New South Wales Government
Independent Planning Commission

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

RE: GLENELLEN SOLAR FARM (SSD-9550)

PUBLIC HEARING DAY 1

COMMISSION PANEL:	DR SHERIDAN COAKES (Panel Chair) MR ADRIAN PILTON DR BRONWYN EVANS AM
LOCATION:	ALBURY ENTERTAINMENT CENTRE – THEATRETTE, 525 SWIFT STREET, ALBURY NSW 2640
DATE:	9.00AM, THURSDAY, 16 NOVEMBER 2023

TRANSCRIBED BUT NOT RECORDED BY APT TRANSCRIPTIONS

DR COAKES: Thank you. Good morning and welcome to the Independent Planning Commission's public meeting into the Glenellen Solar Farm State Significant Development Application. I'm speaking to you from Wiradjuri land and I acknowledge the traditional owners of all the countries from which we meet today. I pay my respects to their Elders past and present and to the Elders from other communities that may be participating today.

I'm Dr Sheridan Coakes and I'm the Chair of the Commission Panel. Joining me are my fellow Commissioners, Mr Adrian Pilton and Dr Bronwyn Evans. Panel Members have made conflict of interest disclosures and the Chair of the Commission has determined that the Panel can consider this application. A copy of that decision document is available on our website. We have a limited and specific role at the end of the planning process. We decide if an application should go ahead and, if so, under what conditions. We consider the Department's assessment report, the application, your written and oral submissions and any other materials that the planning law requires us to consider. All of these materials are either already publicly available or will be made available on our website.

In making a decision on this case, the Commission must obey all relevant laws and consider all applicable policy and the public interest. We're also obliged to consider public submissions and that is the purpose of today. We want to hear what you think about the merits of this application. This is not a forum for submissions on whether you like or approve of the applicant, the laws we must obey or the policies we must consider. The application has already been assessed by the Department on our behalf and many of you may have already participated in the Department's process to date and we thank you for your participation.

There is no need to repeat your previous submissions, they are available to us for our consideration. The applicant and the Department have considered your submissions and taken them into account in the application assessment and recommended conditions that we are considering. Today we want to hear your response to the Department's assessment, recommendation and those recommended conditions. Even if your submission today objects to the application we encourage you to tell us whether any of your concerns could be addressed either wholly or or in part by the imposition of conditions. Your consideration of alternatives does not in any way compromise your submission and it enables the Panel to consider all options.

We will first hear from the Department of Planning and Environment on the findings of its all-of-government assessment of the application currently before the Commission and we will then hear from the applicant. We will then proceed to hear from all registered speakers. While we will endeavour to stick to our published schedule this will be dependent on registered speakers being ready to present at their allocated time. I will introduce each speaker when it's their turn to present to the Panel and everyone has been advised in advance how long they have to speak.

A bell will sound when a speaker has one minute remaining and a second bell will sound when a speaker's time has expired. To ensure that everybody receives their fair share of time we will enforce timekeeping rules. Extensions may be granted on a

case-by-case basis by the Chair; however, in the interests of fairness to other registered speakers an extension may not be granted. If you do have any additional material to support your presentation you may provide a copy to the Commission via the submissions portal on our website. Please note that any information given to us may be made public and the Commission's privacy statement which governs its approach to managing your information is also available on our website.

Exits from this venue in the case of emergency are located on the left side and at the back right-hand corner of the room and the toilets are located outside the room and down the stairs. Please follow the signage. It's now time to call our first speaker. So if I can ask Clay Preshaw please from the Department of Planning and Environment. Thanks, Clay.

MR PRESHAW: Thank you, Chair. And good morning, my name's Clay Preshaw, I'm the Executive Director of Energy, Resources and Industry Assessments at the Department of Planning and Environment. I'd also like to pay my respects to the traditional custodians of the land, in particular, the Elders past, present and emerging. Perhaps moving to the next slide please. Is that better? Talk this way?

DR COAKES: Yes, that's correct. Thank you.

MR PRESHAW: O.K. So the Glenellen Solar Farm is a state significant development project and it has been assessed under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act which is the planning legislation that governs all development in New South Wales. The Department has undertaken a comprehensive whole-of-government assessment of the application and by that I mean we have included and consulted with all the key agencies and Greater Hume Council in preparing our assessment and I do want to note that the process as shown on the flowchart there, there is a number of formal and informal opportunities for the community and other stakeholders to provide input into the process and we are now at the determination stage where the final decision will be made by the Commission on the merits of the application.

To the next slide please. So the application proposes to develop a 200 megawatt solar farm which connect directly to the adjacent TransGrid substation. The site is located about two kilometres north-east of Jindera which is in the Greater Hume Local Government Area. There are three approved state significant solar farms within 50 kilometres of the project which are Jindera Solar Farm approximately 320 metres north-west, Walla Walla Solar Farm, 18 kilometres north and Culcairn Solar Farm, 21 kilometres north.

Before I dive into some of the assessment issues it's important to provide some strategic context about the project in relation to its location and access to the existing electricity network. The Riverina-Murray region of New South Wales has attracted considerable interest from solar developers given the presence of major transmission lines and access to the existing electricity network. Given that all the coalfired power plants in New South Wales are scheduled for closure in the next 20 years, the project, if approved, would assist in providing large-scale renewable energy generation to meet the increased electricity demand.

In that regard, the Department has looked at all the relevant national, state and local policy documents around energy and considers that the project is consistent with these policies, particularly as these policies all identify the need to diversify the energy generation mix and to reduce carbon emissions intensity in the grid.

Next slide please. The building on the strategic context, there are a range of regional context real issues that are worth covering as well. Firstly, the site has direct access to the electricity network and that's via the Jindera substation which is adjacent to the project and connects with two 132 kilovolt transmission lines and a 330 kilovolt transmission line that transverses the site as well. The transport route for the site would require minimal road upgrades. The site is located in a rural area which the Department notes is generally an advantage in terms of the potential impacts but I'll discuss that in more detail later.

The land is currently primarily used for grazing of sheep and cattle and it's not mapped as the biophysical strategic agricultural land, that's BSAL land as we refer to it, and I'll get into more details on that later as well but it's worth mentioning here that the land is predominantly categorised as class 4 in terms of land and soils. So overall, the Department considers the site to be suitably located for a project of this nature; however, again I'll discuss the technical details of our impact assessment as we move along.

Next slide please. The Department received 107 public submissions which included 79 objections, 27 supporting submissions and one with comment. The most common matters raised in public objection were land use compatibility including the loss of agricultural land, visual amenity including impacts on the surrounding landscape and residences, traffic including the movement of heavy vehicles through Jindera, biodiversity including the impacts on native vegetation and habitat loss, the project location including the proximity to the local township and potential devaluation of land in terms of the project's impact on land value in the region. The submissions in support generally raised the benefits of transitioning to renewable energy, the increased employment opportunities along with general economic benefits to the local community.

So following the EIS exhibition the applicant made several changes to the project which it presented in its amendment report. The originally-proposed development footprint is shown in black hatch in the figure. Key amendments to the project included a revised heavy vehicle haulage route which avoided the use of Glenellen Road, that was mainly to address the council's concerns, a reduced impact on native vegetation by avoiding 2.7 hectares and four paddock trees, recontouring of an inundation area in the south-east of the site to avoid inundation to adjacent properties and reduction of visual impacts through relocation of the substation expansion, removal of more than 22,000 solar panels, increased spacing between the solar panels from six metres to nine metres, reduction in the height of fencing and the meteorological station, increased setbacks from Lindner Road, Ortlipp Road and Drumwood Road and increased vegetation screening around the perimeter of the site.

Despite all of those amendments the generating capacity of the project would remain unchanged at 200 megawatts.

Next slide please. I'll now quickly talk about the key issues for assessment which are energy transition, land use capability, traffic and transport and visual amenity. Regarding energy transition. The project has a capacity of 200 megawatts which would generate approximately enough energy to power 76,000 homes. This is, as I said earlier, consistent with the New South Wales Climate Change Policy framework of achieving that zero omissions by 2050. The project, while not located in a declared renewable energy zone, is in an area with direct access to the transmission network with available capacity and abundant solar resources and the project would play an important role overall in increasing renewal energy generation and capacity which would contribute to the transition to the cleaner energy system as coalfired generators retire over the next 20 years.

Next slide please. While agriculture has historically been a key industry in the Greater Hume Local Government Area the introduction of solar energy generation does help to contribute to a more diverse local economy. Importantly, the project is permissible with development consent under the infrastructure SEPP and is consistent with council's strategic planning statement and the Department's regional plan. The vast majority of the site is currently used for sheep grazing. The project components have been cited to avoid the important agricultural land consistent with the Department's large scale solar energy guideline.

All of the development footprint is on land mapped as class 4 under land and soil capability mapping which means agricultural use of the land has moderate to severe limitations and would require active management to sustain any cultivation on a rotational basis. The site represents a very small fraction of agricultural land in the Greater Hume region and the Department has recommended conditions to maintain the agricultural capability of the land following decommissioning. Sheep grazing within the site would actually continue during the operation of the project which is supported by DPI Agriculture.

Next slide please. Now, one of the key reasons for council's original objection to the project was the proposed use of Glenellen Road as part of the heavy vehicle haulage route. To address council's original objection the applicant amended the proposed haulage route in consultation with council and conducted a revised traffic impact assessment. Importantly, the revised road haulage route no longer includes the use of Glenellen Road and in light of this, council actually withdrew its original objection to the project.

The EIS includes two haulage routes. The first is assuming that site components would be delivered from the Port of Newcastle, the route follows the Hume Highway, then via Jindera and Walla Walla Jindera Road, Lindner Road and Ortlipp Road and the second route which would be required in the instance where site components would be delivered from a port in Melbourne. In that instance, components would be railed from Melbourne to the Ettamogah rail hub and then transported to site. Now, the majority of roads along these routes are already B-double-approved and able to

accommodate the proposed traffic movements. However, some road upgrades would be required in order to improve the safety and efficiency and that's on the next slide please.

The road upgrades required to facilitate construction of the project include upgrades to local roads and the site access point including intersection upgrades and road widening and there are a number of different upgrades there that I won't cover in detail right now. In addition to those road upgrades the Department has recommended conditions of consent restricting the number of vehicle movements during all stages of the project, limiting the use of local roads, encouraging construction workers to travel to site via a bus service and preparing and implementing a comprehensive traffic management plan.

Next slide please. Concerns about visual impacts in public submissions included the proximity of the project to surrounding residences and potential impacts on the scenic quality, landscape and rural outlook of the locality. The Department visited the site and nearby non-associated residents to assess visual impacts and to further understand resident's concerns. Due to the relatively flat nature of the local landscape the buffer distance between project infrastructure and local roads and the retention of remnant native vegetation views of the project would be limited beyond its immediate vicinity. Public views of the site would be limited to local roads with a low frequency of use that run adjacent to the project boundary.

It's also worth noting that we sought clarification around the visual impacts described in the EIS on a number of occasions during our preparation of our assessment. This included confirmation of the level of visual impact in accordance with the Department's 2022 Large Solar Energy Guideline. The final assessment concluded that all residences in two kilometres of the site would experience nil to low visual impacts. The proposed onsite vegetation screening which you can see in blue and dark green in between the erase on the figure would further reduce views from these residences. The applicant has also committed to consulting with 10 landowners to implement vegetation screening at their property to assist in reducing residual impacts. As I mentioned earlier, the applicant amended a number of aspects of the project design including spacing between panels, reducing fence heights and increasing step-back distances from roads and residences and this all assisted in minimising the visual impacts associated with the project. In relation to glint and glare impacts.

The Department - in relation to glint and glare, the applicant's analysis identified that there may be low impact to nearby residences and road users; however, if impacts were experienced they would be temporary depending on the season, time of day and the location of the receiver. The existing intervening vegetation along with the proposed vegetation screening would shield or minimise views of the development from surrounding receivers including views of infrastructure with the potential to create glare or reflection. The Department has recommended a condition that offsite lighting impacts of the development are minimised, external lighting is installed as low intensity lighting except as required for safety or emergency purposes and it does not shine above horizontal.

Next slide please. So in addition to its contribution to the energy transition the project would provide benefit to the local community by providing 200 construction jobs, expenditure on accommodation and businesses in the local economy by workers and on goods and services. In addition the applicant would enter into a Voluntary Planning Agreement with council including contributions of $2.5 million. There would be broader benefits to the state through an injection of approximately $250 million in capital investment into the New South Wales economy and the applicant has committed to sourcing workers from the local community to reduce accommodation and service pressures. To encourage the employment of locally-sourced workers and ensure cumulative impacts are considered the Department has recommended a condition requiring the applicant to develop an accommodation and employment strategy in consultation with council.

Next slide please. The operational life of this project is about 20 to 30 years but there is potential for it to operate for a longer period of time if solar panels are upgraded over time as permitted under the recommended conditions of consent. The large scale solar guideline identifies four key decommissioning and rehabilitation principles for circumstances where an applicant actually ceases operating a project and they are:

(1) That land must be returned to pre-existing use.
(2) Infrastructure including underground infrastructure must be removed if the operations cease.

The third is that land must be rehabilitated and restored to pre-existing use and the fourth is that the owner or operator of a solar energy project should be responsible for decommissioning and rehabilitation. So with the implementation of objective-based conditions and monitoring requirements the Department considers that the solar farm would be suitably decommissioned at the end of the project life or within 18 months if operations cease unexpectedly and that the site would be appropriately rehabilitated. In regards to decommissioning bonds. It is the New South Wales Government policy that financial assurances should not be required by conditions of consent and any financial assurances should be dealt with in commercial arrangements outside of the planning system.

Next slide please. And this is my final slide. In summary, electricity-generating works on the site are permissible with consent in accordance with the infrastructure SEPP. Although the site is located on land currently used for grazing it is all class 4 land with moderate to severe limitations. The site has good solar resources, it has direct access to the road network and direct access to the electricity network. The project has been designed to largely avoid site constraints including remnant native vegetation, onsite water courses, farm dams and BASL land while maintaining its ability to utilise the existing electricity infrastructure and road network.

The project would assist in transitioning the electricity sector from coal and gas-fired power stations to low emission sources which is consistent with New South Wales policy. It would generate over 440,000 megawatt hours of clean electricity annually to power approximately 76,000 homes and save over 420,000 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions per year. The Department considers that the project achieves an appropriate

balance between maximising the efficiency of the solar resource development and minimising the potential impacts on surrounding land users and the environment.

Through job creation and capital investment and a planning agreement with council the project would also stimulate economic investment in renewable energy and provide a flow-on benefit to the local community. So I guess our final evaluation is that on balance, the Department considers the project is in the public interest and is approvable subject to the recommended conditions of consent that we provided to the Commission. Thank you for your time.

DR COAKES: No questions, thanks.

MR PRESHAW: O.K. Thanks.

DR COAKES: O.K. I would now like to call Jose Flores who is the representative from Trina Solar and also Daniel Madgi who is from Ecological Australia. Thanks, Jose.

MR FLORES: That is O.K. Good morning ladies and gentlemen. Good morning ladies and gentlemen. My name is Jose Flores, Head of Development of Trina Solar and I stand before you today as the representative of the project team for Glenellen Solar Farm.

Next slide please. Before I go into the detail of the project I would like to acknowledge and pay respect to the traditional owners and custodian of the land on which we work.

Next slide please. I would like to express gratitude to the IPC for the opportunity to present the project, the Department of Planning of New South Wales for their recommendation report, the Greater Hume Shire Council for their guidance and, therefore, reaching the best outcome for the community and the BPA that established the status for the initiative that will contribute to the community wellbeing and all the stakeholder and a community member for their constructive feedback and all the support, objection and suggestion have which no doubt contribute to enhancing our project.

Special thanks to the entire project teams of Trina and GPG. Thanks, Daniel, for all the GR meeting, the surveys, the trips and all the hard work and above all, a deep appreciation to the landowner, Helen, John, Linko, thank you for your patience, dedication and commitment in explaining every detail of the area, community and the peculiarities of grazing, how best to integrate them with solar. All of this has brought us to this moment. Standing on the brink of realising one of the most beautiful period in all of Australia where the future of energy harmonising with grazing activities.

Next slide please. Now, let's go into the project specifics. The Glenellen Solar Farm located in New South Wales commenced development and community consultation in early 2018. It's true that the development faced some delays, primarily due to Covid but also because we consider essential to incorporate all improvement that the

Department of Planning has developed regarding the methodology and guidance for solar farm. These delays have allow us to present a more robust and improved proposal. This solar farm with the size of 200 megawatt AC will be connected to the Jindera Power Station supplying clean energy to the national energy grid.

