

Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI)
C/- Major Projects Portal

Attention: Kirsty Vogel

Sundown Solar Farm – SSD8911 – Inverell Shire

Dear Ms Vogel,

I refer to your request for advice on the draft conditions of consent for the Sundown Solar Farm dated 25 September 2025.

Agriculture plays a vital role in supporting state, regional, and local economies, as well as strengthening the social connections and character of rural communities. The NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, Agriculture and Biosecurity (the Department) collaborates and partners with our stakeholders to protect and enhance the productive and sustainable use and resilience of agricultural resources and the environment.

The Department's advice is guided by section 4.15(1) of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act)*, which requires a consent authority to evaluate a project's potential environmental, social, and economic impacts, as well as the public interest. Sections 1.3(a) and (b) of the *EP&A Act* emphasise facilitating ecologically sustainable development in land use decision-making and promoting responsible resource management that benefits present and future generations.

The Department has reviewed the draft conditions of consent and provides the following advice.

- Condition B10 Land Management should include ground cover to be maintained at a minimum of 70% to prevent soil erosion.
- Condition B45 Decommissioning and Rehabilitation should include restoring land capability to pre-existing productive capacity, Land and Soil Capability Assessment Scheme (LSC) (Second Approximation) Classes 2, 3, 4 and 6, as identified in the Soil, Land and Agricultural Impact Assessment.

The following items have not been included in the draft conditions of consent, which have been committed to and align with the EIS, Soil, Land, and Agricultural Impact Assessment, and Mitigation Measures, or were previously included in our advice.

- Soil Stripping and Management Plan - outlined in the mitigation measures L1-L12, including an inventory of soils to be stripped and stockpiled, including soil types, stripping areas, depths and volumes, and includes a topsoil and subsoil stripping and stockpiling procedure.
- Grazing Management Plan (GMP) – outlined in the mitigation measures L36-L52, covering animal management, land, pasture, and grazing management, as well as agrisolar biosecurity. The GMP will need to detail measures using the agricultural production baseline outlined in the EIS to maintain ground cover at 70%, as requested by the Department.
- Biosecurity Management Plan (BMP) – effective management of risks during both the construction and operational phases at and within the immediate vicinity of the project site. The Land Use Conflict Risk Assessment (LUCRA) mitigation measures table (item 8) commits to a BMP. Refer to the Biosecurity Risk Management in Land Use Planning and Development Guide¹ for further information and resources.

Should you require clarification on any information provided, please contact Lilian Parker, A/Manager Agricultural Land Use Planning, by email at landuse.ag@dpird.nsw.gov.au.

Sincerely

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Lilian Parker

A/Manager, Agricultural Land Use Planning
Agriculture & Biosecurity | Agricultural Land Use Planning

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