

27 September 2023

Contact: Alison Kniha

Our ref: D2023/97951

Anthony Ko
Department of Planning and Environment
Locked Bag 5022
PARRAMATTA NSW 2124

Dear Mr Ko,

Oven Mountain Pumped Hydro Energy Storage Project (SSI-12422997) – EIS

Thank you for your Major Projects Planning Portal referral dated 15 September 2023, requesting WaterNSW's comments on the EIS for the above project.

WaterNSW provided input to the SEARs for the project on 15 February 2021 (our ref: D2021/15731). In our response we requested that the applicant consider the potential impacts caused by construction activities or traffic on WaterNSW's stream flow gauge (ID 206024) on the Macleay River downstream of Georges River Junction.

We have reviewed the EIS and associated documentation and note that the project now also includes the construction of high voltage transmission lines that will connect the pumped hydro system to Line 965 connecting Kempsey and Armidale. The proposed route for the transmission lines across the Macleay River appears to be located directly at the location for the abovementioned stream gauge (between Tower 8 and Tower 9; EIS Figure 3.11). WaterNSW requests that access for our staff and contractors to the gauge is maintained throughout construction and operation of the project, and that measures are implemented to ensure the gauge is protected.

It is also noted that the project may potentially result in a short-term decrease in surface water volume, flow and quality due to water extraction. To assist WaterNSW account for any unexpected variations in measurements at our stream flow gauge, we request that the proponent advises us with regards to these issues when they are occurring or expected to occur.

Additionally, WaterNSW requests consideration of the construction of the transmission line towers in the proposed Soil and Water Management Plan as the mitigation measures in Table 9.3 of Appendix P do not currently include the towers.

WaterNSW requests the Department continues to consult with us on any development that may impact on our assets, infrastructure or land, using the email address Environmental.Assessments@waternsw.com.au. If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact me at alison.kniha@waternsw.com.au.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Alison Kniha", written over a horizontal line.

ALISON KNIHA
Catchment Protection Planning Manager