

Mr Jonathan Upson
Director, Project Development and Origination
Canadian Solar (Australia) Pty Ltd
44 Stephenson St
Cremorne VIC 3121

By email: jonathan.upson@canadiansolar.com

14/08/2020

Dear Mr Upson

**Suntop Solar Farm (SSD-8696)
Biodiversity Offsets**

I refer to your request dated 29 July 2020 seeking the Planning Secretary's approval to vary the timing of the retirement of biodiversity credits beyond the commencement of the development under condition 13 of Schedule 3 of the development consent for the Suntop Solar Farm (SSD 8696) and attached Offset Investigations.

The Department has carefully reviewed your request for additional time to meet the offset obligation under the development consent in order to negotiate a trade via the credit market or pay into the Biodiversity Conservation Fund for the remaining ecosystem credits.

The Department notes that:

- you have undertaken desktop investigations and you believe that ecosystem credits could be generated by negotiating a trade via the credit market;
- you have prepared a detailed time frame incorporating seasonal and project objectives to meet all offset obligations by 31 May 2021; and
- retiring credits before construction begins on the project will drive the need to secure credits via the Biodiversity Conservation Fund, which is less desirable than negotiating the purchase of credits from the credit market.

The Department is satisfied with the proposed approach to your offset obligations on the condition that you strictly adhere to your proposed timetable.

Accordingly, the Planning Secretary approves the commencement of development prior to the retirement of biodiversity credits required under condition 13 of Schedule 3 of the development consent, subject to the following conditions:

- provide a status report to the Department on the outcome of your register searches and expressions of interest by 31 October 2020; and
- retire your biodiversity credits through the market and/or pay residual obligations to the Biodiversity Conservation Fund by 31 May 2021.

If you wish to discuss the matter further, please contact Natasha Homsey on 02 8275 1264 or at natasha.homsey@planning.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'NB', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Nicole Brewer
Director
Energy Assessments

As nominee of the Planning Secretary