

Appendix A – Secretary’s Environmental Assessment Requirements

The Secretary of the NSW Department of Planning and Environment issued Secretary’s Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) for the Project on 26 September 2017. The following table shows where the SEARs have been addressed throughout the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

Note that these SEARs were further supplemented on 2 May 2018. These additional SEARs are included following the table below.

Table 61 SEARS for Springdale Solar Farm

Requirement	Where addressed in this EIS
General requirements	
<p>The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the development must comply with the requirements in Schedule 2 of the <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000</i>. In particular, the EIS must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a stand-alone executive summary. • a full description of the development, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ details of construction, operation and decommissioning ○ a site plan showing all infrastructure and facilities (including any infrastructure that would be required for the development, but the subject of a separate approvals process) ○ a detailed constraints map identifying the key environmental and other land use constraints that have informed the final design of the development. • a strategic justification of the development focusing on-site selection and the suitability of the proposed site • an assessment of the likely impacts of the development on the environment, focusing on the specific issues identified below, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ a description of the existing environment likely to be affected by the development ○ an assessment of the likely impacts of all stages of the development (which is commensurate with the level of impact), taking into consideration any relevant legislation, environmental planning instruments, guidelines, policies, plans and industry codes of practice ○ a description of the measures that would be implemented to avoid, mitigate and/or offset the impacts of the development (including draft management plans for specific issues as identified below); and ○ a description of the measures that would be implemented to monitor and report on the environmental performance 	<p>Section 1 (Introduction);</p> <p>Section 2 (Project Need and Alternatives);</p> <p>Section 3 (Project Description);</p> <p>Section 20 (Summary of Management and Mitigation Measures);</p> <p>Section 21 (Project Justification and Conclusion).</p>

Requirement	Where addressed in this EIS
<p>of the development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a consolidated summary of all the proposed environmental management and monitoring measures, identifying all the commitments in the EIS; and • the reasons why the development should be approved having regard to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ relevant matters for consideration under the <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i>, including the objects of the Act and how the principles of ecologically sustainable development have been incorporated in the design, construction and ongoing operations of the development ○ the suitability of the site with respect to potential land use conflicts with existing and future surrounding land uses; and ○ feasible alternatives to the development (and its key components), including the consequences of not carrying out the development. 	
<p>In addition to the matters set out in Schedule 1 of the <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000</i>, the development application must be accompanied by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a signed report from a suitably qualified person that includes an accurate estimate of the capital investment value of the development (as defined in Clause 3 of the <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000</i>), including details of all the assumptions and components from which the capital investment value calculation is derived; and • the consent in writing of the owner of the land (as required in clause 49(1)(b) of the <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000</i>). 	<p>Provided separately to the EIS</p>
Specific issues	
<p>1. Biodiversity – including an assessment of the biodiversity values and the likely biodiversity impacts of the project in accordance with the <i>Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016</i> (NSW), a detailed description of the proposed regime for minimising, managing and reporting on the biodiversity impacts of the project over time, and a strategy to offset any residual impacts of the project in accordance with the <i>Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016</i> (NSW).</p>	<p>Section 7 (Biodiversity); Appendix B (Biodiversity Development Assessment Report).</p>

Requirement	Where addressed in this EIS
<p>2. Heritage – including an assessment of the likely Aboriginal and historic heritage (cultural and archaeological) impacts of the development, including adequate consultation with the local Aboriginal community.</p>	<p>Section 8 (Aboriginal Heritage);</p> <p>Section 13 (Non-Aboriginal Heritage);</p> <p>Appendix C (Aboriginal Heritage Assessment);</p> <p>Appendix E (Historic Heritage Impact Assessment).</p>
<p>3. Land – including an assessment of the impact of the development on agricultural land and flood prone land, a soil survey to consider the potential for erosion to occur, and paying particular attention to the compatibility of the development with the existing land uses on the site and adjacent land (e.g. operating mines, extractive industries, mineral or petroleum resources, exploration activities, aerial spraying, dust generation, and risk of weed and pest infestation) during operation and after decommissioning, with reference to the zoning provisions applying to the land.</p>	<p>Section 7 (Biodiversity);</p> <p>Section 11 (Land);</p> <p>Section 18 (Air Quality);</p>
<p>4. Visual – including an assessment of the likely visual impacts of the development (including any glare, reflectivity and night lighting) on surrounding residences, scenic or significant vistas, air traffic and road corridors in the public domain, including a draft landscaping plan for on-site perimeter planting, with evidence it has been developed in consultation with affected landowners.</p>	<p>Section 5 (Consultation);</p> <p>Section 9 (Landscape and Visual Impacts);</p> <p>Section 10 (Water);</p> <p>Appendix D (Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment);</p> <p>Appendix F (Flood Study).</p>
<p>5. Noise – including an assessment of the construction noise impacts of the development in accordance with the <i>Interim Construction Noise Guideline</i> (ICNG) and operational noise impacts in accordance with the <i>NSW Industrial Noise Policy</i> (INP), and a draft noise management plan if the assessment shows construction noise is likely to exceed applicable criteria.</p>	<p>Section 12 (Noise and Vibration)</p> <p>Appendix G (Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment).</p>

