

I am raising some objections to the proposed Solar Farm development Culcairn Solar Project - SSD-10288.

Culcairn is named after a village in Scotland. The explorers Hume and Hovell passed through the area in 1824 on their journey to Port Phillip. They noted the extensive grass cover and the potential for grazing. The township dates back to 1880 when it was laid out by local landowner James Balfour who donated land for a school and Presbyterian church. The construction of the Sydney to Melbourne railway saw the town grow as a service centre for the most prosperous grazing and stud stock region in NSW. Early industry included chaff mills, a cereal grain company and a quarry.

Today Culcairn is the centre of an agricultural district producing high yields of wheat, wool, clover seed and fat lambs. Water is reticulated to the town from Australia's largest open artesian domestic water supply which was discovered in 1926. A 37-metre shaft taps 800 000 litres a day from the massive basin which has earned the town the title of 'Oasis of the Riverina'.

I have immediate family and friends in the area, so can see firsthand what impact such a proposal will have on the community, and farming surrounds. This project has caused unnecessary stress to my family and friends, they are physically and mentally exhausted listening to the lies, accusations, backlash fighting to keep their good name in the community, reading inaccurate figures, falsifying documents and photo's, degrading the land to make it look more appealing to the public. Yes they were offered to have Solar on their property but losing 5 generations of blood, sweat and tears in farming to easy money isn't part of their work ethic or morals.

1. This development is on prime agricultural land. For 4 generations (slowly deteriorating over the generations) it has been farmed and run livestock and it was currently leased in the last 3 years by 5th Generation Farmers, due to the neglect in this land they introduced sustainable farming methods to bring it back to prime agricultural land.
2. The soils are classified as highly productive and are amongst the most productive agricultural land in NSW. Food production and food security are emerging issues for this century, and this productive land should be strictly protected from industrial land uses.
3. These solar projects belong in more arid areas not on productive fertile land that produces food and fodder in times of drought.
4. It could become a breeding ground for weeds if the site is not actively managed. This will be labour intensive because the supporting structure

will prevent boom spraying. There is no guarantee that the effort required to manage the weeds will lead to infestations with negative consequences for adjacent properties.

5. This conflict stems from the impact on:-
 - a. - the soil on which they are sited;
 - b. - the ambience and character of this iconic rural area
6. This development is on zoned prime agricultural land, surrounded by established residences. The decision to propose this development at this site is due to financial factors – “greed and easy money”, not established environmental nor current use.
7. The surrounding productive farms will have to suffer with the effects, eg, noise during construction phase, the glare from the galvanised posts and panels, visual impact, heat signature from the panels.
8. The development would have a visual impact on the properties.
9. The land value of the property, being prime agricultural land, will be reduced. Bearing in mind, the property is part of a larger one which has been farmed from original settlement.
10. Loss of employment and effect on neighbour function centre business, loss of income for the neighbouring farms due to the effects they will have to endure if this project is approved.
11. The land that the project is proposed to be built on is high quality agricultural land and shouldn't be wasted by being placed under solar panels just because it is close enough to connect to the power grid. It will degrade the soil, according to agronomist advice, over which it would be located, and it is quite possible this land may never be suitable for agriculture again. Stated by NEON *“The solar farm would be decommissioned at the end of its operational life, removing all above and below-ground infrastructure. It is expected that the land would be returned to its prior production uses, as solar farms typically do not have significant permanent impacts to soil and landform.”* Have they done 30 years of study to support this statement, and where will the 1.1 million decommissioned solar panels be stored???
12. The solar farm will change the rural outlook of the area into an industrial site. This development will have significant and detrimental impact on the local environment and families. An industrial installation is not compatible with the scenic values sought by rural tourists.

13. It must be assumed that the proposed facility will use significant quantities of water during its operation. The use of ground water for industry, not agriculture, is not the best use of a precious resource.
14. A major hazard must be fire generated by parts of the proposed installation such as substations and transmission lines. The local landholders do not need another source of bushfire near their properties.
15. I have concerns in relation to the level of the current public liability insurance. Currently a business has a policy to the value of \$20,000,000. I have reason to believe that this would be inadequate if something was to happen on the neighbouring properties (a fire being started for instance) that caused some or all of the proposed development to be destroyed. Obviously this would mean they would be required to take out a suitable level of cover to allow for such a scenario and this would increase the insurance premiums.
16. Do not allow this international company, and others like them to get away with destroying our prime AUSTRALIAN agricultural land in order to save themselves the dollars it would cost them to place these farms in uninhabited, and barren landscapes. There are plenty of these in Australia, let's face it folks and sun is available all over central and Northern Australia EQUALLY. No need to ruin our food producing areas, no need to disrespect and desecrate the sacred indigenous area of the Wiradjuri people, no need to take more habitat away.