

Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements
Section 78A (8A) of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*
Schedule 2 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000*

Application Number	SSD 6784
Development	Parkes Solar Farm The construction and operation of a 30MVA solar photovoltaic (PV) plant and associated infrastructure.
Location	Located within the Parkes Shire Council area, approximately 10 km north west of Parkes. The development site is located at Lot 4, DP 854193.
Applicant	Neoen Australia Pty Ltd
Date of Issue	9 December 2014
General Requirements	The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) must be prepared in accordance with, and meet the minimum requirements of, Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000 (the EP&A Regulation) and include the following: - The information required under clause 6: - the description of the development for the solar farm should include: → construction, operation and decommissioning details; → a site plan at an adequate scale with dimensions, showing the development's location, orientation, site coverage, access roads and entrances to public roads; → the location and dimensions of all development components including the solar PV module array, transformer stations and switchgears, control system, underground and above ground cabling, and transmission line linking the solar farm to the substation, fencing and landscaping around the solar-farm, on-site office, operations and maintenance buildings, temporary construction infrastructure and compounds, and access roads/road upgrades (including access tracks); → a timeline identifying the development's proposed construction and operation components, their envisaged lifespan and arrangements for decommissioning and staging; → supporting maps/plans clearly identifying existing environmental features (e.g. watercourses, vegetation), infrastructure and land use (including nearby residences and approved residential developments or subdivisions) and the location/siting of the development (including associated infrastructure) in the context of this existing environment; and → resourcing requirements (including, but not limited to, water supply and gravel). - the content listed in clause 7, including, but not limited to: - a summary of the EIS; - a statement of the objectives of the development, including a description of the strategic need, justification, objectives and outcomes. This should include: → a strategic assessment of the need, scale, scope and location of the development in relation to predicted electricity demand, predicted transmission constraints and the strategic direction of the region and the State in relation to electricity supply, demand and electricity generation technologies, and its role within the Commonwealth's Renewable Energy Target Scheme; and → a clear demonstration of quantified and substantiated

	greenhouse gas benefits, taking into consideration sources of electricity that could realistically be replaced and the extent of their replacement; • an analysis of feasible alternatives to the carrying out of the development, having regard to its objectives, including an assessment of the environmental costs and benefits of the development relative to alternatives and the consequences of not carrying out the development, the suitability of the chosen option and whether or not the development is in the public interest. This should include: → an analysis of the suitability of the development with respect to potential land use conflicts with existing and future surrounding land uses (including rural residential development, land of significant scenic or visual value, land of high agricultural value, mineral reserves including existing mineral exploration operations within the proximity of the subject area, forestry and conservation areas), taking into account local and strategic land use objectives including the potential loss of agricultural land the impact on the local community; and → describe the alternatives considered (location and/or design) for all development components, and provide justification for the preferred development demonstrating its benefits including community benefits (for example community enhancement programmes) on a local and strategic scale and how it achieves states objectives. • an analysis of the development, including an assessment, with a particular focus on the requirements of the listed key issues, in accordance with clause 7(1)(d) of the EP&A Regulation (where relevant); • an identification of how relevant planning, land use and development matters (including strategic and statutory matters) have been considered in the impact assessment (direct, indirect and cumulative impacts) and/or developing management/mitigation measures, including section 79C of the EP&A Act, applicable State Planning Policies (SEPP), Local Environmental Plans, the nature and extent of any prohibitions that apply to the development and demonstration that the site is suitable for the proposed use in accordance with SEPP 55; • a compilation of the measures proposed to mitigate any adverse effects of the development on the environment; • a justification for the development taking into consideration the objects of the EP&A Act; and • detail how the principles of ecologically sustainable development will be incorporated in the design, construction and ongoing operation phases of the development.
Key Issues	The EIS must address the following specific matters: • Flora and Fauna – the EIS must: → include an assessment of the impacts of all development components on flora and fauna (both terrestrial and aquatic, as relevant) and their habitat; → The assessment must take into account: ○ the <i>Threatened Species Assessment Guidelines</i> (DECC, 2007); ○ the <i>Threatened Species Biodiversity Survey and Assessment: Guidelines for Developments and Activities</i> (DEC, 2004); and ○ <i>Central West Local Land Services Transitional Catchment Action Plan</i> including details on the existing site conditions and likelihood of disturbance (including quantifying the worst case extent of the impact on the basis of vegetation type and total

