



NAME REDACTED

OBJECT

Submission No: 185394

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| Organisation: | | <i>Land use compatibility, Visual impacts, Biodiversity, Traffic, Erosion and sediment</i> Key issues: <i>control, Water, Noise, Waste, Dust, Hazards and risks, Community benefit, Cumulative impacts, Decommissioning and rehabilitation</i> |
| Location: | <i>Location redacted</i> | |
| Submitter Type: | <i>an individual making a submission on my own behalf</i> | |
| Attachment: | <i>Submission to Independent Commissioner_ Wallaroo_ Objection_ [REDACTED]_10_Jul_24.pdf</i> | |

Submission date: 7/10/2024 1:18:38 PM

Please see attached document

Commissioner
NSW Independent Planning Commission
NSW Government
10 July 2024

SUBJECT: Objection to proposed Wallaroo Solar Farm Development

References:

- A. NGH, Wallaroo Scoping Study dated August 2020
- B. Wallaroo Solar Farm EIS dated April 2023
- C. Mr [REDACTED], Submission Objecting to proposed Wallaroo Solar Farm Development dated 19 Jun 2023 (enclosed)
- D. NGH, Response to Submissions dated November 2023
- E. DPHI, Wallaroo Assessment Report dated June 2024
- F. DPHI, Wallaroo Development Consent dated June 2024

Dear Sir/Madam,

I made a submission to the Developers EIS (ref B) vide Ref C objecting to the proposed establishment of a large solar power farm and battery system which is situated some 800m from my home. In this objection I have referred to several pieces of legislation and rules to which it is contended provide compelling evidence why this proposed development is not permissible on this site. I ask you to consider these in your examination and in addition offer the following to highlight why this proposal should not proceed.

It is appreciated that the Federal and State policies are in place to provide guidance and a framework for responsible development and management of infrastructure but, on balance, it is sought from the Commissioner to deny this application based upon the moral and holistic arguments that the objections represent a 'greater good' than those of the proponent and therefore the proposed development is not permissible. It is noted also that in ref D, the proponent has not addressed with any satisfaction the concerns that I and indeed other objectors have to this development.

The following points of note are offered in addition to ref C (enclosed) as reasons why this development should not be permitted:

- The proponent is a foreign consortium which has no direct ties or obligation to Australia or its interests. While the Assessment Report states that the local council will receive an annual annuity and that there will be a projected influx of capital into the NSW Government coffers, this will be paid by Australian consumers and taxpayers of the region. There is no net gain here rather the foreign company will take its profit offshore there is no net benefit for Australia. The only Australian beneficiary is the landowner who will sell the arable, productive farmland to the developer; leaving the community to deal with the negative impacts of this development as described in terms of decreased land value, increased pollution risks and hazards to people, flora and fauna. By the developers own admission there is no long-term economic benefit to the region. Construction workers will be transitory, and the site will run with a small permanent team. The long-term economic benefit purported by the DPHI report to NSW is questionable but what is real is the current economic benefit the area already provides through its agricultural industry renown.

