

Barbara Seis  
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Gulgong, NSW 2852

**Re: Stubbo Solar Farm, Application No.: SSD-10452**

To whom it may concern,

I am a neighbouring landowner, sharing a significant boundary of around 2km with the project.

I object to the project, highlighting (but not limited to) the following reasons:

**Underground Water and Soil Contamination**

The farm water supply, in particular the well on our property (which is not that far from the study area), is not that far from the surface. I am concerned that if the solar panels are damaged, for example from hail stones, that the chemicals from the damaged panels will leach into the soil and the water will be contaminated. This water is used for domestic purposes, and we are totally reliant on that water for our stock during times of drought.

Like the above, if the solar panels become damaged or there are spills in the construction process, the chemicals leach into the soil, the ground will become contaminated and will become useless for grazing and cropping. This will be exacerbated by water run-off when it rains.

If contamination of the water or soil occurs, we will lose our livelihood. The EIS notes that mitigating measures for soil contamination includes notifying the EPA or Emergency Responses. The mitigating measures will not bring back our livelihood if things go wrong.

**Sourcing Water**

The EIS notes that the 2<sup>nd</sup> source of preferred water supply is (opportunistically) from farm dams within the study area. What assurances do we have that UPC\AC will not source water from dams that are connected to groundwater?

The EIS mentions that during drought conditions water will "likely" be sourced from commercial suppliers and treated wastewater. UPC\AC does not say that they will not source water (opportunistically or otherwise) from farm dams during those times, nor is there any comment on what their plan is for sourcing water during the warmer months or other stressful conditions which are not drought. During times of drought, warmer months, or when conditions are otherwise stressful, there needs to be as much water available as possible to manage the adverse circumstances, especially in the event of a bushfire. I am not comfortable with the notion that water from farm dams could be used in the operation of the solar farm during those times, and there will not be enough water available when we need it as a result.

**Lack of Engagement with a Key Neighbour**

It appears this project has been mooted for some time, with the EIS noting engagement with local and state stakeholders since early 2018. After we received the initial letter regarding the development to ascertain any interest in committing land in late 2018/ early 2019, the next time I heard about it was in August 2020 when my son told me about it after he learned that a friend was committing land to it. This is a long time after UPC\AC says that it started "targeted consultation" with nearby landowners in early 2019. UPC\AC only contacted my son Christopher, who is the landowner and in partnership with myself, at the beginning of September after my other son and my daughter commented on a Facebook post.

Based on the contact we have had with UPC\AC, the only time myself or Christopher received any sort of quality engagement was at the Community Drop-in session in Gulgong on the 28<sup>th</sup> of October 2020 where we both spoke to Killian Wentrup and Michael Zippel. Michael said that he was in the area for a couple of weeks and would come out and see us. This visit has still not happened.

UPC\AC have had opportunities to consult with myself and Christopher, however they appear to have chosen not to. This is very disappointing. As key neighbours we have not been given the chance to talk to UPC\AC about a development which will directly affect us more than most, if not all, of the project neighbours. I do not see how UPC\AC can say in their EIS that they have consulted and engaged with neighbouring landowners when they clearly have not.

### **Traffic During Construction**

During construction, 26% of the traffic will be on Barneys Reef Road. That will be over 100 trips a day. It is not a road designed for that sort of traffic, especially for heavy vehicles. How will the risks from that be controlled and mitigated?

### **Environmental hazard**

The EIS notes that this development is proposed to be approximately 800,000 panels, with the development footprint being 1,243 hectares. Why are so many panels needed in such a large area if solar energy is meant to be a viable renewable resource?

It does not seem like an environmentally friendly process to construct and operate the solar farm. Some of these issues are highlighted below:

- at its peak it is expected that there will be 460 trips per day for light vehicles, and the equivalent of 120 heavy vehicle trips per day, creating pollution and noise,
- ground disturbance during construction will cause soil erosion,
- destruction of habitats, most notably the barking owl,
- there is a significant amount of water used in the manufacture of solar panels and water will continue to be needed for operational purposes,
- the solar panels contain semi-conductor materials, some of which are toxic and can contaminate soil and water; and
- disposal of damaged solar panels or panels at the end of their life/ end of the project: how are 800,000 solar panels going to be disposed of? While some components can be recycled, the semi-conductor materials are considered as e-waste and hazardous. The EIS does not really address this issue, other than it will be disposed of safely which does not provide much comfort.

How can this be considered as being beneficial for the environment? How many years will it be before the development offsets its negative impacts, if at all?

### **Declaration**

I declare that I have not made any political donations in the last 2 years.

