

Your ref: Tilbuster 2 Solar Farm (SSD-69799460)
Our ref: 12636761

16 June 2026

Nestor Tsambos
Energy Assessments
Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure
4 Parramatta Square, 12 Darcy Street
Parramatta, NSW 2124

Tilbuster 2 Solar Farm Response to Submissions Report – Request for Additional Information

Dear Nestor

GHD Pty Ltd (GHD) has been engaged by Quintas Energy (Quintas) on behalf of EP Sunspot 5 Pty Ltd (the proponent) to prepare this response to a request for information (RFI) (dated 3 March 2026) relating to the Response to Submissions Report prepared for the proposed Tilbuster 2 Solar Farm (the proposal).

The information requested is addressed in turn on the following pages.

Please don't hesitate to contact the undersigned if you have any queries.

Regards



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1. Pre-development and post-development flood mapping

The Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) have requested pre and post development flood mapping for the proposal site. This is provided in Attachment 1.

The flood modeling found that the proposed solar array would be largely located outside areas of high flood hazard and therefore the proposal is unlikely to result in an adverse impact on flooding within Duval Creek, provided that the flood management recommendations contained in Section 6.0 of the Hydrological and Hydraulic Analysis (Footprint, November 2024) prepared for Stage 1 of the Tilbuster Solar Farm are applied. The relevant recommendations of this report have been added to the revised mitigation measures in Attachment 2.

As the design clearly avoids flood impact areas, a post-development assessment was deemed unnecessary as it would not provide a materially different outcome compared to the pre-development assessment, given the proposal's avoidance of flood impacts.

2. Updated mitigation measures

The revised mitigation measures for the proposal are included in Attachment 2.

These measures have been updated to:

- Include new measures to mitigate visual impacts (measure V02 and V03).
- Revise measures to clarify visual receivers (R5 and R7) subject to mitigation (measure V04 and V05).
- Include a new measure to mitigate glare impacts for receivers OP6 (R6), OP7 (R7), OP8 (R8) and OP9 (R9) (measure V06).
- Include a new measure (T04) to restrict construction traffic at the intersection with the New England Highway.
- Include new measures to mitigate flood impacts (measure WQ11-WQ15).

Deleted text is indicated by ~~strike through~~ and new text is in **red**.

Landowner agreements to the implementation of visual, glare and noise mitigation at receivers R5 (OP5) and R7 (OP7) are included in Attachment 3.

3. Agreed heads of term for a Voluntary Planning Agreement

Armidale Regional Council (ARC) has resolved as follows at the May 2026 meeting:

59/26 RESOLVED That Council accept the following general terms of the Planning Agreement proposed by the proponent in relation to Tilbuster 2 Solar Farm (State Significant Development SSD-69799460): a. Annual payment of \$850 (in 2023 dollars and adjusted annually for CPI) per MW of capacity from the commencement of operation for the development's operational life.

The draft Voluntary Planning Agreement (VPA) is now progressing through final legal review.

4. Information requests from government agencies

4.1 Conservation Programs, Heritage and Regulation Group

The Conservation Programs, Heritage and Regulation Group (CPHR) of the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) submitted an RFI on 18 December 2025. The issue raised is addressed in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 CPHR RFI

Issue/s raised	Response
Confirmation of the extent of the species polygon for the southern myotis (<i>Myotis Macropus</i>).	Revised mapping and credit calculations are provided in the revised Biodiversity Development Assessment Report (dated 19 May 2026).

4.2 Heritage NSW

Heritage NSW (HNSW) submitted an RFI on 16 December 2025. The issues raised are addressed in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 HNSW RFI

Issue/s raised	Response
Confirm PAD 1 and 4 extents and the rationale for not undertaking test excavation	Additional detail regarding the mapping of PAD 1 and 4 and the rationale for not requiring test excavation is provided in the letter report in Attachment 4. The approach taken and the additional information required was confirmed in meetings with HNSW on 11 and 23 February 2026.

4.3 Armidale Regional Council

An RFI was received from ARC on 22 December 2025. The issues raised and the proponent's response are summarised in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3 ARC RFI

Issue/s raised	Response
ARC requests that determination of the development application be deferred until VPA terms are settled.	This issue is discussed in detail in Section 3.
ARC requests that conditions of consent explicitly prohibit the use of council water resources.	The proponent has no objection to this being a condition of consent.
ARC requests that conditions of consent explicitly prohibit the use of council landfill facilities.	The proponent has no objection to this being a condition of consent.
ARC requests that a comprehensive Workforce Accommodation and Employment Strategy be submitted as an amendment to the EIS, not post-approval.	Quintas convened a meeting with ARC the week of 9 March 2026. Daniel Boyce, Chief Officer, Planning and Activation, confirmed at the meeting that ARC is agreeable to receiving a Workforce Accommodation and Employment Strategy once additional construction details are known i.e. post approval. Quintas has been working with Daniel to shape employment and accommodation solutions with the UNE, and all parties are aligned. In principle agreements have been agreed with the UNE and they have confirmed they have sufficient accommodation capacity. The proponent will prepare a detailed strategy, informed by the NSW Guidelines for Construction Workers Accommodation, prior to construction commencement as per standard practice.

Issue/s raised	Response
	Considerable detail around accommodation and employment is already provides in the Social Impact Assessment (SIA) for the proposal, including monthly workforce forecasts (based on a predicted start date). There is no new information available at this time that has not already been shared. Any further report would be a reformatting or reshaping of existing material, not an addition. The EPC Contractor has not yet been appointed. Their input will be essential to produce a reliable and detailed Workforce Accommodation and Employment Strategy, covering their labour sourcing, accommodation coordination as agreed, and workforce logistics, which will be informed by our SIA. Preparing a strategy prior to an EPC appointment, would be premature and limited in any practical value at this preliminary stage. The proponent is committed to preparing the strategy at the point at which the document will be most accurate and useful to the project/community.
ARC requests that conditions of consent ensure that the construction contractor provides on-site medical services (such as telehealth) for non-resident workers	The proponent has no objection to this being a condition of consent.

4.4 Transport for NSW

An RFI was received from Transport for NSW (TfNSW) on 13 February 2026. The issued raised and the proponent's response are summarised in Table 4.4. A request for a meeting to discuss and close out RFIs was submitted to TfNSW on 24 February 2026 but the request was denied due to lack of available personnel.

Table 4.4 TfNSW RFI 1

Issue/s raised	Response proposed
Confirmation of the dimensions and mass of the laden vehicle configuration (load vehicle).	The Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) for the proposal has been updated to provide the dimensions of the laden vehicle configuration (load vehicle). Refer Section 3.2 of the revised TIA.
Inconsistencies between HV types and volumes in the body text.	The revised TIA has been updated to clarify this (see Section 3.2 and Table 3.1). It is noted that BAL/BAR requirements do not change.
Confirm the actual construction peak hour and the network peak hour for the New England Highway.	The construction and network peak is included in Section 2.7 of the revised TIA.
Revise turn warrant assessment to use 2023 traffic volumes.	The warrant assessment in the revised TIA has been updated with the 2023 traffic volumes supplied. The updated assessment found that the provision of a BAL and BAR on the New England Highway, as currently constructed, is suitable to accommodate the expected combined Stage 1 and Stage 2 construction trips and the background traffic volumes on the New England Highway during the AM and PM construction peak hours (see Section 3.4.1).
Figure 2.5 uses inconsistent units. Please amend in the updated TIA.	Figure 2.5 has been updated.
OSOM swept paths are to be removed in the revised TIA if OSOM are not to be used.	Appendix B and C have been deleted.
Gate to be removed Stage 1 access road.	This is not directly relevant to proposal but will be actioned by the proponent.
Dimensions of the transformers and their associated vehicles.	The proponent has advised that no transformers are required for the proposal.

A revised TIA was submitted to TfNSW and additional comments were received on 20 April 2026. These are addressed in Table 4.5. The TIA was again revised (dated 4 June 2026).

Table 4.5 **TfNSW RFI 2**

Issue/s raised	Response proposed
As the background peak hour has not been assessed, TfNSW recommends a condition to restrict the number of vehicle movements during the background peak hours.	The proponent has no objection to this being a condition of consent.
It is unclear the cumulative impact on traffic volumes and thus the turn warrant assessment. Quantification of cumulative impacts is to be included in a revised TIA.	Additional assessment of cumulative impacts has been included in Section 3.6 of the revised TIA. No additional impacts were noted.
The right turn value is on the cusp of the next order treatment. Restrictions on the number of vehicles turning right into the Access Road may need to be conditioned, along with further mitigation measures.	The turn treatment has been reassessed in the revised TIA using the 2024 data. The assessment found the provision of a BAL and BAR on the New England Highway, as currently constructed, is suitable to accommodate the expected combined Stage 1 and Stage 2 construction trips and the background traffic volumes on the New England Highway during the AM and PM construction peak hours (see Section 3.4.1 of the revised TIA). An additional mitigation measure has been included to ensure vehicle volumes remain compliant and within the safety threshold for the existing BAL/BAR treatments (see Section 4 of the revised TIA).
While TfNSW has provided the 2023 traffic count data to assist the Applicant, the traffic count data provided in the Tilbuster 1 Solar Farm Mod 1 RFI Response (18 July 2025), is more recent (from December 2024) and should have been used to conduct assessments. TfNSW's preliminary assessments using the more updated data provided for Tilbuster 1 Solar Farm indicates that AUL(s) / CHR(s) treatments are required in the construction AM peak hour. Further high-level mitigation measures to ensure vehicle volumes remain compliant and within the safety threshold for the existing BAL/BAR treatments during the background peak hour are to be included within a revised response.	
TfNSW suggests the addition of a condition such that no high-risk OSOM / heavy vehicles requiring escort are to be utilised as part of the Tilbuster 2 Solar Farm project.	The proponent has no objection to this being a condition of consent.

5. Additional requests

The DPHI requested a revised proposal figure showing the internal access road connections to Stage 1 of the Tilbuster Solar Farm. This is shown in Figure 5.1.

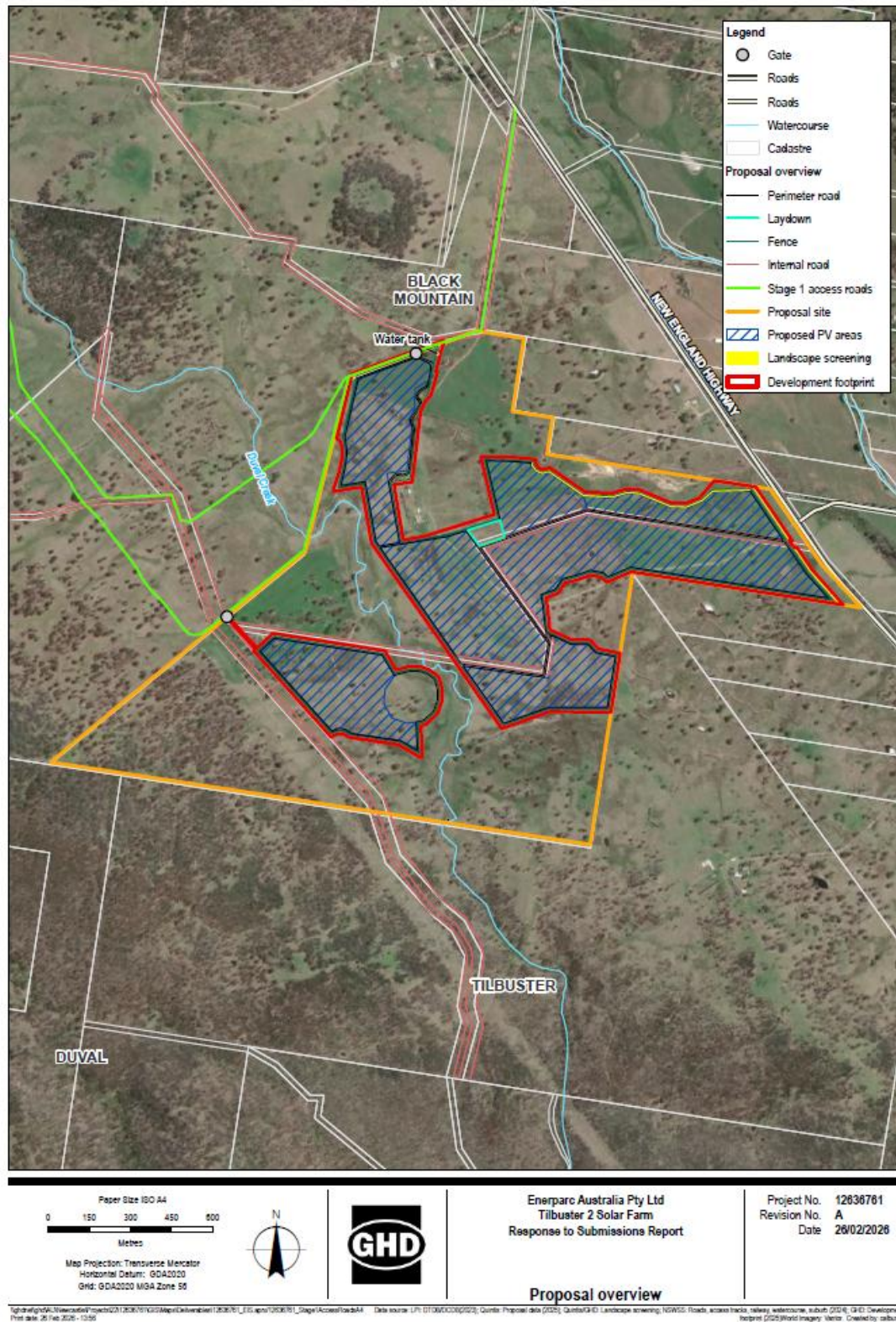


Figure 5.1 Proposal overview

Attachments

Attachment 1

Flood mapping

28 May 2026

Leo Mangini
Quintas Energy
C/- leo.mangini@quintasenergy.com

Dear Leo,

**Tilbuster 2 Solar Farm
SSD-69799460**

I refer to your request to provide advice regarding potential flood risk associated with the above project.

