

Rose-Anne Hawkeswood
Planner
Resource Assessments, Planning Services
Department of Planning & Environment
GPO Box 39 SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Ms Hawkeswood

**Jemalong Solar Farm Project (SSD 6588)
Exhibition**

I refer to your email of 25 August 2016 inviting the NSW Department of Industry, Division of Resources & Energy (the Division) to provide comments on the Vast Solar Pty Limited (the Proponent) Jemalong Solar Farm (the Project) Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

The Division has reviewed the *Environmental Impact Statement Jemalong Solar Station 30MW Concentrating Thermal Power Plant* dated August 2016 and provides the following comments within its area of responsibility.

The NSW Government is committed to providing a diverse energy mix as detailed under the Government's Renewable Energy Action Plan. Increasing solar energy will help the NSW Government meet its commitment to contribute to the national Renewable Energy Target of 33,000 gigawatt hours by 2020.

Concentrated solar thermal power (CSP) plants generate solar power by using mirrors or lenses to concentrate solar thermal energy onto a small area, which is then stored so that it can be dispatched to the grid when it is needed. This technology has the potential to play an important role in complimenting other renewable energy technologies such as solar photo-voltaic and wind to help NSW transition to a cleaner energy mix while maintaining reliability and security of supply.

The Division supports the Project as it aligns with Government policy to increase renewable energy generation, jobs and investment in the State, while contributing to the diversity and security of our energy mix. The 30 megawatt CSP plant has an estimated capital investment value of almost \$100 million and is expected to inject considerable funds into the local community of Forbes. The project would support up to 500 jobs during construction and up to 20 ongoing jobs during operation (around 25 years).

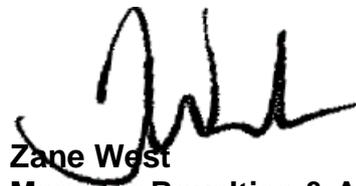
The Jemalong Solar Station follows the Proponent's 6 MW CSP pilot project, which is currently under construction at a nearby location in Jemalong. Both solar plants would add significant value to the State by providing dispatchable and clean energy for use by NSW homes and businesses, when it is needed, whether day or night.

With regard to any potential sterilisation of mineral resources, the Proponent notes in Section 6.3 '*Land Use Impacts (Including Mineral Resources)*' of the EIS, there are no known gold occurrences in the vicinity of the project site. The nearest significant, identified resource (and operating mine) is Cowal Gold Mine, which is approximately 30km to the southwest of the Project. The Proponent also correctly notes that there are no Exploration Licences or Mining Lease Applications held in the vicinity of the project site.

The Division is satisfied that the Proponent has addressed the issue of the impact the project could potentially have on mineral resources in the area. The Division has no further issues or comments relating to the project at this stage.

Should you have any enquires regarding this matter please contact Steve Cozens, Senior Project Officer, Royalty & Advisory Services on 9842 8573.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Zane West', is written over a vertical line.

Zane West
Manager Royalties & Advisory Services