- The direction by the DPHI to the developer vide ref E and F which provide conditions as means to mitigate risk **Do Not** address the fundamental concerns of the objectors in all facets. The mitigations are fiscal based and do not address the fundamental societal, environmental, pollution, hazard and risk profile that objectors have raised. The measures include paying offset credits for the impact on including a significant threatened and endangered species, surely this is a cop out and does not address the biodiversity and environmental risks that this development represents. Additionally, the dust, noise and pollution impact during construction to residents will be significant. All weather comes from the west and no amount of mitigation by the developer will address the discomfort and stress. So where is the offset to the objectors and indeed the thousands of residents impacted by the development? They offer a small discount on the electricity consumed; all that does is imply tacit approval given consumers are paying exorbitant costs for electricity now as power companies finance their renewable energy development. There is no benefit here.
- Environmental Risk. As mentioned in all reports this area has over 167 at risk or threatened flora and fauna species. None of the proponent's responses adequately deal with the risk and impact upon these. Additionally, the report downplays the importance of the Ginninderra Creek which catches all of the run off from the area including the proposed development site. The developer neglected to note that this creek flows out of Lake Ginninderra and actively flows every time there is at least 5mm of rainfall. This water travels into the Murrumbidgee River and represents part of the catchment area to this major river system that is a key economic driver for industry and agriculture in NSW and for Australia. The presence of toxic non-biodegradable materials from solar panel wear, pollutants from battery venting and fires and the degradation of the local biome represent an unacceptable risk to this catchment area.
- NSW planning regulations prohibit these development encroaching upon regional centres. The DPHI Assessment (ref E) fails to acknowledge the proximity of this development to 4 densely populated suburbs of the ACT. Indeed, it specifically states that there are "There are two residences within 500 m of the development footprint and six residences between 500 m and 750 m away. Beyond 750 m, there are rural residential properties to the north along Gooroomon Ponds Road and urban residential development to the east in the Canberra suburbs of Dunlop and MacGregor." What the proponent and the DPHI report fail to address is that these suburbs are within 800m of the proposed development site and the suburbs of Fraser and Ginnenderry are within 2 km of the site. This represents some 10000 residents of the ACT. As such the number of impacted people to this proposed development is significantly larger than purported by DPHI. The report cites both Federal and State policies that on face value make this proposed development permissible; however, it is contended that in this case the moral position of the objectors who represent the immediately impacted population is a more compelling argument to deny this application. While the planning regulations restricting the establishment of these developments may not legally apply to residents of the ACT, morally they should as a principle of why the regulation exists and not be dismissed because of an invisible border between jurisdictions. This development is within 800m of densely populated suburbs of the ACT. It is unacceptable to deny applicability of this principle of the regulation.
- The perceived benefit of the supply of electricity by this development needs to be considered in a holistic sense against what is already being delivered in the region. There is little if no benefit to ACT electricity supply. Many properties have roof mounted solar systems and most of the Region's power is generated through the Snowy Hydro System,

which is being significantly upgraded and provides long term sustainable electricity supply. This is a supply that is not dependent upon sunlight or wind. It would be a better investment to support increased responsible development of the snowy rather than destroy arable land in blind pursuit of what is now being quickly understood as environmentally damaging 'sustainable energy systems'.

- There is no reference in any documents about how the developers will dispose of the non-recyclable solar panels and toxic waste batteries when they become unusable. This is a burgeoning life of system pollution consideration that has not been addressed and wished away. Anecdotal evidence from systems both here and around the world suggests that these panels will be replaced up to 4 times over the proposed life of the system and batteries likely to be the same. The moral point is that there is no reasonable responsible future planning or environmental for the mass pollution that this development will produce. It is toxic and will impact everyone in more significant ways because these waste products are deadly and cannot be recycled into safe waste.
- Silence from the community is not tacit approval. People currently are more worried about how to maintain their standard of living and are so involved in their own problems they often don't see what's coming ahead before it is on top of them. That is why council and resident groups are vital as representatives the broader population as they have a weather eye on behalf of the broader populace. Cost of living is rising another 17% for electricity in the ACT, 10% of which is attributed to renewable infrastructure. People already under pressure are now being stressed further to pay for infrastructure that is foreign owned, it does not seem justifiable.

In conclusion it is contended that all is not as it seems with this proposal; there are too many unanswered and open problems that have not been addressed, mitigated or resolved by the proponent developer or the DPHI. The fundamental principle that for NSW rural centres this proposal would not be permissible due to the impacts upon the centre. My question is why there should be a difference in this case because an arbitrary line separates what is NSW and ACT. There are thousands of impacted people right on the doorstep of this proposed development. I humbly ask you to consider the moral argument of the applicability of this principle in addition to the other factors raised and dent this proposed development.

Yours Sincerely

██████████

10 July 2024

Enclosure:

1. ██████████, Submission Objecting to proposed Wallaroo Solar Farm Development dated 19 Jun 2023

Dear Sir/Madam,

OBJECTION TO WALLAROO SOLAR POWER STATION DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

RE: 20/6/23 Wallaroo Solar, Yass, Solar 100MW, BESS 45MW/2hr, EIS of 465 pages

Reference: <https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/projects/wallaroo-solar-farm>

In accordance with the notification in the above reference, I lodge my objection to this proposed development. There are several issues that, when investigated properly and with due consideration, will compel the New South Wales Government and Yass Council to stop this proposal moving forward.

