

17 September 2026
Chief Executive Officer
Douglas Shire Council
PO Box 723, Mossman QLD 4873

FORMAL SUBMISSSION OF OBJECTION

Application Reference: MCUI 2026_5936/1

I object to the proposed change of land use for a solar farm at 6868 Captain Cook Highway, Killaloe – Lot 32 on SP332240, Killaloe QLD 4873.

Recently Council rejected a project to reforest a tract of inactive farmland at 110 Cape Tribulation Road, lower Daintree. As reported by Newport 29 May 2026, Cr Damian Meadows said: “We’ve got to maintain our good quality agricultural land”, while Mayor Lisa Scomazzon said the region needed rehabilitation, but not at the expense of “viable agricultural land”.

Only 4 months down the track there appear to be double standards when it comes to losing agricultural land.

I request that Council refuse this application for the following reasons

Aesthetics

A solar farm is visually unappealing and inappropriate in this area of outstanding beauty. The Captain Cook Highway is the gateway to the heritage listed Daintree region and a solar farm in this region changes the outlook from agricultural to industrial which is not compatible with ecotourism.

The proposal states that earth mounds will be planted with vegetation that will not obscure the mountain view. This will take at least 3 years to provide any sort of screen and sadly does not include any trees that can grow to a great height: bushes, shrubs and small trees only, do not provide biodiversity.

Environmental impact

The life span of solar farms is approximately 25-30 years, while most components are recyclable there are many metal and chemicals such as lead and cadmium that leave an environmental footprint.

Environmental studies of the impact of solar farms are still ongoing. Recent research has showed that reflective glare from solar panels mimics the appearance of water bodies, confusing migrating birds and leading them off course. Fencing around solar farms restricts movement of animals and birds and bats can become entrapped in perimeter fencing especially if barbed wire is used as top strand.

There is evidence that solar farms can produce their own microclimate by raising temperature by several degrees, this should be of concern with global warming.

The proposal suggests using sheep to minimize chemical and mechanical interventions. Sheep grazing in the wet tropics is entirely inappropriate as sheep suffer from heat stress and foot rot from prolonged contact with water. Cattle are also unsuitable as due to their size they are unable to graze under panels, they can also damage panels by leaning and rubbing on them. This seems a badly thought out 'solution' to chemical and mechanical interventions.

Noise pollution

Solar farms are responsible for noise pollution from inverters.

Potential Fire Risk

Fire risks are low within solar farms but nevertheless can be caused by electrical faults, overheating of equipment and poor maintenance. Battery energy storage system fire can cause environmental contamination including air pollution, and soil and water contamination.

In summary the approval of using of agricultural land in an area of scenic beauty for solar farms sets a dangerous precedent for this region.

Please can I have confirmation of receipt of this email and be kept up to date of any progress made regarding the above.

Many thanks

[REDACTED]

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