

The elusive Response to Submissions has arrived

As we reported in last months' Chatter, the elusive Response to Submissions (RTS) by the developer has been released. Like many of you, the SSAG, having read the document, wonder why we'd been forced to wait almost two years for its production, when it contains no new information that wasn't in the original EIS, in August 2018.

The RTS developed by both Renew Estate and the RES Group, raises more questions than it answers.

When discussing potential impacts of the development on issues such as traffic, visual impact, site suitability, including the visual impact of the development on neighbouring properties, noise and major environmental concerns, the developers have used the term "unlikely", 81 times. That, we can only assume, is because they have no idea of what the impact of the development on the local area, will really be. Coincidentally, using such words as "unlikely", is totally inconsistent with the NSW Threatened Species Test of Significance Guidelines, which states, **"Where detailed information is not available to conclusively determine that there will not be a significant impact on a threatened species or ecological community, or its habitat then it should be assumed that a significant impact is likely..."**. Threatened species exist on the proposed site.

Traffic was the biggest issue raised by the Sutton community in their objections to the development. The developer's response, a detailed Traffic Management Plan will be developed 'after approval' for the development has been given. The RTS states that, **"...the additional traffic volumes are not anticipated to impact upon the town of Sutton"**. That is very easily said by someone who doesn't live here and has likely only driven through the village on a handful of occasions, if that. Chatter readers will recall that last year the SSAG undertook several manual traffic counts through the village and found that during the peak times, when heavy vehicles and workers will be

transiting to and from the development, one vehicle (including trucks and school buses) past through the village every 10 seconds. Not the 2009 traffic count used by the developers in the RTS on Tallagandra Lane, showing one (1) vehicle every 10 minutes. That statement has no relevance to your objections.

Visual impact and screening of the development was the second biggest issue raised by residents. To overcome this the developer suggests that some form of screening could take place on surrounding resident's properties. Whether this means they will build barriers in front of people's houses, similar to what we see on major roadways, we don't know, because again, they suggest, this should be decided after approval of the project. Regardless, the developers suggest that in time "...people (will) become accustomed to the development", which can only mean, we'll all get used to it over time being the view from our houses. What arrogance!

And why did we wait almost two years for the RTS to be provided? You will recall that the hold-up was supposedly due to the developers undertaking additional (indigenous) archaeological studies. Well, it appears that they had no intention of undertaking that work from the start and it still hasn't been done. Again, that's something else they propose to do 'after approval'.

The SSAG has subsequently met with senior Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) officials, who are currently assessing the RTS and voiced our concerns about the lack of detail and how the document answered few of the communities objections. We have provided the Department with a detailed outline those issues.

Follow the SSAG website for further details of the issues we have raised on your behalf <https://suttonsolaractiongroup.com/>

Sutton Solar Action Group

JULY 2020 *The Sutton Chatter* **7**