



OUT20/13697

Lander Robinson
Planning & Assessment
NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment

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Dear Mr Robinson

**Dunedoo Solar Farm (SSD 8847)
EIS**

I refer to your email of 4 November 2020 to the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) Water and the Natural Resources Access Regulator (NRAR) about the above matter.

The following recommendations are provided by DPIE Water and NRAR.

Pre-Approval

- Clarification and details should be provided of the ability to obtain the necessary water volumes from the site or confirm a viable supply is available via an agreement from a water supplier. Where the water is to be sourced from a currently unauthorised source, an impact assessment and confirmation that the necessary entitlement can be obtained will be required.
- The proponent should conduct an impact assessment of the proposed bore and note the close presence of nearby bores, including a Town Water Supply bore, and the vulnerability and responsibility of the proponent in the event of the release of contaminants.
- The proponent should understand the potential constraints to receiving the required water access licence and works approval for the proposed water supply bore and the consequential commercial risk caused to the project.

Post Approval

- 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.
- If groundwater is to be intercepted at any stage of the development the proponent must obtain the relevant entitlement and approval where required prior to any extraction or interception.
- The proponent should prepare a Construction and Operational Environmental Management Plan (incorporating an Erosion and Sediment Control Plan) prior to commencement of activities.
- Works within waterfront land should be in accordance with the Guidelines for Controlled Activities on Waterfront Land (NRAR 2018). Further information is required to understand how buffers are to be implemented to the Talbragar River and what the design and permanency of the track across the river is to be.

Detailed information can be found in **Attachment A**.



Planning,
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Environment

Any further referrals to DPIE Water and NRAR can be sent by email to:
landuse.enquiries@dpi.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

Liz Rogers
Manager, Assessments
Water – Strategic Relations
22 November 2020

**Dunedoo Solar Farm (SSD 8847)
EIS
Detailed information**

Water supply & proposed bore Insufficient information has been provided to confirm access to a secure water supply for this project. The proponent has proposed options such as a new bore, the use of dams which are subject to rainfall/evaporation, and tankering to the site. However the proponent has not confirmed their ability to obtain the necessary water from these sources and the associated agreements and impact assessments.

The EIS reports that the take of 42 ML from the Tabralgar Alluvial Aquifer will have minimal impact given the broader scheme of entitlements and the long-term average annual extraction limits for Talbragar alluvium (3,423ML/year) set within the Water Sharing Plan (WSP). However, localised impacts have not been assessed and there are specific assessment criteria that need to be assessed and approved before take of water can occur. These localised groundwater impacts are prescribed on the WaterNSW website:

https://www.industry.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0008/175931/Assessing-groundwater-applications-fact-sheet.pdf. Specifically, for this Project the acceptable level of impact must comply with those requirements as presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Groundwater criteria for acceptable level of impacts

Groundwater source	Impact on water table (unconfined aquifers)	Impact on groundwater pressure (confined/semi-confined aquifers)
1.2 Lower Gwydir and Lower Namoi groundwater sources	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Less than 0.1 metre cumulative drawdown in the water table, 40 metres from any: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> high-priority, groundwater dependent ecosystem, or high-priority, culturally significant site. An additional drawdown of not more than 10% of the pre-development TAD above the base of the water source to a maximum of 2 metres at any: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3rd or higher order surface water source measured at 40 metres from the high bank, or water supply works (excluding those on the same property) subject to negotiation with impacted parties. A cumulative drawdown of not more than 10% of the pre-development TAD of the water source to a maximum of 2 metres at a distance of 200 metres from any water supply works (including the pumping bores) subject to negotiation with impacted parties. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> A cumulative drawdown of not more than 40% of the pre-development TAD above the base of the water source at a distance of 200 metres from any water supply works including the pumping bores. An additional drawdown of not more than 10% of the pre-development TAD above the base of the water source to a maximum of 2 metres at any water supply works (excluding those on the same property), subject to negotiation with impacted parties.

The EIS has not presented against these impact criteria, nor nominated a site from which the bore would be located. Consequently, DPIE Water cannot complete its own groundwater impact assessment nor confirm that a 71Q dealing for the required volume of water would be permissible.

If the Project is approved prior to completion of the hydrogeological assessment, the proponent will be required to submit a 71Q dealing application for the required volume of water. This is a commercial risk for the proponent as DPIE Water cannot guarantee that the required volume of water demand will be made available.

The impact assessment will be required to address the rules for water supply works in the Water Sharing Plan for the Macquarie-Castlereagh Groundwater Sources 2020. Such rules include distance requirements from boundaries and bores on other properties. The assessment will also need to address DPIE Water's bore impact assessment requirements and confirm a viable supply is available. These assessments when considered as part of the State Significant Development assessment framework will enable relevant exclusions to apply from the requirement to obtain a



water supply work approval under the *Water Management Act 2000*. We note that the Council has concerns with the proposed bore use therefore the assessment will need to clarify potential impacts on Council's Town Water Supply.

The EIS refers to two existing irrigation bores located within the development footprint. Based on a search of the Department's database it appears these two bores are located on the lot to the north (Lot 79 DP754309). These bores and other bores in the surrounding area will need to be considered when addressing the distance requirement rules in the Water Sharing Plan for the Macquarie-Castlereagh Groundwater Sources 2020. The Department also has a number of government monitoring bores in the area critical to managing the resource which need to be protected from impacts of any bore operation. This includes one near the south west corner of Lot 80 DP754309.

Whilst the proponent is yet to acquire a water entitlement to account for water take from a bore, there is sufficient market depth, and there are records of temporary trades in recent years to at least the volume required for this project.

END ATTACHMENT A