

Sutton Solar Action Group meets with Planning Minister

The Sutton Solar Action Group (SSAG) met with the Hon. Rob Stokes MP, Minister for Planning and Public Spaces on 1 April. What was originally scheduled to be a meeting in Sydney's Parliament House, was conducted instead by teleconference owing to the current COVID-19 measures. The fact the Minister agreed to proceed with the meeting, bearing in mind all that's currently happening, displayed his genuine interest in our concerns.

The SSAG wishes to thank our local member, the Member for Goulburn, Wendy Tuckerman MP and her advisor Alicia Croker, for their support in securing the meeting, which included the Minister's senior advisor and a senior representative from the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE).

The SSAG presented the Minister with a detailed document outlining a range of issues, in particular, the favourable treatment Renew Estate Estate appears to be receiving from the DPIE. We were able to point out that the 10 other recent large-scale solar projects in NSW had been given between 18 and 52 days to respond to any community objections, however as of 1 April, 2020, Renew Estate Estate has had **581 days** to respond to our community's objections and still nothing.

Our document pointed out that Renew Estate has previously told the DPIE that they would provide their response by the end of January 2019 and later, that they would provide it by the end

of November 2019. It's now April 2020 and they have still has not lodged their response or any reason as to why it's been so delayed.

The Minister appeared genuinely shocked that this process has been allowed to drag on for so long and apologised to the SSAG for the DPIE allowing it to happen.

The senior DPIE representative offered to visit the site immediately once travel restrictions due to the coronavirus are lifted. We welcomed his offer and look forward to be able to visit the site with him and take his through all the concerns that have been raised by the local community. He indicated that the DPIE had corresponded with Renew Estate since the close of objections, many of which he said have gone unanswered.

The Minister was also highly complementary of the document we provided him for the meeting. That document is available on the SSAG website in the Links Section <https://suttonsolaractiongroup.com/>.

The SSAG is hopeful that we may be soon able to get this issue resolved.

We will keep the community updated with developments through the SSAG website.

Sutton Solar Action Group