

Ms Tanja Ibsen
c/- Major Projects website
tanja.ibsen@dpi.nsw.gov.au

Advice on Draft SEARs for Armidale East BESS SSD-65058714

Dear Tania,

Thank you for your correspondence of 24 November 2023 and the opportunity to provide comment on NSW DPI Agriculture requirements for additions to the draft SEARs for this project.

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.

DPI Agriculture has reviewed the scoping report for the proposed development. I understand that the project site is within the New England Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) and is zoned RU1 Primary Production. I also note the site does not have Biophysical Strategic Agriculture Land or draft mapped State Significant Agricultural Land (SSAL).

DPI Agriculture supports the SEARs requirement to undertake a Land Use Conflict Risk Assessment (LUCRA) to address issues related to the current and surrounding land uses.

I note the Scoping Report has conducted a desktop review of the soil landscapes and the draft SEARs requires a soil survey, which is supported by DPI Agriculture.

The commitment to the complete removal of all infrastructure including cabling in the decommissioning and rehabilitation of the site is also supported, increasing likelihood of returning the land to agricultural capability.

Some suggested additions for the SEARs include:

- Rehabilitation plans for all infrastructure during and post construction to include appropriate groundcover management using locally native species to limit dust and other land use conflict issues.
- Preparation of a biosecurity risk management plan to address potential agricultural impacts as a result of the project (pests, weeds, and potential spread of diseases) including a risk assessment outlining the likely plant, animal, and community risk and mitigation measures.

Industry guidelines and resource information (Attachment A) should be provided to the proponent for their consideration when preparing the Environmental Impact Statement.

Should you require clarification on any of the information contained in this response, please do not hesitate to contact me on 0487 023 845 or by email at landuse.ag@dpi.nsw.gov.au.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Nita Scott'.

Nita Scott
Agricultural Land Use Planning Officer
Strategic Policy and Initiatives
New England and North West Region

30 November 2023

Encl: Attachment A: Industry guidelines and resource information

Attachment A – Industry guidelines and resource information

Title	Website link
Land Use Conflict Risk Assessment Guide	https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/lup/development-assessment2/lucra
Infrastructure Proposals on Rural Land	https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/lup/development-assessment2/infrastructure-proposals
The land and soil capability assessment scheme: second approximation 2012 (OEH)	https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/research-and-publications/publications-search/land-and-soil-capability-assessment-scheme
Australian Soil and Land Survey Handbook (CSIRO)	https://ebooks.publish.csiro.au/content/australian-soil-and-land-survey-field-handbook
Guidelines for Surveying Soil and Land Resources (CSIRO)	https://ebooks.publish.csiro.au/content/guidelines-surveying-soil-and-land-resources
Biosecurity Risk Management in Land Use Planning and Development	https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0018/1271241/managing-biosecurity-risks-in-land-use-planning-and-development-guide.pdf