

Director - Energy Assessments
Department of Planning and Environment
C/- Major Projects Portal

Attention: Pragya Mathema

Calala Battery Energy Storage System – SSD-52786213

Dear Sir/Madam,

Thank you for your correspondence of 14 November 2023 and the opportunity to provide comment on the Calala Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) development.

The NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI) Agriculture collaborates and partners with our stakeholders to protect and enhance the productive and sustainable use and resilience of agricultural resources and the environment.

I note the proposal is for the development of a 300 MW / 1200 MWh battery storage system and associated infrastructure including connection to the electricity grid.

I have reviewed the environmental impact statement (EIS) for the Calala BESS and particularly the land use conflict risk assessment (Appendix L) and the agricultural land capability study (Appendix M) in the context of potential impacts from the BESS on agricultural land and production.

The proposed BESS is located immediately to the west of the Department of Primary industries' Tamworth Agricultural Institute (TAI). The EIS and supporting documents do not appear to have considered potential impacts of the BESS on the activities of the TAI. NSW DPI Agriculture requests that the following matters be addressed in the response to submissions.

Noise

The Noise and Vibration Assessment has considered the potential impact of the BESS on residential land uses however it does not appear to have addressed impacts on the operations of the TAI. It is requested that the potential impacts of noise from the BESS on livestock (sheep) grazing in adjacent paddocks and researchers undertaking field work (not operating machinery) are addressed.

Impact of TAI Activities on the BESS

The Land Use Conflict Risk Assessment has not addressed the potential impact of DPI activities at TAI on the BESS. Such impacts may include dust generated from agricultural machinery etc. It is requested that the potential for activities at TAI to impact on the BESS and any necessary mitigation

measures that need to be implemented in the construction of the BESS are considered in the response to submissions.

Impacts on TAI Activities

The EIS does not indicate whether the location of the BESS will have any impact on future activities or infrastructure that may be undertaken at TAI. The potential for future buffer areas or easements around the BESS which may restrict the activities undertaken by NSW DPI at TAI or the establishment of new infrastructure on TAI is requested to be detailed in the response to submissions. It is strongly suggested that consultation with NSW DPI be undertaken in this regard to understand the potential activities that may occur at TAI.

Hazard impacts on TAI

The EIS and supporting studies have considered the potential hazards that may arise from the proposed BESS on the surrounding residential land uses however it does not appear to have considered the potential for hazardous impacts (fire, exposure to EMF) on TAI staff or activities. It is requested that the potential hazards that may be faced by TAI are addressed in the response to submissions.

Should you require clarification on any of the information contained in this response, please do not hesitate to contact me on 0429 864 501 or by email at landuse.ag@dpi.nsw.gov.au.

Sincerely



Paul Garnett
Agricultural Land Use Planning Officer
Ag Soil and Water
New England and North West Region
13 December 2023