

30 January 2018

Elle Donnelly
Senior Planner – Resource & Energy Assessments
Department of Planning & Environment
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Your Reference: SSD8573
Our Reference: OUT18/1589

Emailed: elle.donnelly@planning.nsw.gov.au

Dear Ms Donnelly,

Re: Wellington Solar Farm Project – SSD 8573

Thank you for the opportunity to provide advice on the above matter. This is a response from the NSW Department of Planning & Environment – Division of Resources & Geoscience, Geological Survey of New South Wales (GSNSW).

GSNSW has reviewed the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Wellington Solar Farm project and notes that some of the specific requirements of the Draft SEARS have not been adequately addressed.

The Specific Issues section of the Draft SEARS included a requirement for the proponent to include an assessment of the development's compatibility with existing land uses on the site and adjacent land including operating mines, extractive industries, mineral or petroleum resources and exploration activities. Furthermore, the Draft SEARS also included a requirement for consultation with exploration licence holders, quarry operators and mineral title holders.

The EIS acknowledges "*Mining exploration activity is of continuing interest, with a number of mineral deposits within the area*" and furthermore the proponent clearly acknowledges that "*The proposal would be likely to preclude the extraction of mineral resources from the site for the life of the solar farm*" (page 165 of EIS).

The area is located on prospective rocks of the Macquarie Arc and proximal to the Kaiser (Alkane Resources) and Commonwealth (Impact Minerals) prospects. The Macquarie Arc has the prospectivity for an economic mineral discovery with the potential to translate into mines equivalent in value to Northparkes or Cadia.

Given the high mineral prospectivity of the area, GSNSW considers the requirement for consultation with mineral exploration licence holders to have not been adequately addressed and requires continued effective consultation with the effected licence holders (EL6178 – Modeling Resources and EL8505 – Drummond West) and evidence of the consultation be provided.

Evidence of consultation with affected quarry operators (Boral and Dubbo Regional Council) should also be provided.

Should biodiversity offsets be considered for this project, GSNSW requests consultation to ensure there are no potential sterilisation impacts to resources.

Queries regarding the above information, and future requests for advice in relation to this matter, should be directed to the GSNSW Land Use team at landuse.minerals@industry.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Drummond'.

Malcolm Drummond
Acting Manager – Land Use