



Our ref: DOC20/732497-21

Your ref: SSI-8896

Ms Rebecca Sommer

Principal Planning Officer  
Social Other Infra Assessments  
Department of Planning, Industry and Environment  
[Rebecca.Sommer@planning.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Rebecca.Sommer@planning.nsw.gov.au)

Dear Ms Sommer

**Response to Submissions Report – Belmont Drought Response Desalination Plant (SSI-8896)**

I refer to your email dated 7 September 2020 in which Social Other Infra Assessments invited Biodiversity and Conservation Division (BCD) of the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (the Department) for comment on the Response to Submissions Report for the proposed Belmont Drought Response Desalination Plant project (SSI-8896), located in Belmont South; within the Lake Macquarie City Council area.

BCD has reviewed the '*Belmont Drought Response Desalination Plant Submissions and Amendment Report*' (prepared by GHD for Hunter Water Corporation, and dated August 2020), including relevant appendices, annexures and attachments in relation to impacts on biodiversity and flooding.

BCD's recommendations are provided in **Attachment A** and detailed comments are provided in **Attachment B**. If you require any further information regarding this matter, please contact Steve Lewer, Senior Regional Biodiversity Conservation Officer, on 4927 3158 or via email at [rog.hcc@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:rog.hcc@environment.nsw.gov.au)

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'S. Cox'.

21 September 2020

**STEVEN COX**  
**Senior Team Leader Planning**  
**Hunter Central Coast Branch**  
**Biodiversity and Conservation Division**

Enclosure: Attachments A and B

## BCD's recommendations

### Belmont Drought Response Desalination Plant (SSI-8896)

---

#### Biodiversity

1. BCD is satisfied that the RTS report has satisfactorily addressed our previous biodiversity comment (dated 13 December 2019) and no further biodiversity assessment is required.

#### Coastal management

2. BCD is satisfied that the RTS report has satisfactorily address previous coastal comments and no further coastal assessment is required.

## BCD's detailed comments

### Belmont Drought Response Desalination Plant (SSI-8896)

---

#### Biodiversity

1. BCD is satisfied with the biodiversity assessment

BCD's prior review of the Environmental Impact Statement for the project contained the following recommendation (as per correspondence dated 13 December 2019 (DOC19/1017918-8)):

- BCD recommends that the groundwater monitoring program includes monitoring of vegetation condition within the area of groundwater drawdown and that the trigger, action, response plan establishes triggers and actions for any vegetation changes associated with groundwater impacts.

#### Recommendation 1

BCD is satisfied that the RTS report has satisfactorily addressed our previous biodiversity comment (dated 13 December 2019) and no further biodiversity assessment is required.

#### Coastal Management

2. BCD is satisfied with the coastal assessment

BCD is satisfied that the proponent has adequately addressed previous concerns (dated 13 December 2019).

#### Recommendation 2

BCD is satisfied that the RTS report has satisfactorily address previous coastal comments and no further coastal assessment is required.