Significant point to mention are the reduction of number of panels, a reduced footprint from 334 to 309 and the capability to power around 8,000 homes with cleaner energy. Also during the construction we anticipate creating 200 jobs and the project aims to reduce carbon emission by 400,000 tonnes of CO2 annually.

Slide please. Our project proponents includes Trina SVU, a part of Trina Solar Group, one of the largest model manufacturer globally with more than 25 year of experience, present in over 150 countries and nearly 10 gigawatt of connected project. In Australia alone we anticipate reaching one gigawatt in development by the end of 2023. Additionally, lower power generation, GPG, a subsidiary of Naturgy Group is actively contributing to Australia solar energy roadmap.

We plan for approximately 2.5 gigawatt of installed capacity by the end of 2025. GPG is currently developing building and operating facilities across four territories, New South Wales, Queensland, Victoria and Western Australia with 1.6 gigawatt under development, 0.5 gigawatt under construction and 0.4 gigawatt under operation.

Next slide please. Our effort are reflected in numerous improvement incorporated into the EIS and the RTS such as reducing the project footprint, minimising impact of native vegetation and enhancing the spacing between panel rows to improve, for, example, the performance and the future decommissioning. We also have addressed concern related to the noise, substation relocation, access road, reduce number of pile and revised water requirement during both the construction and operation faces. Daniel, the Principal Environmental Consultant of the project and the Project Director, will explain in more detail the technical aspect of the project.

MR MADGI: Thanks, Jose. So based on the feedback from the Department of Planning and Environment and the public submissions during the submissions phase of the project there were several additional assessments that were undertaken. One was the Land and Soil Capability Statement and the other one was an Agricultural Impact Assessment. Furthermore, based on the public submissions and agency feedback there were several revised and updated studies that were undertaken. One was Traffic and Transport Assessment which assessed the new proposed route in consultation with council, a revised Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment, a revised Landscape and Visual Assessment, updated Biodiversity Development Assessment report and a revised Flooding Assessment.

Next slide please. Though the revised traffic and transport route as presented by the Department of Planning and Environment looked at a new route for B-doubles to site. Consultation with Greater Hume Council and Albury Council was undertaken. The construction traffic would include approximately 45 heavy vehicles and 11 oversize, over-mass vehicles to and from the site. That's for the duration of the project.

Operational traffic would be negligible and the focus of consultation was along Ortlipp and Lindner Road.

Next slide please. Based on the Traffic and Transport Impact Assessment there were several road upgrades that were recommended. These will be undertaken at the intersection of Urana Road and Walla Walla Jindera Road intersection, Walla Walla Jindera Road and Lindner Road intersection, Lindner Road - Lindner Road, Ortlipp Road intersection and Ortlipp Road. There will also be conditions in regards to limiting B-double movements during school times and also traffic control around some of the bends up on Lindner Road to facilitate public traffic as such.

Next slide please. Visual. Revised Landscape and Visual Assessment was undertaken for the project. The revised dwelling assessment for the project identified nine dwellings are for mitigation that would be low impacted, the rest were nil to negligible. The amendments to the project design were undertaken based on visual impacts. These included the relocation of the substation, reduction in number of solar panels, increased setback from Lindner Road and Ortlipp Road and increased vegetation screening around the entirety of the project.

The visual screening for the project will be undertaken as soon as possible prior to construction and will involve endemic species to the region, firstly, planting colonised species which are fast-growing and pretty handy during drought conditions and the whole idea behind that is that they will reach a height to screen out the panels within two to three years whilst the eucalypts are planted from seed grow to a height to block out the panels at the eight to 10-year mark when the colonised species start dying out.

Next slide please. Noise. Revised Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment was undertaken for the project. Two dwellings were identified as exceeding the allowances by a little bit as such but these were only for two to three hours a day for approximately two to three weeks during the project. Construction noise will be limited during daytime only and the operational noise was within the noise criteria. It is to be noted here that during the assessment process some of the inverters were actually relocated to within the panels to avoid any exceedances along - properties along Lindner Road.

Next slide please. The biodiversity. There's two plant community types across the site. The first one is Blakely's Red Gum, Yellow Box grassy tall woodland and the second is River Red Gum, wallaby grass tall woodland. Across the site approximately 8.7 hectares of vegetation will be cleared, most of that is low condition with no midstorey and things like dominated grass cover. 77 paddock trees will be removed as well. Amendments to the project were undertaken during the submission stage to reduce the impacts upon the critically-endangered ecological community Box Gum woodlands. That was primarily along Ortlipp Road and around the existing Jindera substation and several scattered trees were incorporated into the area not to be cleared and that was a reduction of four scattered paddock trees.

Next slide please. Heritage. So there were three stone artifacts found within the project site. It's very hard to see but they're close to where the entrance road will be

to the site. These artefacts were all assessed as low significance. They will be incorporated into a management plan for the site for Aboriginal heritage and the registered Aboriginal parties will be consulted for salvage of these three artefacts. There were no historic heritage items found within the project site.

Next slide please. Riparian and Flooding. So across the site there's first and second water streams and then the third water stream across the site is Kilnacroft Creek. Kilnacroft Creek is classified - is the 3rd order and, therefore, the project has incorporated 20-metre vegetated riparian zone by the side of Kilnacroft Creek and the amendment to the project was the recontouring of the inundation area along Ortlipp Road. This is primarily to establish natural flows back on site and also to prevent any backfilling inundation into adjacent properties and agricultural land. This recontouring was assessed a revised flooding assessment which identified negligible impacts downstream and there was 0.2 percent difference between current and forecasted flood modelling downstream.

Next slide please. So Land Use and Agriculture and the use of Agri-solar. So the whole focus, I guess of this project is to incorporate solar panels with agricultural productivity. We undertook a Land and Soil Capacity Assessment which identified the site as class 4 which is defined as moderate to severe limitations and maybe, I guess, cultivated on a rotational basis with active management. The Agricultural Impact Assessment completed for the project identified a 25 percent reduction in sheep carrying capacity across the site and DPI Agriculture had no concerns with the project and it supported the proposed agri-solar component of the project as well. The idea behind the whole project is that the panels are at a height and a distance to allow for sheep-grazing. The maximum height at full tilt is five metres and to allow potential cropping underneath the panels as well.

Next slide. O.K. So Bushfire Risk and APZ. So a Bushfire Risk Assessment was undertaken for the project and recommended an asset protection zone and incorporated around the entirety of the project. That has been - that will be implemented to 10 metres and a four-metre category 1 perimeter bushfire trail will be incorporated into that asset protection zone. In addition, an emergency response plan will be developed for the site and also there will be four 10,000-litre water tanks fitted so the RFS can hook into those tanks and they will be located around the site for any bushfire protection that may occur during the project.

Next slide please.

MR FLORES: Just to finish the presentation. Waste Management Plan will be developed for the project to reduce the quantity of waste generated and also we propose to follow the following hierarchy. Reduce waste production, recover resources and dispose of waste appropriately. Everything will be in consultation with the council and with the respondent agencies and as well we have the commitment and we already have contacted six solar model recycle companies and also that will be included in the waste management plan that we already started.

Next slide please. Regarding the water consumption and supply. We already reach an agreement with council. We reduce from the EIS to the RTS the consumption of water during the operation and during the construction also and the water will be supplied in an agreement with council, that has been already authorised.

Next slide please. Regarding the decommissioning and rehabilitation will be one plan prior to construction. So we are already working on this with decommissioning and restoration will occur at the end of the operational life of the project and we'll restore the land to original purpose. Also the date we are expecting to start the construction early next year and the life will have the operational life of 30 years.

Next slide please.

MR MAGDI: So the cumulative Impact Assessment for the project were assessed during each individual assessment that was undertaken and assessed - so the visual impacts were considered minimal given the current, I guess, topography and distance and intervening vegetation around the site. The Traffic Cumulative Impact Assessments were considered within the level of service for the roads around the site and was considered - the road network was considered applicable to both the Jindera and Glenellen Solar Farm occurring at the same time.

Operational noise and cumulative impacts were considered negligible as well as individual assessment for each project were considered together and the output was the same. Cumulative impact in terms of the socioeconomic issues, that will be considered in our Accommodation and Employment Strategy for the project which will be developed as such. Sorry, is that better? And I actually think that's it.

MR FLORES: Next slide please. I would like to highlight the (not transcribable) (00:39:06) of the DPI condition by the Greater Hume Shire Council in April 2021. The proposed agreement involved a monetary commitment of $2.5 million. It will be our honour to execute this agreement and to be part of the initiative that contribute to the community development.

Next slide please. In relation to the VPA we have included neighbour agreement recognising the important of the community relationships. The assessment of eligible neighbour has been - was conducted based on specific criteria including visual impact and we also acknowledge the potential impacts during the construction and operation. Contributing factors such as noise, traffic, visual aesthetic, solar panel glean and glare and emission. Furthermore, we have assessed the potential cumulative impact on neighbouring areas, particularly the proposed Jindera Solar Farm.

Next slide please. We have actively participated in extensive consultation and as a result two neighbour have already signed and joined the agreement. However, the agreement remain open to the ability to enter or exit the scheme at any time, even after construction. I kindly request approval of this project. It has been a long journey but one that we firmly believe has been worth it. The benefit for the community are many. Certainly there will be future challenges but we are confident in our ability to address and resolve them as we have demonstrated throughout the entire development process.

Solar energy represent the future and we are sure that with you rsupport our Glenellen Solar Farm will be able to contribute significantly to a sustainable and cleaner future. Thank you very much.

DR COAKES: Thank you. Thank you, Jose and Daniel. Just a couple of - just a question from me and potentially a couple from the panel members. Just in terms of construction waste, waste management you spoke of obviously your considerations around waste being removed from site to appropriate facilities. We have heard from council about the limited capacity of their local facility so that would also be during construction in terms of construction waste as well. Just to clarify.

MR FLORES: Well, that will be captured in the waste management plan. There will be - so we understand the local limitation but, for example, recycling panels we now recently company announced a plan to establish one company or one factory here in Albury. Obviously for the rest of waste management we will consider other location either in New South Wales or Victoria but it is not limited to Albury or council and we will find a way or an alternative and we are already coordinating with the companies who can provide the services.

DR COAKES: Thank you. And just another question around - we have a number of speakers, I think, later in the day that will talk to us about a range of issues but please feel free to take this question on notice but we'd be interested in just understanding the company's policy, Trina and GPG's policy in relation to sourcing the development of materials for your panels. Happy for you to take that on notice.

MR FLORES: Yes. We can just maybe explain or we can send you more details on that. So it's a little bit complex but, as I said, so Trina is one of the largest model manufacturers or we are totally integrated in the manufacturing of the solar panel and obviously we have that close relation with recycling companies. We already have contacted six and we have identified six in Australia but we are working not only for this period, if not for our entire portfolio. In there, for example, supply we are the number one in Australia with more than 600 megawatt and it's a very important question with all of our (not transcribable) (0:43:11) but we can - it's a little bit complex, we have the process that is basically (not transcribable) (0:43:21) panels or we have to remove the frame because (not transcribable) (0:43:25) and we can send you more details about that so (not transcribable) (0:43:31) Panel.

DR EVANS: If I could clarify. We're also interested at the start of the supply chain on the creation of the panels so again, happy for you to take it on notice but more the question about the whole - excuse me - material sourcing right through from initiation of panel right through to the end. Thank you.

MR FLORES: Just briefly, obviously so Trina is align with all the local regulation, for example, we recognise it's controversial with all the manufacturing companies in China about their Modern Slavery Statement so Trina has registered the Modern Slavery Statement for all their products that we supply in Australia and around the world. Just to let you know, right now Trina is opening a manufacturing factory in United States so that is also one example that we align with all the international

revelation and we have manufacturing facilities not only in China, if not, for example, in Vietnam and in other countries. Happy to provide you more information and to send you the Modern Slavery Statement of the company.

DR COAKES: Thanks, Jose.

MR PILTON: Could I just ask a question about the scattered trees. You said there was a change where I think there was going to be 83 trees to be removed, now there are 79. What are the criteria that you use for the trees that are going to be kept?

MR MADGI: They were just within the development - the revised development footprint.

MR PILTON: So it was easier to plan the thing where it's not ecological or (not transcribable) (0:45:16).

MR MADGI: That's right, yep. So the revised development footprint incorporates 77 (not transcribable) (0:45:20) trees whereas the previous footprint I think eight.

MR PILTON: O.K. Thank you. The other question I have is about the - I was given a report yesterday about the risks of climate change on various renewable energy sources and solar apparently comes out as a very high risk in the future with climate change because climate change is going to exacerbate serious storms and hail and so on. Have you considered that, the risk of damage?

MR FLORES: We don't consider currently any future change in the climate change so our propose obviously is to fight the climate change and to avoid in the future the consequences of the climate change. It's true that our financial model or business plan of this power plant is just for 30 years. I don't know exactly when those event may happen but in principle so we are not considering any natural disaster or natural event in the (not transcribable) (0:46:27) as well so we will try to fight and we'll try to work to avoid those eventualities.

MR PILTON: Thank you.

DR COAKES: Thank you, Jose and Daniel. O.K. I'd now like to call our speaker John McBratney who I think is joining us on the telephone.

MR McBRATNEY: Hello.

DR COAKES: Hi John, can you hear us?"

MR McBRATNEY: Hello. It's John McBratney speaking.

DR COAKES: O.K. Can you hear us clearly, John?

MR McBRATNEY: Yes, I can.

DR COAKES: Lovely. Thank you. Please go ahead.

MR McBRATNEY: O.K. I'm a retired telecommunication engineer with over 45 years experience in hardware and guidance systems (not transcribable) (0:47:11) environmental field implementation and testing. I've worked in power authorities including Snowy. I have good power electrical knowledge and I have no affiliation or involvement with any commercial or government entity. My comments are my own personal opinion as a professional engineer.

Industrial solar plants in general occupy large tracts of generally agricultural land, thus reducing the farmer's output and resulted income. Further, the land use can easily be subject to (not transcribable) (0:47:32) toxic chemicals that can lech from the broken photovoltaic panels during routine replacement at the end of life or in the event of damage. The lifetime photographic - photovoltaic modules is mostly considered to be around 25 years based on performance to guarantees of 80 per cent of rated output.

Further, influence including climatic conditions, circuit behaviours, fiscal quality and the technical and logical and progress have the potential to prompt early replacement. Replacement strategies must, therefore, be considered upfront. There are no replacement strategies evident in this proposal. My prime objection to solar-generated - solar-generated energy systems is although described by the integration techs as reliable, yes, the Glenellen techs, to use the terminology, is anything but reliable. For a start it only provides power for about eight hours in a 24-hour period.

In addition to the inherent limitation of generation in any 24-hour period the output is also subject to vagaries of weather at any level of sun radiation below (not transcribable) (0:48:57) sunlight by roughly between 10.00am and 2.00pm with no cloud cover the panel output would reduce. Further radiation also varies with time of year. Overall, the capacity factor of 22 per cent is a realistic average for solar systems.

Now, however, that solar facilities may produce no output at all over several days under low sun and radiation conditions. Reliable, not so, indeed. The Glenellen project specifically brings into question (not transcribable) (0:49:31) small system of only 200 megawatts. This being of a plate value of maximum output. This will only occur during full sun eradiation during daylight hours. The statement in the project description states it's enough to "power 94,000 homes" is a fractured statement and is meaningless. There was no reference as to the consumption of a home, a value that can vary significantly in any case.

Secondly, the above figure represents an average consumption of about 2000 megawatts - 2000 watts, I beg your pardon, per household. This figure in, in fact, totally inadequate in any modern home. Air conditioners and the like will easily exceed this. Further, the statement made by the project proponents assumes the home load is evenly distributed across the daylight hours of day. The load can vary across the district with sun peaking around midday. Sun-generated power will not be useful for the two major peaks during the day, morning and evening cooking. It is clear that such comments are deliberately misleading and are technical nonsense.

The solar-generation plant can provide limited power over a short daylight period for sun loads, it cannot provide a steady, adequate supply even from midday hours period. It is essential that the grid in this area is supported by reliable fossil fuel generators as the solar system is manifestly inadequate.

In summary, my points of objection to this project are summarised as follows. Electricity generation by solar is not reliable. Large arrays are erroneously described as green, they are not. There is huge amounts of fossil fuels used to produce them. Electricity generated by then is described as cheap. This is not so as generally the costs of renewables does not include transmission lines and other maintenance support generation. This is a complete fabrication.

(Not transcribable) (0:51:38) is proven to be employed (not transcribable) (0:51:38) and other slave labour. This (not transcribable) (0:51:45) must be required, is required and cannot rely on wind as that's unreliable as well. The capacity of the Glenellen array is insufficient to make any real difference to the area's needs especially when the low critical capacity factor is considered. The project description has been deliberately misleading and technically incorrect. See my comments above.

