



EPBC Act Referrals
Environment Assessment Branch
Dept of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Populations and Communities
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**RE 2012/6469: Royalla PV Pty Ltd/Energy generation and supply (renewable)/
BelconnenACT/Abengoa Solar Project**

As Convenor of The Friends of the Pinnacle (fotpin) (<http://www.fotpin.org.au/>) I am writing to provide comments on this referral. Let me begin by stating our strong in-principle support for solar developments of this kind, and indeed for any initiatives to reduce human impact on the environment. However, we wish to voice our disapproval of the siting of this particular project.

Our primary focus is in fostering and enhancing the natural ecological values of the Pinnacle Nature Reserve, which is located immediately south of the suburbs of Hawker and Weetangera in Belconnen. As such, it is one of the closest of the Canberra Nature Park reserves to the proposed development and one of the most likely to be impacted.

Our main concerns are with regard to the threat the development poses to landscape connectivity in the area and the subsequent impacts on the movement and abundance of native birds. This applies particularly to threatened species such as the Superb Parrot, Varied Sittella White-winged Triller and Little Eagle, all of which are observed frequently at the Pinnacle NR and some of which (Varied Sittella and White-winged Triller) are known to nest in the reserve. The removal of large areas of endangered woodland community not only threatens any recovery by these threatened species locally, it also is directly counter to the aims of the ACT Government's own Woodlands Restoration Project. One of the key aims of this project is to re-establish wildlife corridors through and around Canberra's urban fringe, including the Belconnen Hills, an area that encompasses the proposed development site and is targeted by this Project for woodland enhancement. The removal of significant habitat as outlined in this proposal is, at the very least, highly counterproductive.

We recommend that a full EIS be conducted to assess the impacts of this proposal on threatened species and allow for full public consultation, and that alternative sites on more suitable land be given serious consideration.

I can be contacted via email at john.fotpin@gmail.com, or by phone on 02 6258 6038.

Yours sincerely

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Convenor
Friends of the Pinnacle
31 July 2012