STATEMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

5.833MWDC/4.4 MWAC BOORAL SOLAR FARM

LOT 130, BOORAL ROAD, BULAHDELAH, NSW, 2423

(130/-/DP1005958)

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Prepared for (client)	Paul Sun Energy Pty Ltd

Document Versions and Control

Statement of Environmental Effects, Lot 130 Booral Road 2423

Version	Date	PP ref	Author	Reviewed by
1 (draft)	12/05/2025	SEE – Lot 130 Booral Road	PS	JL
2 (draft)	03/07/2025	SEE – Lot 130 Booral Road	PS/JL	ED
3 (lodge)	25/07/2025	SEE – Lot 130 Booral Road	PS/JL	Client

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Perception Planning Pty Ltd on behalf of Paul Sun Energy Pty Ltd (the client) have been engaged to prepare a Statement of Environmental Effects (SEE) for the construction of a 5.833MWDC/4.4 MWAC Solar Farm at Lot 130 DP1005958 Booral Road, Bulahdelah, 2423 (130/-/DP1005958), (**'the site'**).

The application seeks development consent for a proposed solar farm that will provide approximately 4.4 MWAC (megawatts) of electricity to the local distribution network, which will generate approximately 10,000 MWhrs of renewable energy annually. The proposal would occupy approximately 10 hectares of the subject site, with the remainder of the 40 hectare site to be maintained as native bushland.

The solar farm will be 5.83MW DC that will generate 4.4MW AC of renewable power to be fed directly into the grid via the adjoining Essential Energy sub-station. The electrical design of the farm also has the capacity to enable a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) to be retrofitted of up to 2MW/4MWh at a later time, which will allow for a proportion of the generated power to be stored for release into the grid during periods of Peak Usage.

A Site Plan is provided as **ATTACHMENT 1**.

The proposed solar farm will include the following components:

- Solar Farm Array
- Two Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) location options
- Perimeter Access Road
- Landscaping and Security Perimeter Fence
- Civil works
- Shed
- Rainwater Tanks

Being located adjacent to an existing zone substation, the subject site presents an opportunity to contribute to the renewable energy industry and will provide residents in the region with affordable and reliable energy.

Given its location and limited environmental constraints, the proposed solar farm is considered the highest and best use of the site.

The primary concern of the proponent is to maintain and enhance the natural environmental qualities of the site and surrounding area by seamlessly integrating the proposed solar farm into the existing landscape. The retention of existing native vegetation, proposed additional landscaping, and considered positioning and layout of the solar farm have resulted in a proposal that successfully and sensitively interfaces a renewable energy facility into the existing rural landscape.

TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AC	Alternating Current
AHIMS	Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System
BDAR	Biodiversity Development Assessment Report
BESS	Battery Energy Storage System
DC	Direct Current
EE	Essential Energy
EPA	Environment Protection Authority
EP&A Act	Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979
EPI	Environmental Planning Instrument
DA	Development Application
DCP	Development Control Plan
LEP	Local Environmental Plan
LGA	Local Government Area
PSI	Preliminary Site Investigation
SEPP	State Environmental Planning Policy
SEE	Statement of Environmental Effects

LIST OF FIGURES/TABLES

PLANS AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

This SEE is supported by the following plans and documentation:

Attachment	Document	Prepared by	Reference
1.	Site Plan	Mindaro	Ref: P2319 Rev: 4 Dated: 18/06/2025
2.	Landscape Plan	Green Space Planning	Ref: GSP240503 Rev: B Dated: 14 July 2025
3.	Civil Works Plans	DRB Consulting Engineers	Ref: 243370 Rev: A Dated: 06/05/2025
4.	BDAR	Firebird Ecological	Ref: Bulahdelah Rev: 1 Dated: 22/07/2025
5.	Flood Impact and Risk Assessment	Torrent Consulting	Ref: L.T2555.002 Rev: N/A Dated: 27/05/2025
6.	Bushfire Assessment Report	BEMC	Ref: 241645 Rev: 3V1 Dated: 13/07/2025
7.	Geotechnical Report	DRB Consulting Engineers	Ref: 244153 Rev: B Dated: 05/05/2025
8.	Preliminary Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment	East Coast Heritage & Archaeology	Ref: N/A Rev: N/A Dated: 10/03/2025
9.	Traffic Impact Assessment	WGA	Ref: WGA240360 Rev: C Dated: 23/04/2025
10.	Stormwater Management Report	DRB Consulting Engineers	Ref: 243370 Rev: A Dated: 06/05/2025
11.	Survey	Delfs Lascelles	Ref: 25080 Rev: A Dated: 12/03/2025