I'm nearly finished. Productive agriculture land is used and crop and other uses no longer possible resulting in loss of income for landowners and irretrievable destruction of arable land. Project data does not show how disposal of the affected end-of-life occurs. Silicone panels are very difficult to dispose of and there's no effort in the proposal to outline how it will be removed and carefully - pardon me - carefully disposed of. Construction will also result in further destruction and damage to agricultural land, flora and fauna.

My conclusions are briefly fundamentally solar systems cannot ever provide steady reliable energy. They will always require back-up resources and they're not cheap as the cost is artificially claimed to be cheaper ignoring other essential costs. This system will provide no advantage to the local area other than minor peaking facilities and further, will result in significant ecological damage as well as financial deprivation to local farmers and should not, therefore, be built.

DR COAKES: Thank you. Thank you, John.

MR McBRATLEY: That is my submission.

DR COAKES: O.K. Thank you, John.

MR McBRATLEY: Pleasure.

DR COAKES: O.K. I think next up we have Jennifer Huber on the phone as well. Sorry, in person. Sorry, sorry, Jennifer.

MS HUBER: Good morning. I'm Jenny Huber and I'm a long-term local resident of this area. My grandparents ran the Walla Walla General Store during the Depression and I have family members in business and farming on both sides of the border. We

live in challenging times and adaptability has always been a quality of Australians, especially in our farming and rural communities. We would like to speak in support of the Glenellen Solar Farm.

This facility will provide economic benefit in our area. It provides the opportunity for landholders to run integrated agricultural businesses combining harvesting the sun and farming sheep along with other farming activities. An additional income stream will consolidate revenue, providing a strong business model. Strong rural families are a much-needed economic basis for our community. It does this without damaging the soil and so can be converted back to other types of farming in the future. Solar panels actually benefit agriculture for pasture and sheep by creating a 24-hour micro climate that supports increased productivity, a farm for fibre, food and fuel.

This facility will bring social benefits. It will enhance our rural community and positively contribute to the social fabric of the area and farming families are economically successfully, their capacity to contribute to the community is strengthened. The younger generation have the opportunity to stay in the area and build a broader population base.

Thirdly, this will provide environmental benefits. The solar farm will have the capacity to generate approximately 200 megawatts of renewable power. It is close to a major population centre. This power will be used with the minimum amount lost in transition. It is also close to the Jindera substation and existing high-powered transmission lines reducing the need for additional infrastructure.

The IPCC, the Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change, is the most authoritative international body on climate science. In its latest report it states that at present there is inadequate global action, that means the earth is headed towards catastrophic warning over two degrees as the global community needs to reduce emissions urgently. Saul Griffith, a scientist and engineer, sets a path to reducing emissions by electrifying everything and using clean energy.

I understand that no one wants to lose their lifestyle or their view. Unfortunately with climate change we may face great changes including increased bushfires, droughts and floods. Other threats include rising sea levels and habitat destructions. We are already facing great change. I'm part of a community group, the Albury-Wodonga Knitting Nannas for Renewables. We work to encourage people to look at the opportunities for solar, particularly in residential areas. Excuse me. Solar farms on local agricultural land has wide community support as it enables the community to quickly transition away from the generation of electricity through fossil fuels. In the future there may be the opportunity to develop alternatives but at present CO2 levels are such that urgent action is required.

There may be changes and difficulties as the community has to adapt. Maybe some increases in traffic during construction and solar panels being visible from some viewpoints. All changes require adjustment and when the changes bring benefits overall to the community we adapt. A solar farm provides economic, social and environmental benefits. A solar farm in our area enables us to maximise these benefits. We live in

challenging times when changes are required and I appreciate the work and commitment of all those involved to bring this project forward. Thank you for the opportunity to present this to you.

DR COAKES: O.K. We now have Carolyn Kitto who will be joining us on the telephone. No? Carolyn?

MS KITTO: Yes. Hello.

DR COAKES: Hello. Please go ahead, thank you, Carolyn.

MS KITTO: Thank you so much. My name is Carolyn Kitto and I'm - I'm getting a really bad echo. I don't know if we can do anything about that.

DR COAKES: Any way Carolyn can - O.K. Should be O.K. now, Carolyn.

MS KITTO: O.K. Thank you. I'm still getting it, I'll just try and phase it out of my mind. So my name is Carolyn Kitto and I'm the Director of a charity called Be Slavery Free. We're a coalition of civil society that works with consumers, business and government to bring an end to modern slavery in the world. So thank you for the opportunity to address the Independent Planning Commission today on this matter.

I particularly want to address the issues of the supply chain of the solar industry. Be Slavery Free is pro decarbonisation, pro moving to sustainable and green energy; however, we do not believe that this should be at the expense of human rights. I noticed on the agenda that my colleague Ramila Chanisheff will be talking to you further in the agenda and she will address, no doubt, the issues related specifically to Uyghur forced labour in the Xinjiang province of China and the what is happening with the Chinese government but our particular request is that the Commission add a further condition to the planning condition for this particular solar farm and that that condition should be that all reasonable steps be taken to ensure that modern slavery is not in the supply chain of the goods and services that are procured to develop this solar farm.

The supply chain for solar panels is - has much evidence about how child labour, forced labour and bonded labour is at every point in the supply chain. From the cobalt and 70 percent of the world's cobalt comes from the Democratic Republic of Congo where children are used in the mining of that product because children have smaller bodies, then smaller mine shafts ben be made. So from that cobalt through to the processing of those raw materials in smelters where bonded labour and forced labour is used through to the putting-together of the various components and then the final pulling-together of those components into the solar panel.

There are also risks of forced and bonded labour in Australia which should not be disregarded in terms of people who are on particular visas working in rural parts of Australia. This is not that we should not - we cannot have solar panels, it is though, however, that we need to give attention to this. Australia now has a Modern Slavery Act and the New South Wales Government has an Anti-Slavery Commissioner and an

Anti-Slavery Act. That Act requires that all reasonable steps be taken in the procurement of products to ensure that modern slavery is not a part of the supply chain.

As I said, this doesn't mean that you can't source solar panels even though many of them come from places - many of the components come from places where there is strong evidence of forced labour. It requires us to be innovative. So, for example, there are now many projects in Australia where the tailings of nickel and copper mines are now being harvested for cobalt so that we can have our own source of cobalt in Australia. It might cost a little bit more but it won't be at the expense of human rights and of the lives of children and people who are in bonded forced labour.

So that's simply our request that that additional condition that all reasonable steps to be taken to ensure that there is no modern slavery in the sourcing of goods and services in the establishment of this solar farm. Thank you.

DR COAKES: Thanks, Carolyn, and also for your consideration around the conditions in this application, we do appreciate that. We have asked the applicant to also provide some additional information around their policies and standards as well. So - but thank you very much for your contribution today.

MS KITTO: Thank you.

DR COAKES: I would now like to call Gerald Rennick who - - -

MR RENNICK: Yeah. Hi.

DR COAKES: Hi, Gerald. You're already there, terrific. O.K. Please go ahead. Thank you.

MR RENNICK: Yeah. Hi, it's Gerald Rennick here, Senator from Queensland. I'm just ringing to say, you know, basically lend my support and concerns about the construction of the solar Glenellen Solar Farm. I don't believe what, you know, the government's claiming, you know, that it's going to have a low impact. From what I can see the project's going to be built on grazing and cultivation and you're going to have a big transmission line to boot.

So I think it's incredibly hypocritical of the environmentalists to be claiming that renewables is good for the environment. I find that hard to believe. And, you know, in my role as a Federal representative, albeit in Queensland but, you know - you know, I'll fight for anyone and especially in primary industries and regional areas anywhere in the country. I don't think that we should be building these solar farms and the, you know, corresponding transmission lines as well. That's it guys. I think it's pretty straightforward.

DR COAKES: Thank you. Thank you, Gerard. O.K. So on my list we have Ben Beattie next. Ben, are you on the line?

MR BEATTIE: Yep.

DR COAKES: Can you hear us clearly, Ben?

MR BEATTIE: I can.

DR COAKES: Lovely. Please go ahead.

MR BEATTIE: O.K. Thanks. So my name is Ben Beattie, I'm an electrical engineer based in the power and the gas industry for about 20 years.

DR COAKES: Sorry, Ben, we actually missed that first statement. Could you just repeat that?

MR BEATTIE: Sure. Just gave you a brief understanding of my professional background. I'm an electrical engineer and I spent a decade in the power sector and the last decade in the gas sector.

DR COAKES: O.K. Thanks, Ben.

MR BEATTIE: So my few minutes today I just wanted to explain my opposition to large-scale solar farms. The reason is that they cannot lower retail electricity bills as is so often claimed. We take a look at the Australian Energy Regulator's State of the Energy Market Reports and it explains that the retail electricity bills are split up into several components. You have the wholesale electricity cost, you have the cost of the networks, you have environmental costs and retail overheads.

Now, the point that I'm making to people is that large-scale wind and solar cannot lower the network cost, cannot lower the environmental overhead and cannot lower the retail overhead. It barely registers on lowering the wholesale cost either and, in fact, it must act to increase network costs massively.

Now, if you look at the wholesale price first. Large-scale wind and solar do not set the wholesale price very often and the small amount of time that wind and solar do set the price has almost no effect on the average wholesale price which is what the retailers have to buy it. This price is most often set by gas and hydro and the data from the Australian Energy Regulator (not transcribable) (1:08:29), et cetera, all supports this.

If you look at the network costs the cost of transmission and distribution networks cost recovery is determined by the value of the asset and this is called the Regulatory Asset Base, the RAB. Increasing the RAB, sorry, increases the total cost recovered. There is no link between the costs and the network utilisation or how much electricity flows over it, it's just the number of poles, how many kilometres of wire, how many transformers and how many people are involved. Can you still hear me? Hello. I'm assuming you can still hear me.

Current government policies intend to massively expand the transmission network. AMA puts this number at 10,000 kilometres. This is a cost that has to go onto consumer bills. The AER also explains that the distribution network must be upgraded to cater to

the small-scale wine and solar, although that's less of a problem for the large-scale it does tell you that there is no cost reductions coming in the small-scale stuff.

So in summary, large-scale wind and solar can only increase the system costs. There is no reduction in retail or environmental cost due to large-scale wind and solar. There is no reduction in wholesale costs but there is an increase in network costs. Thank you.

DR COAKES: O.K. Thank you, Ben. Any questions? No? Thank you, Ben.

MR BEATTIE: O.K. Bye.

DR COAKES: O.K. I think next we have also on the line Alan Moran.

MR MORAN: Speaking.

DR COAKES: O.K. Good morning, Alan. Please go ahead.

MR MORAN: Be prepared, did you say?

DR COAKES: Yeah, please go ahead. We can hear you clearly.

MR MORAN: O.K.

DR COAKES: Thank you.

MR MORAN: Hello, Panel, thank you for hearing me. It's Alan Moran here. I want to talk about the issues in terms of the Glenellen Solar and its higher prices that it will cause. What we can actually see in terms of looking at solar both domestically and internationally there's a very high correlation between the increase in solar and wind compared to the price. For example, internationally the highest priced electricity is in UK, Netherlands and Spain which have about 25 to 45 percent solar and wind and the lowest are in places like Russia and Korea and India which are very much lower and you can see a trajectory line all the way through that, Australia's about in the middle.

This is a key assessment issue in the consideration. It is energy security and if the Glenellen project proceeds it will deliver electricity at excessive cost with unacceptable reliability. It's said to project (not transcribable) (1:11:54) 200 megawatts of renewable energy to the NEM and though commercial for the sponsors the project cost to the community is considerable. The farm - Glenellen Farm in additional to its market revenue will obtain a subsidy through the large-scale generation certificate and that's currently $52 per megawatt hour. That's pretty much similar to the wholesale price of electricity before we started doing mass increments of renewable energy into the system.

So - and the subsidy from the electricity consumer will be about $30 million per year for the - for the proposal and what we've seen in Australia is the price of electricity, and I'm sure you know this, of the whole market is now about three to four times the price that it was five or six years ago and we can see that in ABS data which shows the price of electricity is - has increased three to fourfold compared to about a doubling of the

general pricing index. That price trajectory - price trajectory will continue as long we keep these subsidies on wind and solar and although many say that wind and solar is cheap, that's only cheap if you get it - if you take it when it's produced and the firming cost to ensure it's available when people want it very much increased the cost of electricity itself.

What we're seeing is as a result of (not transcribable) (1:13:39) something like this is happening below the horizon in Australia, in Victoria, in particular, is that governments are starting to panic somewhat and we see this more clearly in China where yesterday or the day before Chinese coal plants were allocated an additional payment of $45 per kilowatt of installed capacity per year and that's not because China is particularly pro coal, it's just because it recognises that the amount of renewable energy, solar and wind that it has already which is about 10 percent of their total, much less than in Australia, is creating havoc with the system and, therefore, they have to ensure that their coal plants which give that stability and the firming capacity are kept online and so they've introduced this subsidy to coal ironically.

On top of all these other issues what we're seeing is - because when wind and solar are inherently less dense than fossil fuels or nuclear, for that matter, we're seeing a massive increase in transmission systems and those systems aren't being financed as has been the case in the past by the beneficiaries, by the generators but are financed by the consumer by a mandatory be on the consumer, they would not be necessary unless we had the diffused power from wind and solar but the consumer is obligated to pay them. So in my view, this proposal is clearly against public interest and on grounds of energy security alone the Commission should reject it. Thank you.

DR COAKES: O.K. Thank you. Thank you, Alan. O.K. Next we have, again by telephone, Ramila Chanisheff. I hope I've pronounced that correctly, Ramila. Ramila, are you there?

MS CHANISHEFF: Yes, I am.

DR COAKES: Lovely. Yes, we can hear you very clearly. Thank you.

MS CHANISHEFF: Thank you.

DR COAKES: Please go ahead.

MS CHANISHEFF: Hi, my name's Ramila Chanisheff and I'm the President of the Australian Uyghur Tangritagh Women's Association. I represent as spokesperson for the Uyghurs in South Australia as well as Australia-wide. I am based in South Australia. I'm talking on the solar panel issues and modern slavery and slave labour of the Uyghurs who have been internalised to being prisoned, who've been coerced to work in solar panels in China, in North-West China, Xinjiang region. Over 35 percent of the polysilicon comes from Xinjiang and every other product that is the components of the solar panels is mined or made in China which is based in North-West China in Xinjiang region.

Now, there's been credible evidence that the majority of the products that - components of the solar panels are tainted with slave labour and coerced labour. So every Uyghur member in Australia has a family member or friends who have disappeared into these forced labour camps and we have no communication with them as to their whereabouts and if they've been imprisoned or if they've been forced into Xinjian labour camps or have been moved across China to work in labour camps. So the seriousness of solar panels that comes from China, even the components of it is extremely highly likely that it will be tainted by Uyghur forced labour.

There's been credible evidence that's come out, there's been reports of the situation in Xinjiang and I'm here to talk about not only the solar panels but also the - cybersecurity side of it as well bd we - my understanding is that any one of these solar panels can have a direct link to the Chinese Communist regime and they will have access to any data that is collected through these components that is - that lands here in China.

Now, over 30 percent of Australian homes have solar panels and every time I look at it that makes me feel extremely, extremely emotional - I'm sorry - to know that my people who have been ethnically-cleansed in North-West China does have - has been used in these areas of making product, any products that come out of China which is highly likely to be a risk - at risk of being tainted with Uyghur forced labour.

Now, my understanding is that you thinking of bringing a whole lot of solar panels and we understand that any product that's made in China is extremely cheap compared to purchasing it from any other region. Please note that my people are disappearing from this planet when - when the Chinese Communist regime are using them to make these cheap products so that we can have access to them. Hello.

DR COAKES: Hello. Yes, we can hear you.

MS CHANISHEFF: Yep. Sorry. So I have - - -

DR COAKES: Yes, keep going.

MS CHANISHEFF: Yeah. I'm spokesperson for the Australian Uyghurs and I'm here to tell you that please consider - reconsider the solar panel industry in Australia as to where it comes from and I know that New South Wales has got an Anti-Slavery Commissioner and a Commission and processes and policies in place to ensure products don't come from China but we need to make sure that the government is on top of this to - to make sure that people are not being ethnically-cleansed or genocide is happening. A silent genocide is happening to the Uyghur and (not transcribable) (1:20:09) people of East Turkistan or Xinjiang, as they call it, that we are conscious buyers and we are conscious about not only the human aspect of it but the communist and the control aspects of it as well.

DR COAKES: O.K. Thank you, Ramila, for your contribution. Thank you.

MR CHANISHEFF: Thank you very much.

