

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

Submission – Jindera Solar Farm SSD9549

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 Jindera 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

327 hectares of prime agricultural land will be repurposed to an industrial landscape. It is essential in our current climate to preserve the 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 Jindera (and close proximity to proposed Solar Farms of Glenellen, 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 etc.

2. Economic impact of the development

Economic benefit has been exaggerated by the proposal to gain a favourable outcome. Few landholders will receive economic compensation for lease of their property whilst other neighbouring farms will be adversely impacted. There has been a fundamental failure in this proposal to truthfully acknowledge and consider the economic cost to the Australian community. In the event that this land is repurposed to an industrial site, 327 hectares 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 327 hectare 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

During the current Australian climate farmers in Regional Australia are facing a crisis. Farming is a difficult game and with the cost of agricultural land, much of these are farmed by 3rd and 4th generation farmers. Many farms are also being purchased by foreign investment. Mental health has been a major issue with the rate of suicide in regional Australia at its highest. Communities are disappearing along with important services. The current 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 devastating. Farmers who were once friendly neighbours for years (families for generation) 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 327 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. The lack of independent consultation regarding the native species which inhabit the proposed land is concerning. 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. It is recorded that the loss of Aboriginal cultural items will be 24. Our local Wiradjuri, Wavereoo and Dhudhuroa culture is to be preserved and this development should not cause the destruction of or diminish the significance of such cultural heritage.

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. I understand that the majority of land proposed for development is classified as class 3, land that falls under the protection of Department of Planning, Industry and Environments Large Solar Energy Guidelines. We should not forsake one very important primary industry for haste of another.

Yours faithfully



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