In this document I have described several compelling arguments as to why the proposed Wallaroo Solar Power Station development should not go ahead. The arguments are based upon understanding of how NSW Government Legislation is framed and in using this framework the multitude of issues with the development consortium's biased reporting in its scoping study and associated assessments which clearly have been written to provide an affirmative position.

Applicable Legislation.

Firstly, I draw your attention to the legislative framework to which this objection is founded:

NSW SEPP Transport and Infrastructure (2021). This requires consenting authorities for utility-scale wind and solar developments (projects that export electricity to the grid) near certain regional cities to consider various additional mandatory matters before granting planning approval. Specifically, the SEPP Section 2.42 states:

2.42 Determination of development applications for solar or wind electricity generating works on certain land

(1) This section applies to development in a regional city for the purposes of electricity generating works using a solar or wind energy source that is—

- (a) State significant development, or
- (b) regionally significant development.

(2) Development consent must not be granted unless the consent authority is satisfied that the development—

(a) is located to avoid significant conflict with existing or approved residential or commercial uses of land surrounding the development, and

(b) is unlikely to have a significant adverse impact on the regional city's—

- (i) capacity for growth, or
- (ii) scenic quality and landscape character.

(3) In determining whether to grant development consent, the consent authority must consider measures proposed to be included in the development to avoid or mitigate conflicts referred to in subsection (2)(a) or adverse impacts referred to in subsection (2)(b).

The additional matters for consideration would apply to projects that are within 10 kilometres of the commercial centre, or within five kilometres of residential land in Albury, Armidale, Bathurst, Dubbo, Griffith, Orange, Tamworth and Wagga Wagga.

In consideration of this SEPP application of Law, while in the main the affected areas are within the Australian Capital Territory, the NSW Government issued letters to residents of the adjacent ACT suburbs of Charnwood, Dunlop and MacGregor in May 2023 advising of consultation and the ability to make submissions. It was confirmed by the developer representative that the SEPP Laws apply in this case.

The Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 (NSW). This Act sets out protections for native plants and animals.

The Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (NSW) (EP&A Act), Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997 No 156. These Acts imposes obligations on developers and consent authorities to assess and consider the impacts of proposed development on threatened species during the development assessment process.

Environmentally Hazardous Chemicals Act 1985. Under this Act in making an assessment under this Division of a chemical or of a prescribed activity carried on or proposed to be carried on in relation to a chemical or a declared chemical waste, the Government Authority shall consider the effect, or the likely effect, on the environment of all aspects of the carrying on of prescribed activities in relation to the chemical or, as the case may require, the likely effect on the environment of all aspects of the carrying on of the prescribed activity the subject of the assessment.

The Crimes Act 1900 (NSW). Bribery carries with it a maximum penalty of seven years imprisonment. To corruptly receive commissions is an offence if you corruptly receive, solicit, give or offer a benefit as an inducement to do or not do something or to show or not show favour of disfavour to someone.

Modern Slavery Act 2018 (NSW) (Act). This Act, which came into effect on 1 January 2022, requires NSW government bodies, local councils and state-owned corporations to be obliged to undertake a review of their supply chains and undertake a form of modern slavery reporting. The Act requires NSW government bodies, councils and state-owned corporations to take reasonable steps to ensure the goods and services they buy are not the product of modern slavery, and to report on how they do this.

OBJECTION.

This document raises several compelling reasons as to why the proposed Wallaroo Solar Development should not be permitted.

Incompatible Development.

NSW SEPP (2021). Under the SEPP there is a requirement not to consent the development where there

- a. is significant conflict with existing or approved residential or commercial uses of land surrounding the development.

Residents of the following ACT suburbs of Dunlop, Charnwood, Macgregor, Fraser, Ginninderry are all major residential areas which are immediately adjacent to the proposed site. There are several hundred properties sit within the 1000m of the site boundary (see Fig 1 below). There are also plans for additional major residential developments adjacent to this proposed solar power station development (<https://ginninderry.com/our-vision/masterplan/>) which will see continuing influx of residents with young families into the region.