DR COAKES: O.K. So next up we have Jim, Jim Parrett in person. No? O.K. Can we move on then with our schedule? I think we would be - next on the list will be Rafe Champion who is on the phone.

MR CHAMPION: Hello.

DR COAKES: Hi, Rafe, thank you. We can hear you. Can you hear us clearly?

MR CHAMPION: I can hear you.

DR COAKES: Yeah, terrific. If you could go ahead then, Rafe, that would be great.

MR CHAMPION: O.K. Well, these are my - my objections. They come under three headings and I'll note the three headings and then backtrack to flesh them out. The first is the impossibility of the net zero program at large, that is the aim to replace coal and gas with wind and solar. The second is the prohibitive cost of attempting that transition and the third is environment impact of attempting to build these wind and solar facilities that are necessary to make the transition.

So starting from the beginning, the impossibility of the net zero project. This is spelled out as like the ABC. A is the need to maintain a constant input of power to the grid to match demand. B is the disruption of that continuous input by wind drought especially at night and C is the lack of grid scale storage ridge caps which occur on windless or low wind nights. So you add together those three things and it just doesn't make sense and the attempt to make that net zero transition is surely the biggest policy blunder of peacetime history as we will find going forward.

Now, the second is the cost. Well, because the transition can't be made, convenient power including gas and coal will need to be kept on duty until we have nuclear power. In 15 or 20 years there might be some of that about but the point is we have to keep burning gas at prohibitive expense, we have to keep burning coal which means maintaining the aging coal fleet.

Moving on to environment impact. This is probably the most thoroughly covered throughout the submissions. This is not jus a nimby thing and it's not just about not building it here because environmental footprint of wind and solar extends faraway to distant countries with the exploration of mining of the minerals. The transport and processing deducts a lot of toxic byproducts and finally, the disposal of the plant at the end of its lifetime and the risk of course of leaching out of toxic materials, out of the panels if they're damaged in their lifetime and finally the disposal of non-recyclable materials including toxic waste. So all in all there are three - three reasons which can be spelled out at great length, time permitting, but at the moment that's it from me. Thank you.

DR COAKES: O.K. Thank you, Rafe. Thank you. Thank you, Rafe.

MR CHAMPION: Yeah. O.K. Good. I'm done, yep.

DR COAKES: O.K. I think next we had in person Jim Parrott and Dan Brear. Is he? O.K. O.K. Well, we might have to wait a second. Thank you. O.K. So Lucinda. Yes, thank you, Lucinda, that would be great.

MS PALMER: Good morning. My name is Lucinda Palmer and I speak to you today as a representative of property DRM008 referred to in the application, known to our family and throughout my presentation as the property of Drumwood. I'm thankful for the objections already shared this morning and I support each speaker's concerns. However, in my presentation today my priority is not to discuss the general impact of solar farms across Australia but instead to directly draw your focus to the impact of this proposed farm upon its most direct neighbours and upon our ability to live on, work with and continue to sustainably manage our own landholdings.

This morning I'll bring your attention to four main areas. Firstly, contexting the reality of a neighbouring property. Secondly, acknowledging and responding to the proposed amendments contained in the approval and report from DPE. Focussing your attention most importantly on the highest remaining concerns that we believe have not been effectively addressed through any stage of this application and presenting to you some key documentation and evidence of public discussion that we would like you to consider as context for your deliberations.

As I speak to you today I am very aware of the difficulties that the Panel face working in an area which Australian is progressing so rapidly but which unfortunately for all of us here today on both sides we have yet to develop substantial legislation around. When you reflect upon my presentation I want you to bear in mind my direct living knowledge and experience of the land surrounding the proposed site. Our family home of Drumwood is accepted to be the oldest homestead and landholding in the Jindera and, indeed, the Hume district. In fact, the proposed Glenellen Solar Farm is actually located on land that was purchased with and subdivided from Drumwood in the 1980s.

So when my family and I speak of knowledge of the land categories the natural environment and amenities we do speak with intimate knowledge of this land. Our farm is currently and has historically been used very successfully for sheep and cattle production as well as the cultivation of seasonal yield crops. Our land, like the neighbouring property that is in question, also features significant amounts of native vegetation, native animal habitat and seasonal inflowing waterways. As my husband, Ross Palmer, will later attest our lived experience of this land is that it is not category 4 land as detailed by the Tuck Environment Report but is instead more appropriately considered as category 3 which is land which should be avoided by solar farms. This is an issue that we would like to see far more thorough investigation of by the Panel beyond one report, especially in light of the focus that we have just heard from DPE placing on the class 4 categorisation earlier this morning.

My in-laws who own and live on the property at Drumwood that my husband and I will care for in future generations have been actively involved in community consultation since the earliest days of this proposal. Our family have submitted written objections throughout the applications and most importantly, we currently have no neighbour agreement to protect our land and our interests. The reason for this being the fact that

the term “negotiations” is far from appropriate for a process that has actually only involved one paltry offer of a small figure that is supposedly intended to appease our concerns but our amenity, our ability to work the land flexibly in the future, our safety in terms of financial security against public liability and our concern for the best interests of the land around us that we love and care for.

Neighbour agreements are a major concern for us as the report details them significantly and consistently as a mitigating factor; yet, the neighbour agreement commitment submitted by Trina on October 11th makes it abundantly clear that Trina has no intention to improve or negotiate the content of the offers. As I quote: “We want to assure you that the terms and conditions of these agreements will remain identical to what was initially offered to each interested party. There will be no changes to the agreed-upon terms.” That comes directly from a letter on the submission site. And so to move us forward today - next slide please - I bring your attention to the four core amendments and conditions proposed by Trina and DPE through their recommendations.

As you can see, we support the amendments and conditions proposed to address concerns about native vegetation and recontouring of the land. So we do agree with the concern in other submissions that native vegetation amendments should be even more rigorous. Most importantly though, we still hold concerns for the heavy vehicle haulage and visual impact amendments.

Next slide please. On the matter of heavy vehicle haulage our concerns, and we would like to direct your attention to the use of Drumwood Road. As acknowledged in Trina’s presentation this morning, focus so far has been on Ortlipp and Lindner Road. So this road has not been thoroughly discussed in report conditions or amendments. Throughout community consultations it was proposed that this road would be used during the planting of vegetation screening and as an emergency access road.

As you can see by my listed concerns, this road is a dirt agricultural road which is currently used for stock movement as well as recreational use by the local community, horse riding, bike riding, dog walking, et cetera. This road extends along the back of the proposed site. We propose that this road should be excluded from use during both construction and operation phases beyond the intersection with Lindner Road to reduce community risk, allow agricultural use to continue without interruption and to further mitigate dust concerns.

Visual impacts. The mitigation of visual impact is another concern where we believe, despite amendments and conditions, enough work has still not been done. Visual impact has been a major concern of many public submissions and the lack of appropriate acknowledgement is still offensive, insulting and shows lack of respect for community stakeholders. During the work by landscape architects visual impacts for properties was measured with panoramic shots from one static viewpoint on each property. We all know that this is not a fair representation of how amenity is experienced from a property. We enter into, we move through and we experience landscapes, we do not stand in one place.

Our property is 30 metres away from the panels themselves and this reality extends for over two kilometres down our agricultural fence line. To call this low impact shows complete contempt for the experience and context of rural landholders. To then offer to mitigate that impact with two rows of trees that will take up to 10 years to mature to the level shown in figure 5 leaving the view unmitigated for up to a third of the lifetime of the project is not satisfactory and does not show consideration of recommendation 2.2.4 of the Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner's annual report that states screening solutions should be realistic and effective. Even just a quick look at the landscape map featured in the DPE report this morning clearly highlights how exposed Drumwood Road still is.

Next slide thanks. And now to our remaining concerns. Issues which have been raised since the earliest days of this proposal, issues that are being looked at by Parliamentary enquiries, political lobbies and social environmental analysts, issues which are far bigger than just our project. If the IPC approves this project you will be effectively stating that these developments can go ahead without the need for social licence to operate and that governments can keep just pushing ahead with no requirement to address, respond to or meet commitments and recommendations coming from within their own papers of inquiry. This would be a worrying social and political landscape for Australia.

Jim Parratt and Daniel Brear will later draw your attention to the New South Wales Farmer's Federation's concerns for decommissioning funds. A permit for this project should not be granted while this activity continues. The New South Wales Government itself is well aware of concerns for landholders and public liability limitations. Their own Commissioner for Agriculture has recommended that liability be addressed through neighbour agreements in recommendation 22 and 23. I can assure you that Trina have never come anywhere near such a commitment despite it being raised in neighbour discussions.

This solar farm is valued at $200 million, no landholder in Australia can be insured beyond 50 million. This is a very real and huge concern. A permit for this project should not go ahead without a condition that Trina adhere to these recommendations of 22 and 23 in their neighbour agreements. Neighbour agreements are very limited in the local area and those that have been offered are appalling and fall far short of the typical inclusions detailed in the AEIC report recommendations. If this project is to be approved Trina must be given stricter conditions about the inclusions and extent of their neighbour agreements. The AEIC report also acknowledges the realities of complaint and compliance management responses. If a permit for this project is granted, conditions for complaint management should comply with the Commissioner's recommendation 7 and community members should be provided with a clear and single person of contact. Finally, concerns about bushfire management risk and property valuation also need further consideration to ensure community voices have been fully heard and responded to.

Final slide please. I ask the Panel to take each of these points into further consideration and address them directly through your report and findings.

Next slide. And as further evidence to the significance of these concerns I trust that the Panel will fully consider each of these reports, papers and political commentary included here as reference. In closing, I summarise that we ask the Panel to now bring full focus to the impact on Drumwood Road as amendments and focus so far, as acknowledge by Trina, has not been in this area. In response to the Panel's earlier question to Trina in regard to climate change risks, I would also like to add local knowledge of the fact that we already have severe lightning strikes and storms with tornado-like conditions that have pulled huge gumtrees from the ground in the local area and I suggest the Panel does investigate that further. Thank you.

DR COAKES: Thank you, Lucinda. Any questions? Thank you. O.K. I think we actually have John McGrath on the phone so I think we'll pull John up next if that's O.K. and then we can conclude the early part of the session with Jim and Dan if that's O.K. O.K. So, Team, do we have John online? John, can you hear us clearly?

MR JOHN McGRATH: Yes, I can, thank you.

DR COAKES: Lovely. Go ahead, thank you, John.

MR McGRATH: Right. Thank you very much for the opportunity on behalf of the Yass Landscape Guardians to address the Glenellen solar issue and the Panel should have my overhead - my Power Point, sorry, in front of them.

DR COAKES: Yes.

MR McGRATH: Firstly, you can see there on the second slide please that the Glenellen Solar Farm should not be approved for the following environmental reasons. Initial clearing, and it will be clear-filled of 398 hectares involving the removal of well over 150 mature trees. There's a known lack of New South Wales decommissioning legislation meaning the host ultimately is responsible for decommissioning and there's end use other than aerial for these - with this time for the solar panels. There will be heavy metal contamination of the soil which runs in via the - into the Murray system via Dead Horse Creek and Kilnacroft Creek which merges into the Bowen Creek and flow into the Hume Dam. So you've got to think about pollution please. Ultimate hosts will be liable for any fire or soil contamination caused by the neighbouring properties and as far as fire goes remember the uncontrollable fire in the Gulgong establishment back in April 2003.

On the third slide Glenellen should not be approved - the solar should not be approved for the following electrical and longevity reasons. They're intermittent - solar panels are intermittent generators and they're inappropriately located, they've got a limited lifespan. Solar is an infrequent and inadequate generation source at just 200 megawatts. Therefore, by its very nature rigidly stabilising generation. The inappropriate location of the generators with the known load in the south-east Australian seaboard resulting in transmission losses, often these losses are referred to quaintly by components as marginal losses. With the alternating current these losses can be heavy and the limited lifespan of solar panels 10 to 15 years.

The next slide I will ask that the IPC consider the fact that they need - the DPE and the IPC need to know the capacity of the line that the solar panels will be connected to. There's already four other solar generation sources at least connected to the Jindera Wagga transmission - TransGrid 62 transmission line and two examples of this approval process which hasn't taken into consideration the lack of grid capacity. With the Bango wind turbine development it was originally approved to connect to the nine mine line 132kb Yass/Cowra transmission line with next to no capacity for generation - next to taking extra generation. For the majority of the Bango wind turbine developments now connected to the former 973 Yass/Cowra parallel 132kb transmission line with no explanation of how the approval was changed.

Both the New South Wales DPE and the Coppabella IPC 2018 approved the Coppabella wind turbine project with a rated output of 248 megawatts to connect to the existing overhead transmission line which is a 99 in Yass/Murrumburrah 132kb transmission line. Coppabella had approved known - when the known total capacity on a cold winters night for the 99 in as low as 29 megawatts. Now, the 99 in was to be duplicated added cost ultimately to be worn by the Australian taxpayer and if you will refer to my last slide this information was known when both DPE and IPC approved the connection to that 99 in and I really ask the IPC to make sure there is capacity on that 62 line, from my research rated 1500 megawatts. That's over - overloaded already so why are we putting more generation onto that line. Look, that will do me and thanks very much but please consider those points I've raised. Thank you.

DR COAKES: O.K. Thank you, John. O.K. So I think we will now ask Jim Parrett who's going to give - sorry, Parrett. Thank you. Apologies, Jim. We'll inform he tech team at the back. Thank you, Jim.

MR JIM PARRETT: Lucinda, you're a bit short. It's all right. I have done this before. Thanks. I didn't bring any notes and look, I thank you for letting me come in late. Not late to this because I was in for 10.53 and you were early but I only found out about this last Wednesday and it's one of my big burning issues with this whole program that we've been taken off the contact list for some reason. Nothing from DPIE and nothing from your guys and a friend from Wagga let me know about it so I got to book in to the meeting late. Sorry. It's O.K. I thought I was going to stand. I'm trying to - excuse my neck, I had major neck surgery 10 weeks ago today. Had two discs and a partial removal of my fifth vertebrae and I'm a bit shaky.

DR COAKES: Take your time.

MR PARRETT: Yeah, it's all right and it's a bit like my presentation, you've got it there somewhere? No?

DR COAKES: Your submission? So maybe the team - so, Stuart, do we - Mel's coming down. Mel's coming and she'll - lovely. So Mel and Stuart will bring that up.

DR EVANS: Would you like us to wait until they load the presentation?

MR PARRETT: I'll just have a quick chat to you. Yeah. As I said, I only found out about it last Wednesday and I rang your organisation Thursday afternoon and they let me put in a late requirement to speak and they gave me till Monday morning, I think it was, to do my presentation because I was busy baling, that's one of the other things that we have a real problem with is the timing of this as usual. Busiest time of the year for us here.

DR COAKES: And, Jim, just as the presentation's coming up just a question. So have you been involved during the preparation of the EIS (not transcribable) (1:44:48) engagement so I just wondered where you (not transcribable) (1:44:50).

MR PARRETT: Back in the early stages we were but as part of my presentation will allude to I haven't heard from anyone since 2021.

DR COAKES: O.K. Thank you.

MR PARRETT: Yeah. So just a neighbour's perspective. Next slide please. I haven't got a button to push, have I? No. Part of my issue - John and Helen and their kids and their grandkids and all that sort, it's a beautiful property Lilow, it's I've always been quite jealous of it actually being over but, yeah, it's going to go from this beautiful property to the next slide please. And they haven't even got the panels on there yet but that's a substation and not that they have to build a substation here because the Jindera's already there but all these panels and that sort of stuff it's going to be a bit of an eyesore on our landscape.

Next slide please. Right. So here on this overview you can see the lilac, purple, pink, whatever you want to call it, that's the approved Jindera solar. The one in yellow is the Glenellen that's up here for discussion today and you can see where our place is just to the south-east of it. So if this goes ahead my north-west boundary to the utter boundary of the Jindera one there will be seven kilometres of panels in a north-westerly direction and that's exactly where our weather pattern comes from. There's going to be changes to our microclimate, the works and perks but anyway, we'll get into that.

That just gives you a little bit of an idea where we lay. It comes out in the assessment that we're somewhere about 1750 metres from the panels which is wrong because that's measuring the centre of the panels, it's not measuring it from where the panels begin on our area. We're definitely not as close as the farmers but we've still got some fair size issues with it.

Next slide please. We've been living with this proposal since 2018, Consolidated Wind Power approached us in 2018 and actually asked us if we wanted to be involved and and we declined. The consultation process has been appalling to say the least and we last heard from Trina Solar in September 2021 and last contact with DPIE was in April 2021. It's now November 2023. That's very inadequate. I wrote to DPIE in May 2023 and still remains unanswered.