12.	Site Waste Management Plan	Perception Planning	Ref: J004316 Rev: N/A Dated: 03/07/2025
13.	Estimated Development Cost	Corbett Scott Quantity Surveying	Ref: PR1282 Rev: Final Dated: June 2025
14.	DCP Compliance Table	Perception Planning	Ref: J004316 Rev: 2 Dated: 25/07/2025
15.	Owners Consent	Owners	Ref: N/A Rev: N/A Dated: 21/07/2025
16.	Certificate of Title	NSW Land Registry Service	Ref: 130/-/1005958 Rev: 8 Dated: 12/03/2012
17.	Deposited Plan	NSW Land Registry Service	Ref: DP1005958 Rev: N/A Dated: 18/11/1997
18.	BYDA Search Results	BYDA	Ref: 36327021 Rev: N/A Dated: 26/03/2025
19.	AHIMS Search Results	AHIMs	Ref: J004316 Rev: N/A Dated: 25/03/2025
20.	Pre-DA Meeting Minutes	MidCoast Council	Ref: N/A Rev: N/A Dated: 21/12/2021
21.	Flood Certificate	MidCoast Council	Ref: ENG2024/0450 Rev: N/A Dated: 26/03/2024

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1 BACKGROUND

1.1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this Statement of Environmental Effects (SEE) is to assist Council in their assessment and determination and to assist the community in understanding the proposed development.

This SEE has been prepared in coordination with Paul Sun Energy Pty Ltd (**'the client**') and other sub-consultants to demonstrate the relevant matters associated with in the proposed development. The SEE examines the existing development and site location, how the proposed development relates to the location and the environment, as well as the planning merits of the development with respect to the relevant legislation, regulation and other requirements. The SEE examines the applicable site attributes and the specifics of the development proposal that are appropriate to the development application stage. The SEE seeks to provide all the relevant data to give a suitable level of certainty to the consent authority that the proposal has a positive impact on the immediate area and the wider surrounds.

This SEE has been prepared in accordance with best practice principles, applicable aspects of the Development Assessment Framework and the Department of Planning and Infrastructure's (now the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure) guide to the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act* (EP&A Act) 1979 (s4.15).

The objectives of this SEE are as follows:

- To provide a description of the site, existing development and the surrounding locality;
- To provide a description of the proposal and the key issues;
- To provide a discussion of the relevant Environmental Planning Instruments (EPI)s; and
- To provide an assessment of the potential environmental impacts, having regard to the matters for consideration pursuant to the EP&A Act (s4.15) and other State, Regional and Local environmental planning policies and guidelines.

1.2 SITE DETAILS

Property Address	Lot 130 DP1005958, Booral Road, Bulahdelah, 2423
Lot and DP	130//DP1005958
Current Use	Vacant Land
Zoning	RU2 – Rural Landscape
Size (Lot Area)	40 ha
Site Constraints	- Bushfire Prone Land – Vegetation Categories 1 & 3 - Minimum Lot Size – 40 ha - Drinking water catchment - Height of Buildings Map – 8.5m - Floor Space Ratio – 0.4:1 - Flood Prone Land
Owner	Owner's consent has been provided as **ATTACHMENT 15.**
DP and 88B Instrument	The site is encumbered by easements over the existing electricity transmissions lines are located within the Southern corner of the site. The Certificate of Title and Deposited Plan are provided as **ATTACHMENT 16** and **ATTACHMENT 17**.

1.3 SITE DESCRIPTION

The site is located at Lot 130 Booral Road, Bulahdelah(130/-/DP1005958) known as **'the site'** for the purpose of this SEE (**FIGURE 1**). *Note: The site has no known typical numbered address.*

The site is zoned RU2 Rural Landscape (**FIGURE 2**) and has a total area of approximately 40 ha and is located in Bulahdelah, within the Great Lakes Local Government Area (LGA).

The site is adjoined by Booral Rd and an adjacent zone substation to the Southeast and RU2 zoned land to all other directions, with the lot to the West contains an existing dwelling and ancillary sheds as the only developed area within proximity to the subject site.

The site does not contain any existing structures except a shipping container for storage and electricity transmission lines and power poles within the Southern end of the site.

Vegetation within the site consists of dense bushland around the upper perimeter of the site, with the centre and Southern end of the site containing areas of scattered vegetation.

The site is relatively flat and does not contain any natural watercourses.

Access to the site is existing via Booral Road at the Southern end of the site, which later adjoins to the Pacific Highway.

