

Our Ref: s18.6.52/05
Contact: Anthony Alliston, Manager Development Services
Your Ref: SSD 8643

28 February 2018

Department of Planning and Environment
Elle.Donnelley@planning.nsw.gov.au

Dear Madam

**INVERELL SHIRE COUNCIL SUBMISSION
SAPPHIRE SOLAR FARM - STATE SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENT 8643**

INTRODUCTION

Reference is made to the above State Significant Development 8643 and the Departments e-mail dated 24 January 2018. Council is grateful for the opportunity to provide a written submission in respect to the project. This submission has been prepared by Council's Manager Development Services and has been endorsed by Council at its Ordinary Meeting of Council held on the 28 February 2018.

Council acknowledges the benefits of the project at a local, regional and national scale. It is understood that the project will improve security of electricity supply, create employment opportunities and will contribute to the State and Federal Governments' targets for renewable energy and reduction in green house gas emissions. The project has the potential to inject millions of dollars into the Australian economy over its life time. Council anticipates that this economic injection may flow through to the local economy through the use of local contractors and local services, particularly during the construction phase.

Noting the positive implications of the project, Inverell Shire Council also seeks to ensure that the project is constructed, operated and decommissioned in a way that any potential negative impacts on the local and wider communities are minimised.

The submission has been prepared in the context of:

- The proponents Environmental Assessment (EA) January 2018;
- Comments and input from Councillors; and
- Council's inspection of the site, locality, roads and infrastructure.

TRAFFIC AND ROAD DILAPIDATION

One of the primary areas of focus for Council is to ensure adequate measures are in place during the construction phase of the project so that impacts on Council's local service infrastructure, including roads, bridges and causeways will be minimised. Should consent be granted, Council considers that suitable conditions should be included on the Project Approval in relation to:

- Independent road dilapidation reporting prior to construction, for all local and state roads;
- Ongoing and regular measures to restore and reinstate road damage resulting from construction of the project; and
- After construction, a subsequent report to assess the damage that may have resulted from construction.

Council is willing to actively engage with the proponent in relation to the road dilapidation and damage.
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BUSH FIRE

It is noted that prior to commencing construction, a bushfire risk assessment will be undertaken to assess specific risks associated with the site and a bushfire management plan will be prepared to identify a suite of strategies and mitigation measures to manage these risks.

Council supports the need for a detailed bush fire risk assessment and recommends that this be included in the conditions of the Project Approval.

DRAFT CONDITIONS

Inverell Shire Council is confident that the Department of Planning and Environment's assessment and determination will be thorough and that appropriate conditions will be placed on the Project Approval to ensure the likely impacts are adequately mitigated and that corrective action, where necessary can be undertaken should it be found that during the project life there are unforeseen impacts on a local and regional scale.

With a view to ensuring the most appropriate and transparent outcome for all stakeholders including the proponent, Council and the local community; Inverell Council requests the opportunity to view the draft conditions of the Project Approval during the same period in which the proponent is given to review them.

CONCLUSION

Council requests that if there are any significant changes to the design based on final detailed investigations, that further consultation at a local (Council) level be undertaken prior to commencement of the project.

Should you have any queries or require further clarification on matters raised in this submission, please contact me on 0425271633 or (02) 6728 8200.

Yours faithfully,



ANTHONY ALLISTON
MANAGER DEVELOPMENT SERVICES