## Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water

Our ref: OUT24/7486

Kurtis Wathen
Planning Group
NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure

Email: kurtis.wathen@dpie.nsw.gov.au

2/06/2024

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Subject: **The Plains Wind Farm (SSD-50629707) – Environmental Impact Statement**

Dear Mr Wathen,

I refer to your request for advice sent on 3 May 2024 to the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) Water Group about the above matter.

The proposed development is for a 1,800 megawatt wind turbine wind farm with 226 turbines, located within the Plains Renewable Energy Park in the NSW South-West Renewable Energy Zone.

DCCEEW Water has reviewed the Environmental Impact Statement and has recommendations regarding water supply and licensing, works on waterfront land and sewage management. Please see **Attachment A** for more detail.

Should you have any further queries in relation to this submission please do not hesitate to contact DCCEEW Water Assessments water.assessments@dpie.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

Rob Brownbill,
Manager, Water Assessments, Knowledge Division
**Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water**

## Attachment A

# Detailed advice to DPE Planning & Assessment regarding The Plains Wind Farm (SSD-50629707) – Environmental Impact Statement

## 1.0 Water supply and licensing

### 1.1 Recommendation – prior to determination

The proponent should confirm water requirements for the project during construction and operation.

**Explanation**
The EIS estimates a water demand of 790 ML/year (section 3.4.5.1) during construction for concrete, road works, earthworks, dust suppression and watering of vegetation. This is significantly higher than the estimate in Table 3-7 which totals 270.53 ML/year.

### 1.2 Recommendation – prior to determination

The proponent should clarify the ability to obtain a secure water supply for the project and demonstrate sufficient entitlement can be obtained prior to take.

**Explanation**
The proposal provides several options to supply water during construction including Council Water Supply, new or existing dams, existing surface water works, or new or existing groundwater supply works. The feasibility and reliability of these should be confirmed to ensure a secure water supply can be obtained for the project. This can be demonstrated through showing sufficient entitlement can be obtained through trade of by providing details of any relevant exemptions and/or consideration of harvestable rights.

### 1.3 Recommendation – prior to determination

The proponent should provide confirmation of the requirement for new bores, pumps or dams.

**Explanation**
Should new bores, dams or pumps be required these should be identified and their impacts assessed if the applicant wants to meet exemptions afforded under section 4.41 of the EP&A Act 1979 (so they will not subsequently require a separate water supply work approval). For new works, these impacts should be assessed against relevant legislation and policy including the Water Sharing Plans.

## 2.0 Waterfront Land

### 2.1 Recommendation – prior to determination

The proponent should provide clarification of the proposed infrastructure layout to meet the buffer requirements from watercourses as defined in the Guidelines for Controlled Activities on Waterfront Land (DPE 2022).

**Explanation**
It is unclear if the proposed turbines will be outside setback limits from of waterfront land. Setbacks should be in accordance with the Guidelines for Controlled Activities, and the layout should be amended if required to meet these limits. It is unclear if the location of underground cables impact waterfront land and the construction and design of stream crossings need to consider stream order in accordance with the Guidelines for Controlled Activities.

## 3.0 Local water utility water supply impacts

### 3.1 Recommendation – prior to determination

The proponent should:

- Confirm the volume of potable and non-potable water to be sourced from town water supplies (either directly or by water carting) during construction and/or operation.
- Confirm the volume of non-potable water is to be sourced from water storages that should be identified, and the amount to be extracted from each water storage.
- Demonstrate that the relevant local water utilities are satisfied that the town water systems can accommodate the water demands without impacting existing services.
- Confirm with the relevant local water utilitie, the impact of the project and potential additional costs from infrastructure upgrades or increased operational activities.
- Confirm water carting arrangements by providing detail that there are carting providers available to cart water for the construction phase of the project.

**Explanation**

Detail should be provided on whether town water supply is a viable option and if this is the preferred water source. DCCEEW encourage the proponent to engage the local water utility early in the process to determine the viability of town water supply to support the project.

## 4.0 Sewage impacts

### 4.1 Recommendation – prior to determination

The proponent should:

- Confirm the method of disposal/transfer of sewage, effluent and/or septage, including availability of liquid waste contractors, during both the construction and operational phases.
- Confirm with the relevant local water utility which sewerage system will receive and manage the sewage load (if this option is preferred), and if this system can accommodate the wastewater demands without impacting existing services.
- Confirm with the relevant local water utility, the impact of the project and potential additional costs from infrastructure upgrades or increased operational activities.
- If wastewater is to be treated on site – ensure that all on site treatment systems are in accordance with the relevant regulations and guidelines and approved by Council.

**Explanation**

An option is proposed for Council to take sewerage but there are no specifics or demonstrated arrangements/agreements provided.

**End Attachment A**