Footprint previously undertook a detailed flood assessment for the adjacent Tilbuster Solar Farm, and the methodology and findings of that assessment are included in the report titled 'Proposed Solar Farm, Tilbuster, New South Wales – Hydrological and Hydraulic Analysis', dated 05 November 2024 (the "Tilbuster Report").

The modelling for the adjacent Tilbuster Solar Farm included parts of the proposed Tilbuster 2 Solar Farm, particularly those adjacent to Duval Creek. The relationship between the Tilbuster 2 site (red), the Tilbuster site (green) and the hydraulic model boundary (black) is shown in Figure 1.

The existing hydraulic modelling undertaken for the Tilbuster site has been used to assess the potential flood impacts on the Tilbuster 2 site, noting that the eastern portion of Tilbuster 2 falls outside the extent of this modelling as it is located east of the ridge between Duval Creek and Tilbuster Ponds.

The Tilbuster 2 site layout has been overlaid on the pre-development flood mapping prepared for the Tilbuster project and a copy of this mapping is included in Annexure A.

The figures show that the extent of the proposed solar array for Tilbuster 2 is typically clear of the extent of fluvial flooding associated with Duval Creek for the 5% AEP and 1% AEP events. Some areas on the western side of Duval Creek are impacted in the PMF event; however, these are generally outside the H6 hazard in that event. Otherwise, minor overland flooding is shown to occur through the solar arrays west of Duval Creek over first and second or watercourses (ephemeral depressions) in this area, however these flows are of low hazard (H1-H2) in all events.

Given that the proposed solar arrays are to be largely located outside areas of high flood hazard the proposed works are unlikely to result in an adverse impact on flooding within Duval Creek provided that the flood management recommendations contain in Section 6.0 of the Tilbuster Report are applied to this development.

Should you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Yours sincerely



Ashley Bond
Director/Principal Engineer

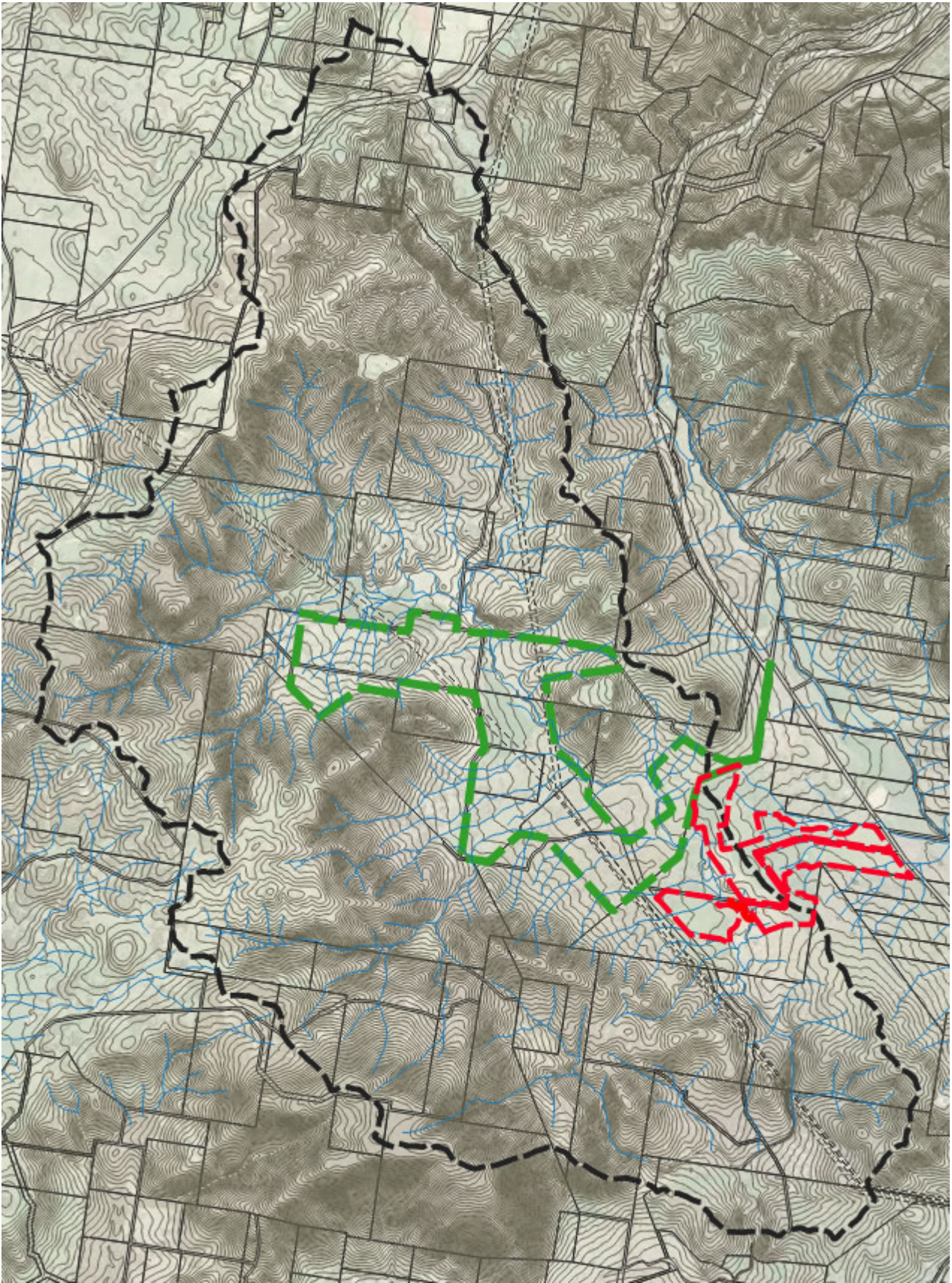
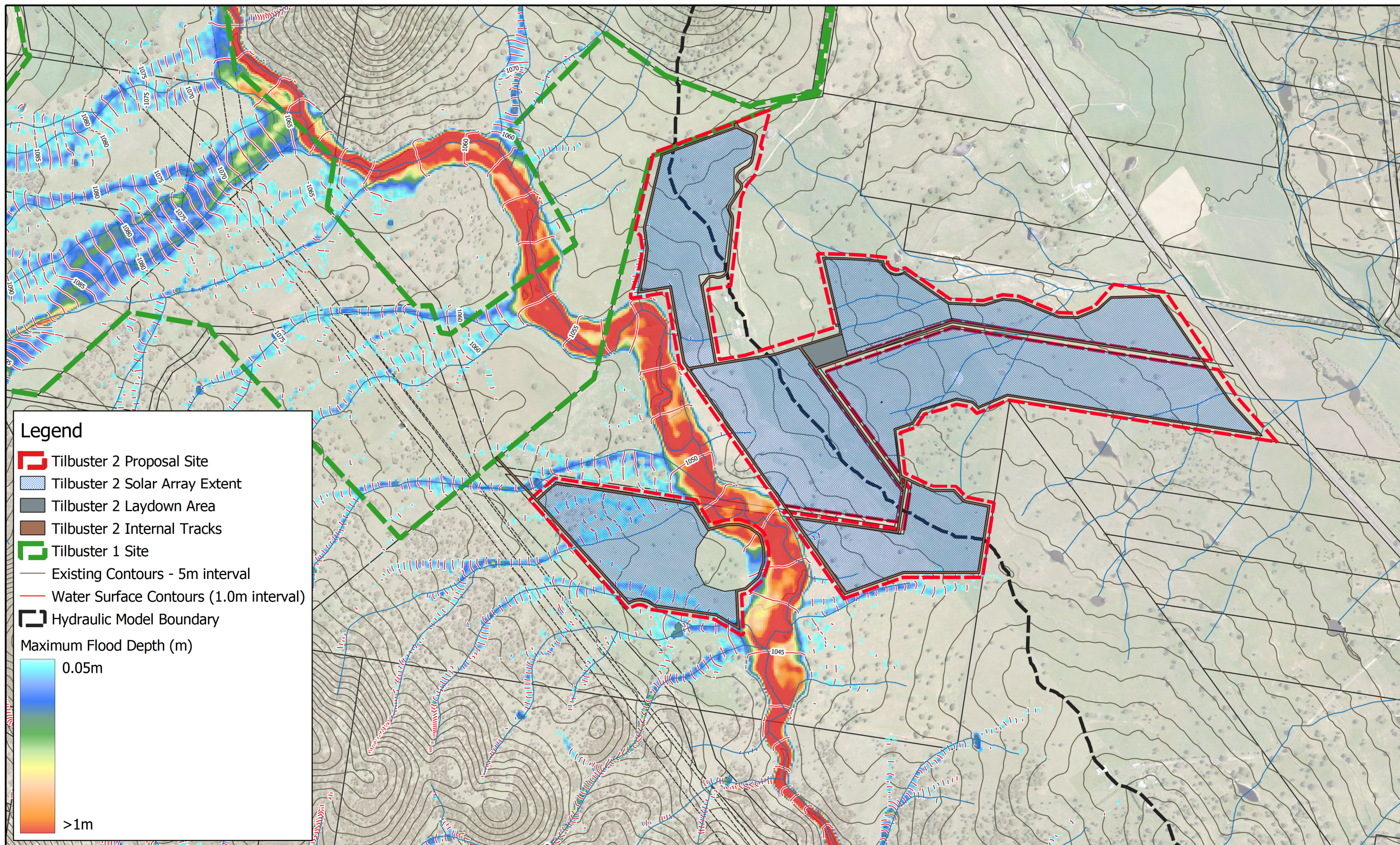
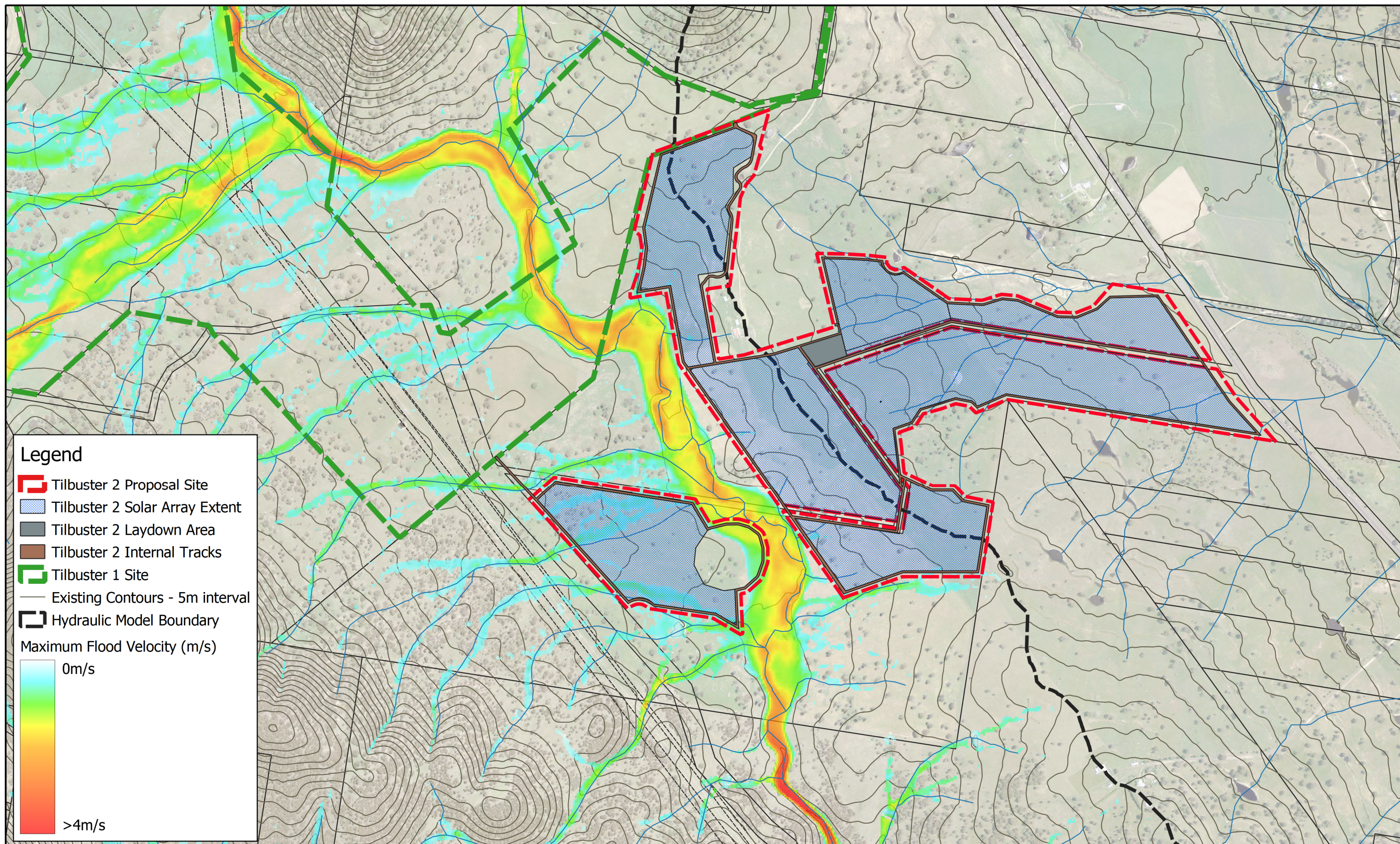
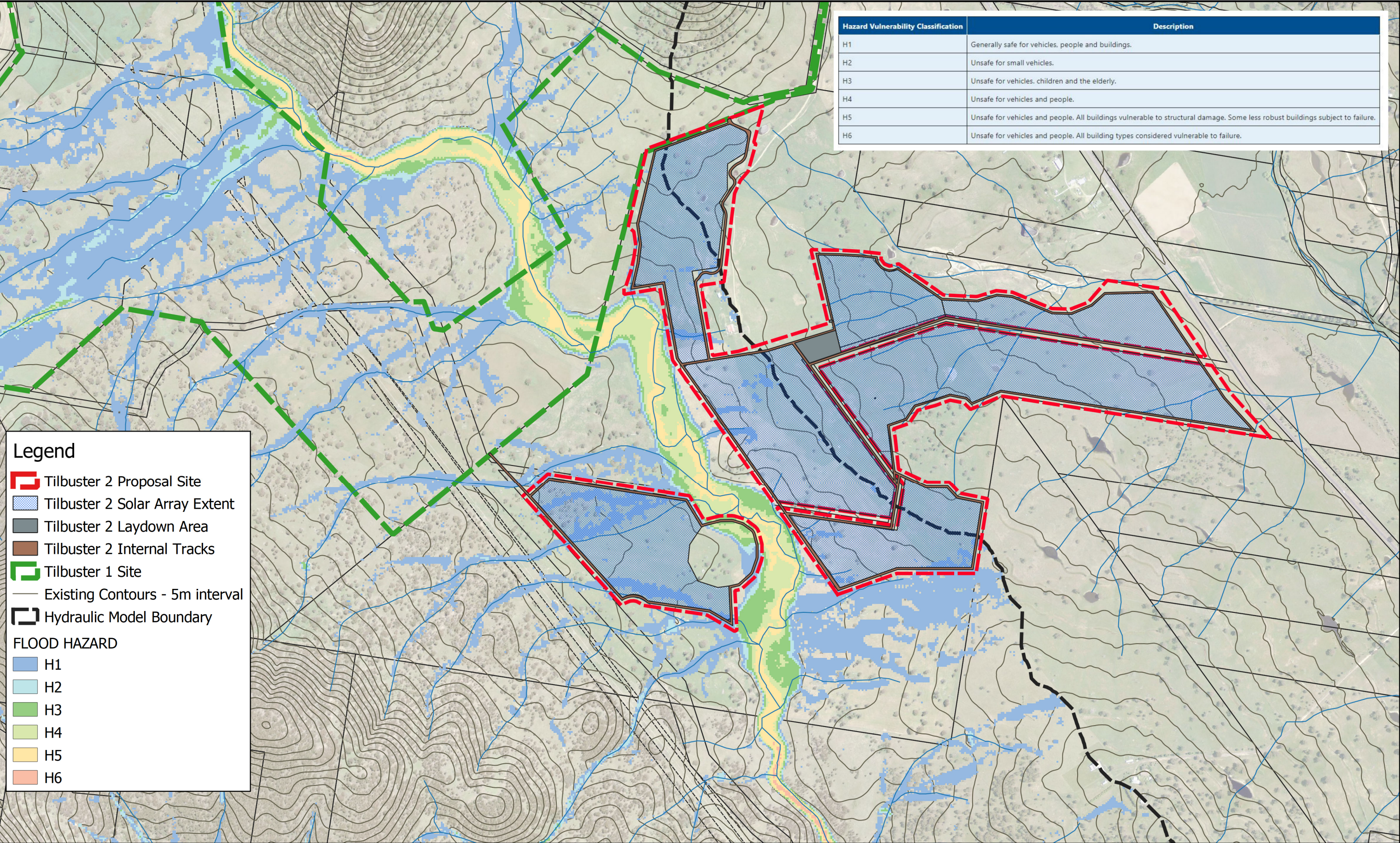


