

GLANMIRE SOLAR FARM FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



QUESTION	ANSWER
<p>1. What is the proposal?</p>	<p>Glanmire Solar Farm is proposed on a site at 4823 Great Western Highway, Glanmire, NSW 2795. This site is located approximately 11 km east of the township of Bathurst and approximately 4.5 km east of Raglan. Elgin Energy is the company developing this proposal.</p> <p>It would have a capacity of approximately 60 megawatts (MW)(AC) and may include an associated battery energy storage system. The project will cover a development footprint of approximately 186 hectares. The land is currently used for grazing and intermittent cropping. It is intended that sheep grazing will continue within the development footprint of the project once operational.</p> <p>The project would provide opportunities for local and regional businesses to support delivery and operation of the project, including approximately 150 construction jobs and approximately 1 - 3 ongoing jobs. It would also support NSW Government's renewable energy targets (NSW Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap, 2020) and generate enough clean electricity to power approximately 24,000 homes.</p> <p>The following components are proposed for this solar farm:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • solar PV modules, either on a fixed-tilt or single-axis tracking system (East/West orientation) • inverters and transformers • underground cabling from the panels/inverters to the substation • a substation to connect the project to the electricity network • an upgrade to existing powerlines from the site back to the substation located in Raglan • access roads from the local road network and internal access tracks • fencing and CCTV around the perimeter • the project may also include a battery energy storage system (BESS).
<p>2. Who is Elgin Energy?</p>	<p>Elgin Energy is a leading international and independent utility scale, solar and storage developer. Established in 2009, Elgin Energy has extensive experience in delivering projects from initial landowner engagement to project completion.</p> <p>As of 2021, Elgin Energy has successfully delivered 230 MW of solar energy across 21 projects in the UK, providing the equivalent of 75,000 homes with clean energy annually. The company has successfully obtained planning permission for 1 GW+ across more than 60 projects. A further 3 GW+ of projects are at late stages of development across the UK, Ireland and Australia.</p> <p>Elgin Energy's global base is in the UK and the Australian division is managed from Elgin Energy's Sydney office.</p>

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<p>3. What stage is the project up to?</p>	<p>The Scoping Report for the project was accepted by the NSW Government and the Secretary’s Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) were issued in late 2021. The SEARs make clear what is required to be included in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).</p> <p>The EIS for the project, including required specialist investigations, is being developed and will be submitted as part of a Development Application later in 2022.</p> <p>Community and stakeholder consultation will continue throughout the development of the EIS and will be summarised within it. When the EIS is completed, it will be placed on Exhibition for public comment via formal submissions. All issues raised in the submissions will be addressed by Elgin Energy within a Submissions Report that will also be made available to the public. The NSW Government Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) will then prepare an assessment report and make a recommendation whether to approve the project. Approval may be made by DPE or delegated to the Independent Planning Committee (IPC).</p> <p>If approved, the project would aim to commence construction in the second half of 2023 and commence operations in 2024.</p>
<p>4. Why is this project needed? Isn’t there enough solar energy being produced in other places?</p>	<p>The Australian Energy Market Operator has estimated that up to 50 GW of ‘variable renewable energy’ (wind and solar power) capacity will need to be installed between 2020 and 2040 to replace Australia’s retiring coal-fired power stations.</p> <p>NSW has a roadmap to increase NSW’s renewable energy penetration to over 60% by 2030. Currently the renewable energy penetration in NSW is 26% (Clean Energy Council April 2022), the second lowest across the states of Australia.</p> <p>This state-wide initiative will create 6300 construction and 2800 ongoing jobs in regional Australia and will reduce electricity price in the state by \$130 per year for households, \$430 for small business and reduce NSW’s carbon emissions by approximately 90 million tons¹.</p> <p>The closure of fossil fuel power stations is accelerating including the recent announcement that closure of Earing coal fire power station (2880MW) is being brought forward by the project owners and renewable energy and storage solutions will need to offset these closures.</p>

