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

Kiar BESS – SSD-86051481– DPIRD Agriculture and Biosecurity Advice

Dear Ms Vogel

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 the proposed Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) will be constructed on land zoned RU6 Transition, with Land and Soil Capability (LSC) Class of 4-5 and moderately low soil fertility. The SEED¹ website shows there is 13,758ha of rural-zoned land classed as LSC Class 4 (8.2%) and 2,316ha of LSC Class 5 land (1.4%) in the LGA. There is no LSC Class 1-2, and LSC Class 3 makes up less than 2.5% of rural zoned land in the Central Coast LGA. Further, Central Coast LGA produced \$177.89 million in agricultural commodities in 2020-21², employing over 500 people, and delivering 28 separate agricultural products, being 1st in NSW for cut flowers, 2nd for vegetables and 3rd for poultry (eggs), fruits and nuts.

This is mentioned as there is no acknowledgement of agricultural resources, potential or risks in the Scoping Report.

Surrounding land includes large areas zoned RU1 Primary Production and RU2 Rural Landscape with evidence of agricultural enterprises in recent imagery. Other land uses include industrial, waste disposal, transport infrastructure, large lot residential development and electricity infrastructure. We note the site is heavily vegetated, and adjoining sites have been recently cleared for industrial development.

¹ <https://geo.seed.nsw.gov.au/>

² [AgTrack - Agricultural and Land Use Dashboard](#)

We support the requirement for a Land Use Conflict Risk Assessment (LUCRA) and assessment of adjacent agricultural land including soil survey as set out in the draft SEARs. The following comments are provided for inclusions to the draft SEARs:

- Biosecurity management issues during and post construction are 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 Guide³.
- 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. This includes consideration and mitigation of contaminated soils in the rehabilitation of the site.

The continued availability of land resources for agriculture, whether reliant on biophysical criteria is an important consideration for landscapes with climatic and market advantages in this location.

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
Hunter Region

23 June 2025

³ https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0018/1271241/managing-biosecurity-risks-in-land-use-planning-and-development-guide.pdf