



Your ref: SSD-122316741
Our ref: DOC26/273328

Emma Fitzgerald
Senior Environmental Assessment Officer
Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure
4 Parramatta Square, 12 Darcy Street
Parramatta NSW 2150

By email: emma.fitzgerald@dpie.nsw.gov.au

Dear Emma

Subject: Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements – Narrabri West Solar Farm (SSD-122316741) (Narrabri Shire)

Thank you for your referral received 13 May 2026 requesting input from the Conservation Programs, Heritage & Regulation (CPHR) Group of the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) on the Planning Secretary's environmental assessment requirements (SEARs) for the above project.

CPHR has reviewed the Narrabri West Solar Farm Scoping Report (RPS AAP Consulting, 22 April 2026) and recommends the proponent addresses the Standard SEARs presented in **Attachment 1**. Any project-specific SEARs are provided in **Attachment 2**.

Should you have any queries regarding this matter, please contact the Planning, Coordination and Advice Team at pca@dcceew.nsw.gov.au

Yours Sincerely

Ben Ellis
A/Senior Team Leader, Planning Coordination and Advice
Conservation Planning and Assessment
Conservation Programs, Heritage & Regulation Group (CPHR)

25 May 2026

Attachment 1 - Standard Environmental Assessment Requirements

Biodiversity
1. Biodiversity impacts related to the proposed development are to be assessed in accordance with Section 7.9 of the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 (BC Act), the Biodiversity Assessment Method 2020 (BAM) and documented in a Biodiversity Development Assessment Report (BDAR). The BDAR must be prepared using the approved BDAR template and include information in the form detailed in the BC Act (s6.12), <i>Biodiversity Conservation Regulation 2017</i> (s6.8) and the BAM, including an assessment of the impacts of the proposal (including an assessment of impacts prescribed by the regulations). 2. The BDAR must document the application of the avoid, minimise and offset framework including assessing all direct, indirect and prescribed impacts in accordance with the BAM. 3. The BDAR must assess the impacts associated with ancillary infrastructure, including the transport route road upgrades, where applicable. 4. The BDAR must include details of the measures proposed to address the offset obligation as follows: • The total number and classes of biodiversity credits required to be retired for the development/project. • The number and classes of like-for-like biodiversity credits proposed to be retired. • Any proposal to make a payment to the Biodiversity Conservation Fund. 5. The BDAR must be submitted with all spatial data associated with the survey and assessment as per the BAM. The minimum information and spatial data requirements are in Tables 24 and 25 of the BAM. Other requirements, such as those relating to the BAM Calculator and Biodiversity Offset Assessment Management System, are detailed in the guides, tools and databases webpage. 6. The BDAR must be prepared by a person accredited in accordance with the Accreditation Scheme for the Application of the Biodiversity Assessment Method Order 2017 under s6.10 of the <i>Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016</i> and be certified within 14 days of submission.
Water and soils
7. The EIS must map the following features relevant to water and soils including: a. Acid sulfate soils (Class 1, 2, 3 or 4 on the Acid Sulfate Soil Planning Map). b. Rivers, streams, wetlands, estuaries (as described in s4.2 of the Biodiversity Assessment Method). c. Wetlands as described in s4.2 of the Biodiversity Assessment Method. d. Groundwater. e. Groundwater dependent ecosystems. f. Proposed intake and discharge locations.
8. The EIS must describe background conditions for any water resource likely to be affected by the development, including: a. Existing surface and groundwater.

