



Department of Industry

OUT19/1789

Michael Themis
Environment Assessment Officer
Resource & Energy Assessments
NSW Department of Planning and Environment

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Dear Mr Themis

West Wyalong Solar Farm (SSD 9504) EIS Exhibition

I refer to your email of 8 February 2019 to the Department of Industry (DoI) in respect to the above matter. Comment has been sought from relevant branches of Lands & Water and Department of Primary Industries. Any further referrals to Department of Industry can be sent by email to landuse.enquiries@dpi.nsw.gov.au.

The department provides the following comments and recommendations for consideration in assessment of the proposal.

DoI – Water and Natural Resources Access Regulator

Prior to Project Determination

- The proponent should confirm the ability to obtain the necessary water volumes from the site dams or confirm a viable supply is available for tankering the supply, via an indication of an agreement from a water supplier. Where the water is to be sourced from a currently unauthorised source, an impact assessment may be required and sufficient entitlement obtained prior to extraction occurring.
- The proponent should commit to the solar panels being positioned at a height that will not impact on floodwaters.
- The proponent should confirm the impact of the security fencing on floodwaters and the resultant impact to adjacent watercourses.

Post Project Determination

- The proponent should obtain relevant approvals and licences under the *Water Management Act 2000* before commencing any works which intercept or extract groundwater or surface water (including from on-site dams where necessary) or for any works which have the potential to alter the flow of floodwaters.
- The proponent must prepare a Construction Environmental Management Plan (incorporating an Erosion and Sediment Control Plan) prior to commencement of activities.

DPI – Agriculture

- While NSW DPI Agriculture acknowledges that a thorough Geotechnical Investigation (Appendix I) was undertaken, this is more focussed on impacts on construction and immediate soil erosion risk and impacts of infrastructure. NSW DPI Agriculture recommends further in-situ investigation and analysis of the collected soil samples to be undertaken prior to construction starting. This analysis is also needed to consider current conditions to assist future rehabilitation activities following the construction of the solar farm and for decommissioning. The information is crucial for the restoration of land and soil capability to current or better value, and also to aid in gaining full productive agricultural values that supports both grazing and cropping activities.
- It is unclear if there will be major earthworks in areas where solar arrays are to be located. It is understood that trenching for cables will be undertaken. Confirmation is required as to whether major land shaping will also be undertaken. NSW DPI Agriculture is concerned about broad acre land shaping as this will make it difficult to return the land to pre development agricultural suitability following decommissioning. Again if this is to occur, careful testing and management measures need to take place to protect the integrity of soil, as part of the construction phase.
- The proponent should prepare a draft Decommissioning Plan that can be updated prior to final use. This will allow the proponent to develop measurement criteria to assess the success of rehabilitation to agricultural lands based on current conditions.

Yours sincerely



Liz Rogers
Manager, Assessments
Lands and Water - Strategy and Policy
8 March 2019