSW, Blue Tongue Lizards, Wedge Tailed Eagles as well as other native wildlife. Small business planning proposals have been rejected at a local council level due to the impact on the environment therefore, such a proposal of this size needs greater scrutiny and transparency.

In closing I wish to acknowledge the importance of Solar energy in our current climate. I am very much supportive of these initiatives however there needs to be clear acknowledgement and adherence to guidelines already in place to protect significant agricultural land.

Yours faithfully

Melinda Delaney
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