

Kurtis Wathen
Department of Planning

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The Plains Wind Farm SEARs (SSD-50629707) (Hay, Edward River)

Dear Kurtis

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the The Plains Wind Farm SEARs (SSD-50629707) (Hay, Edward River).

The NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI) Agriculture collaborates and partners with our stakeholders to protect and enhance the productive and sustainable use and resilience of agricultural resources and the environment.

NSW DPI notes while the project area is predominantly pastoral lands considered Land and Soil Capability Class 4, 5 and 6, some draft State Significant Agricultural lands have been identified and should be avoided in the final layout. All lands are zoned RU1 Primary Production.

The draft SEARs have been reviewed for their consideration of agricultural lands, production and operation. DPI Ag supports the application of the agricultural impact assessment process detailed in the Revised Large Scale Solar Guidelines.

While the draft SEARs generally cover agricultural land use planning and land use conflict requirements some specific requirements are outlined below:

- Although there is no BSAL, an area of draft State Significant Agricultural Land (<https://nswdpi.mysocialpinpoint.com/ssal>) based on irrigated lands have been identified and construction of wind turbines and associated infrastructure should be avoided on these lands.
- Constraint mapping provided should also show appropriate buffers and separation distances for constraints such as host dwellings, non host dwellings, irrigation areas and infrastructure, airstrips, and TSRs, not just environmental and cultural assets.
- Decommissioning Management Plan should include, but not limited to, describing the potential design criteria of the final land use and landform, indicators which may be used to guide the return of the land back to possible agricultural production, along with the expected timeline for the rehabilitation program. This should also include the commitment to remove all infrastructure above and below ground, to a depth of 500mm.
- Rehabilitation plans at all turbine and infrastructure sites during and post construction should detail appropriate groundcover management using locally native species to limit dust and other land use conflict issues.
- A Land Use Conflict Risk Assessment (LUCRA) should be undertaken in relation to land management issues during and post construction, as well as specific justification for the proposed worker accommodation site. DPI Ag does not support the development of extra dwellings on RU1 Primary Production zoned lands remote from towns or villages due to the potential for land use conflicts. Benefits to the local community would be enhanced by providing

such accommodation in or adjacent to town or village centres with suitable infrastructure and utilities.

- Biosecurity management issues during and post construction must be 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.

Should you require clarification on any of the information contained in this response, please do not hesitate to contact Lilian Parker on 0427812508 or by email at landuse.ag@dpi.nsw.gov.au

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "L Parker".

Lilian Parker
Agricultural Land Use Planning
Agricultural Strategic Initiatives
Signed 24-11-2022