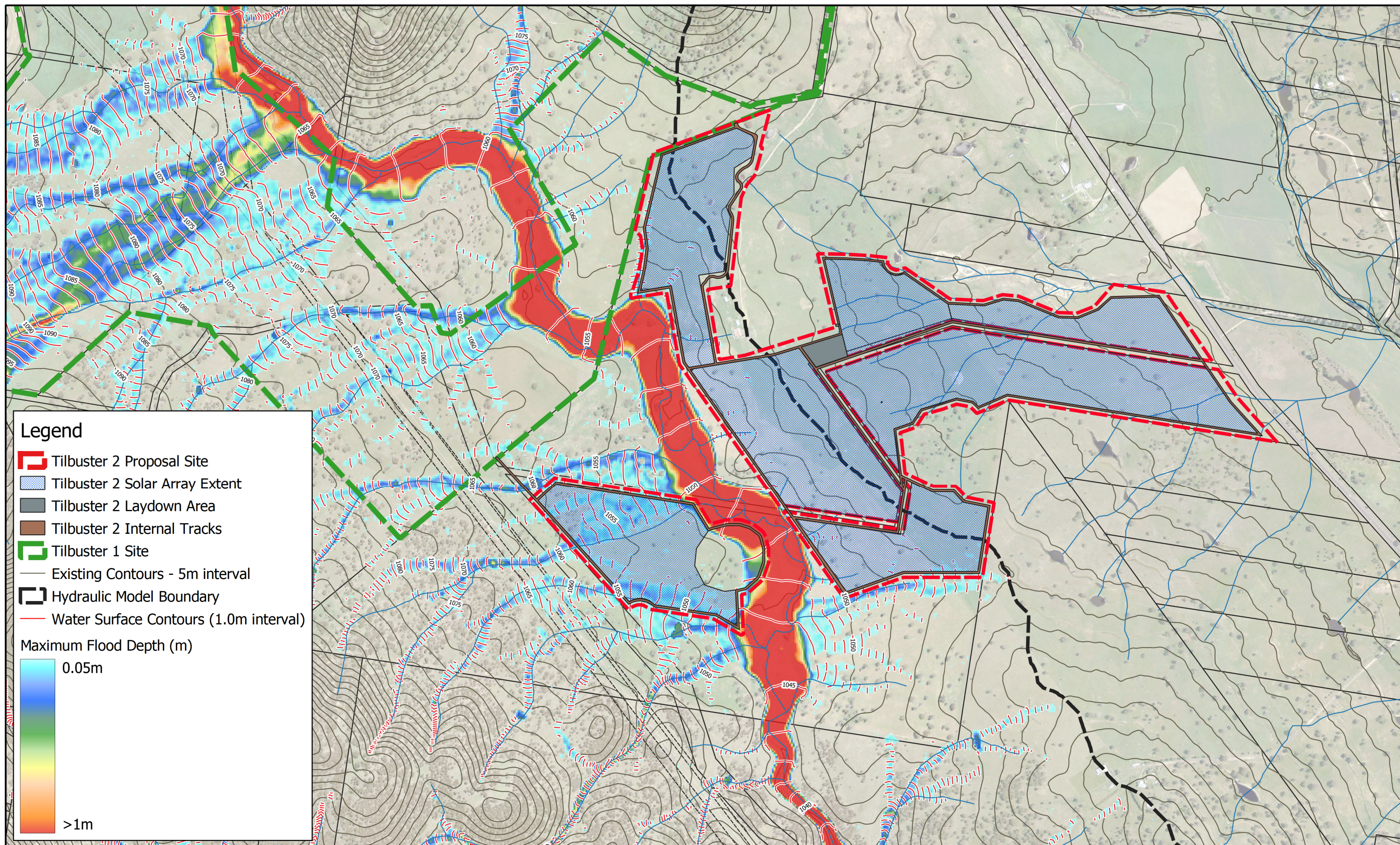
Figure 1: Tilbuster 2 Site (green) in relation to Tilbuster Site (red) and hydraulic model boundary (black)

