



## **GUNNEDAH SOLAR FARM**

CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATION COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN

April 2020

PREPARED FOR PCL CONSTRUCTORS PACIFIC RIM PTY LTD



Prepared for  
Insert Client

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2	Ben Cushnie	01-04-2020	Updates based on DPIE feedback

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 1 INTRODUCTION .....4**
- 1.1 PROJECT TIMELINE .....4
- 2 ENGAGEMENT APPROACH .....5**
- 2.1 PURPOSE OF THE STRATEGY .....5
- 2.2 ENGAGEMENT PURPOSE .....5
- 2.3 OBJECTIVES .....5
- 2.4 STAKEHOLDERS .....6
- 3 COMMUNICATION TOOLS AND ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES .....7**
- 3.1 COMMITMENT TO THE COMMUNITY .....7
- 3.2 ACTION PLAN .....7
- 3.3 OTHER CONSULTATION REQUIREMENTS .....8
- 4 STAKEHOLDER CONTACT MANAGEMENT .....9**
- 4.1 STAKEHOLDER CONTACT MANAGEMENT .....9
- 4.2 ENQUIRIES AND COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT .....9
- 5 REVIEW .....10**

Appendix 1 - Complaints Investigation Management Plan

## 1 INTRODUCTION

This Plan is prepared for PCL Pty Ltd. who are the proponent for the Gunnedah Solar Farm (GSF or the project) that is proposed to be located near Gunnedah NSW. This plan sets out the key community and stakeholder engagement activities and management strategies for the construction and operation of this project.

The GSF is being developed by Canadian Solar Inc through their wholly owned company Gunnedah Solar Farm Pty Ltd.

The GSF was granted Development Consent (SSD 8658) on the 12th of March 2019 by the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment NSW (DPIE) . The approved development consent allows for the development of a large-scale solar farm located at 765 Orange Grove Road, Gunnedah.

The Proposed Development involves the installation of PV panels with a combined generation capacity of approximately 110 MW(AC) on approximately 200 hectares of land. The proposed project will connect to the Boggabri East-Gunnedah 132 kV line which runs along Orange Grove Road at the southern boundary of the Site. This easement contains existing TransGrid 132kV overhead lines connecting to the Gunnedah substation approximately 2.3km to the south of the site.

The project received a number of objections from the nearby neighbours and was ultimately approved by the Independent Planning Commission subject to a range of conditions. Given these sensitivities it is critical that the community and in a particular these stakeholders are kept well informed about the progress of the project to ensure full awareness of potential actions that may impact on their daily activities.

### 1.1 PROJECT TIMELINE

The indicative timeline for the Project is as follows:

Construction is scheduled to commence in March 2020

Construction, inclusive of commissioning and the subsequent removal of all temporary construction infrastructure is scheduled for late July 2021 representing a 14-month construction period.

Construction hours as per the development consent will be:

- 7:00 am to 6:00 pm Monday to Friday;
- 8:00 am to 1:00 pm on Saturdays; and
- at no time on Sundays and NSW public holidays.

## 2 Engagement Approach

### 2.1 PURPOSE OF THE STRATEGY

The purpose of this strategy is to:

- Identify key stakeholders;
- Characterise the stakeholder groups in terms of their interests, concerns and consultation needs and potential to provide local knowledge;
- Describe the consultation methods to be used and outline a schedule of consultation activities; and
- Outline how inputs from stakeholders will be recorded, considered and/or addressed through various stages of the Project.

### 2.2 ENGAGEMENT PURPOSE

A considered and thorough communication and engagement process will be a critical element of the Project's success. This section summarises how the Project team will communicate and engage with key stakeholders, continue to build brand identity for the PCL Pty Ltd., establish trust and develop effective communication tools and tactics to support the successful construction and completion of the Project.

Our communication and engagement activities will be underpinned by the engagement levels defined by the 2004 International Association of Public Participation: informing, consulting, involving, collaborating and empowering.

Guiding principles:

- Move from informing to listening
- Increasing level of trust in relationships
- Decisions based on collective needs, not individual needs
- People genuinely feel a part of the process and own the solution

### 2.3 OBJECTIVES

Business objectives: (what our business or organisation is aiming to achieve)

- Secure community and stakeholder support for the Project (including planning and environmental approvals as required.)
- Successful construction and operation the large-scale solar farm/energy facility

- Ongoing successful partnership between Project partners including funders
- Ongoing positive relationship with surrounding neighbours and key stakeholders such as Gunnedah Shire Council.