The developer claims (P44 of Scoping study) that “The solar farm operation is not considered to be incompatible with local land use activities’ is incorrect. The proposed mitigation strategies offered by the developers are trivial and cannot address the impacts that this development will have on the residents in these suburbs.

It is contended that this development is in significant conflict with the existing and proposed use of the land surrounding it and there for the proposal is not permissible.

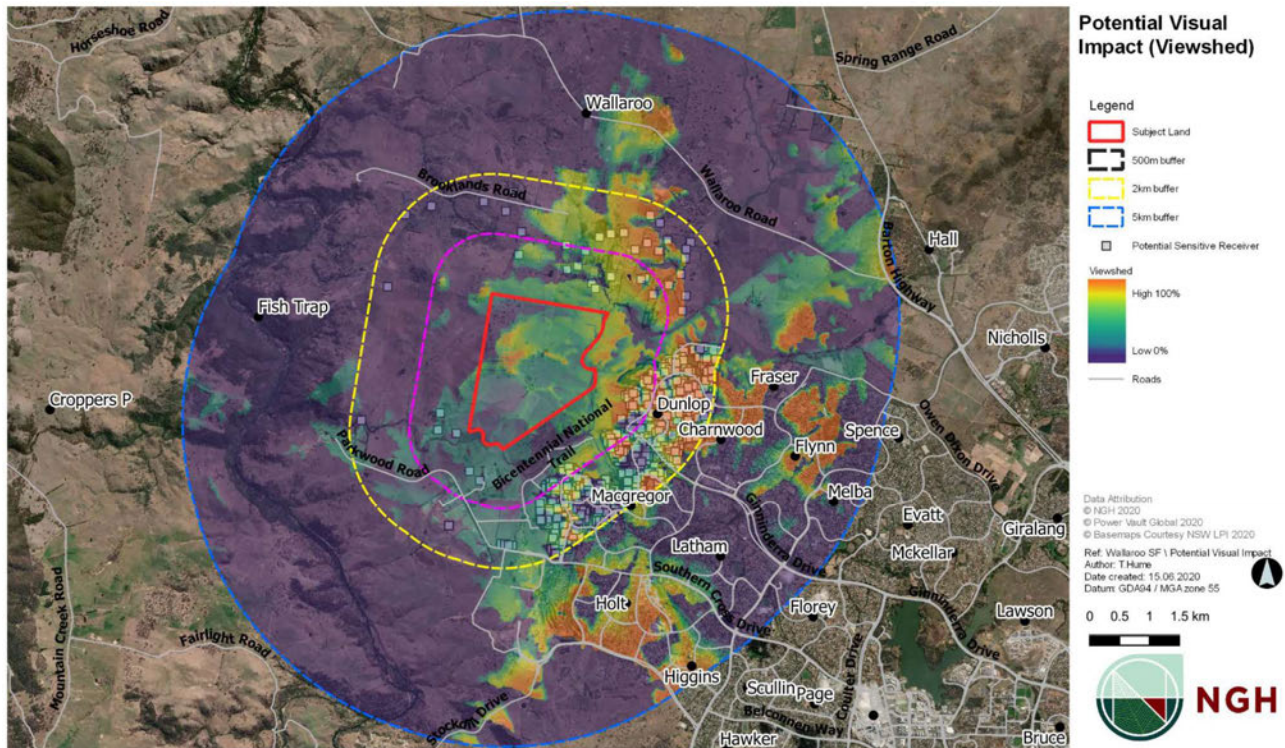


Fig 1 - Potential visual impact – initial viewshed modelling based on the concept layout (source developer scoping report)

- (b) is likely to have a significant adverse impact on the regional city's
- (i) capacity for growth, or
 - (ii) scenic quality and landscape character.