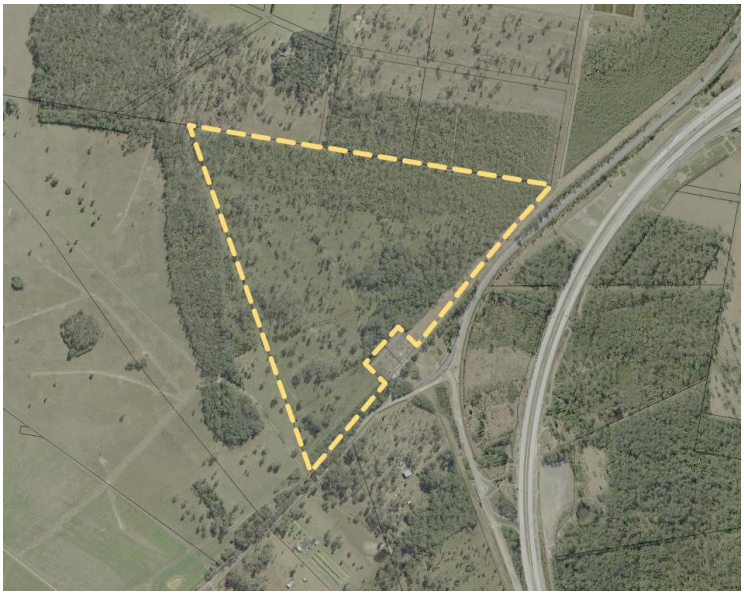

Figure 1 - Locality Map (NSW Planning Portal, 2025)

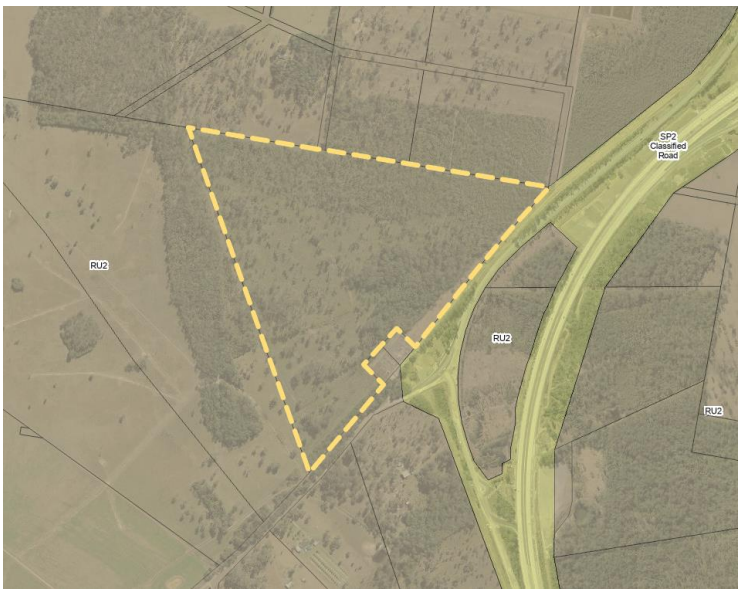

Figure 2 - Land Zoning Map (NSW Planning Portal, 2025)

1.4 CURRENT USE AND EXISTING DEVELOPMENT DETERMINATIONS

The Mid Coast Council Development Application Tracker website identifies no approvals for the site. The site is vacant, and there are no existing structures other than a shipping container for storage.

No known compliance matters exist over the site which would pose issues for the proposed development.

1.5 COUNCIL CONSULTATION

Two Pre-DA meetings were held with Mid Coast Council, with the most recent meeting taking place on 21st December 2021. The meeting minutes from the second meeting, which also briefly summarised the first meeting, are provided as **ATTACHMENT 20** and summarised in **TABLE 1** below.

Table 1 - Pre-DA Meeting Minutes

Pre DA MEETING between Mid Coast Council & LJW Solar Pty Ltd held 21st December 2021. 11AM, Council Chambers Purfleet Taree. For: Proposed Solar Farm at Lot 130 Booral Rd Bulahdelah NSW 2423 On behalf of: Paul Sun Energy Pty Ltd ABN 96 623 349 904 – Mr & Mrs Paul Jung (Property Owners) Attendees: (BM)Bruce Moore – Co-ordinator Major Assessments MCC, (KW)Kieren Woodall – Co-ordinator Development Engineering MCC, (MB)Mathew Bell – Senior Ecologist MCC, (AM)Alexandra Macvean – Senior Land Use Planner MCC, (S)Sarah - PA. MCC, & (JF)Jack Forwood – Commercial Business Manager LJW Solar.	
Discussion Item	**Response**
Recap of Previous Meeting, changes to Original Plans & Update of Essential Energy Network Application. (JF) Size of Solar farm Stage1 now confirmed to be 5.83MW(dc)/4.4MW(ac). (BM) commented this will be the first Solar Farm DA for Council. Considerations include the Concept & how the Farm 'complements' the Rural Landscape.	The confirmed size of proposed solar farm is 5.83MW(DC)/4.4MW(AC). The primary concern of the proponent is to maintain and enhance the natural environmental qualities of the site and surrounding area by seamlessly integrating the proposed solar farm into the existing landscape. The retention of existing native vegetation, proposed additional landscaping, and considered positioning and layout of the solar farm have resulted in a proposal that successfully and sensitively interfaces a renewable energy facility into the existing rural landscape. Assessment of the proposal's positive contribution to the rural landscape is made throughout the SEE.
Requirements General Non-specific (MB) **Biodiversity Assessment** – including Level of Clearing, Carbon Offsets Scheme, Rating Credits Impact (if any) on any Endangered Species, eg Engofera Pena Bakeri – Eucalypts & Orchids. 'Less Clearing' = No Nett Loss, In line with Zoning RU2 Objectives. (JF) NGH Environmental have been advising & will complete Impact Assessment Report. (MB) knows & has previously worked with NGH. Ecology Assessment & in particular Bush-fire Methodology, '6 mtre clearance'	Ecology The proposed development will result in impacts to approximately 11.15 ha of native vegetation, which is above the area clearing threshold of 1 ha based on the Study Area's minimum lot size of 40 ha. As such the proposed development triggers entry into the BOS, requiring a BDAR (**ATTACHMENT 4)** to support this development application. The BDAR finds that the site does not contain any mapped areas for threatened species or mapped biodiversity values and outlines suitable mitigation measures to offset the minor