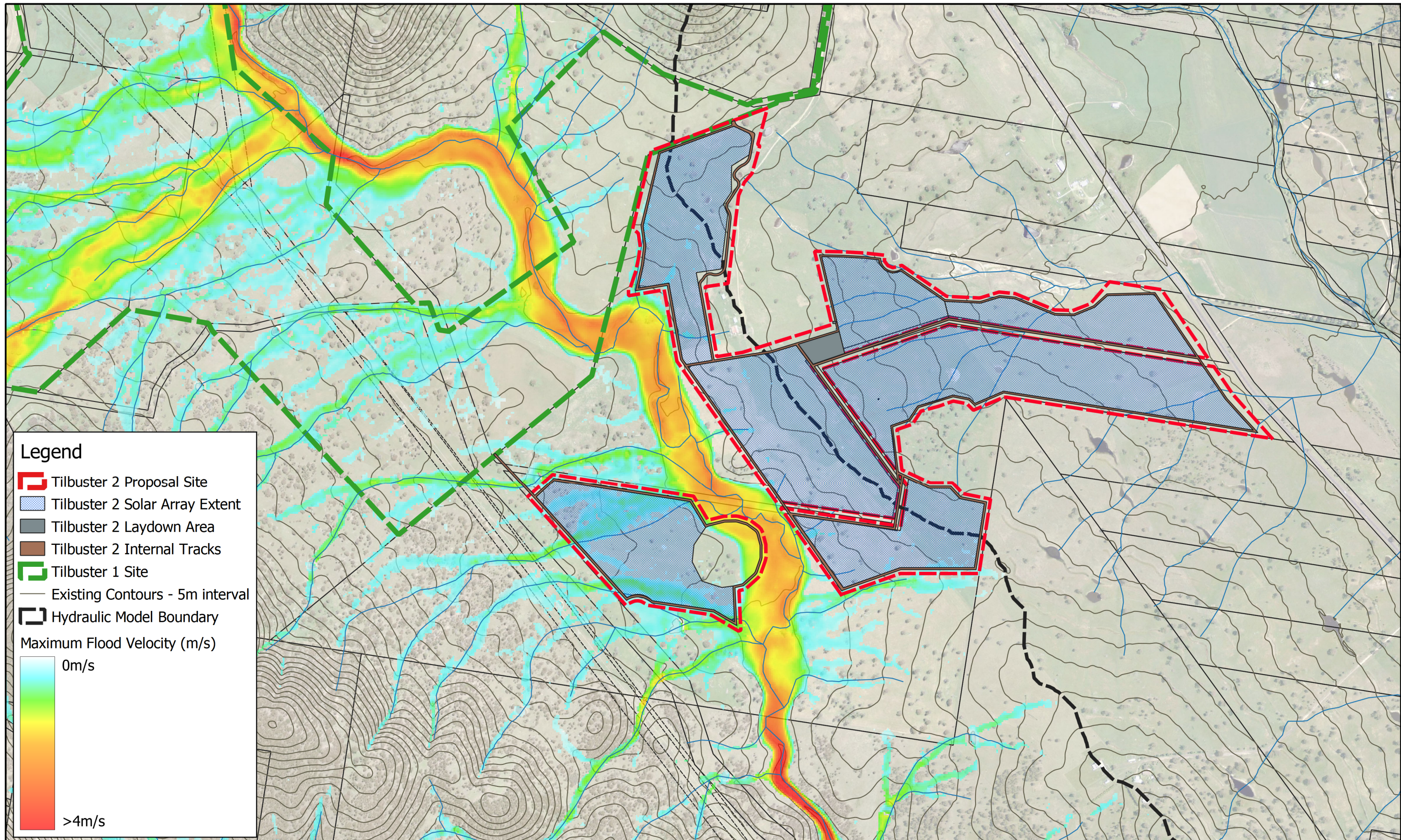
Annexure A – Flood Maps

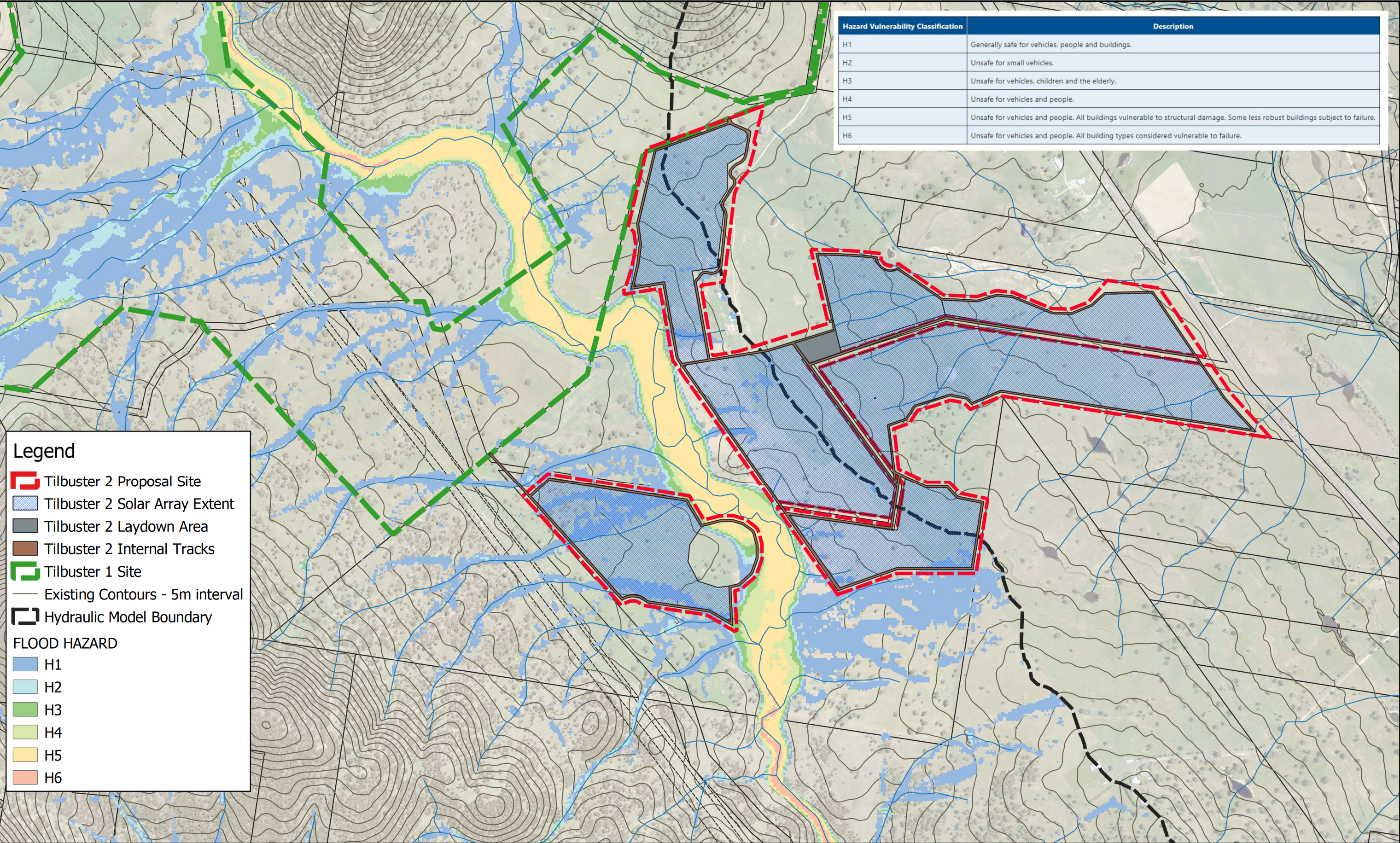












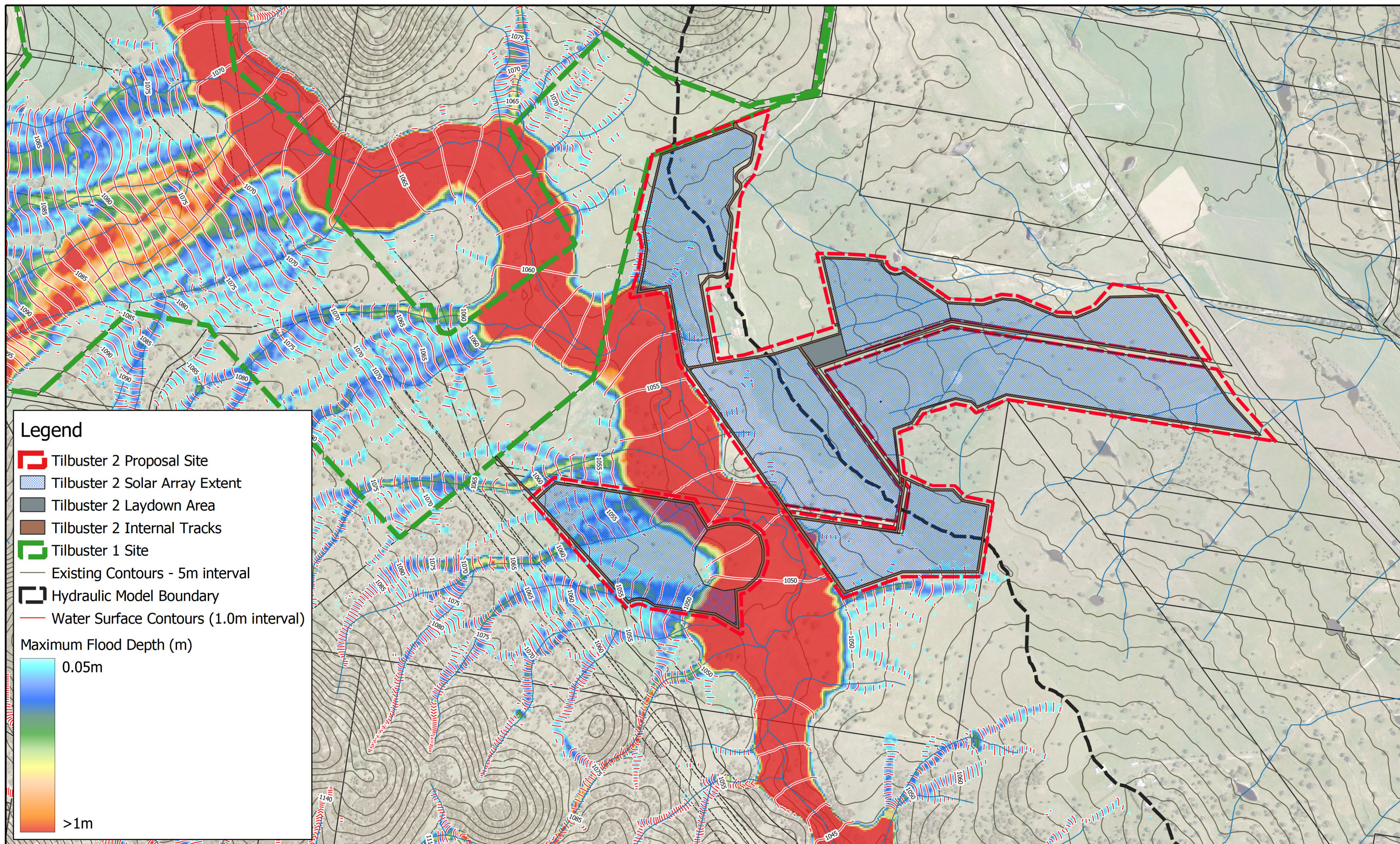
Hazard Vulnerability Classification	Description
H1	Generally safe for vehicles, people and buildings.
H2	Unsafe for small vehicles.
H3	Unsafe for vehicles, children and the elderly.
H4	Unsafe for vehicles and people.
H5	Unsafe for vehicles and people. All buildings vulnerable to structural damage. Some less robust buildings subject to failure.
H6	Unsafe for vehicles and people. All building types considered vulnerable to failure.

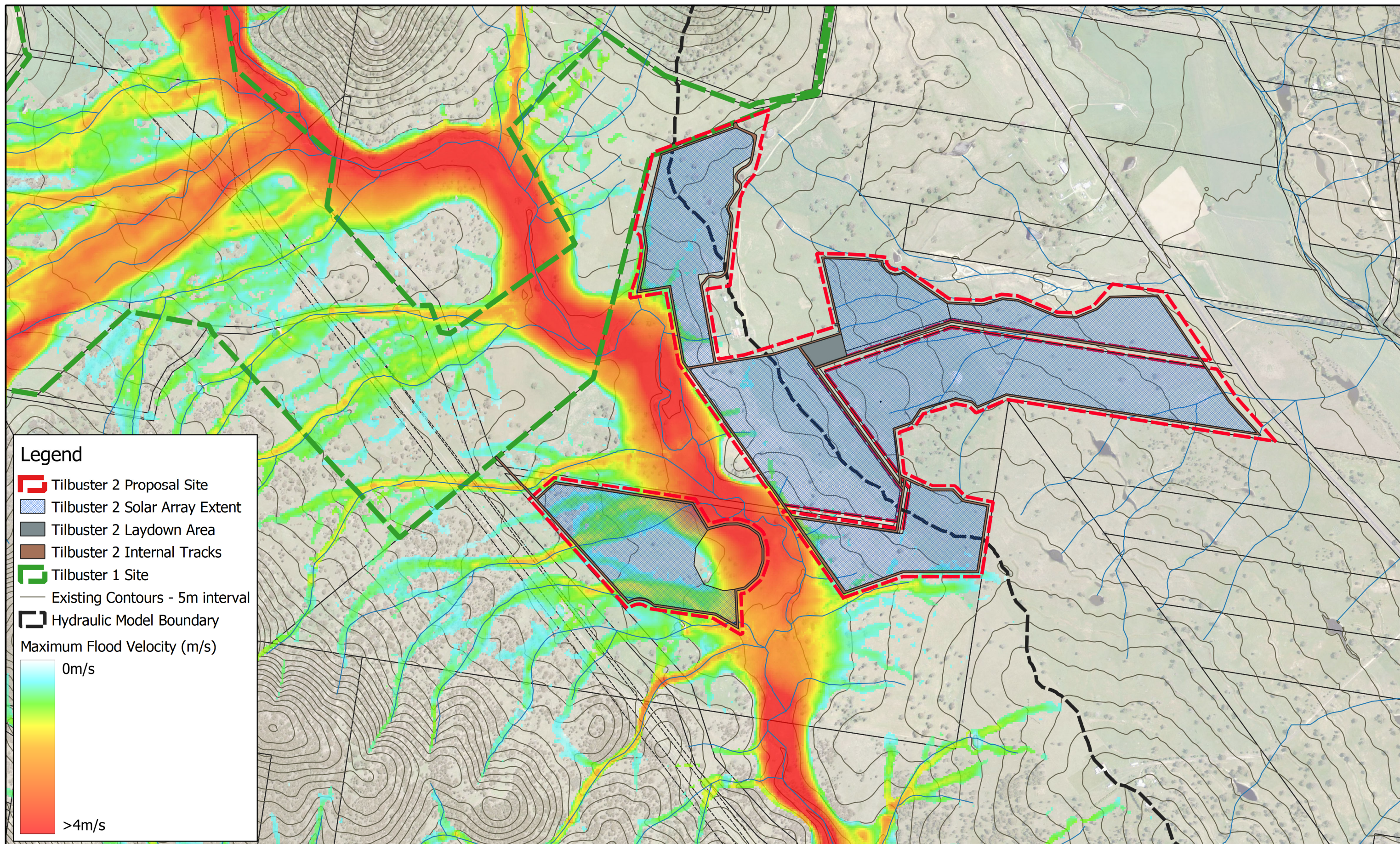
Legend

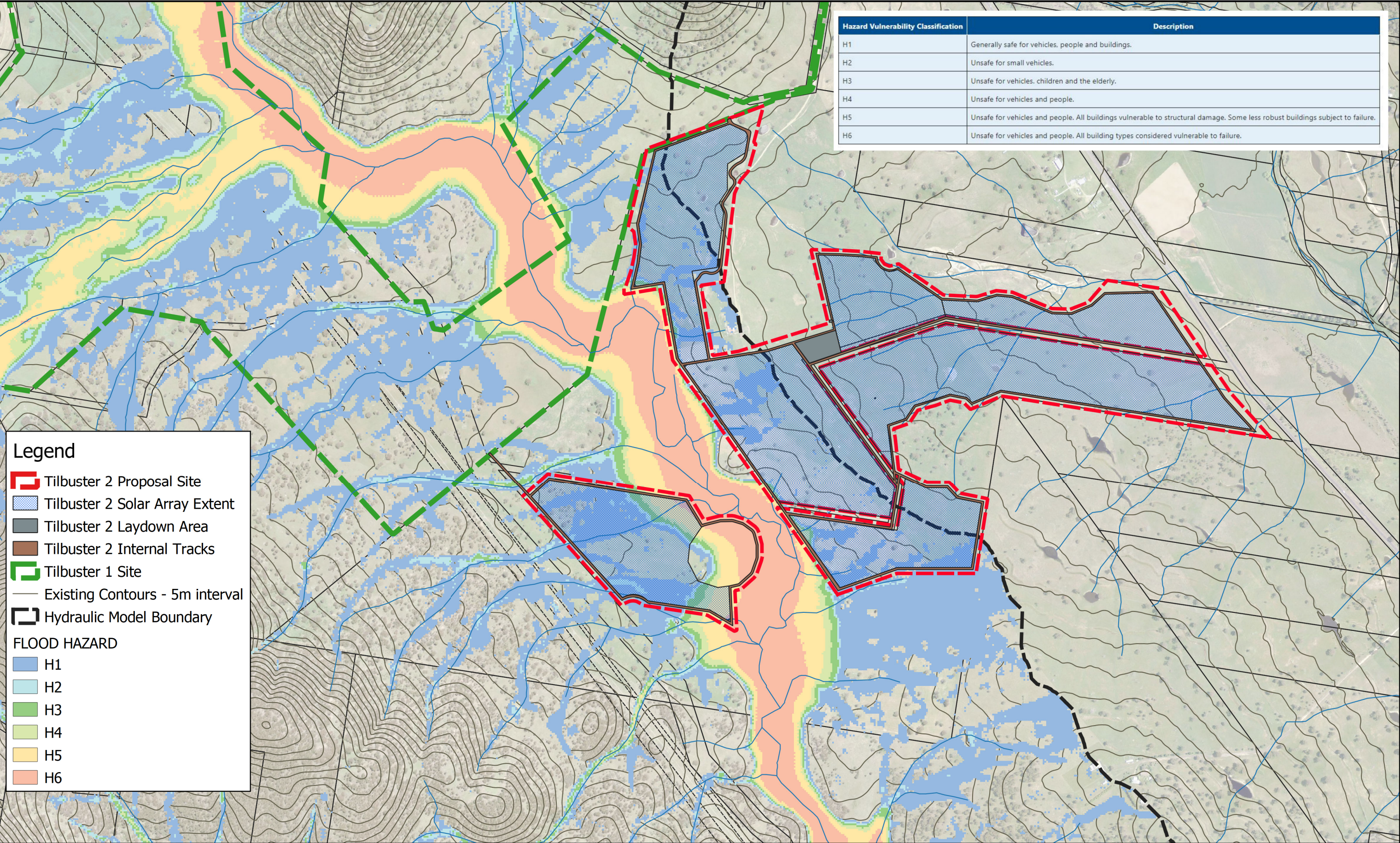
- Tilbuster 2 Proposal Site
- Tilbuster 2 Solar Array Extent
- Tilbuster 2 Laydown Area
- Tilbuster 2 Internal Tracks
- Tilbuster 1 Site
- Existing Contours - 5m interval
- Hydraulic Model Boundary

FLOOD HAZARD

- H1
- H2
- H3
- H4
- H5
- H6







Attachment 2

**Revised summary of mitigation
measures**

Table 6 *Summary of mitigation measures*

ID	Mitigation measure	Timing	Responsibility
Soils			
S01	Permanent erosion control structures will be incorporated into the final design as required, in areas of high erosion risk.	Design	Designer
S02	A SWMP (with erosion and sediment control plans) will be prepared, implemented and monitored during the proposal, in accordance with Landcom (2004), to minimise soil (and water) impacts. The SWMP will include provisions to: – Install, monitor and maintain erosion controls. – Ensure that machinery leaves the site in a clean condition to avoid tracking of sediment onto public roads. – Manage topsoil in all excavation activities, separate subsoils and topsoils and ensure that they are replaced in their natural configuration to assist revegetation. – Minimise the area of disturbance and restrict vehicle movements to reduce compaction. – Stop work in periods of heavy rain. – Progressive restoration of constructed areas to avoid leaving areas of exposed soils.	Construction, operation and decommissioning	Principal Contractor (EPC) and Operator
S03	A Groundcover Management Plan will be developed in consultation with an agronomist to ensure perennial grass cover is establishment and maintained across the site as soon as practicable after construction. The plan will cover: – Soil handling, storage, restoration and preparation requirements. – Plant species selection including native species where practical. – Groundcover targets, indicators, condition monitoring, reporting and evaluation i.e. a target of 70% live grass cover will apply to protect soils, landscape function and water quality. – Contingency measures to respond to declining soil or groundcover condition i.e. any grazing stock will be removed from the site when cover falls below the target of 70%. – Baseline conditions for rehabilitation following decommissioning.	Construction, operation and decommissioning	Principal Contractor (EPC) and Operator
S04	The SWMP will include the following measures with respect to contaminated soil: – Appropriate management controls to minimise the potential for exposure of contamination to workers and/or operations within the proposal site, both during and post construction. – Description of appropriate methodologies for excavation, validation, management and/or disposal requirements for potentially contaminated materials, if encountered during the construction of the proposal.	Construction, operation and decommissioning	Principal Contractor (EPC) and Operator