Requirement	Where addressed in this EIS
6. Transport – including an assessment of the site access route, site access point and likely transport impacts of the development on the capacity and condition of roads (including on any Crown land), a description of the measures that would be implemented to mitigate any impacts during construction, and a description of any proposed road upgrades developed in consultation with the relevant road authorities (if required).	Section 13.2 (Traffic and Transport)
7. Water – including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> an assessment of the likely impacts of the development (including flooding) on surface water (including Back Creek and riparian land) and groundwater resources, wetlands, riparian land, groundwater dependent ecosystems, key fish habitat and acid sulfate soils, related infrastructure, adjacent licensed water users and basic landholder rights, and measures proposed to monitor, reduce and mitigate these impacts. details of water requirements and supply arrangements; and a description of the erosion and sediment control measures that would be implemented to mitigate any impacts in accordance with <i>Managing Urban Stormwater: Soils & Construction</i> (Landcom 2004). 	Section 10 (Water); Appendix F (Flood Study).
8. Hazards and Electromagnetic Interference – an assessment of potential hazards and risks associated with bushfires and the proposed transmission line and substation against the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) <i>Guidelines for limiting exposure to Time-varying Electric, Magnetic and Electromagnetic Fields</i> .	Section 15 (Hazards).
9. Socio-Economic – including an assessment of the likely impacts on the local community and a consideration of the construction workforce accommodation.	Section 16 (Socio-Economic).
10. Cumulative Impacts – an assessment of the cumulative impacts with the Tallagandra Pit, approved Collector Wind Farm and proposed Gunning Solar Farm, including traffic and capacity of the electricity transmission network.	Section 19 (Cumulative Impacts).

Requirement	Where addressed in this EIS
Consultation	
<p>During the preparation of the EIS, you should consult with relevant local, State or Commonwealth Government authorities, infrastructure and service providers, community groups, affected landowners, exploration licence holders, quarry operators and mineral title holders.</p> <p>In particular, you must undertake detailed consultation with affected landowners surrounding the development and Yass Valley Council.</p> <p>The EIS must describe the consultation that was carried out, identify the issues raised during this consultation, and explain how these issues have been addressed in the EIS.</p>	Section 5 (Consultation).

Guidelines for preparing Assessment Documentation relevant to the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act)

Springdale Solar Farm (EPBC 2018/8173; SSD 8703)

1. On 1 May 2018, the proposed Springdale Solar Farm was determined to be a controlled action for impacts on the following matter of national environmental significance (MNES) protected under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act):
 - **threatened species and communities (sections 18 and 18A)**
2. The project will be assessed by NSW under an accredited assessment in accordance with section 87 of the EPBC Act. These requirements are a supplement to the NSW Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) issued on 26 September 2017, and should be addressed in conjunction with those requirements.
3. Assessment documentation prepared for the purposes of approval under the EPBC Act must address the statutory requirements outlined in Schedule 4 of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Regulations 2000* (Cth) (EPBC Regulations). Proponents are advised to check these requirements have been appropriately addressed:
http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/cth/consol_reg/epabcr2000697/.
4. The requirements are intended to ensure MNES are sufficiently addressed in the EIS such that the Commonwealth decision-maker can make a determination on whether or not to approve the action.
5. The EIS must include an assessment of **all** protected matters that may be impacted by the proposed action under the controlling provision identified in paragraph 1, noting that:
 - Protected matters that the Department considers are likely to be significantly impacted by the proposed action are listed at Attachment A.
 - This list is not exhaustive and it is the proponent's responsibility to ensure any relevant protected matters under this controlling provision are adequately assessed for the Commonwealth decision-maker's consideration.

Project Description

6. The title of the action, background to the development and current status.
7. The precise location and description of all works to be undertaken (including associated offsite works and infrastructure), structures to be built or elements of the action that may have impacts on MNES.
8. How the action relates to any other actions that have been, or are being taken, in the region affected by the action.