One of the prime reasons that residents like me decided to make this area our home was due to the amazing vista and uninterrupted views of the Brindabella Range and National Park, the rural sprawl of arable farmlands and meandering of Ginninderra Creek through to the Murrumbidgee River. This proposed development will significantly impact the scenic quality and landscape characteristics of the region and will visually impact the views of several hundred properties adjacent to this proposed development. The developer's assertion that only 37 properties are impacted is a manufactured untruth. Fig 1 clearly indicates the widespread direct visual impact that this solar site will have on the suburbs surrounding it. Pic 1 below provides a panoramic view from my residence which clearly shows the proposed site within the field of view. It will impact the scenic quality of the region and therefore should not be permitted.

The proposed development will significantly impact the scenic quality and landscape character of the surrounding lands and therefore under the SEPP is not permissible.



Pic 1 - Visual impact of proposed development on scenic quality of local residences.

Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016.

From the developers own scoping report the following information on endangered species was provided

“Three threatened ecological communities (TEC) were identified; Alpine Sphagnum Bogs and Associated Fens (Endangered), Natural Temperate Grassland of the Southeastern Highlands (Critically Endangered) and White Box – yellow Box – Blakely’s Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Derived native Grassland (Critically Endangered).

Thirty-six threatened species and 13 migratory species were returned from the Protected Matters Search. “ - Scoping Study P 31

The developers claim, “At this stage a significant impact on an MNES and the requirement to refer the proposal under the EPBC Act is not considered likely.”

However, under Part 3 of the Act An area may be declared as an area of outstanding biodiversity value if the Minister is of the opinion that (in accordance with any criteria prescribed by the regulations)—

- (a) the area is important at a state, national or global scale, and
- (b) the area makes a significant contribution to the persistence of at least one of the following—
 - (i) multiple species or at least one threatened species or ecological community,
 - (ii) irreplaceable biological distinctiveness,
 - (iii) ecological processes or ecological integrity,
 - (iv) outstanding ecological value for education or scientific research.
- (2) The declaration of an area may relate to, but is not limited to, protecting threatened species or ecological communities, connectivity, climate refuges and migratory species.

This developer’s claims are refuted as there has been no effort by the developer to quantify impact or provide scientific based assurance that the proposed development will not impact upon these ecological areas and threatened species. Indeed, peer review scientific studies on animal suggest that large scale solar power plant developments are significantly impacting animals whose habitat is impacted by these developments throughout the complete lifecycle of the development. (e.g., <https://doi.org/10.1111/csp2.319> , www.ucpressjournals.com/reprintinfo.asp, [doi:10.1525/bio.2011.61.12.8](https://academic.oup.com/bioscience/article/61/12/982/392612), <https://academic.oup.com/bioscience/article/61/12/982/392612>).

Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (NSW), Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997 No 156

The proposed development will directly impact these threatened species and ecological zones and therefore under the Act should not be permissible. There is an urgent need to address how to better locate, design, and operate solar facilities to mitigate potential negative effects on wildlife populations.

The proposed development is covered under Division 4.7 of the Act - State Significant Development. Specifically, under 4.42 of the Act - Approvals etc legislation that must be applied consistently including associated Acts.

The Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997 No 156 objects are:

- (a) to protect, restore and enhance the quality of the environment in New South Wales, having regard to the need to maintain ecologically sustainable development,
- (b) to provide increased opportunities for public involvement and participation in environment protection,
- (c) to ensure that the community has access to relevant and meaningful information about pollution,
- (d) to reduce risks to human health and prevent the degradation of the environment using mechanisms that promote the following—
 - (i) pollution prevention and cleaner production,
 - (ii) the reduction to harmless levels of the discharge of substances likely to cause harm to the environment,
 - (iia) the elimination of harmful wastes,
 - (iii) the reduction in the use of materials and the re-use, recovery or recycling of materials,
 - (iv) the making of progressive environmental improvements, including the reduction of pollution at source,
 - (v) the monitoring and reporting of environmental quality on a regular basis,
- (e) to rationalise, simplify and strengthen the regulatory framework for environment protection,
- (f) to improve the efficiency of administration of the environment protection legislation,

It is within this context that the environmental impacts upon the site by constructing this solar power station need to be exposed.

Context: The area is currently used as arable farmland for cattle production. It is also directly adjacent to significant urban suburbs as previously described which are to the East, South and North of the proposed location. The proximity of this proposed development to these suburbs is less than 500m in most instances and would be in direct line of sight to several hundred homes that overlook the area. The land is part of and adjacent to 3 ecologically vulnerable areas and has some 36 threatened species of flora and fauna which will be impacted by this development.