¹ NSW Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap Overview, 2020, P5

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<p>5. Why is this project not located in a Renewable Energy Zone?</p>	<p>Renewable Energy Zones (REZ) are being created to concentrate power generation, transmission, and storage in identified areas to unlock new capacity for the energy grid beyond the existing capacity. The NSW government is working through the planning, consultation and design steps required to establish the five identified REZ.</p> <p>The process above will take many years to deliver, and the aim is for the REZ to progressively start delivering energy to the grid by the late 2020's and into the 2030's.</p> <p>While the REZ will play a critical role, the NSW Government's revised Large Scale Solar Guidelines recognises that to meet state and national clean energy targets, renewable energy projects are also required outside of the REZ² areas. The NSW Government has noted development outside of the REZ must occur if it is to meet its emission reduction targets and about 70% of the developments are outside the REZ.</p>
<p>6. Why was this site chosen?</p>	<p>Elgin inspects many sites in regional Australia and considers a range of social, environmental and economic factors when considering whether to develop a proposal for each location. In the case of Glanmire Solar Farm, this site was selected for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • high solar irradiance • the topography and location of the site can be used effectively to reduce visual impacts for neighbours and the highway • relatively flat and clear land with few nearby residential dwellings and environmental constraints • not identified as 'Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land' or highest quality agricultural land. Further due diligence using soil surveys verified the site land capability to be Class 4 with small areas of Class 5 therefore avoiding Classes 1 – 3 as encouraged by DPE and considered suitable for solar. • cost-effective grid connection with capacity (which is limited across the State) • this development aligns with the strategic intent outlined through the NSW government and Bathurst Regional Council policies.
<p>7. Is the development appropriate in RU1 land zoning?</p>	<p>Section 34(1b) of the ISEPP allows for electricity generating works, including solar farms, in prescribed rural, industrial or special use zones. RU1 land zoning is prescribed zone under this clause. It is considered generally</p>

² DPE Revised Large-Scale Solar Energy Guidelines, 2021, p.3

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	<p>appropriate for development of electricity generating works. The majority of solar farms developed or approved across the State are located in RU1 zones.</p> <p>Land use objectives of the RU1 zone will be investigated as part of the determination process to ensure compatibility with the proposed land use as part of the EIS process.</p> <p>Specific to the Glanmire Solar Farm proposal, key areas of investigation will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a visual assessment which will include an assessment of the existing scenic rural character, which aspects of the visual landscape are most valued by the community and how the proposed solar farm will contrast with this. • an assessment of existing soil capability and ways the project can maintain soil health during operation. This will ensure that the agricultural value of the land can be maintained after the project has been decommissioned. • the potential for the proposed solar farm to impact adjacent land uses, including aviation and residential subdivision. • the potential to impact the values of the site with regard to the 'entrance to Bathurst' and being located within the Bathurst drinking water catchment.
<p>8. Why is this land not being retained for agricultural purposes?</p>	<p>Biophysical Agricultural Land (BSAL) and land with a land and soil class capability of 1, 2 or 3 are considered the most important land to retain in NSW for agricultural use. NSW DPE have been clear that locating solar panel infrastructure in these areas should be avoided.</p> <p>Soil surveys have been undertaken to confirm the soil class at the Glanmire site. The Land and Soil Capability Assessment (SLR Consulting Australia Pty Ltd, 2021) found most of the site is classified as land and soil capability class 4, with the exception of areas greater than or equal to 10% slope which are classified as class 5 due to the presence of sodic subsoils.</p> <p>Additionally, solar farms are considered highly reversable in terms of their impact on agricultural land. While some infrastructure will remain in place after decommissioning, the vast majority of the site will be available for resumed agricultural or other land use. The project, if approved, will include clear commitments to ensure the agricultural values of the site are maintained so that agricultural productivity, after the site is decommissioned, will not be reduced. A commitment to retain the agricultural capacity and productivity of the land will be expected and is considered highly achievable.</p>

