



Mr Bruce Howard
Wollar Solar Development Pty Ltd
Level 21 Suite 3
1 York Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

24/05/2021

Dear Bruce

Wollar Solar - Biodiversity Offsets Update (SSD-9254) Biodiversity Offsets Update

I refer to your Biodiversity offsets status report dated 23 December 2020 and letter dated 28 April 2021, for the Wollar Solar Farm project as required by the Department's letter dated 31 July 2020 regarding biodiversity offset obligations. The Department notes the Planning Secretary's discretion to delay meeting offset obligations for the Wollar Solar Farm as required under condition 13 of Schedule 3 of the development consent (SSD 9254) was contingent on the submission of this report and subject to the following conditions:

- provide a status report to the Department on the outcome of your field work and a preliminary analysis of the stewardship agreement by 31 December 2020;
- apply for a Biodiversity Stewardship Agreement and upload all relevant supporting documents to the Biodiversity Offsets and Agreement Management System by 30 April 2021; and
- retire any residual credits negotiated through the market and/or pay residual obligations to the Biodiversity Conservation Fund by 31 December 2021.

Biodiversity Offset Status Report

The Department and Biodiversity, Conservation and Science Directorate of the Department (BCS) have reviewed the report and notes that whilst the report indicates the proposed biodiversity offset stewardship site is likely to satisfy the ecosystem credit requirements listed in condition 13 of Schedule 3 of the consent, the site may not satisfy all species credit requirements and that further surveys are to be conducted on the stewardship site and a biodiversity stewardship assessment report (BSAR) is to be prepared.

The Department notes that additional surveys were in the process of being undertaken to determine the presence of threatened microbats such as the Large-eared Pied Bat, confirmation of the number of Koala credits generated and further surveys were conducted over the Autumn 2021 season for PCT 1303 and PCT 281 derived native grassland areas to delineate critically endangered ecological communities within the development footprint.

Further information is required to clarify how you intend to satisfy the species credit requirements.

Please ensure discussions are undertaken with Biodiversity Conservation Trust on the proposed stewardship site, as soon as possible.

In addition, the Department notes that the issue of the existing exploration licence is likely to be a key risk to resolve in consultation with Santos / Hunter Gas Pty Ltd and the Mining, Exploration and Geoscience (MEG) division of the Department of Regional NSW. Although you have indicated Santos

has indicated no objection to the proposed offset area, please provide evidence of this consultation and consult with MEG.

Proposed Extension

The Department notes that you considered in your offset status report (23 December 2020), that the timing of the works towards establishing the Biodiversity Stewardship Agreement were considered to be on track with the timeframe provided in the Offset Strategy and provided in the Department's approval which included applying for a Biodiversity Stewardship Agreement and upload all relevant supporting documents to the Biodiversity Offsets and Agreement Management System by 30 April 2021.

However, your letter, dated 28 April 2021 sought a further 6-week extension, being a revised date of 11 June 2021.

In considering this further extension, the Department notes the following:

- all background searches are complete;
- all field work is complete to inform the BSAR;
- the credit calculations demonstrates a surplus in NSW ecosystem credits (including additional credits required for the Commonwealth approval); and
- several species which were assumed to occur along Barigan Road impact areas and generated species credits were no longer detected during the survey efforts.

However, the Department notes that further work to complete the BSAR requires:

- remodelling credit outcomes to allow some grazing under restrictions (i.e., visual cues and seasonal restrictions);
- documentation of the grazing restrictions in the BSAR, including consideration of fencing on the Total Fund Deposit calculations;
- client and landowner consultation to ensure the outcomes are satisfactory to all parties; and
- lodgement of the BSAR.

The Secretary accordingly approves the extension of upload all relevant supporting documents to the Biodiversity Offsets and Agreement Management System by 11 June 2021.

The Department also requests the following by 11 June 2021:

- further information about how you intend to satisfy the species credit requirements; and
- evidence of, and summary of outcomes of, consultation with the exploration licence holder and MEG.

The Department notes that the expectation is still that you retire any residual credits negotiated through the market and/or pay residual obligations to the Biodiversity Conservation Fund by 31 December 2021.

If you wish to discuss the matter further, please contact Nicole Brewer at nicole.brewer@planning.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely



Nicole Brewer
Director
Energy Assessments

As nominee of the Planning Secretary