Issue 1 – Negative Effects of microclimates. There are two fundamental issues with solar power arrays in the creation of two distinct microclimate effects. These effects have enduring destructive potential to the land in terms of degradation of soils and the biome held within the soil and influence local climatic conditions which alter the incidence and severity of weather events.

- *Microclimate under the array.* Studies have repeatedly demonstrated that regardless of the type of array the creation of a cooler microclimate with significantly reduced UV light source underneath the array has a damaging impact upon the health of the biome particularly regarding the ability of the microbes within the soil to absorb CO₂ and N₂ from the atmosphere. To do this they require UV light to absorb and integrate into the soil mass these two gases which are fundamental building blocks of life and are essential to maintain the health and viability of the soil. There have been several studies conducted globally across varying climactic regions; all however are indicating the same trends that soil aggregate stability was reduced by Solar Panel construction resulting in a degradation of soil physical quality. Soil chemical quality and a general indicator of soil quality were lower in anthropogenic Solar Panel constructions than in natural land cover types. Solar panels reduced the soil temperature by 10% and soil CO₂ effluxes by 50%. ***This should be of significant***

The proposed development will directly impact the quality of the soil under the PV array and will lead to potentially irreversible damage to the land Biome, the ecology of the site and impact the flora and fauna in the areas of which there are 36 threatened species.

concern to the Government in that with the intended tenure of operation being some 30 years, the land on the Wallaroo precinct will become significantly degraded in terms of its ability to be used as arable land again. The poor soil quality will lead to increased erosion and directly impact the ecology of the site and surrounding areas as well as place increased stress upon threatened species. (<https://doi.org/10.1002/ldr.4101> , <https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1748-9326/11/7/074016>)

- *Atmospheric Heating creating climactic changes above Solar Array.* Studies are showing that the amount of ambient heat that is reflected by solar panes into the atmosphere changes the local temperature of the surrounding environment. This is called the Photovoltaic Heat Island Effect by as much as 3 degrees Celsius higher than surrounding areas. The impacts of such a temperature rise on the local climate is only now starting to become better understood. (www.nature.com/scientificreports/doi:10.1038/srep35070 (2016). <https://phys.org/news/2016-11-solar-island-effect-large-scale-power.html>). The proposed site is part of the main weather corridor for the ACT/Southern NSW Highlands. It is subject to a wide variance in weather effects from high heat and dry summers through to very wet and cold winters. Of frequency is the intensity and severity of storms in the area which are indicative of a cold front moving across the continent. This cold converging surface winds provides an upward push upon warm humid air near the ground receives causing it to rise rapidly in an unstable atmosphere; a rain event or storm occurs. The areas in where the proposed development is located is subject to several storms and weather events per year already and the incidence of severe weather events with damaging hail and winds is very likely. Having a system that will exacerbate the causal effects of these weather events through increasing the local temperature dramatically, will significantly increase the likelihood of severe weather events on the site and in surrounding residential areas. The subsequent impacts of potential damage to personnel and property and to the local flora and fauna cannot be understated. ***The area has already been noted in the developer's scoping study of its vulnerabilities in terms of ecology, habitat and threatened species due to the PV array creating a Heat Island exacerbates this risk.***

Issue 2 –Land Contamination. Solar Power Stations are made from exotic and highly toxic materials and their operation will require use of chemical materials such as solvents and other toxic materials used for cleaning, maintenance and repair activities. Additionally, the proposed development includes a major Batter storage and associate energy management system on site. These systems are built from highly corrosive and toxic materials, some of which are carcinogenic (such as Hydrogen Fluoride). Spillages and accidents are inevitable in complex industrial precincts such as the one proposed for Wallaroo. As already established the area is ecologically diverse and there are sensitive areas and threatened species. Leaching of these dangerous chemicals, either as a result of damage, corrosion of the infrastructure (PV array, Battery infrastructure etc) or a chemical spill (from cleaning, maintenance or repair activities) onto this land will have significant persistent and likely irreversible impact upon the land.

