

Megan Ramsdale
Environmental Assessment Officer
Department of Planning Housing and Infrastructure
C/o Major Projects Portal

Re: Stoney Creek BESS – SSD-75680468 – DPIRD Agriculture and Biosecurity Advice

Dear Ms Ramsdale

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the draft SEARs for the above proposal.

NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) collaborates with our stakeholders to protect and enhance the productive and sustainable use and resilience of agricultural resources and the environment.

It is noted that the proposed BESS will occur on the subject site zoned RU1 Primary Production, which is part of a contiguous area containing soils of the highest, most productive agricultural quality in NSW, Land and Soil Capability Class 2 and Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land. Despite the project constituting a 'minor' long term loss of agricultural land, the Department's concern with this project is enabling agriculture to continue as part of a larger holding during construction and operations with minimal disruption, as far as practicable.

We support the requirement for a Land Use Conflict Risk Assessment (LUCRA) per the Scoping Report and draft SEARs, as well as an assessment of agricultural land, resources and values, noting that the level of detail commensurate with the degree of risk to the use of the site post decommissioning is required.

The valuable agricultural land in the immediate locality and associated risks of the project to agricultural biosecurity should be confirmed by the proponent in the EIS. It is requested therefore that the draft SEARs require preparation of a biosecurity management plan as part of the Construction and Operations Environmental Management Plans. Further, to enable cropping at the end of the project life, it is our position that the site be decommissioned to a minimum depth of 500mm.

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

Sincerely



Nita Scott

Agricultural Land Use Planner

Soils and Water | Agricultural Land Use Planning

New England and North West Region

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