

Notice of decision

Section 2.22 and clause 20 of Schedule 1 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*

Application type	State significant infrastructure modification
Application number and project name	SSI-9687-Mod-1 Snowy 2.0 - Main Works Mod 1
Applicant	Snowy Hydro Limited
Approving authority	Minister for Planning

Decision

The Director, Energy Assessments, under delegation from the Minister for Planning, has, under s.5.25 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (**the Act**) approved the modification subject to conditions.

A copy of the instrument of modification is available at:
<https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/project/42911>.

A copy of the Planning Secretary's Assessment Report is available at:
<https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/project/42911>.

Date of decision

27 January 2022

Reasons for decision

The following matters were taken into consideration in making this decision:

- the previous assessments undertaken of the impacts of the Snowy 2.0 Main Works project;
- the existing conditions of approval;
- the modification application and modification report;
- the views of the community about the project (see **Attachment 1**);
- advice from key government agencies, including the National Parks and Wildlife Service, NSW EPA Biodiversity Conservation and Science Division of the Department, and NSW EPA;
- Snowy Hydro's Submissions Report;
- relevant NSW legislation, policies and guidelines;
- the objects of the EP&A Act;
- the considerations under s 7.17(2) of the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* (NSW); and
- the Department's Assessment Report on the infrastructure and the reports, advice and recommendations contained in the report.

The findings and recommendations set out in the Department's Assessment Report were accepted and adopted as the reasons for making this decision.

The key reasons for approving the modification are as follows:

- *Benefits* – the proposal would avoid surface disturbance and improve constructability for services connections;
- *Impacts can be managed* - the impacts on the community and the environment can be appropriately minimised, managed or offset to an acceptable level, in accordance with Snowy Hydro's proposed management measures, the existing conditions of approval and proposed changes to conditions;
- *Community views considered* - the issues raised by the community during consultation and in submissions have been considered and adequately addressed through changes to the project, and submissions provide support for the proposal to establish an underground services connection and avoid surface disturbance; and
- *Public interest* – weighing all relevant considerations, the project is in the public interest.

Attachment 1 – Consideration of Community Views

Once the application and modification report was submitted to the Department it was placed on exhibition from 26 October 2021 to 8 November 2021 (14 days). 5 submissions were received, including 2 objections.

The key issues raised by the community (including in submissions) and considered in the Planning Secretary's Assessment Report and by the decision maker include objection to the overall project, concern with retaining the separate proposal to erect overhead power lines associated with the project, and support for measures taken in the design of the proposal to avoid ground disturbance, erosion and biodiversity impacts associated with trenching, and reduce time and cost associated with horizontal directional drilling compared to overhead or trenched services.

The Department considered the issues raised in public submissions closely in assessing the application. The Department considers the proposed modification would result in an overall reduction in the impacts associated with establishing services connection between the two sites, and considers that the reduction in impacts from the proposed modification is generally supported by community and interest groups.