	native vegetation disturbed); and ○ The <i>Framework for Biodiversity Assessment</i>. → specifically consider impacts on threatened species and ecological communities listed under both State and Commonwealth legislation that have the potential to occur on the site and surrounding land, impacts on riparian and/ or instream habitat in the case of disturbance of waterways, and on biodiversity corridors; → include details of how flora and fauna impacts would be managed during construction and operation including adaptive management and maintenance protocols (including the mitigation and/or management of weeds); and → any steps taken to mitigate or offset any identified impacts to the environment should also be detailed in the EIS. Current OEH offsets policy should be used in assessing and determining the adequacy of any offsets. Note that a <i>NSW Biodiversity Offsets Policy for Major Projects</i> is now being implemented. • Visual Impacts - the EIS must: → provide an assessment of the landscape character and values and any scenic or significant vistas of the area potentially affected by the development. This should describe community and stakeholder values of the local and regional visual amenity and quality, and perceptions of the development based on surveys and consultation; → include a full assessment of the visual impacts associated with the solar farm, including identification and documentation of all key viewing points and corridors particularly from identified sensitive lands. This should also include the associated transmission line. Alternative pole designs should be presented and assessed and the potential for undergrounding in sensitive locations should also be assessed; → provide an assessment of the potential for reflectivity from the panels and associated infrastructure, and any safety impacts for motorists or aircraft; → include photomontages of the development taken from potentially affected residences (including approved but not yet developed dwellings or subdivisions with residential rights), settlements and significant public view points, and provide a clear description of proposed visual amenity mitigation and management measures for the solar farm; and → provide an assessment of the feasibility, effectiveness and reliability of proposed mitigation measures and any residual impacts after these measures have been implemented. • Noise Impacts - the EIS must: → include a noise assessment of all phases and components of the development including, but not limited to construction noise (focusing on high noise-generating activities and any works proposed outside of standard construction hours, traffic noise, and vibration generating activities). The assessment must identify noise/vibration sensitive locations (including approved but not yet developed dwellings), baseline conditions based on monitoring results, the levels and character of noise (eg. tonality, impulsiveness etc.) generated by noise sources, noise/vibration criteria, modelling assumptions and worst case and representative noise/vibration impacts; → include monitoring to ensure that there is adequate background noise data that is representative for all sensitive receptors;
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- provide justification for the nominated average background noise level used in the assessment process, considering any significant difference between daytime and night time background noise levels if there are noise generating activities at night; and
- clearly outline the noise mitigation, monitoring and management measures that would be applied to the development. This must include an assessment of the feasibility, effectiveness and reliability of proposed measures and any residual impacts after these measures have been incorporated.

The assessment must take into account the following guidelines (as relevant):

- Site Establishment and Construction – *Interim Construction Noise Guidelines* (DECC, 2009);
 - Traffic Noise – *NSW Road Noise Policy* (DECCW, 2011);
 - Vibration – *Assessing Vibration: A Technical Guideline* (DECC, 2006); and
 - Operation – *NSW Industrial Noise Guideline* (EPA, 2000).
- **Heritage** – the EIS must include an assessment of impacts on Aboriginal heritage. The EIS must demonstrate the likely impacts of the development to Aboriginal heritage (including cultural and archaeological significance). Where impacts are identified the assessment shall:
 - outline the proposed mitigation and management measures (including measures to avoid significant impacts and an evaluation of the effectiveness of the measures) generally consistent with the *Draft Guidelines for Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment and Community Consultation* (Department of Environment and Conservation, 2005) and *Guide to investigating, assessing and reporting on Aboriginal Cultural Heritage in NSW* (DECCW, 2011);
 - be undertaken by a suitably qualified heritage consultant(s);
 - demonstrate effective consultation with Aboriginal communities in accordance with the *Aboriginal cultural heritage consultation requirements for proponents 2010* (DECCW) in determining and assessing impacts and developing and selecting options and mitigation measures (including the final proposed measures); and
 - demonstrate that an appropriate archaeological assessment methodology, including research design (where relevant) has been undertaken, to guide physical archaeological test excavations of areas of potential archaeological deposits. The full spatial extent and significance of any archaeological evidence shall be established and results of excavations included.
 - **Traffic and Transport** – the EIS must assess the construction and operational traffic impacts of the development including:
 - details of the nature of traffic generated, transport routes, traffic volumes and potential impacts on local and regional roads (including impacts on the structural integrity of the road network), bridges and intersections, including any proposed road upgrades and repairs;
 - details of measures to mitigate and/or manage the potential impacts, including measures to control soil erosion and dust generated by traffic volumes and measures to ensure efficiency and safety on the public road network; and
 - details of site access roads including how these would connect to the existing road network and any operational maintenance or handover requirements.

