



Leanne Cross
CWP Renewables
45 Hunter Street
NEWCASTLE NSW 2300

Via email only: Leanne.Cross@cwprenewables.com

02/10/2020

Dear Ms Cross

**Sapphire Solar Farm (SSD 8643)
Project Staging and Retirement of Biodiversity Offsets**

I refer to your request dated 3 September 2020 notifying the Department that the project will be staged as allowed under condition 5 of Schedule 2 of the consent and seeking the Planning Secretary's approval to vary the timing of the retirement of biodiversity credits under condition 10 of Schedule 3 of the development consent for the Sapphire Solar Farm (SSD 8643).

The Department notes that the proposed staging is in two distinct stages with:

- Stage 1 - construction and operation of the battery storage component (planned to commence early 2021);
- Stage 2 - construction and operation of the solar photovoltaic component.

The Department accepts the notification of this staging in accordance with condition 9 of Schedule 2 of the consent.

The Department has carefully reviewed your request to vary the time to meet the offset obligation under the development consent, noting that:

- the project would be completed in two stages;
- Stage 1 of the project would not impact the vegetation communities requiring the retirement of biodiversity credits under condition 10 of Schedule 3 of the consent; and
- retirement of credits would occur within two years of the commencement of construction of Stage 2 of the project, when impact to the relevant vegetation communities requiring offset credits would occur.

Accordingly, the Planning Secretary approves the request to vary the timing of retirement of biodiversity credits under condition 10 of Schedule 3 of the development consent, subject to the following conditions:

- biodiversity credits are retired within two years from commencement of construction of Stage 2 of the project; and
- there is no impact to the relevant vegetation communities requiring offset credits outlined in Table 1 of condition 10 of Scheduled 3 of the consent at any time prior to the commencement of Stage 2 of the project.

If you wish to discuss the matter further, please contact Rob Beckett on 9274 6388.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'NB', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Nicole Brewer
Director
Energy Assessments

As nominee of the Planning Secretary