The proposed development will directly impact the quality of the environment having and increase the risks to human health and safety.

Additionally, there needs to be clarification regarding the waterways. The developer's analysis of the area's waterways and the relationship with the Wallaroo site requires correction. The environmental analysis is based upon a visit to the site in 20/21 Jan 2021. At the time there had been no rain for some two weeks. The report claims that the Ginninderra Creek had pools of water but was not flowing. This conclusion while correct for that period, the Ginninderra Creek is the main waterway the connects Lake Ginninderra to the East to the Murrumbidgee River to the Southwest of Wallaroo. The creek flows strongly and regularly when there is a rain event that anecdotally delivers 10+mm of rain. In 2021 this occurred 10 times, in 2022 20 times, and to date in 2023 8 times (Source BOM). The catchment for the creek, in addition to being the runoff from Lake Ginninderra, is the area directly adjacent to it; this includes the suburbs of Dunlop and MacGregor and directly from the proposed Wallaroo site. ***So, the risk of not only toxic chemical spill affecting the immediate Wallaroo and surrounding ecological sites; is also includes potential contamination of the Ginninderra Creek system which flows unimpeded directly into the Murrumbidgee River which is a major river system in the Murray-Darling***

Basin that is of high economic, social and ecological importance to the Nation. (<https://www.csu.edu.au/research/ilws/research/sra-sustainable-water/murrumbidgee-river>).

The developer has failed to understand the waterways' function and flow, nor appreciate the linkages to one of the most important river systems in New South Wales. The flow on impact of chemical and toxic materials deposited on the Wallaroo site will have far reaching impact upon the whole Murrumbidgee system. There is only one viable way to remove this risk and that is to not build this solar Power Station on such a fundamental

The proposed development directly puts at risk the Wallaroo land site, adjacent lands and waterways, and downstream the Murrumbidgee River system to toxic chemical contamination which will create irreversible damage to the ecological health of these systems.

catchment and flow area for one of Australia's most important and prestigious waterways.

Environmentally Hazardous Chemicals Act 1985.

Issue 3 – Toxic Fire Hazard. The developer specifically identifies the risk of potential fire hazard and risk mitigation measures it proposes. The specific hazard in question is the large battery storage system, with supporting infrastructure, which is necessary to make this proposed solar power station proposal viable. It specifically identifies that it may not use a Tesla battery like the one that created a major toxic fire in Victoria but if they do, they will apply the recommendations arising from the investigation. (Scoping study Appendix 6 - Preliminary Hazard Assessment). The issue is that regardless of whatever risk mitigation measure, other than removing the hazard entirely, leaves behind a residual risk which is just as significantly catastrophic and dangerous to humans, property and the environment. There is significant research that has concluded that battery technology used for renewable energy power stations is still inherently dangerous and at significant risk of uncontrolled runaway fires. (<https://reneweconomy.com.au/tesla-megapack-container-on-fire-at-site-of-australias-biggest-battery/>; 50th International Conference on Environmental Systems, Virtual, United States, July 12, 2021 through July 14, 2021, Battery Fire Risk Assessment, ICES-2021-290; www.nature.com/scientificreports | 7: 10018 | DOI:10.1038/s41598-017-09784-z; https://www.researchgate.net/publication/352158070_Safety_of_Grid_Scale_Lithium-ion_Battery_Energy_Storage_Systems)

The proposed location of the Wallaroo solar power station has already been shown to have significant ecological and environmental risks which cannot be mitigated. Similarly, the proposed BESS on the site compounds the issue with the inherent risk associated with these systems being a persistent and catastrophic fire hazard, regardless of mitigation strategies. The chemical smoke that is produced by these fires is highly toxic. As previously stated, the primary weather movement across the ACT is from west to east. The siting of the Wallaroo solar power station and its battery situates the site directly west of the most populated sections of the ACT and into Queanbeyan. A toxic cloud will present a serious health risk to tens of thousands of people in the ACT. Lithium based oxides and gases are known to be serious poisons and are potentially carcinogenic. The Wallaroo solar power station presents an unacceptable risk to mass population of the ACT and surrounding areas.

