According to eSPADE[1], solodic soils and siliceous sands to the east and north of Gulgong, are characterised by low to moderate salinity, yet there is no mention of salinity in the EIS. A groundwater system survey has not been conducted in an area that is susceptible to salinity? The placement of electrical infrastructure on a saline discharge area is high hazard land use. Perhaps the bores in the development area are not being used for water because they are saline? Salinity outbreaks in the development area and on neighbouring land is a real threat if salinity is not acknowledged and mitigated. The proponents of Suntop Solar 1 & 2 near Wellington barely mentioned salinity in the Suntop 1 EIS and had planned to place the Suntop 1 substation on a saline waterway. Five months into Suntop 2 EIS preparation the community had to explain to the project manager what salinity was. The proponents lost 100mw capacity over the two farms when the salinity problem was finally acknowledged.

There is a lot of information concerning erosion in the development area and beyond during construction, yet there is little mention of how it is to be mitigated during operation. Grazing of livestock hasn't been decided and will occur in certain areas only. It was not stated where or why. Pasture needs to be controlled and maintained to mitigate further erosion. Vegetation along waterways will not mitigate erosion on open country. Suntop Solar 1 began construction August 2020. The whole development area has been sprayed with roundup, what was left was burnt and the area was totally levelled of contour banks. They stated in their EIS pasture would be maintained during construction to prevent erosion?

I find it hard to believe that there will be no groundwater interaction when kilometre upon kilometre of land is trenched and backfilled with sand. Huge trenches carrying hundreds of kilometres of cable, covered with porous sand, topped up with unstable soil. Mid-Western Region LEP has the site mapped as groundwater vulnerable. How shallow is the groundwater? Will the poles and cables be sitting below the groundwater table? There is a high probability of contamination from disturbance and chemicals leaching from solar panels, washing into the creeks, bores and groundwater over the 30-year period.

Blue Springs Road is a local access road similar to Suntop Road. Suntop Road is less than 6 metres wide. Suntop Solar 1 construction began in August and many sections of the road have been stripped of pavement due to the trucks. It is early days. The road is not wide enough. We usually have to leave the road to pass the trucks. The truck drivers do not care and like to hug the road. The Driver's Code of Conduct is as good as nothing. It is dangerous. We have had to write numerous letters to the DPIE, Dubbo Regional Council and the developers to have the road repaired. At a recent community meeting concerning the project, the project manager didn't think they were solely responsible for the absolute mess they had made of the road. Blue Springs Road needs to be upgraded to 7.2 width as recommended in the Austroads guidance.

There is a lot of hype around these developments in terms of employment for locals and boosting the local economy. There is no sustainable employment for locals and a very short-lived boost to the local economy through accommodation and food outlets only. Very little to

[1] Murphy, B.W. Lawrie, J.W. 1998, Soil Landscapes of the Dubbo 1:250 000 Sheet – Department of Land & Water Conservation

nothing is sourced locally for construction of these developments. Backpackers were hired to build Wellington Solar. Within four months they were gone. Bodangora Wind Farm's operational staff has dwindled. UPC/AC states 10 operational jobs. Will these be full time, part time or fly-ins? Proponents and the government at all levels, seek favour for these developments espousing jobs for locals. Unfortunately, the uninformed believe them.

Good productive land is taken out of production and replaced by industrial developments that will give little to nothing to the local economy. There should be a limit to the number and size of these projects on good agricultural land as well as a limit to the number of these projects surrounding small rural towns. The Wellington area will have many thousands of hectares given over to renewables and Gulgong looks like being the same. The whole north eastern approach to Wellington will be a sea of panels, all within a few kilometres of the town centre. The people of Wellington are aghast at the size of these developments. They are clueless about the excellent soil quality on these sites and the imminent placement of more electricity generating plants in the area. If a developer is lucky enough to secure land under a 330 kV transmission line, on a favourable site, they are in. Where is the plan? There isn't one. It is an absolute free for all.

UPC/AC states that the project does not require the construction of transmission infrastructure beyond the study area as it would connect to the existing Wellington to Wollar 330kV transmission line. (Main Doc pg 176) UPC/AP has chosen to omit the fact that to bring the CWO REZ together and make it viable, a new 330kV transmission line from Merriwa to Wellington will need to be built at a cost of $800 million. Wollar Substation will also need an upgrade. Stubbo Solar is part of the CWO REZ. I wonder how many dollars the foreign owned UPC/AP will be contributing to this infrastructure to make their development viable? I am guessing none.