



Prof Mary O'Kane
Chair
Independent Planning Commission
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Dear Professor O'Kane

Springdale Solar Farm (SSD 8703)

The Department has completed its assessment of the merits of the application for the Springdale Solar Farm (SSD 8703).

The application is referred to the Independent Planning Commission for determination, as Council objected to the project and there were more than 50 unique submissions by way of objection.

RES Australia Pty Ltd (RES) proposes to develop a new State significant development solar farm located approximately 3.5 km north of the state border with the Australian Capital Territory and 7 km north west of Sutton Village, in the Yass Valley Shire local government area.

The project would have a generating capacity of approximately 100 megawatts (MW) and connect to TransGrid's existing 132 kilovolt transmission line on the site.

During the exhibition of the environmental impact statement (EIS), the Department received a total of 230 submissions from the community and special interest groups, in addition to advice from 13 government agencies, utility providers and Yass Valley Council. There were a total of 110 unique submissions objecting to the project.

Following the exhibition, RES made a number of changes to the project to address issues raised in submissions, including:

- removing panels from the south east corner of the site;
- removing panels on either side of an unnamed tributary to avoid threatened species habitat;
- increasing the setback of solar arrays; and
- reorientating the site substation.

RES also offered to enter into a voluntary planning agreement with Yass Valley Council to contribute towards community enhancement projects in the local area.

In assessing the merits of the project, the Department has considered the environmental, social and economic impacts of the project, submissions on the EIS, relevant environmental planning instruments, the suitability of the site of the project, and the public interest, in accordance with the requirements of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.

During the assessment process, the Department visited the site and consulted with local residents, Council and relevant government agencies.

Based on this assessment, the Department considers that the project is approvable, subject to the recommended conditions of consent.

I have attached a copy of the Department's assessment report, recommended instrument of consent and other relevant documents for the Commission's consideration.

For further information or to arrange a briefing, please contact Mike Young, Executive Director Energy, Industry and Compliance, on 02 8217 2091 or mike.young@planning.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Gainsford', written in a cursive style.

25/11/2020

David Gainsford
Deputy Secretary
Assessment and Systems Performance
Planning and Assessment