ID	Mitigation measure	Timing	Responsibility
	– Sampling and analysis requirements for assessment of potentially contaminated soils for re-use or for waste classification prior to offsite disposal. – Contingency plans including unexpected finds protocols for potentially contaminated soils (if encountered) including landfill or anthropogenic waste and potential asbestos containing materials. – The requirement that any future contamination reports should be prepared or reviewed and approved by an appropriately qualified environmental consultant.		
Land			
L01	Consultation will be undertaken with the landowner and adjacent landholders regarding property-specific measures to implement during construction, operation and decommissioning to identify opportunities to minimise impacts where practicable such as: – Any potential property impacts/changes, particularly in relation to potential impacts on access. – Stock management particularly for shared boundary fencing. – Maintenance of fencing and other agricultural structures such as farm dams. – Biosecurity.	Construction, operation and decommissioning	Principal Contractor (EPC) and Operator
L02	Reasonable and practicable measures will be implemented to avoid impacts to landholder national vendor declarations and other requirements under applicable livestock production assurance programs due to the use of herbicides, pesticides and other chemicals during construction, operation and decommissioning.	Construction, operation and decommissioning	Principal Contractor (EPC) and Operator
L03	The SWMP will include the following measures as a minimum:	Construction, operation and decommissioning	Principal Contractor (EPC) and Operator
	Soil disturbance will be undertaken as follows: – Remove the topsoil from the trench to a depth of 100 mm and stockpile to one side. – Excavate subsoil in the trench to full depth (assuming 600 mm) and stockpile to the other side of the trench. – Complete installation of cabling. – Apply the limestone/gypsum blend to the stockpiled subsoil at the rate of one kilogram for each one metre length of the trench. If the subsoil material is dry, the material should be wetted to approximately 15% moisture. This can be achieved by applying 10-12 litres of water per metre of trench material immediately prior to mixing the limestone/gypsum blend. – Infill the trench material to depth of 250 mm and compact using a rubber tyred roller; infill the remainder of the trench material and compact a second time. Replace the trench topsoil, compact and sow with a suitable pasture and fertiliser mix to encourage rapid revegetation.	Construction and decommissioning	Principal Contractor (EPC)

ID	Mitigation measure	Timing	Responsibility
	Soil zinc levels would be monitored adjacent to the galvanised steel mounting posts and in the centre of the rows five years following construction and every two years after that, and that this monitoring would be conducted on the basis of one monitoring site for every five hectares of installed panels.	Operation	Operator
	The Groundcover Management Plan will include the following: – Groundcover be maintained at a minimum of 70% at all times where possible during construction. – Soil disturbance be minimised at all times. – All topsoil to be stored from excavated or disturbed areas and replaced following completion of structural works. – Groundcover be maintained at a minimum of 100% during the operational phase.	Construction, operation and decommissioning	Principal Contractor (EPC) and Operator
	A full time Environmental Officer position will be on site during the construction phase and the immediate post construction phase until all disturbed areas have been rehabilitated and stabilised.	Construction, operation and decommissioning	Principal Contractor (EPC) and Operator
LO4	A 'Dial Before You Dig' enquiry will be undertaken prior to carrying out any works.	Pre-construction, construction	Principal Contractor (EPC)
LO5	Approval would be sought for any use of Crown land under the <i>Crown Land Management Act 2016</i> prior to construction works.	Pre-construction	EP Sunspot 5
Landscape and visual			
V01	Ensure construction equipment, stockpiles, and other visible elements are located away from the key sensitive receiver views. Should any equipment or stockpiles be located in a visually prominent location for any reasonable period of time, incorporate screening measures, such as hoarding and buffer planting, and practices to ensure the site is kept tidy and visibility reduced.	Construction	Principal Contractor (EPC)
V02	No advertising signage or logos will be displayed on site, except where this is required for safety or wayfinding purposes.	Construction	Principal Contractor (EPC)
V03	The visual appearance of all ancillary infrastructure (including paint colours) will be designed to blend in with the surrounding landscape.	Detailed design	Designer
V02 V04	A Landscape Plan will be prepared and implemented for the proposal as per the draft plan included in Appendix C of the LVIA. The plan will include: – Planting should respond to the existing character and conditions including topography, landform and natural systems. Use of native vegetation species in patterns that mimic the surrounding conditions and retain as much existing, native vegetation to minimise impacts. – Minimise changes to landform where possible to maintain the existing terrain profile. – Replace pasture grass planting, to match existing paddock conditions.	Pre-construction, construction	Principal Contractor (EPC)

ID	Mitigation measure	Timing	Responsibility
	– Screen planting in key locations using locally endemic species for identified viewpoints, particularly along the northern extent of the proposal site to mitigate views and glare impacts for VP04/OP7 R7/OP7. – Intermittent screen planting between the proposal site boundary and the New England Highway to filter views to the proposal and improve visual amenity for motorists. – Replacement tree planting for tree removal required as part of the development where appropriate. – Ground level landscape treatments such as native and pasture grasses in areas where revegetation is required to tie in with the landscape.		
V03 V05	Due to the elevated position of the residential dwelling at VP04 R5 , vegetation screening around the solar farm is unlikely to have any mitigating effect and has not been included. Vegetation screening on the residential property itself will provide a better screening outcome and should be considered through consultation with the property owner.	Pre-construction	EP Sunspot 5
V04	Detailed design refinements, in consultation with the design team and solar panel manufacturers could further reduce glare impacts, for example: — Considering single axis tracking (SAT) instead of fixed tilt: SAT maintains perpendicularity between the panels and the sunlight, which can be effective in mitigating glare. — Adjusting the tilt angle of the panels: keeping a lower angle of incidence can mitigate some occurrences of glare. — Adjusting the orientation of the panels: orienting the panels slightly west may reduce glare impacts as majority of the sensitive receivers are located to the east of the proposed solar farm. Further modelling is recommended to test the effectiveness of chosen design refinements during the detailed design of the proposal.	Detailed design	Designer
V06	Solar panel backtracking will be limited to angles between 0 degrees and +/- 5 degrees between the hours of 5:00 pm and 6:00 pm at the locations shown for receivers OP6, OP7, OP8 and OP9 in the Glint and Glare Assessment (GHD) dated 7 March 2025.	Operation	Operator
Noise and vibration			
N01	A CNMP will be prepared for the proposal. The CNMP will include a review of the noise predictions in this report. The plan will be based on the method for works and include a detailed examination of feasible and reasonable work practices and noise mitigation measures to manage sensitive receivers that are predicted to be 'noise affected'. The CNMP will also include: – Details of the methodology for works being conducted. – Feasible and reasonable mitigation measures to be implemented. – Updated noise predictions at sensitive receivers. – Assessment of noise impacts for light and heavy vehicle movements. – A noise monitoring procedure and program for the duration of works.	Construction	Principal Contractor (EPC)

ID	Mitigation measure	Timing	Responsibility
	– A community consultation plan to liaise with the noise affected receivers, including: • Notification to residences a minimum of seven calendar days prior to the start of works and should include information such as total building time, what works are expected to be noisy, their duration, what is being done to minimise noise and when respite periods will occur. • A procedure for complaints, including maintaining a compliant register on site.		
Traffic, transport and accessibility			
T01	A Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) will be prepared prior to construction to detail processes and responsibilities to minimise traffic and access delays and disruptions and identify and respond to changes to road access. The plan will be developed in consultation with relevant stakeholders, including ARC, TfNSW, emergency services and public transport/bus operators as necessary. The plan will include a driver's code of conduct for haulage operations, which will include but not be limited to: – Safety initiatives for haulage through residential areas and/or school zones. – An induction process for vehicle operators and regular toolbox meetings. – A public complaint resolution process. – Emergency vehicle access routes that may be impacted by the proposal will be identified, and if appropriate control measures provided. – Emergency services will be advised of any restrictions to vehicular access for both public and private areas where traffic conditions are changed.	Construction	Principal Contractor (EPC)
T02	Road condition surveys will be undertaken of the public roads proposed to be used, prior to and following completion of construction, and provided to the TfNSW and ARC. Condition monitoring will also be carried out during construction. Rectification measures will be implemented as needed, during and/or following completion of construction, to address any damage caused during construction.	Pre-construction, construction	Principal Contractor (EPC)
T03	The CTMP will include the following measures to ensure site access is restricted to the designated entrance: – Gates and any existing informal openings to the highway will be closed during construction. – Entry only signage will be installed at the approved access and advance direction signs on both approaches. – Route cards and inductions for all contractors and delivery drivers will identify the approved entry. – Compliance with access requirements will be monitored during peak construction periods and apply corrective actions for any breach.	Construction	Principal Contractor (EPC)

ID	Mitigation measure	Timing	Responsibility
T04	Construction traffic would be limited to: – No more than 24 heavy vehicle movements per day – No more than two vehicles per hour during construction peak hour periods of: • 7:00 am and 8:00 am • 5:00 pm and 6:00 pm	Construction, decommissioning	Principal Contractor (EPC)
Biodiversity			
B01	A Biodiversity Management Plan will be prepared for implementation prior to and during construction. The management will include the following: – Clearing is restricted to the development footprint, which will be clearly marked and/or fenced prior to works commencing. – No stockpiling or storage within dripline of any mature trees. – When clearing adjacent to areas that to be retained, chainsaws will be used rather than heavy machinery to minimise risk of unauthorised or accidental disturbance. – Relocation of habitat features such as fallen timber, hollow logs from the impacted area into adjacent retained vegetation. – Time clearing works to avoid critical life cycle events such as general breeding activity during late winter/spring. – Where practicable, time construction activities outside koala breeding season. – Where practicable, hollow-bearing trees would not be removed during breeding and hibernation season (June to January). – If clearing outside of this period cannot be achieved, pre-clearing surveys would be undertaken by an ecologist or suitably qualified person to minimise potential direct impacts to fauna.	Construction, decommissioning	Principal Contractor (EPC)
B02	A Pest and Weed Management Plan will be prepared to manage the occurrence of priority weeds and pest species across the site. The plan must be prepared in accordance with ARC and Department of Primary industries requirements and the <i>Biosecurity Act 2015</i>. The plan will also detail hygiene protocols to prevent spread of pathogens, and ongoing active maintenance and management for five years following construction/decommissioning.	Construction, operation, decommissioning	Principal Contractor (EPC)
B03	Permanent fencing of the development footprint adjacent to areas of bushland outside the site (i.e. the western and south-western boundary) are to include koala/fauna friendly structures to aid traversal of koala (and other fauna) across their range.	Design	Designer
B04	An Ecological Restoration Plan will be prepared for the proposed regeneration area. The restoration plan will include: – Activities to revegetate the area where appropriate with endemic native species. – Fencing to exclude stock.	Construction, operation, decommissioning	Principal Contractor (EPC)

ID	Mitigation measure	Timing	Responsibility
	– Weed control measures. – Long term erosion control measures. – Monitoring and adaptive management of the restoration area for a period of five years post construction.		
B05	The CTMP for the proposal will include measures to minimise the likelihood of vehicle strike including reduced speeds, restricted movement at dusk and dawn, and protocols for actions if native animals are hit by vehicles.	Construction	Principal Contractor (EPC)
B06	The Landscape Plan for the proposal will incorporate use of native, endemic species only including, in particular, koala trees to compensate for those removed.	Construction	Principal Contractor (EPC)
B07	The potential for establishment of a Biodiversity Stewardship Agreement (BSA) across the western excluded part of the proposal site would be explored.	Pre-construction	EP Sunspot 5 and landowner
B08	The Operational Management Plan for the proposal will include the following for the life of the proposal: – Monitoring and maintenance of planting and restoration areas – Monitoring and treatment of weeds and pathogens	Operation	Operator
Water			
W01	The design and construction of waterway crossings will be in accordance with the <i>Guidelines for Watercourse Crossings on Waterfront Land</i> (DCCEEW 2024), the <i>Guidelines for Controlled Activities on Waterfront Land</i> (DCCEEW 2025) and the <i>Policy and Guidelines for Fish Habitat Conservation and Management</i> (DPI 2013).	Design, construction	Designer Principal Contractor (EPC)
W02	No works will occur within third order or above streams (plus required buffer) within the development footprint.	Construction	Principal Contractor (EPC)
W03	A Soil and Water Management Plan (SWMP) will be prepared and implemented during proposal construction. The plan will be prepared in accordance with <i>Managing Urban Stormwater: Soils and construction - Volume 1</i> (Landcom, 2004) and relevant ARC requirements.	Construction, operation and decommissioning	Principal Contractor (EPC) Operator
W04	All fuels, chemicals, and liquids would be stored at least 50 m from any waterways or drainage lines, not on sloping land and would be stored in an impervious bunded area.	Construction, operation	Principal Contractor (EPC) and Operator
W05	Machinery would be checked daily to ensure there is no oil, fuel or other liquids leaking from the machinery. All staff will be appropriately trained through toolbox talks for the minimisation and management of accidental spills.	Construction, operation	Principal Contractor (EPC) and Operator
WQ06	The refuelling of plant and maintenance will be undertaken in impervious bunded areas on hardstand areas only.	Construction, operation	Principal Contractor (EPC) and Operator
WQ07	All potential pollutants stored on-site would be stored and managed in accordance with <i>Storing and Handling of Liquids: Environmental Protection – Participants Handbook</i> (DECC, 2007).	Construction, operation	Principal Contractor (EPC) and Operator