Under the original guidelines of 2018 for large solar arrays neither Jindera or Glenellen would've got up because they're too close to an urban area and you weren't allowed to

have solar arrays back to back and weren't allowed to be within 10 kilometres of each other. Overnight those guidelines changed and all of a sudden we find these are allowed. Walla, Culcairn back to back, that's allowed. You know, who changed that? Why did they change it? You know, to suit this mantra or what? I don't know.

Next slide please. There's a list here and I will go through this in my submission, I don't have time in five minutes, they get half an hour, they get half an hour, we get five minutes, it seems a bit skewed but anyway. A list of reflection on how poorly we've been listened to and/or treated over this journey and a lot of the other speakers have spoken about it but one of my big bugbears is the heat island effect. We keep getting quoted the one hectare site at Mooroopna near Shepparton as the norm for heat island effect. I've done research in South America, South Africa, the US and all of those sites - all of those papers, and I will put that in my written submission, are declaring anywhere between two and five degrees impact and also a two kilometre dissipation factor but that's - that's only part of it.

Clearing 160 mature trees. They're the ground water pumps for our area so all you're going to do is bring back dry land salinity by knocking those out of the system and also those trees transpire into the sky which also has a cooling effect. Remove those, we lost that, little bit more heat but also transpiration forms precipitation. It's a natural phenomena. So do I get less rain? It's going to change the microclimate at my place, especially if they both go back to back and seven kilometres of that I might as well just sell now and go and move to the desert because that's what it's going to feel like.

The screening techniques, land values, timing of proposal. The timing of proposal. We asked - we've spoken to DPIE and the proponents since 2018 and asked them not to deliver it at this time of the year because it's hay and harvest time, it's our busiest time of the year and what do we do? Bang. Even the - even the - geez, you're quick, aren't you?

DR COAKES: So it's O.K., we'll keep going.

MR PARRETT: Righto. Even when the then Project Manager for Trina Solar sat at my table and to other landholders were there and he said, when's the best and when's the worst time to have you guys look at this and we said the best time for us is middle of winter - sorry, not the middle of winter, the end of winter or late summer because, you know, we've got sowing in April to June and we've got harvest from October through to December and when did it come out? 30th of October or 31st of October, 2021. Right bang when we couldn't do anything. Like it's just mind-numbing really. No one's listening.

Next slide please. Here's a point that I wanted to try and get across. Trina Solar solely own Chinese company Fugunzu, China. That's O.K. They're all over the world now. Why don't we take a leaf out of China's books? When this first started happening I went around and mapped all the solar plants, hundred megawatts or larger around the world and I've got them on a Google Earth map and I can send them to you. I probably will in my submission. All their solar arrays are away from closer settlements, they're in the deserts, they're on the Mongolian Step, they're in the Tibetan Plateau, there's

another one on a major water treatment plant. None of them are on agricultural land, even base agricultural land and none of them are near areas of closer settlement. So why would we accept theirs right here within two kilometres of a township and prime agricultural land?

Next slide please. I'll reiterate a bit about what Lucinda was talking about. I spent 24 years in the Public Service with the Soil Conservation Service and State Water. I did land capability mapping. That is billarmy that that's class 4 land. It's class 3 land, minimum class 3 land everyday of the week and under the draft State Significant Agricultural Land Guidelines 40 percent of that proposal falls into this category and it should not be allowed to go ahead. You know, we're told - we want to use the old 1982 Land Capability maps but we don't want to use the new one but we want to use the new guidelines for back-to-back solar arrays and not the old ones. You know, you can't have a bit of each - an each-way bet, you've got to be down the line and take it all into consideration.

Next slide please. Now, I imagine you guys are hardworking and you work for the same Minister so I'm questioning the independence of how it all works but as taxpayers I think it's high time someone listened to us. It would be really nice if we could get some of our concerns listened because as Lucinda alluded to there's nothing there and I don't begrudge my neighbours signing up for this, it was a big ticket item, they're good people and, you know, they're looking for their kids' future and grandkids' future but it's their grandchildren that are going to have to clean up this mess and this is going to be a big cost and when you go back and look at the decommissioning they only have to decommission to 200 mils below the ground. The concrete stays there, the cabling stays there, the cabling boxing stays there, all degenerating under the ground and what say down the line, you know, Lincoln Adam want to move on and they sell that place and someone comes in and wants to plant a tree line and they put a river in there and it will ger, ger, ger and all this stuff starts coming up underneath you. It's not right. If they're going to decommission the site, take the whole lot out and return to what it once was. Anyway, thanks for your time.

DR COAKES: Thank you. And, Jim, I think you might be also - - -

MR PARRETT: All up next again.

DR COAKES: - - - up next again with Dan.

MR PARRETT: I might just sit here.

DR COAKES: Yeah. And I would just say, Jim, if you can please include that extra information in your submission we would appreciate it.

MR PARRETT: (not transcribable) (1:53:31). (not transcribable) (1:53:42) (OFF MICROPHONE).

DR COAKES: Do your best. Thank you.

MR BREAR: O.K. Well, thank you very much. I would like to acknowledge, yeah, the IPC for having New South Wales farmers here today and I am speaking on behalf of New South Wales farmers in part and part as a representative of the Hume branch of the New South Wales Farmers Association. So a bit of context. The Hume branch encompasses the Albury, Jindera and lower area around the (not transcribable) (1:53:42) Riverina here and Murray districts. I also cover the south-east of New South Wales as the Regional Manager for New South Wales Farmers Association and have been dealing with these enquiries from our members across a number of districts here.

So renewable energy obviously is something that we are seeing a lot of challenges with within our membership and largely it is landholder and land use conflict that we are dealing with. So I will touch on our New South Wales farmers state policy, a lot of which has been addressed by our Hume, Billabong and Wagga Wagga district branches. So with increasing development and rollout of renewable energy projects in New South Wales a growing number of landholders are considering hosting infrastructure on their property, particularly wind turbines and solar facilities. New South Wales Farmers acknowledges that hosting renewable infrastructure can provide a lucrative opportunity for landholders and the organisation supports the right for landholders to engage with developers.

There is considerable angst amongst rural communities in the renewable energy areas around the state. We have designated renewable energy zones. I would like to note that this is not within one of those renewable energy zones and there is guidelines and processes around how to work in those renewable energy zones and I would like to again note that those guidelines do not apply outside of the RES. So there are, you know, very different opportunities to engage and how our proponents work to get these approved.

I think with the - with regards to the policy here, looking to host these developments, we have landholders that are working to put these developments on their property and that is their right and that is their opportunity to consider. We need to make sure that those landholders are going into this with open eyes and previous contributions to our Panel today have made it very clear that decommissioning is a huge risk.

Now, that decommissioning may not lie on the person that is running that land at the moment. So decommissioning guidelines need to be thoroughly established. Moving into that I would like to touch on three key policy principles that New South Wales Farmers has with regards to these. So New South Wales Farmers is requiring the New South Wales Government to place a moratorium on large-scale solar energy developments until the planning deficiencies in relation to decommissioning and remediation are addressed.

New South Wales Farmers require the proponents of solar installations adequately financially compensate adjoining landholders with neighbourhood agreements similar to those with wind installations. The reason that we're asking for this is that some landholders may not be willing to come into a negotiation. There is a principle here that these lands are very valuable in their agricultural capacity. They've got history of use. They've been assessed as an opportunity. The Hume branch has acknowledged that this is, and has been very active in defending the agricultural attributes of this area.

So moving, I guess, to the final one that I would like to touch on and I'm sorry, my eyes are playing up in the light here. Landholders impacted by RES policy and other renewable energy developments outside of RES require access to professional planning advice and information to enable informed decision-making and negotiation with renewable energy project proponents and/or energy co. for the RES network scheme infrastructure or, if outside the RES, working to develop those relationships to make sure that landholders adjoining developments have the best information possible and the best support possible to put their submissions forward, to have an understanding of the ramifications and the legal obligations that they do feel.

In summing up to this, I think it's very important to touch on these developments in this area have been going on since 2018. Speaking to branch members in the local area here they've been unable to make decisions on their land with this project overshadowing them. There's concerns about the devaluation of rural property. There's concerns around what I can actually do. Am I going to invest in infrastructure on my property to further my agricultural pursuits to further how I develop my business and the cloud that is hanging over this from a Hume branch perspective is impacting on people such as Jim, impacting on other landholders making farm decisions on their properties and it is inequitable when an operator such as Jim or such as one of our Hume branch representatives cannot make decisions on their farm due to the longevity of the opportunity for a landholder to develop these without proper consideration of the impact on their neighbours. Thank you to the Commission for hearing me today and hearing from the Hume branch. I appreciate your time.

DR COAKES: Thanks, Dan. And we do acknowledge that obviously in the case of this particular application it has been in the system for quite sometime and we do acknowledge that that does have impacts on people's ability to move forward. Any questions of Dan before he sits down?

DR EVANS: No.

DR COAKES: O.K. All right. Well, that brings us to the end of our early morning session, though we are still at 11.06. So we may - we'll now take a break and we'll see you back at - what time have we got here? 12.20. Thank you. And thanks to all those speakers who have presented to us this morning.

LUNCHBREAK

RESUMED

DR COAKES: O.K. Thank you for coming back to our second part of the meeting today. I'd like to invite Helen Weidner up to the microphone. Thanks, Helen. Can someone - - -

MS WEIDNER: Thank you. Good morning. My name is Helen Weidner. My husband John and I are one of two landholders who decided to take up the opportunity of being involved in the development of the Glenellen Solar Farm. John and I moved to our farm

at Jindera in 1981 at the ages of 23 and 25 with a six-week-old baby son. This means that we have been living and farming at Jindera for 42 years. Our family increased to two sons who are now grown adults and we also have been blessed with grandchildren.

The Weidner family settled in the Albury area and surrounding districts in the 1850s and are now 7th generation farmers. Our family has had a long and strong involvement in the Jindera community with both our sons attending Jindera Preschool and Jindera Public School. We were also strong supporters of the Jindera Tennis Club playing tennis every Saturday as a family for many years and contributing as volunteers for committee work and regularly working bees on the maintenance of the courts when they were gravel courts. They're all artificial green - grass green courts now.

Both of our sons are now part of our family farming business and are co-managing the business with us. When the opportunity arose to be a part of the Glenellen Solar Farm project we discussed the proposal for 12 to 18 months before we made our final decision. It was not made lightly. The main points for our decision to be a part of the project include the location of our land. Our land joins the Jindera electricity substation on three sides. The fourth side is the front entrance to the substation on Ortlipp Road. This means that our land surrounds the substation. You can't get any closer to it. This also means that the electricity generated from the solar farm will have a very short distance to travel to get to the substation which means our land is an ideal site for a solar farm and the energy generation will be extremely efficient.

Agri-solar. Agri-solar is a new word which describes the blending of both farming practices and energy generation from solar panels on the same land. We are excited about opportunities of integrating green energy production into our farming business and see the following combined land and infrastructure uses. Number 1. Grazing sheep under the solar panels to maintain the grass growth to reasonable levels while still producing food and fibre for Australia. Cropping between the solar panels, lucerne and other crops can be grown and harvested between the solar panel rows. It's already being done.

The lucerne will provide grazing feed for the sheep under the panels and also hay for our cattle in our farming business. The solar farm will actually help us to diversify and actually increase our farming production generated from the same piece of land. We will be farming sheep, crops and the sunlight that falls on the land. There will be no loss of farming land here. In fact, we are adding an extra layer of production onto it in the form of clean green energy. We will be farming the sun, it's just another type of farming.

Climate change. Climate change is now undeniable. Everyone has heard about it. The scientific evidence to prove this continues to mount alarmingly year on year. The United Nations reported just last week that Australia looks like failing to meet its emissions targets due to not having enough renewable energy infrastructure available for green-power generation. More renewable energy projects are needed to help Australia transition away from its dependence on the polluting coalfired power stations.

Community benefit. This project will create over 200 jobs for people during construction. Trina is keen to employ the local tradespeople and businesses to help support the Albury-Wodonga and Jindera economies. Trina has also contributed - are committed to contributing $2.5 million into a voluntary planning agreement with the Greater Hume Council to fund community projects within the Jindera area.

Educational opportunities. Opportunities exist to link into the local schools with education programs on renewable energy. Nearly finished. Trina is researching ways to facilitate this. After all, the future of today's school children lies in renewable energy and learning about its production. In closing, this is a good project which will provide benefits for everyone. Hopefully we might even get to the stage of using electric tractors and yes, they are coming. Reducing no emissions while helping to provide food, fibre and energy to Australians. So embrace change, the world is being altered by climate change, we must change with it. Be proactive and contribute to the solution. Thank you.

DR COAKES: Thanks, Helen. And I would just like to thank you, Helen and John for giving us access to your property in Lincoln yesterday. Thank you. On our site visit. O.K. I would now like to call on Bob King and I think Bob, you're on the telephone.

MR KING: I am on the line.

DR COAKES: Lovely. Go ahead, thank you, Bob.

MR KING: Good morning, Panel. Thanks for allowing me an opportunity to speak. I can hear a little bit of echo, is this line O.K. for you?

DR COAKES: Can hear you very clearly, Bob.

MR KING: Good. I'll continue then. I'd like to concentrate just on one particular small area and that is the damage to solar farm panels. There are a couple of things that worry me. Firstly, I'd like to talk about back sheet cracking. I reference PV Magazine. And in Germany the current - presently about 13 percent of the solar panels are cracking on the - on the rear surface. So a polymer back sheet that protects the backside is cracking and degrading. So 13 percent may not sound much but the growth in solar farms in Germany is about 12 percent a year. So you've got a very large increase and if currently you've got 13 percent that have got this sort of problem, look, statistically you could just add the two together. It's a simple way to do it but 13 and 12 gives you 25 percent you could say that 25 percent of panels are going to have some problem with back sheet cracking.

Second, I'd like to talk about cracks - mainly talking about the front side of solar panels now. So there's a Denver-based energy advisory company who tested samples from 16 countries over eight years at a 148 sites. So this looks fairly good evidence. What they found was at 83 percent of the sites they found hairline cracks. 78 percent had soldering anomalies. 76 percent had complex and large cracks. 29 percent of the sites were impacted by edge ribbon cracks. 81 percent of the sites had half-cut cells. 52 percent had cell to edge glass defects. They're fairly large in the findings and what's more

significant is that the - it's increasing, the number increasing. I suspect that's probably got something to do with the race to the bottom in price, so, you're getting leaching here.

Now, in Australia we have a lot of hail damage, probably larger than - I can't evidence that but anyway, I do think we have a lot of hail damage on solar panels and I worry about the chemical leaching, especially from some of the toxic elements in the panels. The Panel is probably more (not transcribable) (2:12:22) knowing what they are but I think lead and cadmium may be two of the ones that we could worry about.

So my - in conclusion, I just say that the life expectancy for panels is not as large as we normally believe. It's shorter for these reasons I've mentioned. I don't - in Victoria I believe they're not allowed to go to landfill and the recycling hasn't yet been fully worked out, how we're going to do that. So I'd like the Panel please to make some recommendations or conclusions to the - to the solar farm that they not go to landfill and that they recycling may go to the best available technology at the time and thirdly, that if we have some way to protect the land or contain toxicity that be a requirement of the farm. This is what I'd like to say to the Panel and happy to take any questions.

DR COAKES: Thank you, Bob. Any questions?

DR EVANS: No.

DR COAKES: No questions. Thank you for those constructive comments around potential conditions. O.K. Thank you, Bob.

MR KING: Thanks very much. Bye.

DR COAKES: Bye. O.K. We've got a couple. Now going to call on Rob Cumming who - Cummings who is on the telephone as well. Just before I hand over to you, Rob, I do understand that there have been a number of queries by a couple of our speakers today who have enquired with our office this morning regarding the meeting today not being livestreamed. I would just like to note for everyone's information that we don't livestream every public meeting. The main purpose of the public meeting is just for speakers to have the opportunity to address the decision-makers directly and all members of the public are able to attend these meetings in person. So - and because we have a number of local residents here with us today which is terrific. So, of course, transcripts of today's meeting - for the entire meeting will be loaded on our website as soon as possible following the meeting so just would like to clarify that before we hand over to yourself, Rob, who I think you are on the phone.

MR CUMMING: Thank you.

DR COAKES: Yep.

MR CUMMING: Thank you. Good afternoon. It's still morning in Queensland/. UTC time works well for us.

DR COAKES: O.K. Well, good morning in Queensland, Rob.

MR CUMMING: Now, do you want me to go ahead now?

DR COAKES: Yes, yes, please.