What 'structures' are to be included & accompanying Amenities such as Toilet & Effluent system /type.	ecological impact that the proposal will have on the site. Bushfire The proposed development is not identified as special fire protection purpose development, however a Bushfire Assessment Report in accordance with the provisions of section 8.3.5 of PBP 2019 has been provided as **ATTACHMENT 6**. Effluent The proposed storage shed will include a small washroom with toilet. Wastewater will be managed via a proposed septic system. As such, a Section 68 application will be submitted.
(KW) **Civil Requirements** - Confirmation of Booral Rd being State or Regional & their Obligations Civils to Entry/Exit & site topography, Sheeting & Water Run-off, Water heads to North of Property (BM) Noise of Rain on Panels? Establishment of Swale Drains/Basins Geotech Perculation & Infiltration Reports including RLs (height levels)	Civil works associated with the proposed development will include the proposed perimeter road and stormwater management system. While the proposed development avoids the implementation of large expanses of impervious surface area, stormwater management will manage runoff generated by the solar panels and perimeter road. A Civil Works Plan and Stormwater Management Report are provided as **ATTACHMENT 3** and **ATTACHMENT 10**. The array requires minimal earthworks and ground surface disturbance, as it is supported by metal posts at regular intervals rather than an expanse of impervious surface. A Geotechnical Report is provided as **ATTACHMENT 7.**
MCCs **Mapping System** displayed showing Water Course on property (these available on MCC Website) (BM) identified an area within the property being NNW that he considered the most suitable in which the panels to be situated. (BM) commented that he considered the best opportunity for the DA to be successful was if the system's total area to be <1/3 of total property area for this DA.	The full complement of mapping and environmental constraints have been assessed and have informed the positioning and layout of the proposal in order to minimise impact. The SEE assesses each constraint and demonstrates that the proposal suitably addresses each consideration. The proposal occupies approximately 1/3 of the site area.
(MB) DA should be submitted for the Solar Farm only. A separate DA should be submitted for the House later.	Noted. A dwelling is not proposed as part of this application.

(MB) enquired re Paul Sun Energy's **Community Engagement & Local Employment Policy** (JF) - Project Support. Will follow direct consultation with local residents (within what locality- 1klm?), will create web-site, will conduct public meetings and potential site visits. Local Employment/Suppliers to be used where possible & practical.	In addition to standard neighbour notification as part of the Development Application process, Paul Sun Energy is implementing a Community Engagement and Local Employment Policy. Paul Sun Energy is currently implementing a Community Engagement & Local Employment Policy by establishing a website for display of information, milestone updates, and direct access and communication for interested parties through admin@paulsunenergy.com. Public meetings and information days will also be held locally. Public notification and details of local employment opportunities & processes will also be provided to the community. Ongoing community consultation and response to submissions is also welcomed. Local contractors and suppliers will be used where possible and practical during both the construction and operational stages of the solar farm, contributing approximately half of the development cost ($5 million) to the local economy.
(JF) Further discussion re prospective **Power Purchasing Agreement** with Council. (MB) Will investigate further & consult Mr Rob Scott Director of Engineering Sewer Plants + Russell Wallace & Dan Aldridge, believes that Sewer Pumps are using 1/3 of all Council's power, raised it in previous meeting. Will also consult Council's Procurement on who/how this PPA can be achieved with.	While no further engagement has taken plan with MidCoast Council, a potential Power Purchasing Agreement with Council can be discussed upon receipt of the application and commencement of assessment. Paul Sun Energy is also currently actively seeking PPAs with local entities both directly & with vested 3rd Parties.

