

Our ref: HMS ID 7006

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Letter uploaded to the Major Projects Planning Portal

Advice on amendment report and response to submissions – State Significant Infrastructure

Proposal: Oven Mountain Pumped Hydro Energy Storage Project

Major Project reference: SSI-12422997

Received: 22 August 2024

Dear Lauren,

Thank you for your referral dated 22 August 2024 inviting comments from the Heritage Council of NSW on the above State Significant Infrastructure (SSI) amendment report and response to submissions. Thank you for the continued opportunity to comment on the project.

The following reports were considered in our assessment of the response to submissions:

- Relevant sections of *Oven Mountain Pumped Hydro Energy Storage Submissions Report*, prepared by EMM, dated 20 August 2024.
- Relevant sections of *Oven Mountain Pumped Hydro Energy Storage Aboriginal cultural heritage assessment addendum*, prepared by EMM, dated 2 August 2024.
- *Oven Mountain Pumped Hydro Energy Storage EIS Statement of Heritage Impact*, prepared by EMM, dated 28 March 2023 (SOHI).
- *Oven Mountain Pumped Hydro Energy Storage EIS World and National Heritage Impact Assessment*, prepared by EMM, dated 23 March 2023.

Our assessment of the proposed amendments to the project included relevant sections of *Oven Mountain Pumped Hydro Energy Storage Amendment Report*, prepared by EMM, dated 19 August 2024.

Comments from Heritage NSW on the response to submissions and amendment report are provided in **Appendix A**.

As Kunderang East Pastoral Station is also listed as a local heritage item, advice should be sought from the relevant local council.

If you have any questions about this correspondence, please contact James Cole, Senior Assessments Officer at Heritage NSW on (02) 9873 8500 or heritagemailbox@environment.nsw.gov.au

Yours sincerely

Nicole Davis

Nicole Davis

Strategic Manager - Major Projects

Heritage NSW

Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water

As Delegate of the Heritage Council of NSW

6 September 2024

Attachment A – Heritage NSW comments on the response to submissions and amendment report

As delegate of the Heritage Council of NSW, the following comments are provided.

In our review, it was identified that there are inconsistencies between the documentation provided. Heritage NSW requests further information to assist in our assessment of the amendment report and response to submissions:

1. An updated SoHI to address inconsistencies within the EIS and response to submissions. The updated SoHI should:
 - a. Provide a clear and consistent impact assessment, including consideration of the proposed amendments to the design.
 - b. Provide management recommendations which are reflected in the Updated Mitigation Measures for the project.

Examples of noted inconsistencies include:

- **Travelling Stock Camp [Crown Reserve No. 1075]:** inconsistencies raised in Heritage NSW's response to the EIS have not been resolved. The SoHI recommends archaeological monitoring (Table ES1) and archaeological test excavation (Table 10.1). Updated Mitigation Measure HH02 in Appendix C of the Submissions Report states that the site will be the subject of an unexpected finds protocol and does not explain why this management measure is proposed, or why it differs from the recommendations of the SoHI.
- **National Trail:** impacts to this item are not clear. Section 3.7 of the Aboriginal cultural heritage assessment addendum references modifications to the trail. Table ES1 of the SoHI states that the setting and landscape of the item will not be impacted, but also that the design will impact portions of the trail. Updated Mitigation Measure HH02 states that impacts to the trail will be avoided, and that the trail will be a no-go area while works are being undertaken.
- **Kunderang East Pastoral Station:** Updated Mitigation Measure HH02 proposes archival recording as a mitigation measure. Table 6.11 of the amendment report does not include this mitigation measure, and states that the works will have no impact on the item. This assessment is inconsistent with Section 9 of the SoHI submitted with the EIS, which notes that the works will have a low impact on the heritage significance of the item and recommends archival recording.

The variation between the information provided in the reviewed documents means that the impacts of the proposed works to historic heritage and the appropriateness of proposed mitigation measures are not clear. Heritage NSW is unable to provide further advice on the amendment report and response to submissions until these issues have been resolved.