ID	Mitigation measure	Timing	Responsibility
WQ08	Incident management procedures will be incorporated into the construction and operation environmental management plans for spills, including the requirement to notify EPA for incidents that cause material harm to the environment (as per s147-153 <i>Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997</i>).	Construction, operation	Principal Contractor (EPC) and Operator
WQ09	Water sources will be confirmed during the detailed design phase in consultation with suppliers, landholders and ARC. The proposal design and construction timeframe will be amended as required dependent on water availability.	Pre-construction	Principal Contractor (EPC)
WQ10	If extraction of water from existing or new groundwater bores is required for the proposal, or if development will impact on WaterNSW assets, infrastructure or land, EP Sunspot 5 will consult with WaterNSW with respect to any licences or approvals required.	Design, construction	EP Sunspot 5
WQ11	All buildings and structures (including solar arrays) associated with the proposal should be located outside high hazard areas (H5 and above) where they may be vulnerable to structural damage and have significant impact on flood behaviour.	Design, construction	EP Sunspot 5
WQ12	For fixed solar panel modules, the mounting height of the module frames should be designed such that the lower edge of the frame is clear of the predicted 1% AEP flood level plus 500 mm freeboard so as not to impact on existing flood behaviour and to prevent the infrastructure from being damaged from flooding. For solar tracking modules, the tracking axis should be located above the 1%AEP flood level plus 500 mm freeboard, and the modules rotated to the horizontal during significant flood events to provide maximum clearance to the predicted flood level.	Design, construction	EP Sunspot 5
WQ13	All electrical infrastructure should be located above the 1% AEP flood level plus appropriate freeboard (min 500 mm). Where electrical cabling is required to be constructed below the 1% AEP flood level it should be capable of continuous submergence in water.	Design, construction	EP Sunspot 5
WQ14	Fencing within the floodplain should be avoided or minimised. Where required security fencing should be constructed in a manner which does not adversely affect the flow of floodwater and should be designed to withstand the forces of floodwater or collapse in a controlled manner to prevent impediment to floodwater. Fencing across Duval Creek should be avoided in preference to creating two separate fenced compounds on either side of the creek.	Design, construction	EP Sunspot 5 Principal Contractor (EPC)
WQ15	Access roads should be constructed as close to natural ground levels as possible so as not to form an obstruction to floodwaters. The surface treatment of roads should be designed giving regard to the velocity of floodwaters to minimise potential for scouring during flood events.	Construction	Principal Contractor (EPC)

ID	Mitigation measure	Timing	Responsibility
Aboriginal cultural heritage			
CH1	An Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Management Plan (ACHMP) will be developed in consultation with the RAPs and Heritage NSW. The ACHMP will include: – Management measures to ensure the protection of the recorded Aboriginal sites and PADs including fencing of all sites during construction. – An unanticipated finds protocol, unanticipated skeletal remains protocol. – Procedures for cultural awareness training and induction for all site workers and visitors.	Construction	Principal Contractor (EPC)
Environmental heritage			
EH01	Should an item of historic heritage be identified, Heritage NSW will be contacted prior to further work being carried out in the vicinity of the item.	Construction	Principal Contractor (EPC)
Hazards and risks			
HZ01	Ensure that design of structures and tanks, bunds and handling equipment for all chemicals complies with the relevant Australian Standards.	Design	Designer
HZ02	Design and selection of all electrical equipment is to minimise electromagnetic field (EMF) levels and comply with the International Commission for Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) exposure levels.	Design	Designer
HZ03	The quantity of dangerous goods stored will remain below the threshold quantities outlined in 'Applying SEPP 33' and storage of dangerous goods will comply with Australian Standards and/or Environment Protection Authority Guidelines.	Construction, operation, decommissioning	Principal Contractor (EPC) and Operator
Bush fire			
BF01	A Bush Fire Emergency Management and Operations Plan is to be prepared, in consultation with the NSW RFS New England Fire Control Centre, and shall identify all relevant risks and mitigation measures associated with the construction and operation of the solar farm. This should include: – 24 hour emergency contact details including alternative telephone contact. – Site infrastructure plan identifying asset protection zones, access roads, fire fighting water supplies, etc. – Fire fighting operations plan including methods and resources to manage and extinguish solar panel fires. – Detailed measures to prevent or mitigate fires igniting. – Work that should not be carried out during total fire bans. – Availability of fire-suppression equipment, access and water. – Storage and maintenance of fuels and other flammable materials.	Construction, operation, decommissioning	Principal Contractor (EPC) and Operator

ID	Mitigation measure	Timing	Responsibility
	– Notification of the local NSW RFS Fire Control Centre for any works that have the potential to ignite surrounding vegetation, proposed to be carried out during a bush-fire fire danger period to ensure weather conditions are appropriate. – Appropriate bush fire emergency management planning.		
BF02	The solar farm development footprint is to be managed as an APZ in accordance with Appendix 4 of 'Planning for Bush Fire Protection 2019' (PFBP).	Construction, operation, decommissioning	Principal Contractor (EPC) and Operator
BF03	A minimum 10,000 litre water supply (tank) fitted with a 65 mm storz fitting shall be located adjoining the internal property access road entrance within the required APZ.	Construction, operation, decommissioning	Principal Contractor (EPC) and Operator
BF04	Internal access roads within the development shall comply with the property access requirements of 'Planning for Bush Fire Protection 2019'.	Detailed design	Designer
BF05	To allow for emergency service personnel to undertake property protection activities, a 10 metre wide trafficable defensible space (APZ) that permits unobstructed vehicle access is to be provided around the perimeter of the solar array footprint including associated infrastructure.	Detailed design	Designer
Waste management			
W01	A detailed Waste Management Plan (WMP) will be developed to include at a minimum: – A summary of the waste types, classification and estimated annual quantities of wastes produced during the construction of the proposal. – Measures to manage waste disposal in accordance with the principles of the waste hierarchy, with emphasis on reducing, reusing and recycling wastes prior to disposal. – The procedure for assessing, classifying and storing waste in accordance with EPA guidelines. – Procedures for storage, transport and disposal of waste, including location for disposal of all residual waste. – Monitoring, record keeping and reporting, including the use of waste tracking data, to demonstrate the lawful disposal of contaminated products, waste or residues generated by the proposal.	Construction	Principal Contractor (EPC)
W02	The Operational Management Plan for the proposal will include the following: – A summary of the waste types, classification and estimated annual quantities of wastes produced during the operation of the proposal. – Measures to manage waste disposal in accordance with the principles of the waste hierarchy, with emphasis on reducing, reusing and recycling wastes prior to disposal. – The procedure for assessing, classifying and storing waste in accordance with EPA guidelines.		Operator

ID	Mitigation measure	Timing	Responsibility
	– Procedures for storage, transport and disposal of waste, including location for disposal of all residual waste. – Monitoring, record keeping and reporting, including the use of waste tracking data, to demonstrate the lawful disposal of contaminated products, waste or residues generated by the proposal.		
W03	The Decommissioning Management Plan for the proposal would include the following: – A summary of the waste types, classification and estimated annual quantities of wastes produced during the decommissioning of the proposal. – Measures to manage waste disposal in accordance with the principles of the waste hierarchy, with emphasis on reducing, reusing and recycling wastes prior to disposal. – The procedure for assessing, classifying and storing waste in accordance with EPA guidelines. – Procedures for storage, transport and disposal of waste, including location for disposal of all residual waste. – Monitoring, record keeping and reporting, including the use of waste tracking data, to demonstrate the lawful disposal of contaminated products, waste or residues generated by the proposal.	Decommissioning	Principal Contractor (EPC)
Air quality			
AQ01	Track width of internal tracks will be minimised during detailed design.	Design	Designer
AQ02	Dust suppression will be used when visible dust is created i.e. during dry and/or windy periods.	Construction	Principal Contractor (EPC)
AQ03	Vehicle loads of material that may generate dust will be covered while using public roads.	Construction	Principal Contractor (EPC)
AQ04	All vehicles and machinery used at the site will be in good condition, fitted with appropriate emission controls to comply with relevant Australian standards and operated in accordance with manufacturer's requirements.	Construction	Principal Contractor (EPC)
AQ05	Plant and vehicles will be operated efficiently and turned off when not in use.	Construction	Principal Contractor (EPC)
AQ06	Fires and material burning is prohibited on the proposal site.	Construction	Principal Contractor (EPC)
AQ07	All disturbed areas will be revegetated as soon as possible on completion of works.	Construction	Principal Contractor (EPC)

ID	Mitigation measure	Timing	Responsibility
Social impact			
S01	A Community Engagement Plan will be prepared to guide the management and delivery of community and stakeholder engagement in the lead up to and during construction, and as required during operation and decommissioning, to ensure that: – Accurate and accessible information about the proposal is provided. – Feedback from the community is encouraged. – Opportunities for input are provided. – Community members and stakeholders with the potential to be affected by construction activities are notified in a timely manner about the timing of activities and potential for impacts. – Enquiries and complaints are managed, and a timely response is provided for concerns raised. The plan will include approaches and protocols to: – Communicate with potentially affected residents, other community members, businesses and other key stakeholders to provide information about the proposal, and the likely nature, extent and duration of changes. – Identify and engage with vulnerable persons that might be affected by the proposal. – Communicate information about potential access changes. – Share information about the proposal with other regional stakeholders to assist with managing cumulative impacts on local and regional communities.	Pre-construction, construction, operation, decommissioning	EP Sunspot 5
	An enquiries and complaints management systems will be developed, outlined in the Community Engagement Plan, and implemented during all phases of the proposal. The complaints management systems will be maintained throughout the construction period and for a minimum of 12-months after construction finishes.	Pre-construction, construction, operation, decommissioning	EP Sunspot 5
S02	A Workforce Management Plan will be developed and implemented during all phases of the proposal to manage: – Potential impacts of the non-resident construction workforce. – Health and wellbeing service needs of the temporary construction workforce, including medical, allied health and wellbeing services. The plan will be developed in consultation with ARC and service providers, including local and regional health and emergency services providers. The plan will include measures to manage potential impacts of the non-resident construction workforce on local and regional communities, including: – A code of conduct for workers, including a zero-tolerance policy relating to antisocial behaviour. – Strategies to promote wellbeing of the workforce.	Pre-construction, construction, operation, decommissioning	Principal Contractor (EPC)

ID	Mitigation measure	Timing	Responsibility
S03	An Accommodation and Employment Strategy, which will propose measures to ensure there is sufficient accommodation for the workforce associated with the development, will be prepared prior to construction commencing and implemented through all stage of the proposal. The strategy will be prepared in consultation with ARC and other stakeholders and include a detailed review of accommodation is requirements for the proposal and local accommodation availability. The strategy will: – Consider the cumulative impacts associated with other State significant development projects in the area. – Include a program to monitor and review the effectiveness of the strategy over the life of the development, including regular monitoring and review.	Pre-construction, construction, operation, decommissioning	EP Sunspot 5
S04	The Accommodation and Employment Strategy will investigate options for prioritising the employment of local workers for the construction, operation and decommissioning of the development, where feasible. The strategy will be prepared in consultation with ARC and other stakeholders prior to construction commencing and be implemented through all stages of the proposal. It will include: – Investigation into the potential local workforce including underemployed residents such as young people, Aboriginal people, refugees etc. – A breakdown of what skilled workers would be required and their availabilities. The strategy will include measures to manage local employment and procurement requirements, including but not limited to: – Recruitment, skills and training measures, including identification of skills and qualifications required, and training targets. – How the contractor will work with regional stakeholders to upskill local residents, including Indigenous and culturally diverse communities.	Pre-construction, construction, operation, decommissioning	EP Sunspot 5
Economic impact			
E01	A Voluntary Planning Agreement will be negotiated and agreed between EP Sunspot 5 and ARC. The VPA would agree on the financial contribution by EP Sunspot 5 to the RECBF to promote benefit sharing with the local community.	Pre-construction	EP Sunspot 5
Cumulative impacts			
C01	Consultation will be undertaken with ARC and other community stakeholders to time and plan works to minimise potential negative interactions with other major projects. Consultation will include engaging with proponents of other major projects to identify any scheduling and other cumulative issues.	Pre-construction, construction, decommissioning	Principal Contractor (EPC)

Attachment 3

Landowner agreements to mitigation

Attachment 4

**Additional Information towards the
Aboriginal Cultural Heritage
Assessment Report**



26 February 2026

Corey O'Driscoll

A/Practice Lead

Major Projects

Heritage NSW

Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water

TILBUSTER SOLAR FARM STAGE 2 (SSD-69799460) – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION TOWARDS THE ABORIGINAL CULTURAL HERITAGE ASSESSMENT REPORT

Dear Corey,

Thank you for your advice letter dated 16 December 2025 responding to the Response to Submission (RtS) re the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report (ACHAR) for the proposed Tilbuster 2 Solar Farm (HMS ID 12919).

This additional information has been prepared by OzArk Environment & Heritage (OzArk) on behalf of GHD Newcastle (the client) to specifically address the request for further justification of the defined extents of recorded potential archaeological deposits (PADs) and the rationale for not undertaking test excavation:

"1. Clarification on how site/PAD extents were defined.

The ACHAR indicates that site and PAD boundaries were primarily based on landform classification. However, inconsistencies exist between site descriptions and mapped landforms. For example, 'Tilbuster Stage 2 PAD 4' (AHIMS 21-1-0587) is described as being on an elevated rise/localised crest (Table 6.5) yes Figure 6.3 places it within an area mapped as a gentle slope.

Please clarify the methodology used to define site / PAD boundaries in accordance with Requirements 6 and 7 of the Code of Practice for Archaeological Investigation of Aboriginal Objects in NSW ('the Code of Practice'; DECCW 2010). Where slight elevation changes within broader landform units were used to define boundaries, this should be clearly described and supported by additional mapping (e.g., fine-grained contour mapping to identify microtopography).

2. Rationale for not undertaking test excavations

The ACHAR concludes that test excavations are unnecessary because data from previous excavations completed by NGH within 'Tilbuster Solar AS24' (AHIMS 21-2-0354) and 'Tilbuster Solar AS25' (AHIMS 21-1-0353) can be extrapolated to predict similar subsurface conditions for the PADS recorded as part of the current assessment. While the nature of subsurface archaeological deposits may be inferred, these results do not establish PAD boundaries. The extent of archaeological deposits cannot be confirmed without testing.

