



Office of  
Environment  
& Heritage

DOC17/130706  
SSD 8072

Mr Iwan Davies  
Senior Planner  
Department of Planning and Environment  
GPO Box 39  
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Mr Davies

**Nevertire Solar Farm Project (SSD 8072) - Exhibited EIS**

I refer to your request dated 23 February 2017 seeking comment from the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) on the exhibited Environmental Assessment for the Nevertire Solar Farm.

We have reviewed the information provided against our requirements sent to the Department of Planning and Environment on 30 November 2016 and our recommendations are provided in **Attachment A** and our detailed comments are provided **Attachment B**.

If you have any questions regarding this matter please contact Michelle Howarth on 02 6883 5339 or email [michelle.howarth@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:michelle.howarth@environment.nsw.gov.au).

Yours sincerely

**PETER CHRISTIE**  
**A/Director North West**  
**Regional Operations Division**

28 March 2017  
Contact officer: MICHELLE HOWARTH  
02 6883 5339

## OEH Recommendations

### Nevertire Solar Farm – Environmental Impact Statement

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#### Acronyms

EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
OEH	NSW Office of Environment and Heritage
BOS	Biodiversity Offset Strategy
BAR	Biodiversity Assessment Report

#### Recommendations:

1. A detailed offset strategy should be provided prior to the approval of the impact so the benefits to biodiversity to compensate for the adverse impacts of the project can be assessed. The offset strategy should propose an offset that is consistent with the *NSW Biodiversity Offsets Policy for Major Projects*. Offset commitments must be demonstrated prior to approval of the impact and the offset components should identified and be in place prior to the commencement of construction.
2. The proponent clarify the proposed total impact to native vegetation and the amount requiring offsetting.
3. Species credits should be calculated for the koala so that the loss of the 0.84 hectare woodland area of koala habitat is offset appropriately.

## OEH Detailed Comments

### Nevertire Solar Farm – Environmental Impact Statement

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#### A biodiversity offset strategy is required

Page 53 of the EIS states *'A Biodiversity Offset Strategy (BOS) will be developed and implemented as part of the approval of the proposal.'* And *'It is proposed that an offset will be established subject to consent conditions within 2 years of the commencement of construction, which would be adequate for the retirement of biodiversity credits of a number and class specified in Table 7-3.'*

While the credit requirement for offsetting has been calculated a BOS has not been provided. The FBA states (Section 11.1.1.2) that the BOS should be submitted with the BAR as part of the EIS.

Offset commitments must be demonstrated prior to approval of the impact and the offset components should identified and be in place prior to the commencement of construction.

#### Recommendation

1. A detailed offset strategy should be provided prior to the approval of the impact so the benefits to biodiversity to compensate for the adverse impacts of the project can be assessed. The offset strategy should propose an offset that is consistent with the *NSW Biodiversity Offsets Policy for Major Projects*.

#### Area of impact

Page 14 of the BAR, in reference to PCT 56, states *'This vegetation community includes the majority of native vegetation within the development of which 8.82 ha is proposed to be cleared'*

This figure is inconsistent with other sections of the BAR and EIS. It is understood that a total of 1.41 hectares of PCT 56 will be impacted on by the proposal with 0.84 hectares requiring offsetting. We presume this is typo. The proponent should clarify the area listed on page 14 to ensure that all impacts are being adequately assessed and offset.

#### Recommendation

2. The proponent clarify the proposed total impact to native vegetation and the amount requiring offsetting.

#### Koala habitat is present

The BAR identifies that while koalas were not recorded within the 0.84 hectare woodland area to be removed, a koala was heard bellowing adjacent to the north-east boundary. Additionally the BAR identifies that Poplar Box is listed as a secondary food tree species for the Koala by OEH for the western areas of NSW and as a Schedule 2 feed tree species on State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP) 44.

OEH does not accept the proponents' conclusion that the 0.84 hectare woodland area is not habitat for the koala. It is likely that koalas within the surrounding habitat areas utilise the 0.84 hectare woodland area on an occasional or rare basis. Species credits should be calculated for the koala so that the loss of the 0.84 hectare woodland area of koala habitat is offset appropriately.

## Recommendation

3. Species credits should be calculated for the koala so that the loss of the 0.84 hectare woodland area of koala habitat is offset appropriately.