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	<p>During operation, solar farms in NSW often utilise ‘solar grazing’ to manage biomass under and around panels. It is likely to be implemented as a ‘ground cover management’ strategy to ensure vegetation cover is retained beneath the panels, rather than for generation of a reliable farm income but it can have resilience and productivity benefits (Clean Energy Council, 2021³) and it is the most prevalent form of complementary land use for utility-scale solar farms.</p>
<p>9. How does the State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007 (ISEPP) relate to local land zoning provisions?</p>	<p>Section 34(1b) of the ISEPP allows for electricity generating works, including solar farms, in prescribed rural, industrial or special use zones. RU1 is a prescribed zone that has been considered generally appropriate for development of electricity generating works.</p> <p>Under the Bathurst Regional Local Environmental Plan (LEP) RU1 zone provisions, electricity generation works are not specified and therefore deemed <i>permitted with consent</i>.</p> <p>In addition to addressing the LEP, the EIS is required to provide specific consideration of the impact on, or conflict with, land that would be required to support the growth of Bathurst Regional City having regard to any future growth areas identified in Regional Plans and Local Strategic Planning Statements and advice from Council on future growth areas.</p> <p>The applicability of the Regional Plan to the project will be considered as well as a specific consideration of impacts on residential development, in the Land Use Conflict Risk Assessment (LUCRA) assessment.</p>
<p>10. What is the importance of the proposed changes to the Infrastructure SEPP: Renewable Energy and Regional Cities?</p>	<p>Bathurst is one of the regional cities identified as having high solar and wind resource potential with the risk that utility scale renewables may adversely impact city expansion and growth.</p> <p>The matters that must be considered under the proposed changes to the ISEPP include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • whether the development is located so as to avoid land use conflicts with existing and approved uses of land • whether the proposed development is likely to have a significant impact on, or conflict with, land that would be required to support the growth of a regional city having regard to any future growth areas identified in Regional Plans and Local Strategic Planning Statements and advice from Council

³ <https://www.cleanenergycouncil.org.au/resources/resources-hub/australian-guide-to-agrisolar-for-large-scale-solar-1>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> whether the proposed development would significantly impact the scenic quality and landscape character of a regional city, including on any approaches to the city, taking into consideration any values identified by the community and Council. <p>These matters are being carefully assessed as part of preparation of the EIS and the associated specialist assessment reports and through and the engagement process currently underway.</p> <p>More on this can be found here: https://pp.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/ISEPP-renewable-energy</p>
<p>11. Is development of a solar farm compatible with adjacent land uses?</p>	<p>The SEARs set out specific requirements for the EIS to consider, including an assessment of the potential impacts of the development on existing and approved land uses on the site and adjacent land. The investigation approach includes reference to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Land And Soil Capability Assessment (LSCA) (SLR Consulting Australia Pty Ltd, 2021) and Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land (BSAL) Verification (SLR Consulting Australia Pty Ltd, 2021) to consider agricultural impacts and potential to manage and remediate any soil impacts. A Land Use Conflict Risk Assessment (LUCRA) is a quantitative risk matrix used to look at the compatibility of the proposed change in land use. The LUCRA assessment is primarily used to consider impacts on agricultural developments but can be used to assess other industry. <p>In this case, the LUCRA will be expanded also consider compatibility with nearby residential development, aviation activities, transport corridor entrance to Bathurst, drinking water catchment values. This will provide an opportunity to consider any appropriate actions the project should take to minimise impacts on these specific uses, such as setbacks from the highway, which has already been adopted.</p> <p>Land use compatibility will be a key consideration in the EIS. Visual impact assessment will consider the scenic character of the area and the value the community places on this.</p> <p>A solar farm on the subject land will not impact on the adjoining properties to carry out agricultural activities.</p>
<p>12. What has Elgin done to understand the soil quality and</p>	<p>Soil surveys have been undertaken to confirm the soil class. The Land and Soil Capability Assessment (SLR Consulting Australia Pty Ltd, 2021) found most of the site is classified as land and soil capability class 4, with the exception of areas greater than or equal to 10% slope which are classified as class 5 due to the presence of</p>

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<p>agricultural output of the site?</p>	<p>sodic subsoils. While class 4 is considered suitable for solar, careful consideration of impacts on the surrounding land uses will also be considered in the EIS.</p> <p>An Agricultural Impact Statement (AIS) will be completed as part of the EIS. This body of work will consider the analysis completed for the Glanmire Action Group as part of a thorough assessment.</p>
<p>13. What impact will the solar farm have on the agricultural output of the property?</p>	<p>An Agricultural Impact Statement (AIS) will be completed as part of the EIS. This body of work will consider the analysis previously completed for the Glanmire Action Group as part of a thorough assessment.</p> <p>Elgin notes that previous analysis completed by the Glanmire Action Group was desktop only and not based on soil samples from the project site. As well the ground validated soil analyses completed for the site by Elgin, an Agricultural Impact Statement will be prepared to consider the impact on the agricultural economy and will inform the detailed assessment of the project. The AIS will factor in the continued use of the land for agricultural purposes through sheep grazing.</p>
<p>14. What impact will this project have on the local economy?</p>	<p>The project EIS will compare the local employment and economic stimulus being generated at the site now, under agricultural land use, to the solar farm's predicted employment impacts and ongoing grazing activities. This will be informed by the AIS.</p> <p>The construction phase, lasting around 12 months, will generate the most employment and stimulus to local providers, and support around 150 jobs (based on the project scope presented in the Scoping Report). It will require careful planning to ensure local employment is maximised and demand on limited local services does not impact the wider community.</p> <p>In operation, the employment will be much less, currently estimated to be around 1 - 3 full time equivalent jobs; more comparable to the current circumstance under agricultural use.</p>
<p>15. Will developing a solar farm reduce the ability to do soil carbon activities on the site?</p>	<p>While intensive agricultural use and any associated carbon sequestration opportunities will be precluded during the operational stage of the solar farm, the resting of the soil and benefits to soil biota beneath shaded solar arrays (which can act as a microclimate and increase soil health) will have a small, continued contribution.</p> <p>Some specific agricultural practices can be important contributions to mitigating climate change, by taking up carbon from the atmosphere and storing it. However, more impactful to mitigating the impacts of climate change will be the project's contribution to the NSW's transition away from fossil fuel electricity generation to renewable energy.</p>

