

Ewan Reid
Planning Officer
Department of Planning Housing and Infrastructure
C/o Major Projects Portal

Re: Hanworth Battery Energy Storage System – SSD-78179499 – DPIRD Agriculture and Biosecurity Advice

Dear Mr Reid

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the Hanworth Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) request for Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) provided on 28 November 2024.

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

We note that the project includes a disturbance footprint of approximately 26 ha of 47.7 ha of land and involves the construction, operation and decommissioning of a 1.2 GW/4.8GWh BESS located on land zoned RU2 Rural Landscape under Upper Lachlan LEP 2010. The site is adjacent to the lot containing the 330kV Bannaby Substation operated by Transgrid, and the proposed BESS would integrate with existing and planned transmission lines. The site is currently used for livestock grazing, and this would continue outside of the development area.

DPIRD Agriculture and Biosecurity has reviewed the draft SEARs and support the requirement for a Land Use Conflict Risk Assessment (LUCRA) and assessment of agricultural land in the locality which are not elaborated in the Scoping Report. We suggest the inclusion of the following requirements into the draft SEARs:

- Biosecurity management issues during and post construction must be assessed in relation to potential agricultural impacts (pests, weeds, and emergency animal diseases such as Japanese Encephalitis and Foot and Mouth Disease) including a risk assessment outlining the likely plant, animal, and community risks. The preparation of a Biosecurity Management Plan as part of the EIS is recommended as part of the Construction and Operations Environmental

Management Plans. Please refer to DPI's Biosecurity Risk Management in Land Use Planning and Development Guide¹.

- Further, to enable continuation of agricultural activities at the end of the project life, it is our position that the site be decommissioned to a minimum depth of 500mm in areas where there is potential for agriculture. The explicit objective of decommissioning and rehabilitation should be to return the site to its 'pre-development agricultural productivity potential'.

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

Sincerely



Milo Kelly

Agricultural Land Use Planning Officer
Soils and Water | Agricultural Land Use Planning
South East and Tablelands Region

12 December 2024

¹ https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0018/1271241/managing-biosecurity-risks-in-land-use-planning-and-development-guide.pdf