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE DEVELOPMENT

2.1 PROPONENT AND CONTEXT OF MICRO SOLAR FARMS

Paul Sun Energy is a local family entity with a strong passion for sustainability, having owned the site for over twenty (20) years. The intention of the proposed micro solar farm is to generate renewable energy, to service the local community by using the existing Essential Energy Distribution Substation and Network, in sync with maintaining as much of the existing native habitat as possible.

The consultants that have been engaged to work on the project are all based in the Hunter Mid Coast region and have extensive local knowledge of their respective specialist fields.A 'micro' solar farm differs from a conventional solar farm in that they typically have a maximum output of less than 5 megawatts and occupy less land area, therefore resulting in lesser environmental impacts than larger commercial solar farms.

As opposed to large scale solar farms that are more suited to open plains with no surrounding vegetation, micro solar farms can be sensitively inserted into a range of environments and contexts with very little impact or alteration.

As such, micro solar farms are well suited to smaller rural sites that have limited agricultural value and are within close proximity to electrical infrastructure, such as the subject site.

The purpose of micro solar farms is to efficiently generate output in sensitive settings to contribute directly to local networks, as opposed to larger solar farms where output is typically transmitted out of the region for use in larger urban centres.

With energy generation costs increasing and being passed on to consumers, micro solar farms are playing an increasingly vital role in supplementing Australia's energy supply.

As a result, several micro solar farms have been recently constructed, particularly within the Western regions of NSW and Victoria, with more continuing to be proposed and approved throughout the country.

2.2 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The application seeks development consent for a proposed solar farm that will provide approximately 4.4 MWAC (megawatts) of electricity to the local distribution network. The extent of development is proposed to occupy approximately 10 hectares of the subject site, with the remainder of the 40 hectare site to be maintained as native bushland.

The solar farm will be 5.83MW DC (Direct Current) that will generate 4.4MW AC (Alternating Current) of renewable power to be fed directly into the grid via the adjoining Essential Energy sub-station. The electrical design of the farm also has the capacity to enable a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) to be retrofitted of up to 2MW/4MWh at a later time, which will allow for a proportion of the generated power to be stored for release into the grid during periods of Peak Usage.

A Site Plan is provided as **ATTACHMENT 1 and FIGURE 3**.

