



John Fisher
Environmental Manager – Delivery
NSW Electricity Networks Operations Pty Limited
180 Thomas Street
Haymarket, NSW, 2000

16 March 2022

Dear Mr. Fisher

**Project EnergyConnect (NSW - Western Section) (SSI-10040)
Biodiversity Offset Package**

I refer to the Biodiversity Offset Package (the package) submitted in accordance with Condition D26 of Schedule 2 of the Infrastructure Approval for EnergyConnect (NSW - Western Section) (SSI-10040).

The Department has carefully reviewed the document and notes that Transgrid:

- intends this to be a progressive document to be updated as other offset mechanisms are implemented;
- proposes the retirement of a portion of offset credits through 'Big Bend' Biodiversity Stewardship Agreement site (BSA) 1 (BSA 1) and itemises the credits that will be retired from BSA 1;
- proposes other mechanisms to be progressed, including other additional properties for BSAs and residual payments into the Biodiversity Conservation Fund (BCF);
- has prepared a timeline for updates of the package to achieve the implementation and delivery of all offset credits by 31 December 2023.

The Department notes that no extensions to the timeframe of 31 December 2023 in condition D26 will be provided. In accordance with the Deed of Agreement described in condition D27, all offsets must be delivered by 31 December 2023 or the funds in the escrow account will be drawn upon.

In addition, the Department is concerned about the timeline proposed in the package and Transgrid's ability to meet the deadline in the Infrastructure Approval given some of the proposed BSA applications have not commenced.

The Department requests that Transgrid provide a progress report every 3 months against the proposed timeline and with a reconciliation of the credit break down with the first progress report delivered by 30 June 2022.

Noting the above, the Secretary has approved the Biodiversity Offset Package (Revision 3, dated 14 March 2022).

Please ensure that the approved document is placed on the project website at the earliest convenience.

If you wish to discuss the matter further, please contact Nicole Brewer on (02) 9274 6374.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Clay Preshaw". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "C".

Clay Preshaw
Executive Director
Energy, Resources and Industry Assessments

As nominee of the Secretary