b. Hydrology, including volume, frequency and quality of discharges at proposed intake and discharge locations. c. Water Quality Objectives (as endorsed by the NSW Government http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/ieo/index.htm) including groundwater as appropriate that represent the community's uses and values for the receiving waters. d. Indicators and trigger values/criteria for the environmental values identified at (c) in accordance with the ANZECC (2000) Guidelines for Fresh and Marine Water Quality and/or local objectives, criteria or targets endorsed by the NSW Government.
9. The EIS must assess the impacts of the development on water quality, including: a. The nature and degree of impact on receiving waters for both surface and groundwater, demonstrating how the development protects the Water Quality Objectives where they are currently being achieved, and contributes towards achievement of the Water Quality Objectives over time where they are currently not being achieved. This should include an assessment of the mitigating effects of proposed stormwater and wastewater management during and after construction. b. Identification of proposed monitoring of water quality.
10. The EIS must assess the impact of the development on hydrology, including: a. Water balance including quantity, quality and source. b. Effects to downstream rivers, wetlands, estuaries, marine waters and floodplain areas. c. Effects to downstream water-dependent fauna and flora including groundwater dependent ecosystems. d. Impacts to natural processes and functions within rivers, wetlands, estuaries and floodplains that affect river system and landscape health such as nutrient flow, aquatic connectivity and access to habitat for spawning and refuge (e.g. river benches). e. Changes to environmental water availability, both regulated/licensed and unregulated/rules-based sources of such water. f. Mitigating effects of proposed stormwater and wastewater management during and after construction on hydrological attributes such as volumes, flow rates, management methods and re-use options. g. Identification of proposed monitoring of hydrological attributes.
Flooding
11. The EIS must map the following features relevant to flooding as described in the NSW 2023 Flood Risk Management Manual including: a. Flood prone land. b. Flood planning area, the area below the flood planning level. c. Hydraulic categorisation (floodways and flood storage areas).
12. The EIS must describe flood assessment and modelling undertaken in determining the design flood levels for events, including a minimum of the 1 in 10 year, 1 in 100 year flood levels and the probable maximum flood, or an equivalent extreme event.

13. The EIS must model the effect of the proposed development (including fill) on the flood behaviour under the following scenarios:

- a. Current flood behaviour for a range of design events as identified in 11 above. This includes the 1 in 200 and 1 in 500 year flood events as proxies for assessing sensitivity to an increase in rainfall intensity of flood producing rainfall events due to climate change.

14. Modelling in the EIS must consider and document:

- a. The impact on existing flood behaviour for a full range of flood events including up to the probable maximum flood.
- b. Impacts of the development on flood behaviour resulting in detrimental changes in potential flood affection of other developments or land. This may include redirection of flow, flow velocities, flood levels, hazards and hydraulic categories.
- c. Relevant provisions of the [NSW 2023 Flood Risk Management Manual](#).

15. The EIS must assess the impacts on the proposed development on flood behaviour, including:

- a. Whether there will be detrimental increases in the potential flood affection of other properties, assets and infrastructure.
- b. Consistency with Council floodplain risk management plans.
- c. Compatibility with the flood hazard of the land.
- d. Compatibility with the hydraulic functions of flow conveyance in floodways and storage in flood storage areas of the land.
- e. Whether there will be adverse effect to beneficial inundation of the floodplain environment, on, adjacent to or downstream of the site.
- f. Whether there will be direct or indirect increase in erosion, siltation, destruction of riparian vegetation or a reduction in the stability of river banks or watercourses.
- g. Any impacts the development may have upon existing community emergency management arrangements for flooding. These matters are to be discussed with the SES and Council.
- h. Whether the proposal incorporates specific measures to manage risk to life from flood. These matters are to be discussed with the SES and Council.
- i. Emergency management, evacuation and access, and contingency measures for the development considering the full range of flood risk (based upon the probable maximum flood or an equivalent extreme flood event). These matters are to be discussed with and have the support of Council and the SES.
- j. Any impacts the development may have on the social and economic costs to the community as consequence of flooding.

Attachment 2 – Project specific environmental assessment requirements

Biodiversity – The eastern boundary of the project area crosses Pig Creek in several areas, which is listed as Category 2 – vulnerable regulated land (riparian area) on the Draft Native Vegetation Regulatory map.

A portion of this riparian corridor is zoned C3 Environmental Management. The EIS must assess the impact of the development in accordance with the DCCEEW [Riparian Corridor Guidelines](#).

Water and soils - nil

Flooding - nil