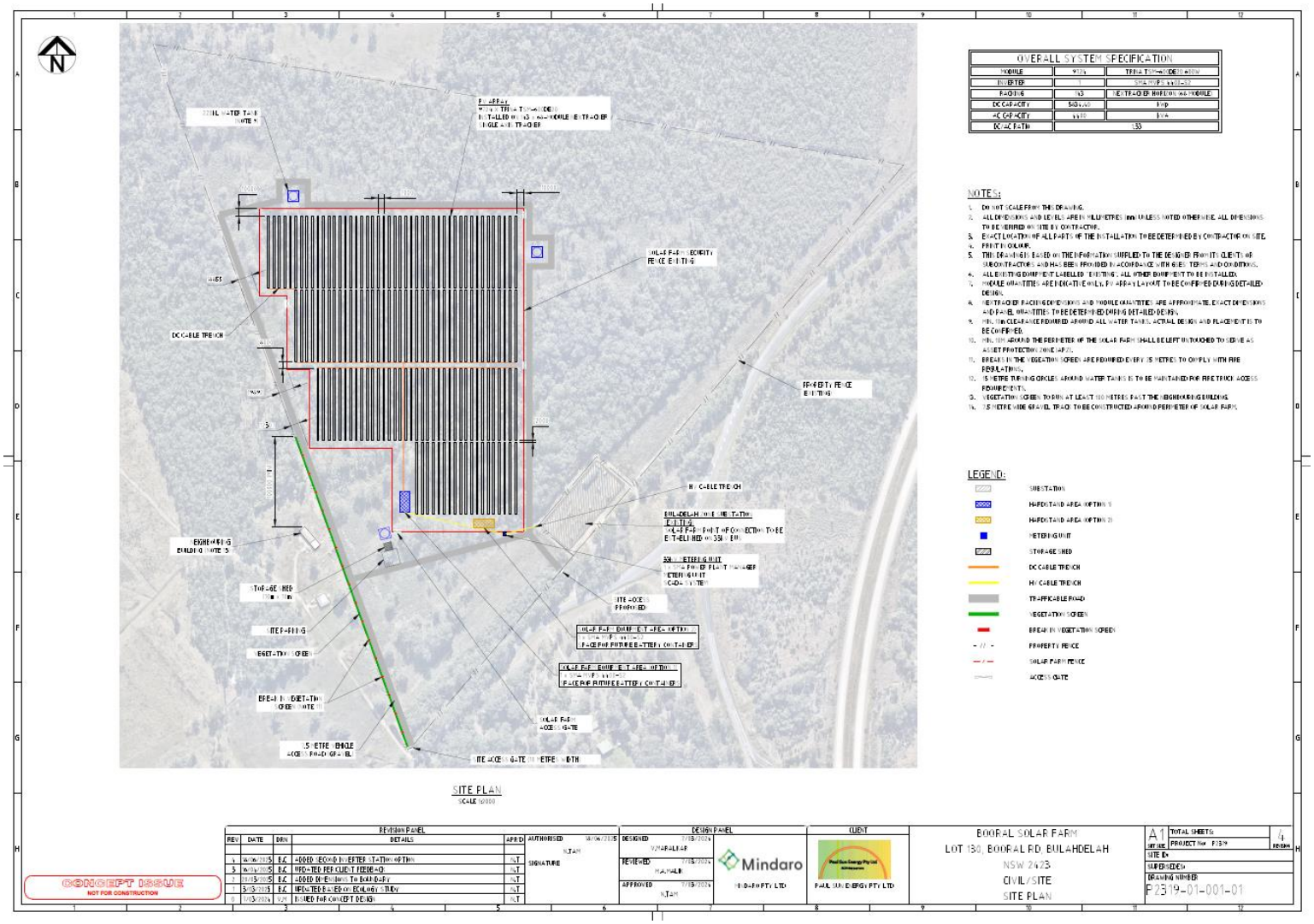

Figure 3 - Site Plan (Mindaro, 2025)

The proposed solar farm will include the following components:

Solar Farm Array

The main solar panel array will consist of 9724 automatic tilt panels covering an area of approximately 10ha. The array will be guided by an automated tracking system, allowing the array to rotate in accordance with solar patterns to optimise sunlight capture. The array requires minimal earthworks and ground surface disturbance, as it is supported by metal posts at regular intervals rather than an expanse of impervious surface. The array will direct electricity directly to a Battery Energy Storage System (see below) via a high voltage cable, which will then be transferred to the adjacent sub-station.

Two Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) location options

Two optional locations for future Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) facilities are proposed within the site (labelled as 'Solar Farm Equipment Area' within the Site Plan provided as **ATTACHMENT 1**).

The BESS facility is to be installed approximately 12 months after the completion of construction of the solar farm, as 12 months of operational data is required prior to incorporation of BESS.

Due to the above, this development is proposed to be staged as below:

- Stage 1 – Construction of solar farm excluding BESS facility
- Stage 2 – Addition of BESS facility

The future BESS facility will consist of two self-contained 40-foot shipping containers that incorporate self-sufficient ventilation and fire suppression systems. An example of a BESS facility is provided as **FIGURE 4** below.

The BESS facility will be placed on a concrete strip footing and blockwork.

Figure 4 - Example of BESS Facility

Perimeter Access Road

A 7.5m wide gravel access and perimeter road is proposed to provide suitable vehicular access to and within the proposed solar farm.

Landscaping and Security Perimeter Fence

A Landscape Plan is provided as **ATTACHMENT 2.**

Extensive landscaping is proposed along the Southwestern boundary to provide privacy and separation from the adjacent property to the West.

Buffer planting within the APZ will consist of 70m lengths with 10m breaks between to ensure a discontinuous gap per bushfire requirements. Buffer sections proposed to be densely planted with a mix of trees and shrubs of various heights to provide screening to western neighbours and for travellers heading North on Booral Road.

The remainder of the site around the solar farm and under the array is to remain as managed grassland.

The landscape design proposed has been developed in conjunction with critical factors including bushfire requirements and ecological assessment, with the proposed landscape design achieving improvement of the site through the addition of native and hardy species.

The proposed landscaping consist of a mix of trees and shrubs of varying heights, ensuring an appropriate planting density is achieved to provide suitable visual screening and consistency with the existing landscape.

When combined with the extensive existing native vegetation surrounding the site, proposed solar farm will not be visible from outside the site and the natural and rural character of the locality will be maintained.

A security perimeter fence is proposed to enclose the solar farm array.

Civil works

Civil works associated with the proposed development will include the proposed perimeter road and stormwater management system. While the proposed development avoids the implementation of large expanses of impervious surface area, stormwater management will manage runoff generated by the solar panels and perimeter road.

Stormwater will be directed via grassed lined swales to 6 larger swales that will terminate at the legal point of discharge (roadside drainage) to the East.

Overall, it is considered that the proposal will generate minimal stormwater runoff.

A Civil Works Plan is provided as **ATTACHMENT 3**.

Shed

A 10m x 10m storage shed and small carpark are proposed to support routine operation and maintenance of the solar farm. The proposed solar farm will require minimal attendance, with

staff attendance limited to routine cleaning of solar panels (and replacement if necessary), landscape maintenance, and general site maintenance.

