



Our ref: DOC20/62661

Your ref: SSD 9264

Natasha Homsey
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Resource Assessments
Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
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Dear Natasha

Environmental Impact Statement: Tamworth Solar Farm (SSD 9264)

Thank you for your email dated 23 January 2020 to the Biodiversity and Conservation Division (BCD) inviting comments on the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Tamworth Solar Farm proposal.

BCD has reviewed the EIS and we are satisfied with the conclusions presented in the Biodiversity Development Assessment Report.

BCD has also reviewed the Aboriginal cultural heritage (ACH) assessment report (Appendix D of the EIS) and accept the assessment findings and the procedures undertaken for Aboriginal consultation. BCD have no comments regarding the ACH assessment and consultation.

BCD's recommendations are provided in **Attachment A** and detailed comments are provided in **Attachment B**. If you require any further information regarding this matter, please contact Liz Mazzer, Conservation Planning Officer, at liz.mazzer@environment.nsw.gov.au or on 6883 5325.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Sarah Carr'.

19 February 2020

Sarah Carr
Director North West Branch
Biodiversity and Conservation Division

Enclosure: Attachments A and B

BCD Recommendations

Tamworth Solar Farm – Environmental Impact Statement

- 2.1 The mitigation measures in table 2.6 of the Biodiversity Development Assessment Report should be included with those presented in table 5.3 of the EIS.
- 2.2 Planted vegetation should use species commensurate with PCT 433 – White Box grassy woodland to open woodland on basalt flats and rises in the Liverpool Plains sub-region, Brigalow Belt South Bioregion.

BCD Detailed Comments

Tamworth Solar Farm – Environmental Impact Statement

Biodiversity

1. Use of a streamlined assessment is appropriate

The Biodiversity Development Assessment Report (BDAR) has used the streamlined assessment module for clearing paddock trees (Biodiversity Assessment Method [BAM] Appendix 1).

Vegetation on the site meets the definition of paddock trees in the BAM as the trees are surrounded by category 1 land. Adequate evidence (BAM vegetation plots and a property vegetation plan) has been provided to support the use of the streamlined module.

Use of the streamlined assessment module is appropriate for this proposal. The streamlined module has been correctly applied. The project will generate nineteen (19) ecosystem credits. Section 5.1.4.1 of the EIS indicates that the proponent intends to satisfy the offset requirement by payment into the Biodiversity Stewardship Payments Fund. This intent is consistent with the requirements of the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*.

2. Additional mitigation measures are recommended

Table 2.6 of the BDAR lists recommended mitigation measures. BCD supports these mitigation measures. However, these are not included in the summary of mitigation measures for biodiversity presented in table 5.3 of the EIS.

The EIS states that vegetation screening will use fast growing species that are drought tolerant, fire resistant and grow to a height of 5 to 10 metres, and are preferably native species (section 5.5.4.2). Consistent with the recommended mitigation measure in table 2.6 of the BDAR, BCD recommends that landscaping and vegetation screening should use plant species commensurate with the plant community type (PCT) identified on the site.

Recommendations

- 2.1 The mitigation measures in table 2.6 of the BDAR should be included with those presented in table 5.3 of the EIS.
- 2.2 Planted vegetation should use species commensurate with PCT 433 – White Box grassy woodland to open woodland on basalt flats and rises in the Liverpool Plains sub-region, Brigalow Belt South Bioregion.