

05 February 2013

Ms Joanne Glass
Department of Planning and Infrastructure
GPO Box 39
Sydney NSW 2001

Dear Ms Glass,

Response to Office of Environment and Heritage letter dated 27.11.2012 Re: Young to Wagga Wagga looping pipeline Stage 2 (Bethungra to Young)

AECOM, on behalf of the APA Group (APA), has prepared the following response to the letter issued by the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) dated 27.11.2012 to the NSW Department of Planning and Infrastructure (DP&I). In preparation of this response AECOM has liaised with the APA and the OEH contact for this matter, Peter Ewin.

It is noted that consideration of offsets is required by OEH for this project, particularly in relation to potential impacts upon ecological communities and hollow-bearing trees identified in the Environmental Assessment (EA). To ensure that appropriate offsets are obtained for the potential impacts identified, APA proposes to hold discussions with an Offset Broker (such as the Lachlan and/or Murrumbidgee Catchment Management Authority, or NSW Nature Conservation Trust) prior to construction. These discussions would be held to progress the offset strategy resulting in the identification of suitable offset area(s) which are both available for use as an offset, and contain the required ecological values. OEH would be informed of the outcomes of these discussions prior to construction of the project commencing.

The EA for this project identified potential impacts on 6.9 ha of vegetation communities and 36 hollow bearing trees as a 'worst case scenario'. However it is noted that during construction of the project it is expected that the actual impacts upon communities and hollow bearing trees would be lower than this worst case scenario, through sensitive construction methods and design adjustments (previously demonstrated during construction of Stage 1 of this project). As such, while the initial discussion with the Offset Broker would be carried out ensure the availability of suitable offsets for the worst case scenario, the final quantity of offset required for the project would be reassessed following construction in consultation with OEH. It is understood that this reassessment would consider the actual impacts of the proposal in comparison to the forecasted worst case scenario amounts presented in the EA, and may allow a reduction of the offset area required. This reduction would be expected to be proportional to the difference between the actual and forecasted impacts.

If you have any questions regarding the above, please contact the undersigned.

Yours faithfully,



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