Communication objectives:

- Raise community and stakeholder awareness about the Project and its benefits and opportunities presented by the shift to a renewable energy future.
- Offer community members and stakeholders a genuine opportunity to discuss the Project and any potential issues and benefits of the Project and submit any concerns formally.
- Communication strategies align objectives of key stakeholders, such as:
  - The community consultation requirements of the DPIE
  - The requirements of the landholders
  - The broader State and Federal Government energy policy and strategy statements as relevant to the Project
- Consistent, relevant and regular communication between partners – internal and external.
- To ensure project participants understand and support the Project.
- Facilitate stakeholder and public access to the information they need to support development of a successful Project.
- Community and stakeholders provided with adequate information.
- Support for the Project is maintained throughout the construction period and its life cycle.
- The engagement is flexible and responsive to the outcomes throughout the engagement process.

## 2.4 STAKEHOLDERS

Stakeholders are individuals, groups or other organisations or entities that have an interest in a decision, issue or situation relating to the Project. Not all stakeholder groups are homogenous and each will have varying levels of interest, impact, needs, concerns, wants, relationships and influence. The key stakeholders are identified as follows:

Stakeholder	Description
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Involved landowners	those who have Project infrastructure on their land with landowner agreements in place.
Neighbouring/interested landowners	Neighbours within the vicinity of the solar farm and those who made presentations to the project during the assessment process.
Broader community	Includes people within the Gunnedah township and wider area.
Business/Industry	Includes business/industry within the Gunnedah township and wider area that may be interested in supporting the project.
Authorities	Gunnedah Shire Council is the relevant Shire Council.  Secretary of the Department, or nominee  DPIE – Biodiversity & Conservation, Water  RFS Rural Fire Service  RMS Roads and Maritime Services

Other stakeholders may be identified during the construction process.

### 3 Communication Tools and Engagement activities

#### 3.1 COMMITMENT TO THE COMMUNITY

PCL are committed to delivering the construction of the Project in compliance with the necessary regulations and minimising impacts on neighbours and the surrounding community.

#### 3.2 ACTION PLAN

Prior to and during the construction of the solar arm the following planned activities are proposed.

	Action /Community	Timing	Tools	Responsibility
1	1 on 1 conversations with immediately adjoining landholders.	Prior to construction commencing.	FAQ Sheet 1 – Project Summary and Construction Program. Include contact details.	PCL and representatives.

2	Project update to surrounding landholders.	Q1 2020	FAQ Sheet 1 letter drop.	PCL and representatives.
3	Notification of construction commencement to Council.	Q1 2020	Presentation.	PCL and representatives.
4	State Government Notifications.	As per approvals.	Relevant documentation, Presentations if required	PCL and representatives.
5	Local Businesses.	Q1 2020	Email through Council economic development officer.	PCL and representatives.
6	Media releases.	As required	As required.	PCL and representatives.
7	Announcement of construction commencement	Construction start		PCL and representatives.
8	Construction updates to community and key stakeholders	Throughout construction.	Mail out, website updates, 1:1 meetings as required	PCL and representatives. Canadian Solar
9	Formal Opening.	Post commissioning	Invitations, mail out, media release, website update	PCL and representatives, Canadian Solar
10	Operation Updates to community and key stakeholders	Throughout operation	Mail outs, website updates	PCL and representatives, Canadian Solar, Operation and Maintenance Contractor

### 3.3 OTHER CONSULTATION REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the above activities PCL will meet their community and stakeholder consultation and engagement obligations set out in other management plans developed for the construction of this project. This includes the following key plans:

- Traffic Management Plan
- Water Management Plan
- Construction Environmental Management Plan
- Local Accommodation and Resource Plan



## 4 Stakeholder contact management

### 4.1 STAKEHOLDER CONTACT MANAGEMENT

A stakeholder database and register has been established to record and track details of all stakeholder and community contact (including enquiries, complaints, meetings, events and question arising from community consultation.)

The Register will continue to be utilised to capture community members contact details, the nature of the contact, how the contact was received, any matters raised and any actions required, as well as Project team responses, follow-up and close out.

### 4.2 ENQUIRIES AND COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT

The timely and effective management of queries and complaints is a critical component to the successful delivery of the Project. Complaints will be investigated and an appropriate response provided as soon as is practicably possible and in accordance with the complaints management protocols set out in the following associated plans

- GSF Construction Environmental Management Plan
- GSF Operation Environmental Management Plan

## 5 Review

This plan will be regularly monitored and reviewed and updated quarterly or at major Project milestones, to ensure a culture of continuous improvement, and any lessons learned are incorporated.

Ongoing evaluation is part of the planning and management of community engagement activities and outlined in engagement execution plans that sit under the plan.

Monitoring and evaluation includes:

- Feedback forms for participants of stakeholder engagement activities such as community consultation sessions and workshops.
- Regular review of complaints and enquiries received to identify emerging issues and enquiry trends.
- Media monitoring to maintain a current understanding of community concerns