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	<p>Additionally, solar farms are considered highly reversible in terms of their impact on agricultural land. While some infrastructure will remain in place after decommissioning, the vast majority of the site will be available for resumed agricultural or other land use. Overall, a commitment to retain the agricultural capacity and productivity of the land will be expected and is considered highly achievable.</p> <p>Recent research out of a collaboration among Argonne National Laboratory⁴, the US National Renewable Energy Laboratory, and the University of Minnesota found that the restoration and management of native grassland vegetation beneath ground-mounted solar energy facilities can restore ecosystem services and drive a 65% increase in carbon storage potential over conventional management of turf grass on solar farms. This is something that can be explored with the landowner, but the solar farm does not prevent this activity from occurring.</p>
<p>16. How is the decommissioning process managed?</p>	<p>It is critical for renewable energy developments to demonstrate that they will not have any unreasonable impacts on the environment, including after they have been decommissioned.</p> <p>The developer is required to show how the infrastructure will be decommissioned and removed at the end of the project's life, in addition to how damaged components will be recycled or disposed of without impacting the environment. This includes the allocation of funds to manage this process. This must be reviewed and approved by DPE before the consent is provided to construct it.</p> <p>For this project, Elgin Energy will describe as part of the project, the commitment to the development of a Decommissioning and Rehabilitation Plan to ensure the array site is returned to at least or better than pre-solar farmland and soil capability during the decommissioning stage. The plan would be developed with reference to the base line soil testing (completed) and with input from an agronomist to ensure the site is left stabilised, under a cover crop or other suitable ground cover.</p> <p>Should a consent be granted, the conditions of consent must be met by the developer and the operator of the infrastructure. If the solar farm is sold, the conditions of consent must be met by the new owner. This requirement is also included in the lease conditions for Elgin Energy.</p> <p>The Glanmire project has a standard decommissioning clause (12 months to remove improvements and pay rent while doing so). A fund for the make good process will be established and can be drawn on for if required to facilitate this process.</p>

⁴ Source: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2212041620301698>

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<p>17. Can solar panels be recycled?</p>	<p>Solar panels are inherently recyclable, due to their ability to be broken down and separated into existing recycling streams (Blakers, A 2021, ANU). Up until recently, Australia did not have the capability to recycle everything in a solar panel but, in recent years, dedicated recycling operators have emerged, and this capability is growing all the time. Notably, a facility is currently being established in Wagga Wagga by local company Solar Professionals.</p> <p>Given Glanmire Solar Farm would not start operating until 2024, and the panel recycling capability is growing quickly, it is anticipated that the project could make use of recycling facilities for disposal of damaged panels and for decommissioning.</p>
<p>18. Do solar farms devalue land?</p>	<p>Unfortunately, there is no credible local evidence base available to reference on this subject. It has been Elgin's experience that solar farms have not resulted in devaluation of surrounding land in the other markets they operate in, including the UK.</p> <p>Whilst there are many factors that influence the value of a property it is noted a large number of solar farms have been constructed in Australia over the 12 years and no conclusive evidence of adverse impacts on local property values resulting from these projects has emerged.</p>
<p>19. What impact does a Solar Farm have on insurance premiums for neighbouring properties?</p>	<p>Elgin Energy has requested clarity from the Australian Insurance Council in relation to concerns regarding insurance requirements for landholders near solar farms. The response below was provided to Elgin Energy in 2021:</p> <p><i>The IAC have investigated the views of insurers and are not aware of any position of escalated risk focus being placed on neighbouring properties solely as a result of solar facilities being established.</i></p> <p><i>Insurance premiums are developed among many considerations on risk factors relevant to any specific property. As data and information develops, those risks may be alleviated or escalated and premiums applicable would be applied according to each insurer's determination on that specific location.</i></p> <p><i>There is no sole or single position on pricing or risk, each insurer will determine and apply their own risk framework, acceptance criteria and pricing model. While there may be a factor with one or some insurers, in a specific region or at a specific location, that will be an individual organisation position, it is not an industry position.</i></p> <p><i>Risk determination is complex and is property specific and applied individually by insurers in line with their own positioning. We would like to confirm however that there is no position known at this time indicating or</i></p>

