

Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
320 Pitt Street
Sydney NSW 2000

Re: Submission Jindera Solar Farm (SUB-9549)

Dear Sir / Madam,

I wish to object to the proposed Jindera Solar Farm development primarily as it requires the use of large amounts of productive agricultural land in Greater Hume.

Agriculture contributes \$98M to the Shire's economy and is the largest sector for employment. *Source: Greater Hume Shire Economic Development and Social Plan 2017 – 2022.* Agricultural land is an important asset which we need to protect for the purpose of producing food, fiber and fodder. Using productive agricultural land for large scale renewable energy developments is a misuse of land given there are other, less arable land options available.

Site Suitability:

The Jindera site is not suitable for the following reasons. The map from Renewable Energy Resources of NSW depicts a solar reference point in Greater Hume. This reference point appears in the lower, average daily global solar exposure section. The map indicates much larger areas to the North West of the State, have higher average daily global solar exposure. Additionally the area of Greater Hume was not listed in AEMO's Integrated System Plan identifying the best locations for potential energy zones in NSW.

The Riverina Murray Regional Plan 2036 states under the heading 'A Growing and Diverse Economy' - Direction 1: Protect the region's diverse and productive agricultural land. Under Direction 1, three actions are listed.

The first, 1.1 being '*Develop a regional agricultural development strategy that: maps important agricultural land...*' p 17.

Whilst the important agricultural land mapping is still being undertaken by the Department of Primary Industries, a major project of this magnitude should not be considered.

Project Benefits:

The local economic benefits to Jindera and surrounding Greater Hume during construction would be minimal as workers would likely be accommodated in larger areas. After construction the EIS indicates the project only requires 2-3 full time staff. Resources are being redirected from one industry and replaced with another - not really providing a significant economic advantage.

Enterprises from agricultural pursuits year in year out support many local and regional businesses including but not limited to - Livestock carriers, Shearing Teams, Produce Stores,

Wool Stores, Fuel Providers, Contactor sprayers, Contact harvesters, Contract fencers, Contact seeders, Contact Lamb and sheep husbandry businesses , Machinery dealerships, Metal fabrication businesses, Mechanics, Tyre Businesses, Earthmoving Businesses, Accountants, Legal Firms, Vets, Schools, Sporting clubs and local business.

There is strong demand for agricultural properties in the region. Farmland prices are a function of many variables including, but not limited to rainfall, location, agricultural industry, productivity, land quality, sentiment, interest rates, commodity prices and the performance of the wider economy.

Greater Hume Shire Council at its Extraordinary Meeting held on 6 Nov 2019 decided to formally object to the development for the following reasons:

1. The development will result in adverse environmental, social and economic impacts for the local community.
2. The proposed development will restrict the ability for Jindera to grow in the direction of the subject land.
3. Concerns in relation to the bushfire risk posed by the development.
4. Loss of high quality agricultural land.
5. Impacts on native vegetation and Aboriginal cultural heritage.

I agree with Council's objection to the development and reasons. There are more suitable locations for this large development. Not all land is equal in terms of reliable agricultural production, as illustrated in the current drought conditions. The location of transmission lines should not be the driving factor in the placement of large scale solar developments. More consideration needs to be given to the suitable placement of projects for renewable energy generation.

With Regards

Michelle Pumpa