MR CUMMING: O.K. Thank you for having me on board. I've worked in the Riverina areas from 1974 and still have clients that I work with in that area, probably had one-to-one interaction with well over a thousand people working through farmer issues, cropping, soil erosion and so forth. So I just think that this whole proposal is completely counterproductive. Its proper use and long term use of what is, in fact, prime agricultural land probably class 2. Now, I make a comment about being able to download environmental impact statements and other supporting evidence and that has not been possible from the DI - from the Department of Planning. I've raised it with them and that really causes serious problems in for people to be able to properly assess and work through the paperwork that's been provided by organisations such as DPI and I believe that they haven't properly assessed this at all.

These are some of the best agricultural cropping grazing lands in the region. Other people will point out some of the very mature trees that are throughout the landscape down there and that forms a very important part. Wind turbines and solar panels don't - aren't part of that. These lands are in what are regarded as some of the safest rainfall areas and best soils in the entire Riverina area with the ability in part to feed the nation in difficult years when we have less than average rainfall and we've had a few of those over the last few years. It's climate variability, not climate change.

That the DPI dismisses this - these issues in a handful of words shows how the proposal is serious flawed and in north - Far North Queensland we've had real problems where proponents put a bunch of words down and they are not properly supported and that's the case with this one as well. There's - for example, even the picture of the Glenellen Solar Farm shows a header harvester in the picture along with sheep. Well, shall we get to - to that. You can't run sheep underneath solar panels. They make assurances that sheep grazing will be undertaken. Mustering of the sheep no doubt would be a hoot. Can you imagine getting in there on foot, a motorbike trying to chase - you're chasing sheep, you're watching them and you've got panels whacking into you. That would go down real well and I guess a bit of nibbling on some of the cables would go a long way to keeping the solar panels going.

So there's serious management issues. How do you manage sheet? Well, the obvious problem, a blowfly attack. Sheep will lie, that's their - that's their behaviour in the shadows. They'll be quite inaccessible and you can't see them, they just hide out and they'll die and you'll just destined large numbers of animals to an uncertain future but certainly an agonising death. Now, if we go back further, I believe that we should not be removing these high rainfall, high quality lands from agriculture.

Now, when we come to social licence, the community - it's only a small community but there's a lot of people speaking up for them, as you no doubt can see, and that's a social licence. Social - and the raw data shows there's no social licence for the proposal and

that this proposal just simply should be rejected and I call on the Panel to do precisely that, reject it. Thank you.

DR COAKES: Thank you, Rob. Thank you. O.K. We're now going to move to Lynette LaBlack. Do we have Lynette, I think, on the telephone? All right. Lynette apparently is not quite ready for the call so could I ask, if that's O.K., Ross Palmer to come up. Thank you, Ross.

DR EVANS: Get some help with the microphone.

MR PALMER: Good afternoon. Thank you for your time. I'm Ross Palmer and I speak to you today in further objection to the proposal with experience and perspective as both directly as - directly as a neighbouring landholder, as an agronomist with over 18 years experience with agriculture realities in the Jindera district as well as the Eastern Riverina.

Next slide please. In my presentation today I plan to address four key concerns that I firmly believe require greater deliberation by the IPC in the review process for this project. Firstly, categorisation of the land itself, especially whether one report is sufficient to make the critical decision between whether this land is classified as class 3 or class 4. Secondly, the fact that RU1 land for this project in the Hume Shire in a strict reading is, in fact, prohibited with use, whether such development should be approved considering the New South Wales Agriculture Commissioner's report review, RU1 use to prioritise agriculture.

(not transcribable) (2:22:00) the location of this parcel of land within directly neighbouring land zonings and whether the approval should consider this as strictly RU1 or place concern on its vicinity to other land uses and finally I'll ask you to consider the restrictions such as - such an approval would place on future ability of neighbours to use their own land flexibly in response to agricultural, economic and social directions.

Next slide please. Land Categorisation. Prior to the independent report by Tuck Environmental as part of the submission response parts of the land parcel impacted by this project were categorised as class 3 meaning they should be afforded for such use. After the report they were recategorized as class 4. This is crucial and I ask you today - ask you today if one report is really sufficient considering the impact of such a change. I actually heard numerous points today regarding using field crops in between solar panels. If this was truly categorised 4 land classification field crops would not be suitable.

My lived experience of this land as both farmer and experience agronomist attest the class 3 categorisation. Over the past 20 years I've personally witnessed the land on the proposed site successfully and repeatedly cultivate crops, field crops such as canola, wheat, forage sorghum, oats and lucerne all without any significant moderate or severe limitations as would be experienced if it was class 4. I ask the Panel to seek further advice on land classing for this parcel to substantiate this critical recategorization.

Next slide please. Prohibited Use. In my next concern, protecting the use of RU1 primary production land. The use of agricultural land has been much discussed throughout all stages of this development and I understand the proposal is for agri-farm balance with grazing still being viable. This does not address the key concern though which is the land has potential greater than that which the Australian Governments are currently acknowledging.

With the New South Wales Agriculture Commissioner raising their own concerns for protecting or protection of RU1 land in renewable energy rushes and calling for review which the government itself has supported. I ask if a clause in the infrastructure planning policy is appropriate justification to overrule the prohibited use of this land at this time.

Next slide please. Further to my concerns for the protection of the land on which the project is located I also raise my concern for the land that surrounds the project. Yes, the solar farm will be on rural land but is it appropriate use - is it appropriate use to develop the land so industrially when it directly adjoins R2 land and is within 500 metres of a golf course and a cemetery and there is a housing estate one kilometre down the road which many landholders purchased years prior to knowledge of the proposal. It is easy for landscape architects to visit and say low visual impacts are negligible impact as they stand in one place on each property but this is - this is really the representation of the cumulative impact on individuals as they move through their own properties and local neighbourhoods.

Next slide please. I ask for higher consideration on the neighbouring land zones in which the parcel of land is located. Finally, I bring the Panel's attention to the future. The lifetime of this project is noted to being 20 or - yeah, 20 to 30 years I've heard. No longer - or longer depending on maintenance and technology development. As a direct neighbour of this development this means our own potential land use is impacted for the next generation. The DP report states that the site will not have significant impact on local community or landholders and that property devaluation is not significant despite the fact that local experience already provides evidence that this is not true and the fact that studies have shown there is insufficient data in Australia to report such a claim.

Does this statement consider the ability to flexibly use our own land into the future? Under RU1 zoning there are many business opportunities that my wife and I have considered exploring when taking ownership of Drumwood. There is - there are opportunities that would capitalise on the heritage of the property, the natural environment, regenerative land practices and agritourism. It's undeniable that having two kilometres of five-metre-high panels extending down our property would have significant negative impact on each of these opportunities.

I ask that the Panel consider that this development would have on our future potential projects that could benefit the local community. After all, people are thinking the solar farm will bring employment but once it reaches operational phase it will only employ an estimated eight to 10 people. Any of our own business opportunities and other opportunities could offer similar employment numbers with far less impact on the land,

the community and the wellbeing of local landholders. Thank you for your time and your consideration.

DR COAKES: Thank you, Ross. And, Ross, just before you go just one question from me. You mentioned the issue of visual impact, so was the visual impact assessment taken just from one point of your property?

MR PALMER: That's correct. Yep.

DR COAKES: Yeah. And do you have views of their site from the house or, you know, from the verandas of the house or other buildings on the property?

MR PALMER: There will be, yes.

DR COAKES: Yeah. All right. Thank you. Thank you. O.K. Right. I think we have Rick Martin via the telephone. Rick, are you online?

MR RICK MARTIN: Yes, I'm here.

DR COAKES: Lovely. Thank you, Rick. Please go ahead.

MR MARTIN: Just a quick background. My wife and I own a property half an hour east of Wagga called Burnbank. We've spent more than 30 years rejuvenating the place after a major bushfire on Christmas Day 1984. That work has been recognised by a major Landcare award, a number of other awards and also Professor David Lindenmayer from the Australian National University has heard of us 20 years ago and has been doing trails on our place monitoring (not transcribable) (2:29:39) and so forth. (not transcribable) (2:29:44) (loss of audio) greenies and tree-huggers (not transcribable) (2:29:50) (loss of audio) the norm. Our neighbours thought we were mad.

We also had the proposed Mates Gully Solar Factory, if it went ahead, which sit on our eastern boundary and would border nearly four kilometres of our eastern boundary. Because of all our environmental work that we've done over the last 30-odd years we've become quite critical of the landholders and what - how they treat their land and even more so now with - when we're getting foreign-owned companies coming in and explosion of these proposed solar factories that will deface vast squares of productive agricultural land with glass panels and the clearing of native vegetation as well as I've seen at the Bomen Solar Factory. I've actually seen the dump of the trees that were bulldozed off that site onto an adjoining property.

Australia has some of the lowest arable food producing land per capita in the world. For example, in 2020 arable land in Australia was 30-million-seven-hundred-and-twenty-nine-odd-thousand hectares or 307,292 square kilometres or four percent of Australia's land mass. Ross Garnaut estimates solar farms need for net zero in Australia would cover cover 3.75 million hectares. "Shock me large", he wrote. He then went on to say that lifespans of these solar panels, 25 to 30 years and have to be returned - replaced every 25 or 30 years or even sonar. He warns of a solar trash wave.

In fact, I'm just appalled with all the work we've done how these multinational governments with the approval of governments and so forth allowing this to go ahead. What guarantee in place - is in place for decommissioning to previous standards of land as stated in the Glenellen Solar proposal? Do we know? Has anyone done it? Can we - other examples where land has been returned after it's been on solar - had solar panels on it for 30, 40 years or whatever? Is it possible? Has it ever been done before?

There are tonnes of cement in the ground, is that - is that replaced, is that removed? And the other major issue that I have concern with these foreign companies is will they be around in 30 or 40 - 30 - 25, 30 years time or will they move on? And then the landholder that's hosting these solar farms will be responsible of cleaning the whole mess up. We seem to be selling our previous resource to fund multinationals and I'm appalled. Three generations of my family have served this country of ours overseas. One, I'm a Vietnam veteran. My posting was similar to a modern-day combat engineer so it was a dangerous posting. My late father served in the Middle East during the Second World War, a distinguished Rat or Tabruk and when he he was - they finally send him home, he was retrained and sent to Borneo to fight the Japanese. Thirdly, our son - my wife and I's son is a member of one commando, again with a dangerous posting overseas. We haven't served our country to have ourselves and fellow landholders treated in this such contemptable way. I just - I just can't cope with it all, it's - that's basically it, I'd say. Thank you.

DR COAKES: O.K. Thank you. Thank you, Rick.

MR MARTIN: Can I get some answers to a number of those questions I've asked?

DR COAKES: We'll take those - we've noted those questions down and we will be addressing those as part of our deliberations. Thank you.

MR MARTIN: Thank you. Because I've seen the results of the land - adjoining landholders of the Bomen Solar Factory and it's appalling how they've been treated, they've been totally ignored. So I suspect that's what happens in all these state certificate developers that are approved, it happens all the time, it's the same thing all the time so - - -

DR COAKES: O.K. Thank you.

MR MARTIN: All right. I wait in anticipation. Thank you.

DR COAKES: O.K. Thank you, Rick, for sharing your experience.

MR MARTIN: Bye. Thank you. Bye.

DR COAKES: Bye. O.K. Now in person we have Carolyn Emms.

MS CAROLYN EMMS: Emms.

DR COAKES: Sorry, sorry, Emms on the phone. O.K. Apologies. That is, yes, as you said, Carolyn Emms. Hi, Carolyn, please go ahead.

MS EMMS: Thank you very much. Thank you for the - first of all, thank you for the opportunity of actually having a voice on this as hopefully real consultation. Look, with the - thank you for also accepting the paper that I meant to submit, Signs of the Total Environment, it's called.

DR COAKES: We seem to have lost Carolyn. Call her back. Five minutes? O.K. So who else do we have? Short break. O.K. Chat amongst yourselves and a stretch.

SHORT BREAK

RESUMED

MS EMMS: Hello.

DR COAKES: Yes.

MS EMMS: O.K. So as solar - the name of the presentation Solar - a Tsunami of Infrastructure. It does relate to the Glenellen Solar Farm. In summary, the Department states that it has considered all of the matters in its assessment of the proposal and I also refer to EIS proposals and there's a lot of issues that actually aren't addressed and the cumulative effects, the land use now and tomorrow and, of course, at what cost, who really benefits. So there is an issue of social licence and duty of care.

Decommission at 4 is also not addressed. So not addressed adequately. So the land - the landscape to heavy industrial use is actually a completely different change of land use. We ask, if it is fair or reasonable process whereby a paid environmental company is allowed to gloss over the issues raised, you know, for 50 submissions, it is a question. Can the public view the submissions, it's another question. Is it a fair process where offset certificate prices for companies (not transcribable) (2:37:09) offering a carbon wind form for global investors that actually offers no long term benefits to Australia. There are a few financial beneficiaries in the form of community benefits and all that. I mean, this is what we're experiencing ourselves with this.

I do - are very concerned, our organisation Rainforest Reserves Australia for which I speak on behalf of as President. Our concerns are contamination risk of PV panels and BESS infrastructure waste management. Ignition risk of solar power station facilities. We're concerned about the requirement for detailed management plans and related approval conditions, hydraulic soils and land management. The ecological assessments, the approach and survey findings, much was found in the EIS but a lot of it is obfuscation, that is, it - the approval goes through provided there are offsets and mitigation.

So then we turn the slide to the Glenellen Solar Farm. Is this - my question is this really an appropriate land use for a farm? You can see the painting - the picture on the left-

hand side. Plate 8 survey unit 6 and it's in the indigenous cultural heritage section. Are you still there?

DR COAKES: Yes, we can - yeah.

MS EMMS: O.K. And also then you've got a total change of land use. It's actually industrial site, heavy industrial site that's going to leave enormous different change of land use. The concern when it comes to - this includes decommissioning, apart from learning, poisoning for a solar farm they state they're going to have sheep but then we're looking at also the increase of say five to 10 degrees heat, extra heat that's going to - and also maybe emissions. Sheep - it will be unbearable for sheep.

So, you know, they might like to call it a farm but it actually isn't. To include sheep and cattle or - and sheep do cause damage to infrastructure. We know this from experience because we used to live at Hawkesdale and so we are farmers ourselves but we're also conservationists. So we do have experience with this and we have a lot of evidence to support that.

So sheep and cattle I've just said that why pretend that sheep in an industrial high-voltage estate are compatible. That's also a statement but it also can be a question. If the general public knew the impacts would they consent or give social licence to the increase of heat and what we consider and possibly outside Africa is the driest, hottest continent on the planet. It's very dry. Do we risk that? Do we take that risk?

So when we look at the upfront - even if there was an upfront bond for the removal of industrial waste it would be likely to be a token. It would take considerable resources to return an industrial site back to its original state. These are not just solar farms or solar parks that this industry would have the public believe. It is, in fact, a potential toxic future hazard. This is not to mention the potential fire hazards from increased temperatures. Rainfall could be seriously affected by large-scale industrial developments that covers the photosynthesis and the biodiversity that makes our planet so different to other planets.

There also may be increased temperatures, as I've said, of around five percent to 10 percent. So it's quite - it would be very cruel and in Canberra they said that they were going to place sheep in between the solar panels, they raised the infrastructure to accommodate this. Well, today I have got photos, there are no sheep there and it wouldn't be compatible anyway.

So the next slide. Page 3. You can see - here's the photo that was taken recently and we're also compiling a documentary on this because we're so concerned about biodiversity. Biodiversity loss across the country and this is a national crisis as far as we're concerned and many, many communities, and backlash, are very concerned about what's happening to our country. it actually makes me feel very anxious for the next generation. I actually feel ashamed. Is this progress to destroy entire environments and biodiversity as a totally different landscape use than farming which feeds the nation and our biodiversity that we need for nature. Without any care of foresight that is actually not progress.

There are other alternatives and I've listed them at the back - in the back of the presentation for you - for your reference. Most people - obviously we were 100 percent pro renewable. We don't mind, we have no objection to solar panels on the rooves but if people are really concerned about climate action, well, then there are choices and evidence on the back page. We also have two environmental scientists, her blog's up and running and I'm very happy to share that with you. So she's enabled lectures and information to some of our events and also to universities.

The challenges. Well, we're looking at the vast ecological footprint. Renewable, no, it's not renewable. We're looking at the soil ecology, the climate, the water cycle. Australians do put a high value on habitat, farming, tourism and other opportunities. We've got to also - businesses that provide jobs. This is not compatible with real jobs and if the plan is from what - is happening up this way anyway, we're looking at a lot of these facilities being operated remotely anyway. So the opportunity for regenerative agriculture is shamefully not considered. Should this proposal be approved who bears the cost? The next generation? Can it ever be restored to what it was? Unlikely because we're concerned about the toxicity. Are you still there?

DR COAKES: Yes. No, we can hear you, Carolyn. That's your - you've got one minute to conclude, thank you.