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	<p>highlighting any widespread increased risk relevant to a property neighbouring or being near a solar farm or facility.</p>
<p>20. What role will Elgin Energy play in this project in the future?</p>	<p>Many companies develop and sell renewable energy projects (approx. 60% of State Significant Projects) in Australia. In fact, a large proportion of renewable energy developers in Australia specifically aim to setup well informed and designed projects before selling them to companies who construct and operate the infrastructure while delivering on agreed standards and requirements (as established in the planning phase).</p> <p>Elgin Energy is currently working through options with respect to establishing and operating the projects under development in Australia. Elgin’s objective over the next 12-24 months is to become an integrated independent power producer (IPP) in Australia delivering solar and storage to energisation and owning and operating the projects that are developed.</p> <p>Elgin and the conditions of any Development Consent will ensure that the commitments made during the planning process will be incorporated into the operation of the Solar Farm. This includes the agreed Community Benefit Scheme, management of construction impacts and the decommissioning obligations.</p>
<p>21. Who is Elgin Energy and how is Elgin Energy funded in Australia?</p>	<p>Elgin Energy was established in 2009 and is one the largest privately owned solar/battery developers in the UK. The Elgin business is well funded following the early success of the busines and recent fundraises as shown in the articles below:</p> <p>https://www.irishtimes.com/business/energy-and-resources/elgin-energy-raises-almost-30m-to-fund-projects-in-its-main-markets-1.4739113</p> <p>https://www.pv-magazine.com/press-releases/berenberg-green-energy-junior-debt-fund-and-elgin-energy-enter-agreement-to-finance-late-stage-development-of-elgins-1-36-gwp-solar-portfolio/and-project-sales</p> <p>https://www.pv-magazine.com/press-releases/elgin-energy-announces-sale-of-uks-largest-solar-portfolio-to-iberdrolas-scottish-power-renewables/</p> <p>As stated, Elgin’s objective over the next 12-24 months is to become an integrated independent power producer (IPP) in Australia delivering solar and storage to energisation and owning and operating the projects that are developed.</p> <p>The Australian business was established in 2019 and is currently developing 750 MW of projects between NSW and Victoria and aims to deliver over 1 GW of projects over the next three years.</p>

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<p>22. Will this project have a visual impact on the area?</p>	<p>Visual impact assessment will consider the scenic character of the area and the value the community places on this. The visual impact assessment is required to consider impacts from important locations, not just residential receivers. In this case the assessment will include views experienced by motorists approaching Bathurst.</p> <p>It is essential that our visual impact assessment specialists can meet with nearby landholders to capture their viewpoints and assess the likely impacts from a range of positions.</p> <p>The topography of the site is fortunate in that the properties near the site are oriented away from the proposed solar farm and battery.</p> <p>Elgin has already reduced the footprint of the development area to avoid views from the highway and there is some flexibility to modify the development area on the southern end of the site to help mitigate visual impacts.</p> <p>To ensure a rigorous visual assessment, the recently released NSW Government draft Visual Assessment Framework for Large-Scale Solar Energy Development will be considered by the assessment. The benefits of this new methodology include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • specific consideration of the difference in elevation between specific receivers and the solar farm infrastructure • reverse viewshed modelling to understand the most visible areas of the facility, where large numbers of receivers are affected • consideration of the horizontal magnitude of impact for specific receivers (being able to see the facility in more than one direction or ‘sector’) • a focus on consultation and the provision of ‘photo montages’ to inform the community and specific receivers about the impact on their existing views. <p>The level of glare and reflectance from the PV solar panels is considerably lower than the level of glare and reflectance of common surfaces, particularly those surrounding the proposed solar farm. The PV panels are likely to reflect approximately 6.5% of energy which is less than typical rural environments which have a reflectivity of approximately 15-30% (MLA 2010; cited in several solar farm visual assessments including Nyngan and Capital Solar Farms). It is noted however that array mountings (steel or aluminium), PCUs, grid connection transmission line poles, the onsite substation and other site buildings could also produce glare and glint, however not more than is to be expected for existing rural infrastructure including sheds, powerlines and farm buildings.</p>