Rainwater Tanks

Three 220kL rainwater tanks are proposed throughout the solar farm. While minimal water usage will be required during the operation and maintenance of the solar farm, the purpose of these rainwater tanks is mainly to provide on-site capacity for fire-fighting events as per RFS requirements.

Being located adjacent to an existing zone substation, the subject site presents an opportunity to contribute to the renewable energy industry and will provide residents in the region with affordable and reliable energy.

Given its location and limited environmental constraints, the proposed solar farm is considered the highest and best use of the site.

The primary concern of the proponent is to maintain and enhance the natural environmental qualities of the site and surrounding area by seamlessly integrating the proposed solar farm into the existing landscape. The retention of existing native vegetation, proposed additional landscaping, and considered positioning and layout of the solar farm have resulted in a proposal that successfully and sensitively interfaces a renewable energy facility into the existing rural landscape.

The location and layout of the solar farm has been carefully considered to minimize required vegetation removal and ecological impact, being located within the existing open area of the site.

Appropriate offsets for the vegetation proposed to be removed are detailed in the Biodiversity Development Assessment Report (**ATTACHMENT 4**) and Landscape Plan (**ATTACHMENT 2**) submitted with this application.

2.3 CONSTRUCTION

Due to the pre-fabricated nature of the development and minimal ancillary construction work required, construction will be limited to a period of 16-20 weeks.

Minimal earthworks and clearing will be required, as a fundamental objective of the project is to maintain the natural ground surface and landscape as much as possible.

As detailed within the Traffic Impact Assessment, the proposal will generate minimal traffic movements during construction of the proposed development and that the proposal will not compromise the safety or function of the road reserve or network, noting that no additional access points are proposed and that the increase in traffic is negligible.

During the construction period, major civil works, materials delivery, and other heavy vehicle movements will only occur between the hours of 7am - 6pm Monday to Friday, and 8am – 3pm Saturday.

2.4 OPERATION

2.4.1 Ongoing operation

The proposed solar farm will operate generally un-manned over its 25-30 year lifespan, other than periodic maintenance which may include systems checks, site assessment, damage repair, and landscape maintenance.

The facility will not include storage of any dangerous goods on site.

The site will be remotely monitored in real time, with local contractors to be immediately deployed to address any faults, required repairs, or emergencies.

Due to the autonomy of the proposal and concealment with existing vegetation and proposed landscaping, it will operate quietly and with no impacts to the surrounding area.

2.4.2 Electromagnetic radiation (EMR)

Small amounts of electromagnetic radiation (EMR) can be emitted by electrical componentry associated with solar farms such as inverters, transformers, and high voltage powerlines. However, the level of radiation dissipates quickly, becoming largely indistinguishable from background levels over a distance of 5-10m from the componentry.

The electromagnetic field (EMF) produced around an electric installation is non-ionising (non-harmful) within a range that exists in our daily lives from natural sources and from appliances and electrical devices.

As the inverter is located in a secure and isolated location and all high voltage powerlines will be below ground, there is no possibility of harmful EMR being emitted.

2.4.3 Heat island effect and glare

While large-scale solar farms have the potential to generate significant amounts of heat created from reflection/glare, the discernible impacts and tangible effects are widely contended.

Various studies have been undertaken and assessments presented as evidence for other contested solar facility proposals. As a result of these investigations, it was determined that any discernible impacts or change in temperature would be unlikely and would be quickly dissipated over a relatively short separation distance.

Due to the small area of the proposed solar farm, significant setbacks to boundaries, roads, and surrounding land uses, and existing and proposed screening vegetation, no significant heat or glare will be generated due to reflection.

The solar panels will also have a dual glass anti reflective (AR) coating.

2.5 DECOMMISSIONING

The proposal is based on a thirty-one year lease and 25-30 year lifespan of the solar farm. Upon completion of this leasing period, assuming that the lease is not renewed, it will be the responsibility of the proponent to decommission the facility, remove all installations, and remediate the site back to its pre-existing state. Upon approval of this application, the

consent authority may condition a requirement for a decommissioning and rehabilitation plan to be submitted for endorsement.

It is noted that upon the end of the proposed solar farms lifespan and subsequent decommissioning, the site can be remediated and returned to original form for alternative uses.

The non-invasive mounting system and non-hazardous (non-contaminating) nature of the solar farm would allow the remediation process to be undertaken without complexity or complication.