We also note that Tilbuster Solar AS24 and AS25 were both assessed as being of moderate significance. Although NGH may have concluded that the results did not warrant salvage excavation, both sites are listed in Table 2 in Appendix 6 of the SSD-9619 consent, which requires salvage (including subsurface salvage at artefact scatter sites located in areas with an intact A soil horizon under Condition B20(c)(ii)."

This document will be furnished to the Department of Planning, Housing & Infrastructure as additional information relating to SSD-69799460.

1. CLARIFICATION OF TILBUSTER STAGE 2 PAD 1 EXTENT

The landform at Tilbuster Stage 2 PAD 1 (hereafter 'PAD 1') is situated within a broader landscape of gentle slopes, within which subtle microtopographic changes manifest as a local spur comprising flat to very gentle slopes. The local spur is surrounded by more prominent, albeit still gentle, slopes which descend into ephemeral drainage gullies to the west and east. **Figure 1-1** illustrates these topographic and hydrological features, utilising 2 metre (m) interval contours. Within PAD 1, the northern portion comprises a gentle slope which recedes southerly into a slight flat bench overlooking Duval Creek (**Figure 1-4**).

Figure 1-2 shows hillshade mapping extracted from digital elevation models (DEMs) of the landscape and provides a clear view of this local aspect of the landform. Specifically, **Figure 1-2** is useful in understanding the landform to the west, as this area was outside of the development footprint and was not subject to survey (although this area has been previously surveyed and test excavated). A rough extent of this microtopographic aspect has been outlined in **Figure 1-3**. Through this visualisation, the relationship between PAD 1 and nearby sites 21-1-0353 and 21-1-0354 can be more easily appreciated. It is evident that PAD 1 encompasses the easternmost extent of a low, local spur which is predominantly situated west of PAD 1 and is the same landform on which 21-1-0353 and 21-1-0354 are recorded. **Figure 1-4**: image 4 gives a view north over the PAD and highlights where this eastern limit of the landform occurs, showing where the elevated spur is replaced with slopes descending easterly towards the drainage line.

With this understanding of the landform, two observations can be emphasised. Firstly, that the test excavations at 21-1-0353 and 21-1-0354 undertaken for Tilbuster Stage 1 have tested the same aspect of the landform and provided low density subsurface results with nil conservation value, results which can confidently be extrapolated to PAD 1. Secondly, that the development footprint, which has been redesigned to lie 10 m east of PAD 1, is situated on the gentle slopes east of the local spur and does not encroach on the level part of the landform associated with archaeological potential.

The detailed landform mapping provides confidence that the PAD 1 extent is attached to distinct albeit subtle manifestations of the landform, specifically a low, local spur overlooking Duval Creek. This clarification of the PAD's relationship to the landform expands on and reiterates the ACHAR's conclusion that test excavation is not warranted as ground disturbing works will completely avoid the area of identified archaeological sensitivity, the definition of which is evidence-based, as presented.

Figure 1-1: Contour and hydrology mapping at PAD 1.



Figure 1-2: DEM hillshade mapping at PAD1.

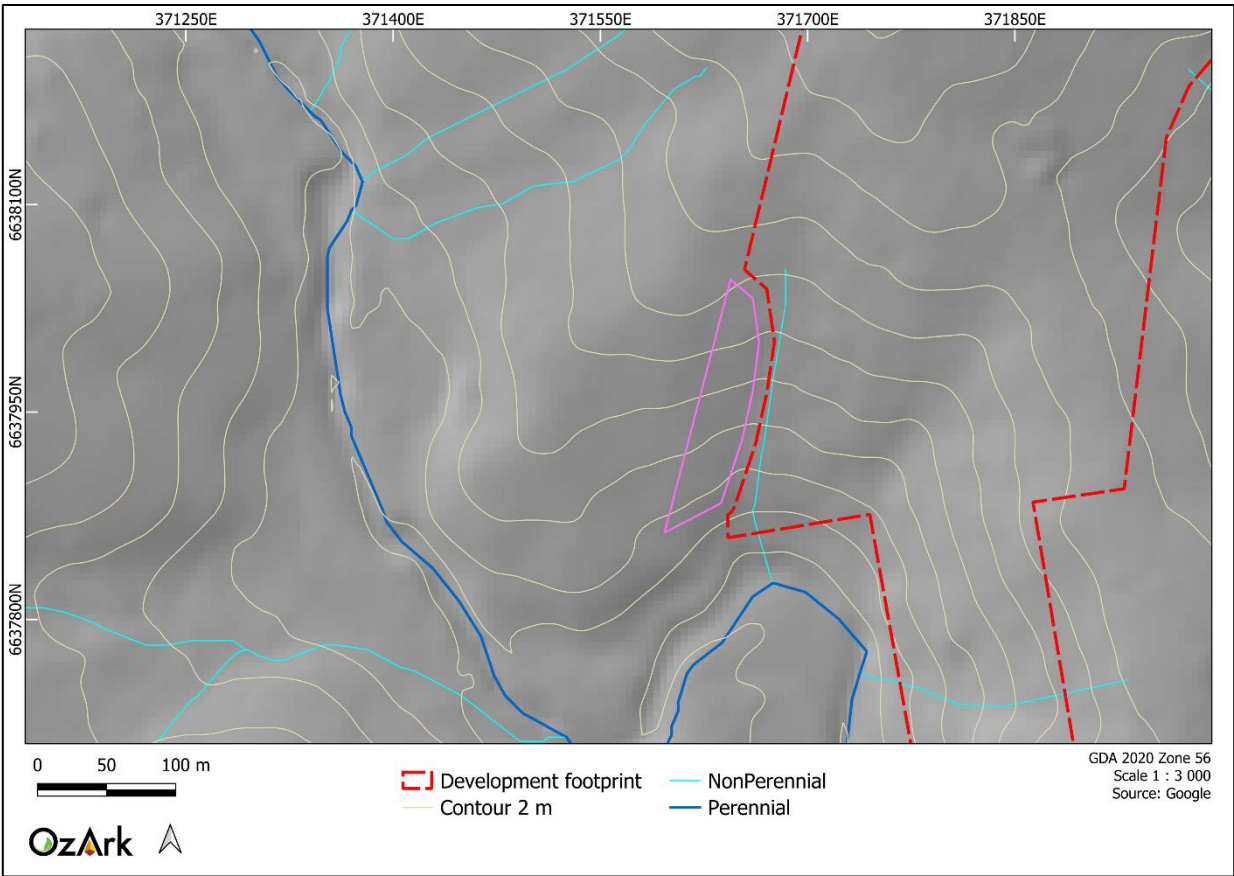


Figure 1-3: Mapped estimated extent of landform shared by PAD 1, 21-1-0353 and 21-1-0354.

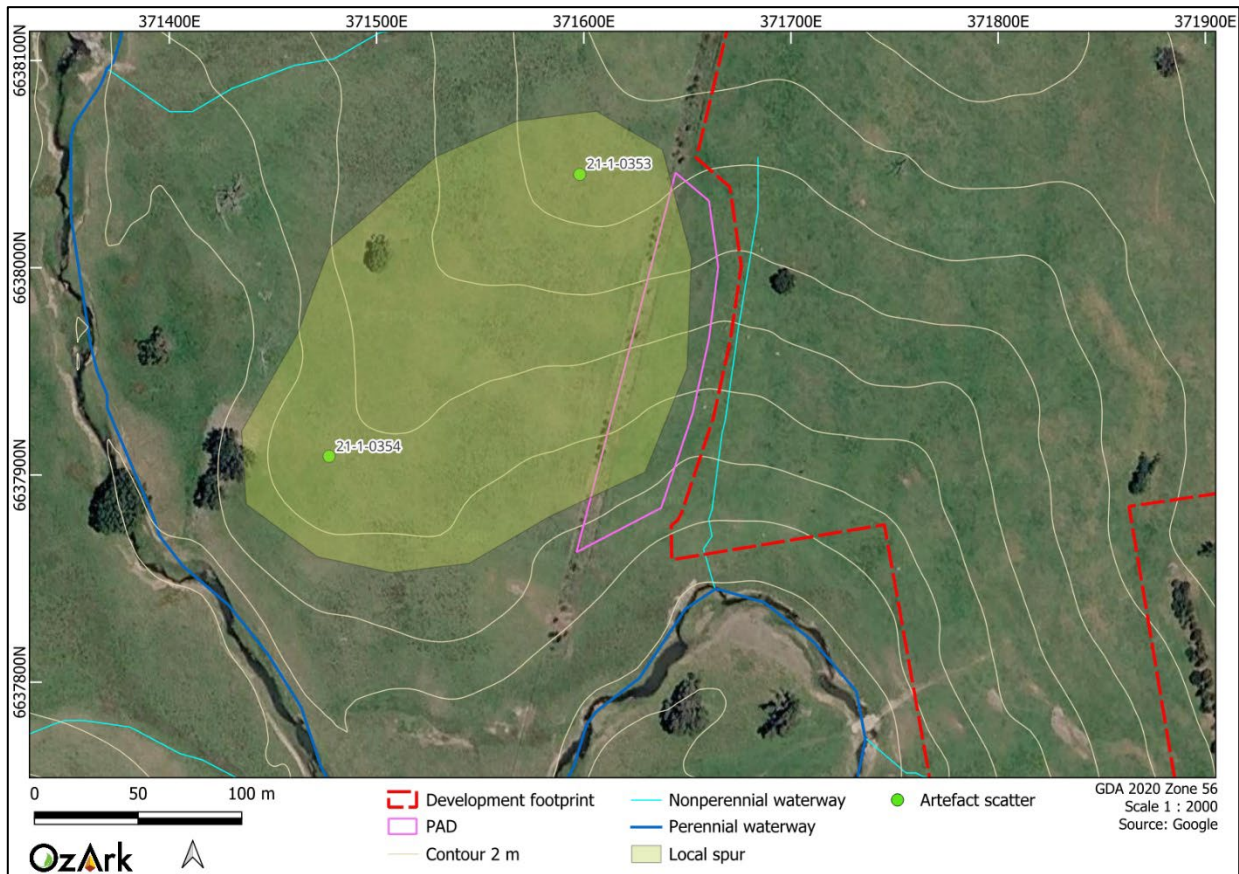
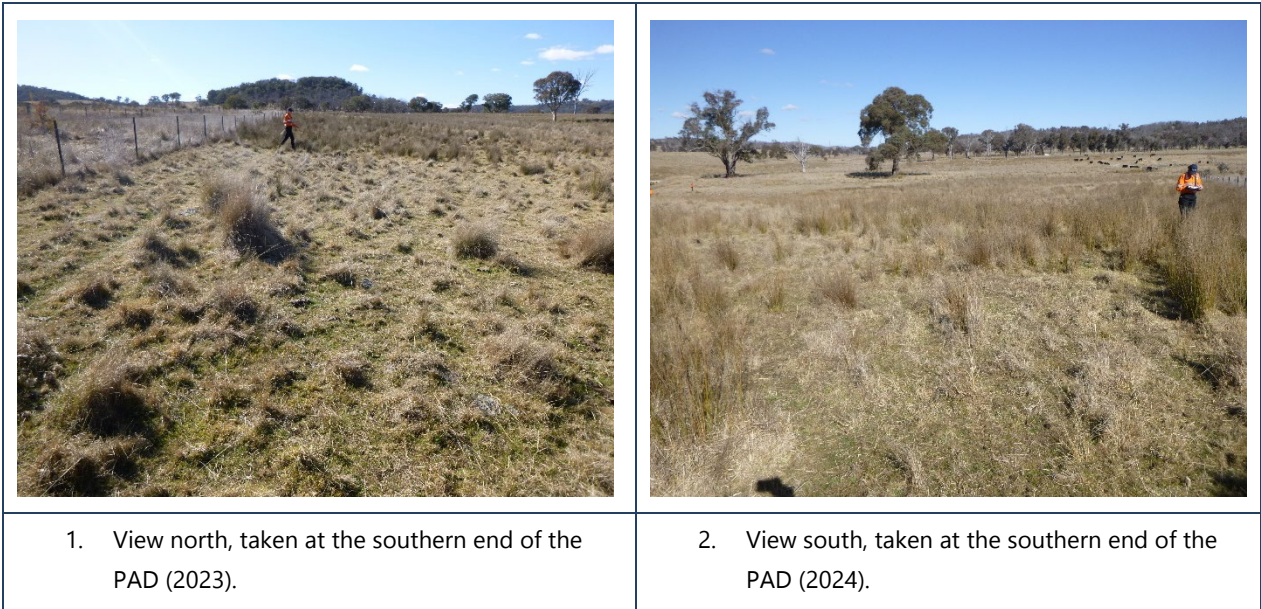


Figure 1-4: Views across landforms within PAD 1.



	
3. View south, taken at northernmost end of the PAD (2024).	4. View north, taken at the southernmost end of the PAD (2024).

2. CLARIFICATION OF TILBUSTER STAGE 2 PAD 4 EXTENT

The landform at Tilbuster Stage 2 PAD 4 (hereafter ‘PAD 4’) is situated within a broader floodplain landscape of gentle slopes west of the Duval Creek channel. **Figure 2-1** illustrates the surrounding topographic and hydrological features, utilising 2 m interval contours.

The landform that defines PAD 4 is subtler yet than at PAD 1, and in this case the hillshade mapping provided in **Figure 2-2** is particularly useful for the landform analysis. The key landform aspect is visible along the eastern curvature of PAD 4, which aligns with the subtle terrace formation overlooking Duval Creek. The hillshade mapping best depicts how the floodplains immediately west of Duval Creek are lower lying than the slightly more elevated landform on which PAD 4 is situated. Images 3 and 4 in **Figure 2-4** capture this well, both pictures show PAD 4 in the foreground clearly elevated above the lower floodplains that are immediately adjacent to Duval Creek.

To the west, the landform develops into a continuous gentle slope which ascends westerly towards the foothills of a distant range (**Figure 2-4**: image 5). Without distinct landform limits in the western and southern parts of the PAD, the PAD boundaries at this end were informed partly by observation of landform subtleties while in the field and partly by utilising the accepted rule that distance to water significantly reduces archaeological potential.