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<p>23. Will glare be an issue for the airport?</p>	<p>The compatibility with land uses in including aviation will be investigated through the EIS. Glint and glare will be considered as part of the assessment. Generally, reflectivity of solar farm infrastructure is considered lower than surrounding rural infrastructure</p> <p>The primary function of PV panels is to absorb sunlight rather than reflect it. The technical process in manufacturing PV panels includes an anti-reflection, hydrophobic layers that minimises potential for sunlight reflection.</p> <p>Elgin have engaged with the Bathurst Airport and CASA regarding visual impacts, and we will continue to keep them updated as our assessments progress. CASA have approved projects close to airports in the past, reporting that more glare is expected from the local waterways and the sun itself.</p> <p>Glaring is typically not an issue for aviation activities, as evident by the fact that solar panels have been deployed in Residential, Industrial and Sensitive Facilities, such as many airports around the world, including Ballarat, Adelaide, Brisbane, Melbourne, Changi (Singapore), Denver and Dusseldorf (and many more).</p>
<p>24. How will fire risks be managed?</p>	<p>Solar Farms are proven to have very minimal fire risks. Well established set-backs from site boundaries (and vegetation where relevant) will be included in the design to ensure there is 'defensible space' between infrastructure and surrounding site boundaries/vegetation.</p> <p>Elgin will adhere strictly to a Code of Conduct substantially in line with the Clean Energy Council's Best Practices Charter, as well as other relevant regulations, including fire safety.</p> <p>We will work closely with the RFS to confirm access requirements for the Solar Farm in the event there is a bushfire that moves into the area, or if a fire starts in the Solar Farm.</p> <p>A Management Plan will be produced prior to construction commencing that will include a Fire Management Plan to address the management of fire risks in construction, operations, and decommissioning and will be developed in consultation with RFS.</p> <p>The facility operations will be monitored using real time data, an on-site manager and security cameras to pick up fires which will trigger notification of the local RFS as part of the Fire Management Plan.</p>
<p>25. Will there be enough agricultural land available as more</p>	<p>Despite the ambitious state and national goals for delivery of renewable energy infrastructure, Solar Farms will not need take up a large amount of land in proportion to agricultural land. Furthermore, the land area needed for every megawatt of installed capacity is expected to decline as solar modules become more efficient (CEC, 2021).</p>

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<p>renewable energy projects are delivered?</p>	<p>In the unlikely event that all new variable renewable energy were to be in the form of large-scale solar, then the total land required to support this solar generation would be up to 120,000 hectares. That's the equivalent of less than 0.016 per cent of Australia's total land area, or 0.027 per cent of Australia's total land currently used for agricultural production.</p> <p>https://assets.cleanenergycouncil.org.au/documents/resources/reports/agrisolar-guide/Australian-guide-to-agrisolar-for-large-scale-solar.pdf</p>
<p>26. How will Elgin engage with the community and stakeholders during the EIS?</p>	<p>Elgin is committed to working the community and other key stakeholders as part of the EIS process and as part of the wider project. Initial engagement was completed during the project scoping phase, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • targeted discussion with nearby landowners via letters and several face-to-face meetings and follow up emails • letters were sent out to a 3km radius of the project site • development of a project specific website, project overview, project survey and follow up emails • a community information session • targeted stakeholder meetings • an offer was made to meet with the Glanmire Action Group directly (but not taken up). <p>The project is currently working with representative stakeholders as part of a Community Consultative Committee (CCC). This CCC ensures that key stakeholders are kept informed and can make comment on key issues and management plans at this very early stage of the engagement process. The CCC will meet monthly over the coming months.</p> <p>Outside of the CCC, Elgin has engaged with the Council, the Chamber of Commerce, BCCAN, similar projects, local institutions and local media. The wider community will be engaged through monthly drop-in sessions, newsletters, website updates, social media updates, presence at the Bathurst Show, presentations to The Bathurst Chamber, Councillors, community groups and targeted landholder meetings.</p>
<p>27. Is the project supported by Bathurst Council and the NSW government?</p>	<p>Elgin has been engaging with the planning department at Bathurst Regional Council and the council is represented in the CCC.</p> <p>Our understanding is that the Council will play an objective role that is focused on ensuring the development considers local interest and planning arrangements, as well as ensuring the project details and well communicated through meaningful engagement.</p>