Identification of threatened species and communities

9. The EIS must identify **each** EPBC Act-listed species and community likely to be significantly impacted by the proposed action, and provide evidence as to why other EPBC Act-listed species and communities likely to be located in the project area or in the vicinity are unlikely to be impacted.
10. For **each** of the relevant EPBC Act-listed species and communities likely to be impacted, the EIS must provide:
 - A description of the habitat and habits (including identification and mapping of suitable breeding habitat, suitable foraging habitat, important populations and habitat critical for survival), with consideration of, and reference to, any relevant Commonwealth guidelines and policy statements including listing advice, conservation advice and recovery plans, threat abatement plans and wildlife conservation plans; and

- details of the scope, timing and methodology for studies or surveys used and how they are consistent with (or justification for divergence from) published Commonwealth guidelines and policy statements.

Note: the relevant guidelines and policy statements for each species and community are available from the Department of the Environment and Energy's Species Profiles and Threats Database.

<http://www.environment.gov.au/cgi-bin/sprat/public/sprat.pl>

Information to address Requirement 10 can be drawn from the Biodiversity Development Assessment Report in accordance with Table 25 of the *Biodiversity Assessment Method*. Although EPBC Act-listed species and communities must be individually described and assessed for Commonwealth approval purposes, it is acceptable, where possible, to use the mapping and assessment of Plant Community Types (PCTs) and the species surveys prescribed by the BAM as the basis for identifying EPBC Act-listed species and communities. The proponent must provide evidence that PCTs are associated with specific EECs and species habitat. Occasionally there will be species that are not contained in the databases underpinning the BAM; in these cases Commonwealth survey guidelines should be used.

Impacts

11. The EIS must include a comprehensive assessment of impacts on any relevant EPBC Act-listed species and communities. The assessment must address the nature, geographic extent, magnitude, timing and duration of any likely direct, indirect and consequential impacts. The description of impacts must have regard to the full national extent of the species or community's range (i.e. not just NSW).

Information to address Requirement 11 can be drawn from the Biodiversity Development Assessment Report in accordance with Table 26 of the *Biodiversity Assessment Method*.

Avoidance and mitigation

12. For each of the EPBC Act-listed species and communities that are likely to be impacted by the development, the EIS must provide information on proposed avoidance and mitigation measures to deal with the impacts of the action, and a description of the predicted effectiveness and outcomes that the avoidance and mitigation measures will achieve.

Information to address Requirement 12 can be drawn from the *Biodiversity Development Assessment Report* in accordance with Table 26 of the *Biodiversity Assessment Method*.

Offsets

13. Where a significant residual adverse impact to EPBC Act-listed species or communities is considered likely, the EIS must provide information on the proposed offset strategy, including discussion of the conservation benefit associated with the proposed offset strategy, how offsets will be secured, and timing of protection.

Note: For the purposes of approval under the EPBC Act, it is a requirement that offsets directly contribute to the ongoing viability of the specific protected matter impacted by a proposed action i.e. 'like for like'.

A number of offsets options available under the NSW *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* will be acceptable for EPBC Act approval purposes. The main requirement is that offsets are like-for-like. For Commonwealth purposes, like-for-like includes protection of native vegetation that is the same EEC or habitat community being impacted, or funding to provide a direct benefit to the entity being impacted i.e. threat abatement, breeding and propagation programs or other relevant conservation measures.

14. For each EPBC Act-listed species and community likely to be significantly impacted by the action, the EIS must provide reference to, and consideration of, relevant approved conservation advice or recovery plan for the species or community.

Note: the relevant guidelines and policy statements for each species and community are available from the Department of the Environment Species Profiles and Threats Database.

<http://www.environment.gov.au/cgi-bin/sprat/public/sprat.pl>

Environmental Record of person proposing to take the action

15. Information in relation to the environmental record of a person proposing to take action must include details as prescribed in Schedule 4 Clause 6 of the EPBC Regulations 2000.

Information Sources

16. For information given in the EIS, the EIS must state the source of the information, how recent the information is, how the reliability of the information was tested; and what uncertainties (if any) are in the information.

Attachment A

The Department's Environment Reporting Tool (ERT) identifies threatened species and communities that may occur within 5 km of the proposed action. Based on the information in the referral documentation, the location of the action, species records and likely habitat present in the area, there are likely to be significant impacts to:

- Golden sun moth (*Synemon plana*) – critically endangered
- Natural temperate grassland of the south eastern highlands – critically endangered

In addition, there is some risk that there may be significant impacts on the following matters and levels of impact should be further investigated.

- Superb parrot (*Polytelis swainsonii*) – vulnerable
- Striped legless lizard (*Delma impar*) – vulnerable
- White box- yellow box- Blakely's red gum grassy woodland and derived native grassland (Box Gum Woodland) – critically endangered