MS EMMS: O.K. Page 4. Solar needs the purest form of silica and some islands have been mined out of existence. The government knows the risk to our environment, they know. I'll provide you Simon Nesho, Professor Simon Nesho. The last document just indicates that should we keep going on this path, the last signed (not transcribable) (2:45:24) document for every one percent of green energy production actually increases the carbon emissions by .9 percent globally. It's not green and we've made submissions to the Senate so look, I do thank you. There is references that hopefully you will take that time to explore them and on the - that's it.

DR COAKES: No, just conclude, Carolyn.

MS EMMS: O.K. Look, page 6 takes you straight to the beautiful views, the visual amenity, the trees, the farm, the rolling hills or if there's any undulation, flat, but it's actually a real farm at the moment, it has its own carbon sink and trees which hold a beauty of its own. We'd like to see the solutions that you adopt land care policies, take the precautionary principle. If you're really serious about climate action, nuclear, new generation nuclear. We've done our research. The jobs could go into that for the long term benefit of Australia and it provides proper dense energy for Australia. The other one is very risky, high risk and I strongly ask the council to reject the Glenellen Solar Farm please.

DR COAKES: O.K. Thank you, Carolyn, for your presentation and as we say to all speakers we're very happy to receive any additional information as part of written submissions so, thank you.

MS EMMS: Thank you very much for this opportunity. Thank you.

MR PILTON: Before you go, Carolyn, can I just ask a question? Doesn't matter. Don't worry.

DR COAKES: O.K. I'd now like to call on Dennis Armstrong from Save Our Surroundings. I think we've got Dennis on the phone.

MR ARMSTRONG: Yesh, that's correct, yes.

DR COAKES: Hi Dennis. Please go ahead.

MR ARMSTRONG: Good afternoon. Thank you, Chair, for the opportunity to address the Commission. Member of Save Our Surroundings and others already live with the negative consequences of Australia's emissions reductions fever. We now have a few years of Australian experience with the claims made before approval versus realities after approval of solar, wind, BESS and pumped hydro projects. Today I cannot do much more than raise some of the deficiencies we believe exist in the proposal and the DPE assessment. However, we do intend to put a detailed submission to the Commission by the due date.

The fundamental objective for our governments are to reduce Australia's greenhouse gas emissions to achieve net zero emissions by 2050 and toa provide cheaper, affordable electricity to consumers. Secondly objectives are clean, reliable and secure electrical generation and for New South Wales to create jobs in regional New South Wales. Therefore, the project must be assessed by the Commission, in our opinion, on the extent to which Glenellen Solar project meets these objectives. The proposed Glenellen Solar works most likely fails the two fundamental objectives, in our opinion, the project will also fail the secondary objectives.

If we look at the embedded greenhouse gas issue there appears to be much greater and embedded greenhouse emissions in PV solar panels than currently as claimed. Studies have suggested that it will take 10 years or more to offset the embedded greenhouse gases in solar panels and that was based on the old methodology of Europe and some American Analysis.

A recent study suggests - and it's a very recent study suggests the embedded greenhouse gases in solar panels is three times higher than first thought and if you look at what's actually happened around the world in this regard according to a France-based manufacturer of solar panels their frameless solar panel made in France takes one and a half to two and a half years of operation to offset its embedded greenhouse gases. So it gives you the best case basis just for the solar panel before it leaves the factory.

The same panel made in China may have seven times the embedded greenhouse gases and, therefore, take 10 and a half to 17 and a half years to offset the greenhouse gases and that's just for the panel without the aluminium frame, transport, infrastructure disposal, et cetera, being considered. China produces about 90 percent of the world's solar panel and Glenellen Solar project will source its solar panels from China. Frane's electricity system generation mix is only 10 percent fossil fuels while China has 72

percent based on the 2022 figures. That difference is quite substantial and that's why the embedded CO2 in solar panels coming from China manufacturers is very important to consider.

Glenellen Solar project would, therefore, have a substantial upfront embedded greenhouse gases value and a very much longer payback period. That's obviously longer than the claimed French Manufacturer. The precautionary principle must be applied just as the Commission's Bylong Coal decision took into account the CO2 to be released overseas over the decades of the mine life it must take into account this solar project's upfront years of embedded emissions.

I'd now like to address the increases in the NEM system cost. The DPE appears disinterested in the fact that the stated capacity for any solar and wind project do not equate with the base load generation plants. This project's claimed 200 megawatts capacity is only equivalent in terms of electricity generated to a 25 megawatt base load generator. The project has initial capacity factor of 25.2 percent. Over a year on average it will produce an unstable and intermittent output of electricity less than 25 percent of the time and must of the time zero or close to it.

This means electricity generation has to come from elsewhere for at least 75 percent of the time. At times this deficiency gap approaches 100 percent. Wind generation is little better with a capacity factor of 30 percent on average across Australia. Filling the deficiency gap will add more and more cost to the grid. This is why all major countries with over 30 percent of solar and wind capacity, as Australia now has, have near the highest electricity prices in the world. This reality in resulting in countries, for example, Finland, Sweden, the UK and France recently moving away from wind and solar generation to modern coal, gas and nuclear plants. In the case of Germany it has restarted 20 of its old mothballed coal-fired power plants. This project will add cost to the NEM and so increase electricity cost, not reduce them as claimed. High electricity prices are already causing harm. It is not in the public interest to inflict more pain.

I'd now like to address some of the secondary objectives. In regard to being clean, the project is not clean because its up to 200 megawatt capacity is only equivalent to about a 25 megawatt modern gas-fired or small modern nuclear reactor, each with lives of 50 years or more. This means that to achieve capacity equivalence over 50 years the solar project would need to be eight times larger and require considerably more resources of all types, so creating even more embedded and ongoing greenhouse gas emissions. This is has obviously not been considered appropriately. The emissions could not be offset as there would be no fossil fuel power stations to offset against under the current plans of near 100 percent wind and solar generation by 2050.

Reliability. A solar output is only as reliable as the weather and the seasons. It is also weather-vulnerable. Solar works in Australia have already had severely reduced output due to heavy rain, lightning strikes, strong winds, hail, very hot days and grass fires.

Security. Electricity system security and national security cannot be assured when almost the whole of the NEM electricity systems depend on a single source of supply.

Regional jobs. Experience in current plans show that few construction jobs can be, or are filled by locals. Operational jobs are very few, indeed. Proposals for huge construction labour camps to be filled by outsiders or already in the pipeline with just three of many already greater than the nearby town's total population of 700 people. We're talking about the New South Wales Central West Orana Renewable Energy Zone and the town that's sort of in the centre of that. The claims of being clean, reliable, secure and local job creator are unsubstantiated by the proponent and misleading.

I'd like to spend a couple of minutes looking at the DP's assessment report. SOS has several reservations with the DP's recommendations conditions and apparent lack of understanding of key claims the proponent or the Glenellen Solar Works. These include no questioning of the disparities between projects. They all only produce one product, alternating current electricity; yet, "large differences in economic lives and physical lives, differences in CO2 savings and capacity factors." These are very important issues to say why, because they're all basically solar - solar works doing the same thing, producing the same product but some of the differences we're seeing in the various EISs is quite substantial.

End of life condition is toothless. A bond must be provided to ensure intergenerational equity. The cost of rehabilitation will be equalled or - we know from developers already that they say about the same time to build the thing will be about the same time to decommission it and rehabilitate the land. That being the case, then the cost in 20 years time or so will be astronomical. We can't just go on the say-so of a developer who will not be there, the developers only develop and then they sell as we were told yesterday in our local visitors.

Fire mitigation still leaves an increased risk and this is because firefighters will not enter a solar works fire. So the risk can be mitigated to some extent but it cannot be - it's still increased overall. No recognition of the potential toxicity of solar panels, e.g., requiring soil and water testing before and after installation and after a damage incident. Such incidents has recently occurred and months later we're still trying to find out what happened to the panels.

No apparent understanding of capacity factors, panel degradation, panel damage susceptibility and effects on output over time. No mention of the guaranteed $40 per megawatt hour subsidy the project will receive, a total of 17.66 million a year. The council is to receive 2.5 million over decades which is paltry by comparison. No mention the proponent has not received a social licence for the project. Retiring biodiversity certificates still reduces the flora and fauna at a local level. No capacity equivalence comparisons mislead the public. No recognition of the resources taken away from the local community such as quarrying materials, cement, accommodation, medical services, ease of travel. The $250 million investment only includes a small unspecified Australian content. This content should be specified. A solar works is not a primary industry venture.

DR COAKES: If I can just get you to wrap up please, Dennis.

MR ARMSTRONG: That's exactly where I'm at.

DR COAKES: Thank you.

MR ARMSTRONG: Thank you. In conclusion SOS request that the Commission rejects the project because (1), substantial greenhouse emissions are created upfront by this project, the precautionary principle must be applied just as the Commission's Bolong Coal decision took into account the CO2 to be burnt overseas over the decades of mine life, you must take into account this solar project's upfront use of embedded emissions. (2), it will add cost to the NEM and so increase electricity costs, not reduce them as claimed. High electricity prices are already causing harm, it is not in the public interest to inflict more pain. And lastly, the claims of being clean, reliable, secure and local job creator are unsubstantiated and misleading. Thank you, Chair, that concludes my presentation.

DR COAKES: O.K.

MR ARMSTRONG: Are there any questions?

DR COAKES: Thank you, Dennis. Thank you very much.

MR ARMSTRONG: Right.

DR COAKES: Thank you.

MR ARMSTRONG: Thank you for the time.

DR COAKES: O.K. We're now moving to Lynette - I think we've got Lynette LaBlack back on the telephone. Yes, Lynette, are you online?

MS LYNETTE LABLACK: I haven't - I haven't been able to hear a thing.

DR COAKES: Are you online, Lynette?

MS LABLACK: Yeah, can you hear me?"

DR COAKES: Yes, we can hear you.

MS LABLACK: Because I couldn't hear a thing until just now.

DR COAKES: No, that's right because we've been dialling you and I did make a statement a couple of speakers ago just to say that this public meeting is not being livestreamed, we do not livestream all public meetings but the transcript will be available on our website as soon as possible after the meeting.

MS LABLACK: So it's very important to hear the developer and the Department's speak so I feel we've - we should've heard those.

DR COAKES: As I said, there will be transcripts of all our key stakeholder meetings as well all on our website. So if you'd like to proceed with your presentation, Lynette. Thank you.

MS LABLACK: Can you - can - - -

DR COAKES: Yes, yeah, we can hear you and we do have your presentation up.

MS LABLACK: O.K. Thank you very much.

DR COAKES: Thank you.

MS LABLACK: Thank you to the panel for allowing me to speak about Glenellen Solar. Trina's Glenellen Solar is a ghastly contaminating plan for an obnoxious industrialised solar wasteland that will be a visual amenity nightmare of 400,000 glaring solar panels that will never soften and blend into the natural landscape as many claim causing heartache and grief and severe distress for the Glenellen and Jindera community. It is an unethical slave labour-based risky moral hazard for Greater Hume Council which ratepayers will suffer for even though the council and majority of the community has sensibly and strongly objected to it.

There is, therefore, no social licence for Glenellen Solar or, indeed, the adjacent Jindera Solar or nearby Culcairn and totally dodgy conflict of interest Walla Walla Solar where the DPI Planner and Environmental Assessment Officer immediately and wrongly became the Walla Walla Solar Project Developer. Pretty emblematic o the whole fudged fake green renewable flawed planning assessment approval process stitch-up. So the first photo which I hope you can see.

DR COAKES: Yes, we can see.

MS LABLACK: Well, at the moment this is property protecting nature as agriculture does. In this area, in particular, it's a very pretty area where it's highly productive but the nature landscape is preserved because the people care greatly about the ecological, or ecological habitat and their previous vulnerable species but this predatory plan falsely touted as clean, green and sustainable will hypocritically result in a 160 mature eucalyptus trees being removed when these are essential climate-curling trees and previous ecological habitat will be - will be destroyed and this can never be replaced by farcical biodiversity offsets.

This will result in detrimental harm and death for vulnerable and endangered species as they plan to be cleared for Glenellen's industrialised solar electricity generating works which is the antithesis of caring for country, protecting nature and reducing global boiling as Antonio Guterres would hysterically constantly warn about.

The second photo showing the trees and the water source, Glenellen's toxic-class contaminating solar footprint of 309 hectares on the 398 hectare site will inevitably impact vital life-sustaining water sources including Dead Horse Creek and Kilnacroft

Creek which both merge with Downer Creek which flows directly into the vital Albury Hume Dam.

The third photo is a photo of a beautiful rural outlook in the Riverina in the Boman Eunony Valley area so instead of the town of Jindera only two kilometres away having a pretty rural outlook similar to this where we all - we grow similar productive crops such as canola, barley, oats and wheat and fava beans, the genuinely sustainable uncontaminated reliably on - sorry, on genuinely sustainable uncontaminated reliably productive prime agricultural where we retain the ecological habitat for threatened species including Superb Parrots and Squirrel Gliders this will all be destroyed.

As clearly seen by the next photo of the bare log taken at Bomen Eunony Valley next door to our own property a typically environmentally-destructive industrialised solar construction process in the Riverina includes denuding the landscape and destroying essential ecological habitat for precious species. The results have been devastating with our own local Member who used to claim that this was going to be wonderful for biodiversity, clean air, clean soil, water, all sorts of fancy things has now admitted that solar factories are environmental vandalism. They are not clean and green at all. The next photo is the protest sign showing 100-year-old trees, Squirrel Gliders and Superb Parrots all gone. They have now no alternative at all except hollow words of farcical, non-existent biodiversity offsets.

The next two photos showing more than four years after construction you can now see how disingenuous is the nature of these false claims that the Department have accepted of retaining essential ecological habitat in a suitable place in the landscape such as this useless - this hollow log lying on the ground completely useless to birds and Squirrel Gliders. Clearly observable is also - actually this might be the next photo. What's the next photo after that? Hang on a minute.

DR COAKES: Can we move to the next photo?

MS LABLACK: Yes. So we're past the biodiversity offsets, is that right?

DR COAKES: Yes. This photo's title Disingenuous Ecological habitat.

MS LABLACK: Yes.

DR COAKES: Photo 4, Lynette.

MS LABLACK: Yeah. Disingenuous ecological habitat retained in a suitable place in the landscape. Completely overgrown with weeds in what is meant to be a tree-screening area which more than four years later is completely pathetic, doing nothing to reduce the glaring visual amenity nightmare, nor the heat island effect. Instead we have a ticking timebomb of toxic fire smoke hazard risk forced on us against our will without a consent, with no social licence. Far too close, right next door with no exclusion zones and no evacuation plans threatening our livelihoods and our lives with carcinogenic and birth defect causing toxic smoke risks.

The New South Wales Fire and Rescue have admitted that they have done no industrialised solar research at all and clearly find the whole fake green solar, wind, battery graphite block dilemma, a tragic experiment, they have no idea how to handle at all as proven by the October 6 graphite block Tomago fire. Who would ever approve such a waste, a substantial waste of public money funding such a hairbrained scheme when we are so blessed to have our own reliable, efficient, affordable, plentiful and secure Australian coal, gas and an unstoppable clean, safe nuclear power future.

To quote New South Wales Fire and Rescue's SARET research, there is a general lack of guidance and provisions in building codes, standards and legislation in relation to safety to address the potential risks from these emerging technologies. Part of the problem is that we do not know yet - we do not yet know enough about their probability of failure, their mechanisms of failure and potential consequences of failure.

The next photos are photos of the Walla Walla - the devastating industrialisation of the pretty Walla Walla area which always feels like home to me. It's just such a pretty, highly-productive area and they're substantially ruining it.

DR COAKES: Lynette, just letting you know that's our one minute bell so if you can conclude in the next minute that would be appreciated.

MS LABLACK: O.K. So what's the next photo?

DR COAKES: We've got the Walla Walla fire risks, destruction of nature and industrialisation of the landscape.

MS LABLACK: So then you can see how close the solar is with the picture of the wheat and solar panels right next door followed by the glaring visual amenity nightmare four years after construction, no mitigation whatsoever and a series of photos with the hail-fractured solar panels because there is no recognition whatsoever of the operational risks that industrialised solar present to rural communities and to Australia's life-sustaining food and water supplies. There's no bunding mentioned, there's nothing to stop the heavy metals washing into the soil and water and as you can see in the fifth photos with the uncontrolled water runoff and erosion damage there is just extensive harm being caused already in the Riverina from industrialised solar that nobody in the approvals to date is addressing whatsoever. They are just completely ignoring the principles of ecological sustainable development and ruining the future for intergenerational equity and creating extreme public health and safety risks for our life-sustaining food and water supplies including our own home-grown canola oil which is grown in this Glenellen area, will that end up with heavy metal leachate in it? I mean, nobody even cares, they don't even bother testing. There's no scientific determination, there's no engineering facts, there's no integrity and there's no ethics at the basis of any of these plans.