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	<p>We know that the project aligns with NSW Government policies around renewable energy development, but in the past the local member, the Hon Paul Toole MP has expressed some concerns about the project. We will continue to work through these concerns with Paul and his team in the coming months.</p>
<p>28. What local benefits will the project provide?</p>	<p>The project will provide several benefits including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • opportunities for both local and regional businesses to support delivery and operation of the project • employment opportunities, with approximately 150 employees needed during the construction period of approximately 12 months, and approximately 1 - 3 ongoing jobs during the operational phase • contributing to progress towards the NSW government renewable energy targets • annual reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and generation of enough clean electricity to power approximately 24,000 NSW homes • ongoing community benefits through a local community benefit scheme.
<p>29. Will there be a Community Benefit Fund?</p>	<p>Elgin Energy aims to deliver a community benefit fund on every project and is committed to delivering a Community Benefit Fund if this project proceeds to energisation.</p> <p>There are several successful examples of the delivery of Community Benefit Funds from renewable energy projects across Australia.</p> <p>Funds are usually based on the project owner paying a fee to the local community organization on a fixed sum per MW basis. This fund is then distributed to suitable local projects/initiatives.</p> <p>Elgin has discussed benefit sharing opportunities with Council and this will be discussed with the CCC group in addition to the broader community.</p> <p>Elgin is keen to hear the community's thoughts in relation to this and invite residents to share their views on suitable local projects/initiatives.</p>
<p>30. Will the project supply power to the Bathurst Community?</p>	<p>In the eastern states and South Australia, energy that is generated from all large-scale energy generators (including any new solar farm or wind farm) goes into the energy grid and it is distributed according to the rules and controls that govern the grid's stable operation. The effective sale of the energy is done through purchase agreements or by selling it into the wholesale electricity market.</p>

GLANMIRE SOLAR FARM FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



QUESTION	ANSWER
	<p>Elgin cannot control the physical flow of power within the grid, but local contributions through other forms of investment can be considered in the Community Benefits Scheme that will be developed during the EIS engagement period.</p> <p>If community members have specific suggestions around the form of community benefits, Elgin would love to hear them.</p>
<p>31. Will there be changes to the local road network?</p>	<p>The Traffic Impact Assessment being undertaken by traffic engineering specialists, Amber, will investigate, in consultation with the road authorities, the safety of the existing road network, upgrades required to facilitate the construction of the project and mitigation strategies to ensure safety for road users and protect the road assets.</p> <p>This is expected to include intersection assessments, upgrades to intersection treatments and commitments to road dilapidation and traffic management strategies. The onus will be on the proponent to monitor and keep the road network in good repair. All assessment results and commitments will be included in the EIS.</p>
<p>32. Will there be impacts on local waterways?</p>	<p>Impacts on formed waterways are considered early in the design planning process.</p> <p>Standard setbacks are applied for most infrastructure to protect the riparian zones, where they exist. Where impacts are required within these zones, such as for limited waterway crossings by tracks and cables, they are designed in accordance with standard best practice measures and are considered to have high levels of confidence. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidelines for Watercourse Crossings on Waterfront Land (DPI, 2012) • Guidelines for Laying pipes and Cables in Watercourses on Waterfront Land (Office of Water, 2010) • <i>Why do fish need to cross the road? Fish Passage Requirements for Waterway Crossings</i> (Fairfull and Witheridge, 2003). • <i>Policy and Guidelines for Fish Friendly Waterway Crossings</i> (NSW DPI, 2003). <p>In addition, the site-specific hydrology report undertaken for the proposal, will be undertaken in two stages to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assist the proponent design the proposal so that solar farm assets will not be adversely affected by floods (this is done based on the existing catchment information). 2. Verifies that layout produced will not adversely affect local hydrology or exacerbate soil erosion due to run off (this modelling uses the indicative worst-case layout so that it will be resilient to any design changes in detailed design).

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	In this way the soil and water resources will be protected during the operational stage of the project.