The redesign of the proposal layout places the PV panel areas a further 20 m west of PAD 4, well away from the higher potential portion of the PAD to the east, which is associated with closer proximity to Duval Creek (**Figure 2-3**).

This clarification of the landform adds assurance that ground disturbing works associated with the construction of the PV panels will not impact the landform that is assessed as having high archaeological potential. This additional information and analysis provided regarding PAD 4 reiterates the ACHAR’s conclusion that test excavation is not warranted as ground disturbing works will completely avoid the area of identified archaeological sensitivity.

Figure 2-1: Contour and hydrology mapping at PAD 4.

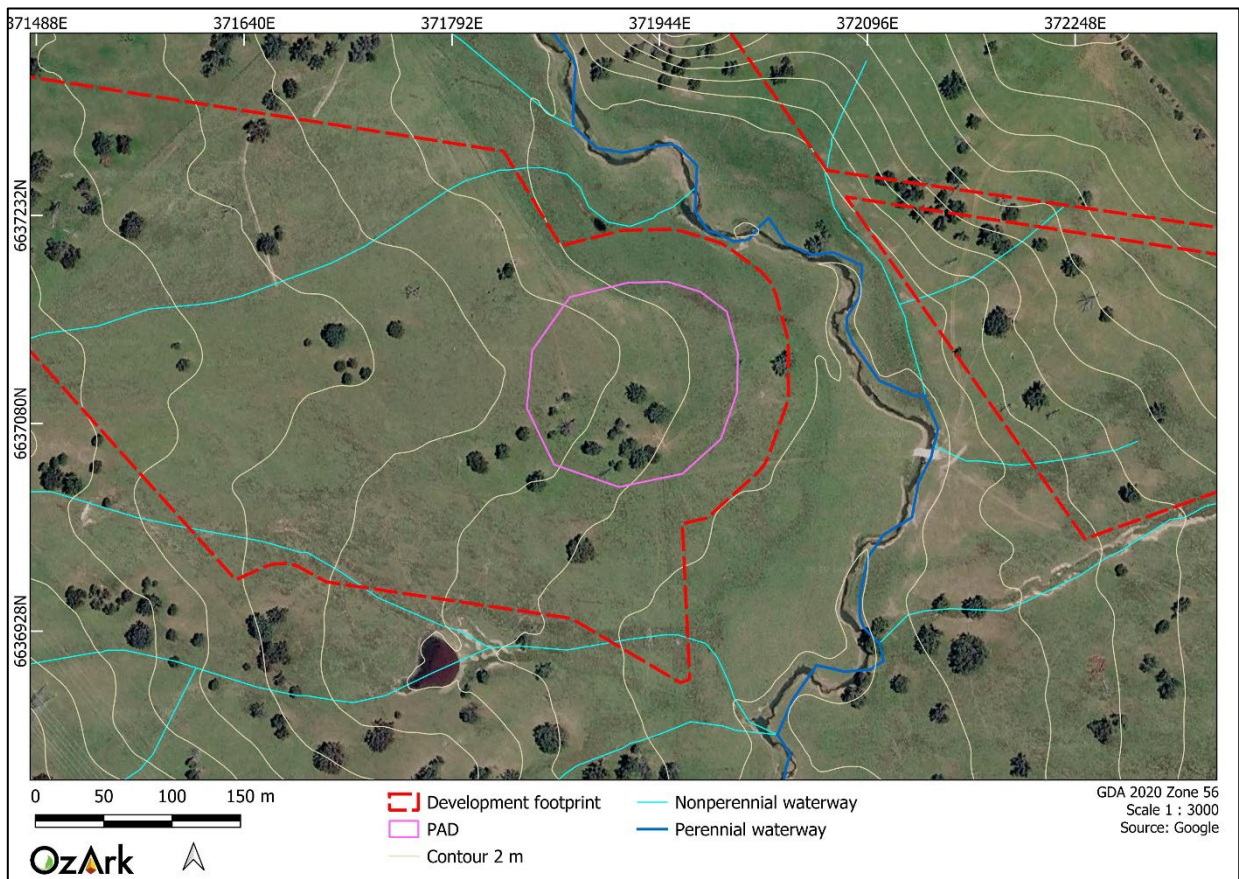


Figure 2-2: DEM hillshade mapping at PAD 4.

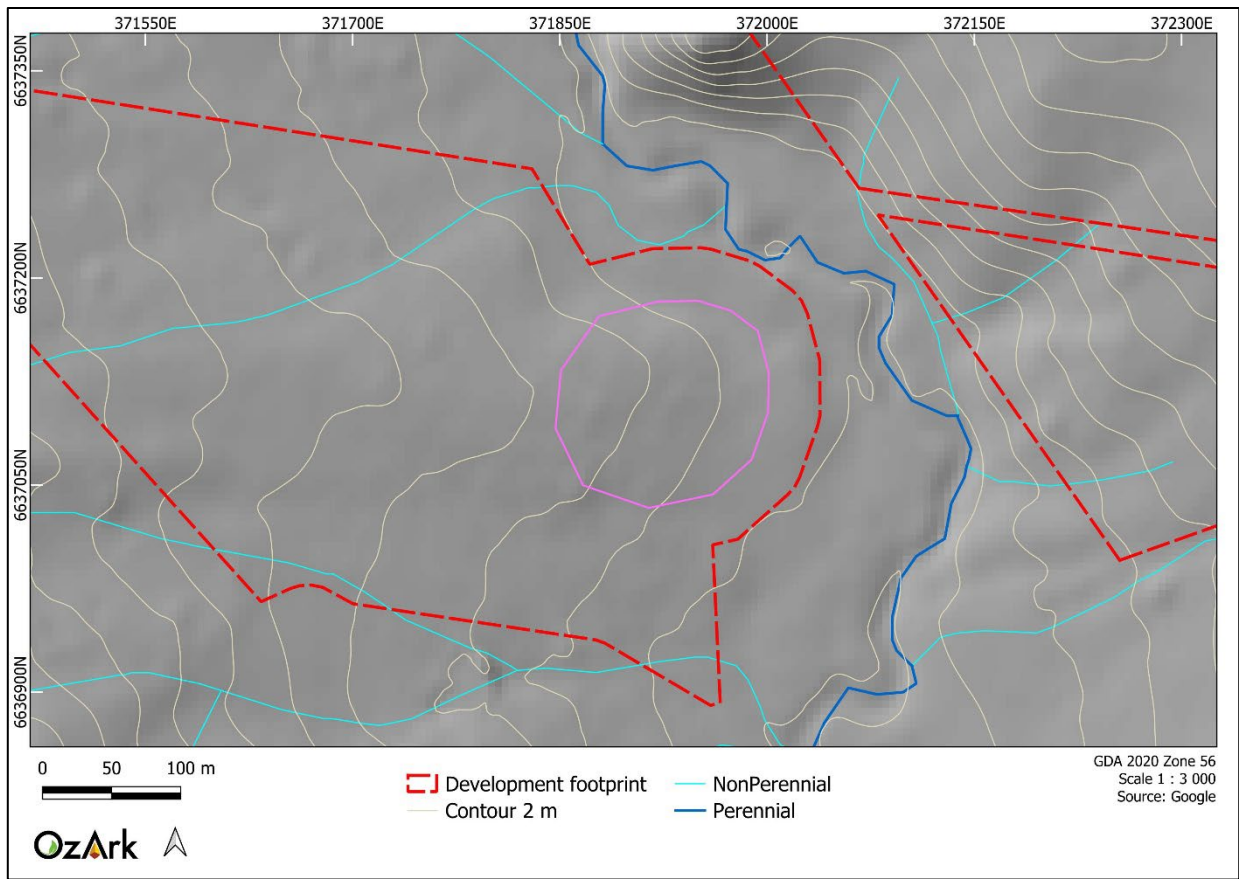


Figure 2-3: PV panel construction area in relation to PAD 4.

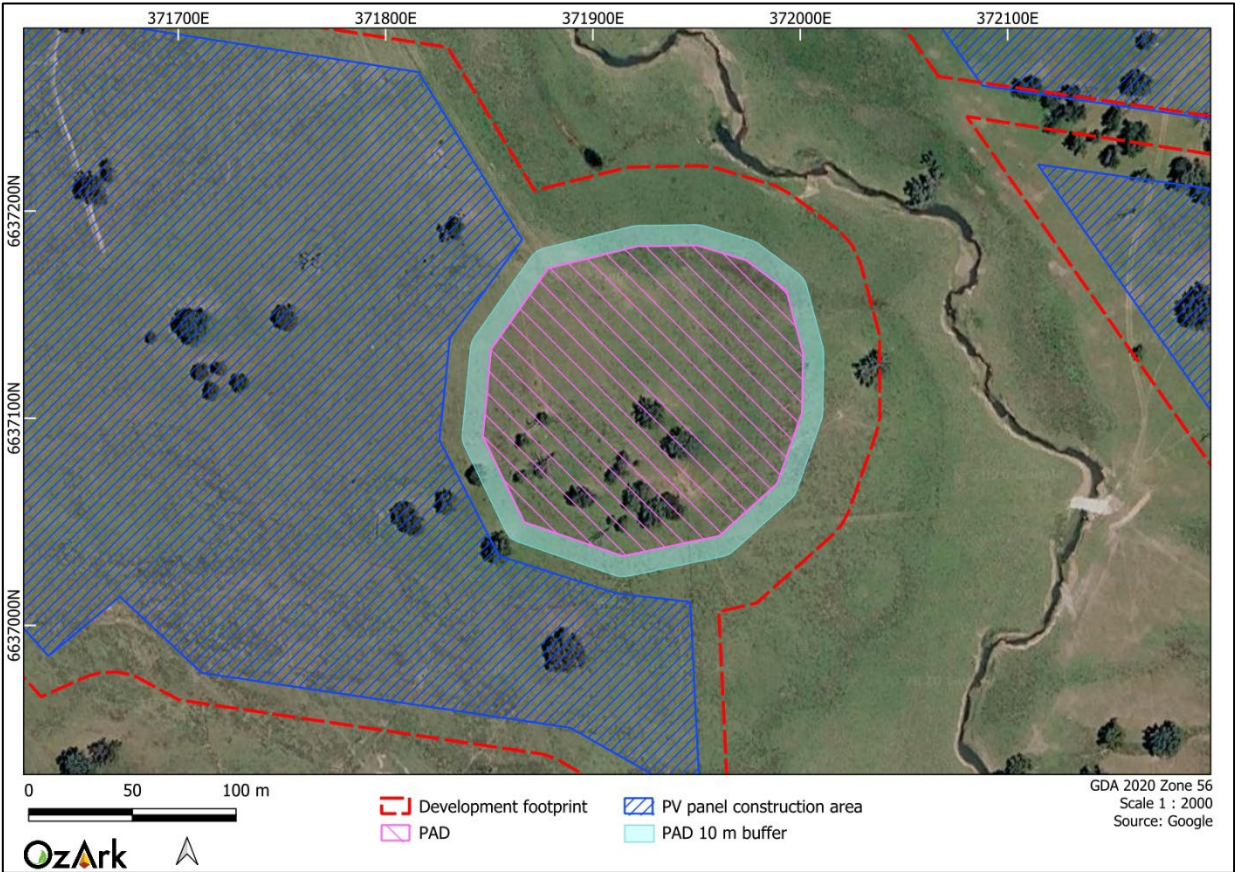
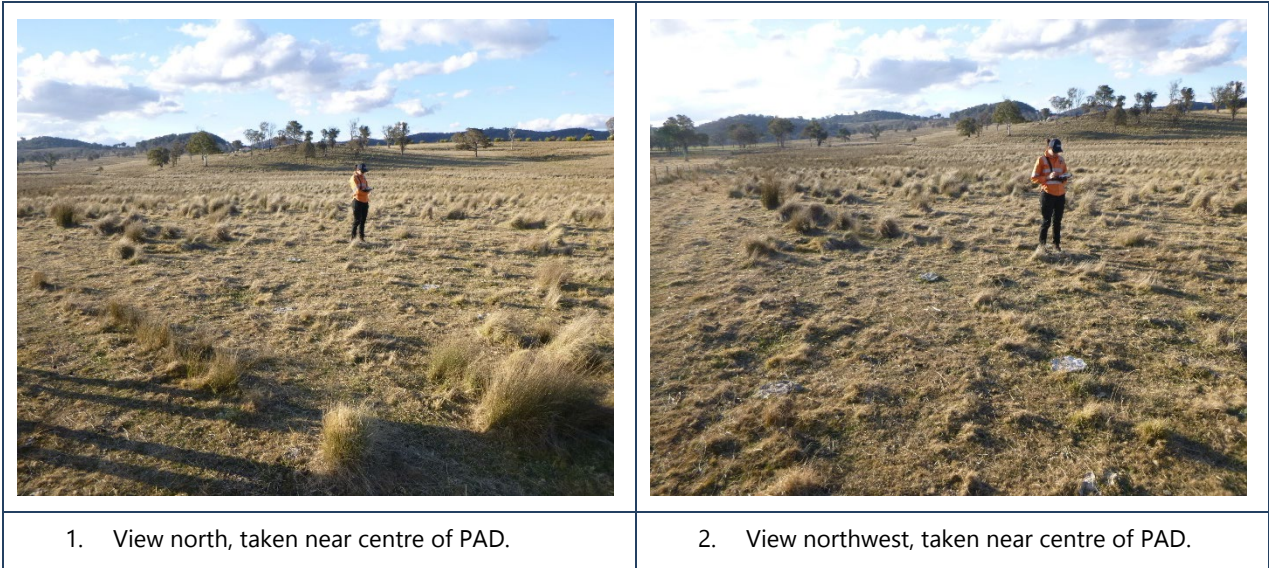


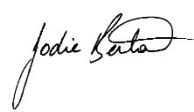
Figure 2-4: Views across landforms within PAD 4.



	
3. View north, taken near south of the PAD.	4. View east.
	5. View west, taken at Duval Creek. Note cars in the background are parked near the centre of PAD 4.

If you require any additional information or require further clarification, please feel free to contact me.

Kind regards,



Jodie Benton
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