When these chemicals it drops out of the atmosphere and deposits onto the ground or in water it is equally as toxic to flora and fauna. ***Given that it has been established that the Wallaroo site is adjacent to a catchment area of the Murrumbidgee it is likely that this toxic material will find its way down stream impacting many more people, livelihoods and ecological systems. Additionally, the firefighting systems that are used in fighting these types of BESS Lithium based fires will eventually leach into the soil and into these waterways.***

The almost certain risk of a Lithium battery fire directly puts at risk the Wallaroo land site, adjacent people, lands and waterways, and downstream the Murrumbidgee River system to exposure to toxic poisoning that can kill or is carcinogenic. This is a risk that cannot be mitigated to any acceptable level of managed risk and therefore cannot be retired or treated unless the issue causing the risk is taken away. (ISO 31000 Risk Management)

The Crimes Act 1900 (NSW). Under the Act, Bribery is an offence if you corruptly receive, solicit, give or offer a benefit as an inducement to do or not do something or to show or not show favour or disfavour to someone.

This is a serious allegation but is being brought to the attention of the Government to demonstrate the lengths this developer is willing to pursue to achieve its goal. I had heard anecdotally from neighbours that the developers Project Manager and team had been offering significant discounts and shielding works to block out the view of the Wallaroo solar power station once it is constructed. It was not until I visited the public information at Holt in June 2023 that I was personally offered a lifetime 25% discount on my electrical bills once the Wallaroo solar power station became operational. I was known to the project team as someone opposed to the proposed development and found it confronting that there was an expectation that I would be convinced to acquiesce my position and right of protest for their offer. Even if it was not intended as a bribe, the mere fact that these representatives of this consortium think that it is ethical to obtain approval by payment is abhorrent.

It should be investigated as to the activities that the consortium, that is proposing this Wallaroo Solar Power station, has done in seeking to gain a commitment from private and public persons to support their proposal using future financial gain as an incentive. If it is not illegal it surely is unethical and immoral.

Modern Slavery Act 2018 (NSW) (Act). This Act, which came into effect on 1 January 2022, requires NSW government bodies, local councils and state-owned corporations to be obliged to undertake a review of their supply chains and undertake a form of modern slavery reporting. The Act requires NSW government bodies, councils and state-owned corporations to take reasonable steps to ensure the goods and services they buy are not the product of modern slavery, and to report on how they do this.

Investigation into the proposed supply chain of this proposal would indicate that the only viable supplier of the volume of solar panels and other infrastructure required for this development can be provided by Chinese suppliers. China is well known across many manufacturing sectors to employ slave labour in the sourcing of raw materials and in the production of these items.

Given the national and state commitment to support stamping out the use of slave labor by not allowing Australian projects to use supply chains emanating from these areas, the developer must disclose its potential supplier and whether they contravene this act.

Societal Impact

The developer which is a JV between an Australian and Spanish/Japanese company (<https://univergysolar.com/en/about-us/>) held their most recent community engagement forum in Jun 2023, 5 days before submissions to the government are to close. There must be concern that this large multinational company, with 12 major projects lined up for Australia does not have the interests of the country at heart. It is using the current rhetoric and populist agenda for renewable energy to make billions of dollars, all of which exits out of this country without any benefit to the Government or indeed the people. The population is already under extreme financial pressure as a result of unsustainable and underperforming renewable energy projects taking the place of more reliable sources of energy which can be used at net zero or indeed zero emissions (Natural Gas and Atomic Energy).

National Infrastructure projects should not be built or delivered by foreign owned corporations as it is detrimental to society in terms of the leaching of billions out of the national economy for questionable outcomes.

Conclusion. In this document there has been described several compelling arguments as to why the proposed Wallaroo Solar Power Station development should not go ahead. The arguments are based upon understanding of how NSW Government Legislation is framed and in using this framework the multitude of issues with the development consortium's biased reporting in its scoping study and associated assessments which clearly have been written to provide an affirmative position. It is contended that there is sufficient uncontrollable risks to people, ecological systems and the environment demonstrated to prove that this proposal should be denied.

I look forward to a confirmation that my response has been received and am available for follow up representation.

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]