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Dear Mr. Cannon,

**Heritage NSW Review - Aboriginal Cultural Heritage - EIS - Great Western Battery Energy Storage System (SSD-12346552) (Lithgow City)**

Thank you for your referral on 2 March 2022, inviting comments from the Heritage NSW on the above SSD proposal with respect to Aboriginal cultural heritage (ACH).

Heritage NSW understands that Neoen Australia Pty Ltd (Neoen), are seeking to construct, operate and maintain a large-scale Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), at 173 Brays Lane, Wallerawang NSW, as well as a new transmission line that would connect the BESS to the existing TransGrid 330 kilovolt (kV) substation at Wallerawang. The Project is in the Central Tablelands of NSW, in the Lithgow City Local Government Area. AECOM Australia Pty Ltd (AECOM) was commissioned by Neoen to undertake an Aboriginal cultural heritage assessment for the Project in accordance with the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) and relevant Heritage NSW guidelines.

Heritage NSW has reviewed Appendix D and E - *Great Western Battery - Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report (ACHAR)*, Neoen Australia Pty Ltd, Neoen Australia Pty Ltd, 8 December 2021. Heritage NSW notes that test excavations have been undertaken prior to submission, which provided clear information and guidance in relation to managing any potential impacts to Aboriginal cultural heritage across the development footprint. Heritage NSW understands that subsequent to the finalisation of AECOM's ACHAR for the Project in early December 2021, Neoen identified the need for some additional site access works, adjacent to Brays Lane, outside of the previously assessed ACHAR study area, which encompassed the proposed BESS site (the Site), as well as an approximately 1.5 kilometre (km) long, 30 metre (m) wide linear corridor centred on the Project's proposed transmission line alignment. Heritage NSW has also reviewed this additional Addendum ACHAR and notes that the land within the Addendum ACHAR study area is highly disturbed due to historical land use activities and is considered to retain negligible potential for Aboriginal objects, in surface and subsurface contexts. Heritage NSW concurs with this assessment.

Heritage NSW notes that the initial ACHAR proposes measures to both mitigate and manage the potential impacts on the identified Aboriginal cultural heritage values of the study area through the development of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Management Plan (ACHMP). Heritage NSW supports the development and implementation of an ACHMP.

Key components of the proposed ACHMP for the Project would include:

- An archaeological salvage program for impacted stone quarry site GWB-STQ1-21, incorporating surface collection and open area salvage excavations

- Protective fencing of artefact scatter SU1a-A5
- Protocols for ongoing consultation with RAPs
- The incorporation of an Aboriginal heritage component into the Project's standard environmental site induction
- An Unexpected Aboriginal Heritage Finds Procedure (UAHFP) covering all Aboriginal objects, including human skeletal remains.

Heritage NSW supports development and implementation of the proposed ACHMP for the project, in line with the above recommendations. Heritage NSW has no additional concerns or comments in relation to this proposal proceeding. Should you require any further information, please contact Nicole Davis, Manager - Heritage Assessments, Heritage NSW at [Nicole.davis@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Nicole.davis@environment.nsw.gov.au)

Yours sincerely



Nicole Y Davis

Manager - Heritage Assessments

**Heritage NSW**

**Department of Premier and Cabinet**

21 March 2022