

OUT25/2737

Rita Hatem
Department of Planning Housing and Infrastructure
C/o Major Projects Portal

Molong BESS –SSD-80471210 (Cabonne Shire Council) DPIRD Agriculture and Biosecurity Advice

Dear Ms Hatem

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the draft SEARs for the above proposal. We have reviewed the Scoping Report provided, *Molong BESS*, SLR Consulting dated 20/02/2025 (Rev 2).

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.

The proposed 150MW Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) will be established on the 371ha project site being Lot 1 DP542283 and Lot 99 DP1020247, zoned RU1 Primary Production. The project site is 100% mapped as Land and Soil Capability Class 3 land, State Significant Agricultural Land and Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land approximately 2.5km from the Molong CBD. A transmission line traverses Lot 1. The subject holding and wider locality supports highly productive extensive livestock grazing and cropping which reflect the land's agricultural productivity and historic management.

Any risks to agricultural production on the site and surrounding land due to the project include issues of biosecurity breach, groundcover management, soil erosion and land use conflict. The requirement for a Land Use Conflict Risk Assessment (LUCRA) and agricultural land assessment including soil survey as set out in the draft SEARs is supported.

The following advice is provided for additional inclusions in the issued 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.

- To enable continuation of agricultural activities at the end of the project life, the site should be decommissioned to a minimum depth of 500mm.
- Any subdivision of the site as the result of the project is not to result in additional dwelling eligibilities.

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

Sincerely



Nita Scott

Agriculture & Biosecurity | Agricultural Land Use Planning
Central West Region

7 March 2025

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