	This must be prepared in accordance with the methodology set out in Section 2 of the RTA's <i>Guide to Traffic Generating Development's 2002</i>. • Hazard/Risks– the EIS must include an assessment of potential hazards and risks associated with electric and magnetic fields (EMFs) (with reference to Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency standards) and bushfires. The EIS should demonstrate the application of the Principles of Prudent Avoidance in relation to EMFs. The EIS must also detail measures to contain any hazardous substances to prevent the contamination of pasture and dams. • Water Quality, Waterways and Flooding – The EIS must include: → an assessment of the likely impacts to the waterways and measures to minimise impacts including details of the design of waterway crossings; → an assessment of soil erosion issues and the potential for clearing to create salinity risks; → details of water supply demands and an assessment of whether an adequate and secure water supply is available for the project, including statutory (licensing) context of the water supply sources, and assess potential environmental impacts associated with the use of identified sources including impacts on surface and groundwater sources and implications for existing licensed users; → an assessment of any proposed modification to surface water management including modelling of redistribution of waters and an assessment of the impact on neighbouring properties and the associated watercourse and floodplain; → an assessment of the potential for groundwater to be intercepted; → an assessment demonstrating consistency with the relevant Water Sharing Plan(s); and → an appropriate assessment of potential flooding impacts, undertaken generally in accordance with the principles, processes and guidelines as outlined in the NSW Government <i>Floodplain Development Manual 2005</i>. The study shall consider a full range of potential flood events up to and including the Probable Maximum Flood (PMF) and any local floodplain risk management planning processes.
Environmental Risk Analysis	General Environmental Risk Analysis – notwithstanding the key assessment requirements, the EIS must include an environmental risk analysis to identify potential environmental impacts associated with the development, proposed mitigation measures and potentially significant residual environmental impacts after the application of proposed mitigation measures. Where additional key environmental impacts are identified through this environmental risk analysis, an appropriately detailed impact assessment of the additional key environmental impact(s) must be included in the EIS.
Consultation	The Proponent must undertake a consultation program as part of the environmental assessment process, including consultation with, but not necessarily limited to, the following parties: • Parkes Shire Council; • Central West Local Land Services; • Office of Environment and Heritage and Environment Protection Authority; • Department of Primary Industries (NSW Office of Water); • NSW Trade and Investment (Crown Lands Division and NSW Mineral Resources);

	• NSW Roads and Maritime Service; • NSW Rural Fire Service; • TransGrid; • Local Aboriginal Land Council; • Relevant mineral stakeholders (including exploration and mining title holders); and the local community and landowners The consultation process shall include measures for disseminating information to increase awareness of the development as well as methods for actively engaging stakeholders on issues that would be of interest/concern to them. The EIS must: → Demonstrate effective consultation with stakeholders, and that the level of consultation with each stakeholder is commensurate with their degree of interest/concern or likely impact; → Clearly describe the consultation process undertaken for each stakeholder/group including details of the dates of consultation and copies of any information disseminated as part of the consultation process (subject to confidentiality); and → Describe the issues raised during consultation and how and where these have been addressed in the EIS.
Further consultation after 2 years	If you do not lodge an EIS for the development within 2 years of the issue date of these SEARs, you must consult with the Secretary in relation to the requirements for lodgement.