DR COAKES: Lynette, I'm going to have to ask you to wrap up now, we do have our next speaker actually in-house here waiting to speak so if you could just conclude please virtually a minute or so.

MS LABLACK: O.K. Well, this is a threat to our food security, our independent energy security and our economic prosperity and our national security because even nearby at Walla Walla you've got a currently being constructed solar development where the solar inverters will be remotely - be able to be remotely disabled by our most hostile enemy the Chinese Communist Party with Microsoft having a power-purchase agreement with them and yet Microsoft are claiming they're partnering with the signals directorate to protect Australia's cyber security.

DR COAKES: Lynette, can I please ask now that you put the balance of any of your further comments in your written submission and obviously we will review that alongside all the other submissions we receive but thank you very much for making the time to present to the meeting today.

MS LABLACK: Thank you.

DR COAKES: Thank you. I'd now like to call Amanda Walters please. And apologies, Amanda, I think we jolted you down the list so thank you for your patience.

MS WALTERS: Thank you. Good afternoon and thank you for your time. My name is Amanda Walters and I grew up with my family at the historic property of Drumwood which borders the entirety of the southern side of the proposed Glenellen Solar development in excess of two kilometres. My family still reside at the original homestead, the most historic in the district and we'll farm the land for generations to come. The solar farm will be located within 500 metres of our homestead and 30 metres of our land.

Next slide please. Thank you. I wanted to start today with the context of the rural environment that we live in. We're not referencing a remote and arid landscape, quite the opposite. The proposed site for this development is located only two kilometres from the Jindera township and within hundreds of metres of significant local infrastructure and amenities including our local golf club, the cemetery, the recently-constructed pomegranate housing estate, our property of Drumwood, the most historic in the district, together with a host of surrounding landholders and residents.

This is not an isolated location with limited impact but, rather, a thriving rural community with a population of residents that made a conscious choice to live in our rural landscape without the impact of traffic congestion, industrial creep or, in fact, large-scale solar farms in our backyards. The location does not lend itself to the intended use and will result in significant impacts to the aesthetic appeal of the semi-rural landscape we call home.

I absolutely concur that renewable energy in this country is an important aspect of our sustainable future but it is critical that its growth is managed appropriately. Renewable energy and agriculture are two of Australia's most important sectors, one will power the country in the future and the other will feed it. Dr Madeline Taylor, Macquarie University lecturer and Climate Council Councillor recently addressed this issue and stated: "There needs to be clarity and certainty for communities to ensure that

renewables continue to hold their site social licence to operate." We've heard that from a number of our speakers today.

We need to have a very swift transition to renewable energy but we also can't negatively impact on farming land and our food security. This absolutely goes to the heart of today's considerations. I acknowledge the importance of renewable energy but in the right place, not just the most convenient. Let's be very clear here. The current site location has not been selected due to its appropriateness but, rather, due to its convenience, its commercial benefit for the developer, it's accessibility to existing power infrastructure and the massive savings that provides to our foreign applicant. This is not an acceptable long term approach and will impact the viability of our broad-scale agricultural sector over time.

Next slide please. Whilst it would obviously be easy for me to be emotive in my approach today given the personal association, I recognise the Commission is rightly focused on the details of the proposal and the associated conditions and as such, that will be my focus. There are critical omissions in the proposed development, the associated conditions and identified mitigation strategies. These must be rectified prior to any further progression of this application.

Next slide please. Public liability insurance and associated risk for all surrounding landowners simply must be addressed either through the commitment of the developers rt meet these insurance costs or alternatively provide applicable indemnity. This is a risk that will impact all neighbouring landholders and place incomprehensible financial burden on them through no fault of their own and for a development they will receive no financial benefit from.

This element has been consistently raised with the developer over the last five years and there has been a complete failure to address these concerns with any tangible commitment. It is unacceptable in anyone's world for innocent landholders to face financial ruin for a development they have no association with, nor control over. This is a non-negotiable condition that must be rectified prior to any further progression of this application.

Next slide please. Within the proposed development documentation I note that there is frequent reference to neighbour agreements as a mitigation strategy to manage a range of issues. However, I bring the Commission's attention the vast majority of these agreements remain in limbo, terms have not been agreed, negotiations have not been conducted in good faith, requests for information from the developer have gone unanswered and there has been a failure to address landholder's concerns as part of this process. To that end, the developer cannot lay claim to these agreements being an effective mitigation strategy. If this development is approved in its current form there will be no obligation to undertake real and valid negotiation in regards to these agreements. There will be no incentive to do so and in actual fact, Trina have confirmed they plan not to do so.

I, therefore, deem it is critical that further work must be undertaken to negotiate in good faith and finalise these agreements prior to any approval being granted. This has a direct

correlation with the public liability element that I spoke to earlier which must be legally addressed through contractual means in formalised agreements and I seek the Panel's support in ensuring that further work is done in this regard.

Next slide please. The aesthetic impact of the solar farm is proposed to be mitigated by screen planting. Whilst I acknowledge this option may provide some visual screening, there is a lack of detail in the proposed conditions to ensure the developer is held to account for the long term maintenance of this mitigation. I draw your attention to the image on the screen which was taken two weeks ago upon inspection of the approved site of the nearby Jindera Solar Farm. This is the state of their similar screen planting initiative with half of the plantings already in a deteriorated state. This is clearly completely inadequate and an ineffective mitigation to the aesthetic impacts if not implemented with long term efficacy.

I furthermore reference the landscape plan at appendix 6 of the development consent. This prescribes increased perimeter plantings in the north-east section of the development. This is located around the boundary of the homestead of the property that is accommodating the proposed solar farm. This is an inequitable approach given that this homestead is located the furthest distance from the boundary of the solar farm in comparison to other impacted residences including our own. It is, therefore, appropriate that the additional screen planting proposed in this location should be extended to the entire boundary of the development and I seek the Panel's support in considering this request.

Next slide please. We've heard a number of speakers today talk about significant concerns with decommissioning. The condition B31 refers to the obligations of the applicant to decommission the site within 18 months of the end of its life. There is, however, a lack of enforceability around this condition. The New South Wales Farmers Association, who we heard from earlier, have recently recommended a full moratorium to be placed on any further approvals for large-scale solar farm projects until effectively regulatory controls are in place around decommissioning provision. They specifically commented and I quote, "Current planning and approval provision for large-scale solar energy facility do not take into account the long term interest of agricultural land, rural communities and the rural landscape following the decommissioning of the facility."

This supports broader warnings recently provided from the Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner that landowners may ultimately be lumbered with the responsibility for cleaning up renewable power projects at the end of their lives. This once again poses significant risk to surrounding landholders in the event future decommissioning provisions fall short and it clearly not an acceptable position. I subsequently request that either additional conditions be applied in this regard or any approval is paused until such time the outcomes of the proposed moratorium are further understood and future decommissioning controls are determined.

Next slide please. Much of what I have spoken about today points to the immature legislative landscape we are operating within. Whilst there is significant push to move with pace in the renewable sector, we must ensure we are doing so sustainably. It is clear that there are limited policy and legislative controls in place to manage large-scale

solar projects of this nature. This poses significant risk to the future sustainability of this industry and those directly impacted by such projects. We cannot live in an environment of strategic denial. These issues need immediate attention prior to any approvals being put in place.

I refer to the New South Wales Agriculture Commissioner Report 2022 relating to renewable energy. This report details a number of significant issues requiring policy intervention to ensure effective controls are put in place including all of the elements raised today together with many more. A number of these recommendations have been accepted by government but are yet to be actioned. We must cease continued naïve broad-scale approvals and ensure appropriate controls are in place. I appeal to you to consider these issues and to ensure this development is not approved without legislative policy and governance provisions.

Next slide please. This is the view from the boundary of our farm adjacent to our historic homestead looking directly across the proposed development site. Sheridan, you asked earlier about the impact to us. This is taken from our homestead block. Clearly serene, unspoilt, productive agricultural land that adds such value to our rural community. It's our home, yes, but it also portrays the quintessential semi-rural Australian lifestyle so many of our neighbours have chosen to be a part of.

Next slide please. Is this what our future should look like? I'll leave you to consider that. I hope today, if nothing else, you accept that there are critical gaps in this development that must be resolved. Our family and those of our neighbours cannot be held responsible for the financial liability that will be placed upon us if these are not addressed. You have an important job, you are our final voice, you have been empowered to make critical decisions in the spirit of service to the Australian people to ensure we build a sustainable and accountable system that has defensible and robust governance frameworks in place ensuring that our tomorrow is not a deterioration of our today.

Is this personal? Absolutely it is, as it should be to each and every one of us. This is our country, our land, our community, our future. In our nation's best interests we must get this right. There will be no second chances. Based on the critical gaps highlighted today I implore you to genuinely consider the appropriateness of this application to make what might not be the easy decision but to make the right one. This is nothing short of what the Australian community expect, need and deserve from you in making such a significant determination about the future of our nation. I thank you for your time and for your genuine consideration of our concern. Happy to take any questions.

DR COAKES: Thank you, Amanda, and we do appreciate the time obviously that's been taken by you and your family in being present today.

MS WALTERS: Thank you.

DR COAKES: Thank you. O.K. So we are now - we've got Stirling Moll on the call. Stirling, can you hear us?

MR MOLL: I can hear you. Can you hear me all right?

DR COAKES: Yes, can hear you. Please go ahead.

MR MOLL: Look, the main thing I want to talk about is we run a - we have a sizeable farming operation in the Greater Hume Shire and we farm 800 hectares of farmland due north of the proposed project and probably our biggest concern with it is with public liability insurance. We are a mixed farming operation and we're probably 60 percent cropping, 40 percent stock so we do a fair amount of cropping, headers and the like and our current insurer will only insure us for maximum 50 million for a farming operation and you've got a proposed project going in next to us that's worth hundreds of millions. So I would just like to put it to the IPCN that the developer or the - of the project would cover our public liability or not just ours but all the adjoining landholders for that - that - whatever the project is worth for their public liability.

Probably second-most is the visual impact and the removal of paddock, like 150 proposed maybe paddock trees. Like we've got virtually no screening on the northern side of the project there and probably wouldn't like more than a 30-metre - what we think would be reasonable would be a 30-metre screening along the north-eastern side which would also perhaps mitigate the heat island effect that we may get from it too which is a bit of an unknown and, yeah, just with the paddock trees and we can't go rip out any paddock tree we feel fit to rip out so probably would be good to see the project maybe incorporate as many paddock trees as they could and the other point, there is - there seems to be no real fire plan - fire plan or bushfire emergency plan in the project layout. It would be good to see like a bushfire - bushfire plan like as far as local fire brigade and that goes and that's (not transcribable) (3:29:59).

Another point is stock-proof fencing. I would just like to assume that all the fencing on the project would be actually stock-proof and up to the end of the whole (not transcribable) (3:30:12) I would see more (not transcribable) (3:30:13) properly and that's probably nearly all I've got to say really at the moment. Yeah, that's pretty much it really.

DR COAKES: O.K. Thank you.

MR MOLL: Just another point too. Is there a biodiversity plan there as well?

DR COAKES: Yes, yes.

MR MOLL: Yeah.

DR COAKES: Yes, there is, Stirling.

MR MOLL: Yeah, there is, yeah, yeah, I haven't seen it yet and just one more point was could the - is there habitat provided for native fauna in the ecosystems there too?

DR COAKES: We'd probably encourage you, Stirling, to go and just have a look at the assessment report where it actually talks about the plans that will be developed to - but

very - very happy to - once you've had an opportunity to do that to receive - you know, receive any further input from yourself in your submission.

MR MOLL: Yeah. O.K. No worries. Yep. No, that's pretty much the main points I had there, probably in order as well. Yep.

DR COAKES: O.K. Terrific. Thank you very much, Stirling, for making time today to speak with us.

MR MOLL: Thanks (not transcribable) (3:31:34) today so thank you.

DR COAKES: O.K. Thank you.

MR MOLL: O.K. Thanks. No worries. Bye.

DR COAKES: Bye-bye. O.K. And then this brings us to our last speaker who I think is on the phone.

MR MOORE: Yes, I am.

DR COAKES: And that's Stan Moore. Hi, Stan, please continue.

MR MOORE: G'day, thank you. Firstly, thank you very much for the opportunity to talk with the Commission today and outline one particular issue that I have been doing a fair bit of research and followed up over quite a period now in relation to the development of renewable energy projects. It surrounds the whole issue of decommissioning and remediation and rehabilitation. Maybe I'll just also just put in context my discussion today.

I have been having trouble with the Planning Department's website downloading documents such as the EIS, et cetera. I do have a copy of the scoping report so my comments will be on the basis of the scoping report which I had downloaded some time before but not on - if there's any amendments to what I'm discussing in the EIS.

DR COAKES: And thanks, Stan, for raising that - just sorry to interrupt - but we have heard that from another presenter today about the issues around access, particularly given they're such - and printing, I guess, particularly given they're such large documents.

MR MOORE: Well, look, absolutely and it's not as though on this one that I haven't got the technology to do it, we're on Starlink satellite and so it has plenty of capacity to download a document. I'll carry on then with that introduction. I'll now carry on with my point of substance. In the scoping report at 5.8 and headed up Decommissioning it says: "Underground cables which are more than 300 millimetres below ground level may be left buried to avoid excessive ground disturbance." I'd ask, well, what did they do when they installed them? Surely they should be taking them away.

The other thing, site control room and facilities will be lifted off their foundations and transported off site and finally they say, "The surface of the site will be ripped and returned to agricultural use." Whatever that means. One thing is I don't think it's appropriate that these developers are able to leave, or their operators when it's decommissioned, are able to leave infrastructure on site be it, you know, as I've discussed, maybe, you know, the cabling underground.

The other thing that's not mentioned here apart from the concrete slabs for the control rooms, et cetera, but this site based on its size will have around about 65 inverter concrete pads, concrete pads that they had placed inverters on, they are usually of the size or footprint of a 40-foot ship container and there will be 65 of those spread across the site and that alone does not return a site to agricultural use.

I have had it mentioned to me that the State Environmental Planning Policy Number 55 Remediation of Land covers all of this but alas, I don't think it does. It only covers the issue around contamination and the environmental impact and, of course, that would have to come into play should there be broken or damaged or burnt solar panels or even maybe oil leading from - leaving from burning substations. So it doesn't cover rehabilitation. Rehabilitation is not just ripping the land.

Now, in relation to who has the obligation to remediate and rehabilitate? It's - firstly, the developer may say this in their documentation but what happens to subsequent owners? There are a number of solar sites now that are on their third and, I believe, some are now almost on their fourth owner. So who is the one responsible for the remediation and rehabilitation following decommissioning? And lastly, the last owner be a company that may own such a site, there is no incentive for them to complete the clean-up of the site because what they'll do is they'll just go bankrupt and walk away.

The example was - you can see in the mining industry and that has been rectified by the requirement for them to lodge a - the developer to lodge a security deposit in relation to rehabilitation and remediation and that bond is held by government and that's what I think we should be seriously looking at here in relation to renewable energy projects and particularly in relation to solar panels. Thank you for your time.

DR COAKES: Thank you, Stan, and thank you for those constructive comments. Obviously decommissioning has been a key theme throughout this meeting today and obviously in submissions that we are starting to review. So anyway, thank you. Thank you for that.

MR MOORE: Yeah. Could I just comment based on your comment?

DR COAKES: Yes.

MR MOORE: They get away with the word decommissioning and do not mention remediation or rehabilitation. That - there is a distinguish - you can distinguish between all of those matters so - - -

DR COAKES: Thank you, Stan, noted, noted. Terrific. Thank you. Thank you. O.K. Well, I think that brings us to the end of the public meeting into the Glenellen Solar Farm project. We would like to thank everybody who has participated in this very important process and I say that obviously on behalf of Adrian and Bronwyn. We do greatly appreciate the input that's been put in. We recognise the time that it takes to review these documents, to provide your submissions and also the time that you've taken today to present to us as a Panel.

It's not too late to have your say on this application. Simply click on the "make a submission" portal on our website or send us a submission by email or post. The deadline for written comments is actually 5.00pm next Thursday, the 23rd of November. In the interests of openness and transparency we will be making a full transcript of the public meeting, as I said, available on our website in the next few days. At the time of determination the Commission will publish its statements of reasons for decision which will outline how we, the Panel, have taken the community's reviews into consideration as part of this decision-making process. Thanks again to Adrian and Bronwyn and thank you all for participating today and from all of us here at the Commission enjoy the rest of your day. Thank you.

PUBLIC MEETING CONCLUDED