3 PLANNING CONTROLS

3.1 ACTS

The following Acts are considered relevant to the proposed development:

- *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*
- *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*
- *Rural Fires Act 1997*
- *Water Management Act 2000*
- *Roads Act 1993*

3.1.1 ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT ACT 1979

The Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act) is the principal planning and development legislation in NSW and is applicable to the proposed development. Section 4.15 of the EP&A Act specifies the matters which a consent authority must consider when determining a DA. The relevant matters for consideration under Section 4.15 are addressed in further detail in separate sections of this SEE below.

Section 4.10 – Designated development

As per the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021, the proposed development is not classified as Designated Development under Section 4.10 of the Act, detailed below.

Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021, Schedule 3, Part 2 Designated Development

Designated – 7 Battery storage facilities

Development for the purposes of a battery storage facility is designated development if the facility supplies or is capable or supplying more than 30 megawatts of electrical power. The proposed development is not designated development as per **TABLE 2** below.

Table 2 - Designated Development – 24 – Electricity Generating Stations

	Proposed Development
(1) Development for the purposes of an electricity generating station is designated development if the station supplies or is capable of supplying— (a) electrical power where: (i) the associated water storage facilities inundate land identified as wilderness under the *Wilderness Act 1987*, or (ii) the temperature of the water released from the generating station into a natural waterbody is more than 2 degrees centigrade from the ambient temperature of the receiving water, or	(i) There are no associated water storage facilities, and the site is not identified as wilderness under the Wilderness Act 1987. (ii) As above.
(b) more than 1 megawatt of hydroelectric power requiring a new dam, weir or inter-valley transfer of water, or	The proposed development does not generate hydroelectric power.
(c) more than 30 megawatts of electrical power from other energy sources, including coal, gas, wind, bio-material, hydroelectric stations on existing dams or co-generation, but excluding solar powered generators.	This section does not apply to solar powered generators.
(2) Development for the purposes of an electricity generating station is designated development if the station supplies or is capable of supplying more than 30 megawatts of electrical power from a thermal solar powered generator.	The proposed electricity generating station is not capable of supplying more than 30 megawatts of electrical power from a thermal solar powered generator.
(3) Development for the purposes of an electricity generating station is designated development if the station— (a) supplies or is capable of supplying more than 30 megawatts of electrical power from a photovoltaic solar powered generator, and (b) is located on a floodplain.	a) The proposed electricity generating station is not capable of supplying more than 30 megawatts of electrical power from a photovoltaic solar powered generator. b) The proposed electricity generating station is not located on a floodplain.
(4) This section does not apply to a power generation facility used exclusively for stand-by power purposes for less than 4 hours per week averaged over a continuous 3-month period.	N/A – The proposed electricity generating station is not to be used exclusively for stand-by power purposes for less than 4 hours per week averaged over a continuous 3-month period.

(5) In this section— ***electricity generating station*** includes associated water storage, ash or waste management facilities	Noted.

Section 4.46 – What is integrated development?

Integrated development is development (not being State significant development or complying development) that, for it to be carried out, requires development consent and one or more of the approvals listed within **TABLE 3** below. The proposed development is identified as integrated development, to the Rural Fire Service.

Table 3 - Integrated Development

Integrated development	Proposed Development	
Fisheries Management Act 1994	▪ s 144 ▪ s 201 ▪ s 205 ▪ s 219	N/A
Heritage Act 1977	▪ s 58	N/A
Coal Mine Subsidence Compensation Act 2017	▪ s 22	N/A – The site is not located within a Mines Subsidence District.
Mining Act 1992	▪ s 63, 64	N/A
National Parks & Wildlife Act 1974	▪ s 90	No – Development is not integrated development in respect of an Aboriginal heritage impact permit required under Part 6 of the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 unless – a. an Aboriginal object referred to in that Part is known, immediately before the development application is made, to exist on the land to which the development application applies, or b. the land to which the development application applies is an Aboriginal place within the meaning of that Act immediately before the development application is made An AHIMs Search has been carried out for the site and is provided at **ATTACHMENT 19**. The AHIMs Search identifies that 0 Aboriginal sites or places have been declared on or near the site (within 200m). A Preliminary Aboriginal Cultural Heritage

		Assessment has been prepared and is provided at **ATTACHMENT 8**. It is reasonable to conclude that there is a low probability of objects occurring in the area of the proposed development. The proposal does not seek to destroy, deface, damage or move an object from the land. The area of the proposed development is located in an existing disturbed area and unlikely to show any visual signs of objects. If any burials/skeletal remains, shell middens or stone artefacts are found, all work is to cease immediately, and the relevant parties notified.
Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997	▪ ss 43(a), 47, 55 ▪ ss 43(b), 48, 55 ▪ ss 43(d), 55, 122	N/A
Roads Act 1993	▪ s 138	N/A
Rural Fires Act 1997	▪ s 100B	Yes – The land is identified as Bushfire Prone Land: Vegetation Category 3. The proposed development is not identified as special fire protection purpose development, however a Bushfire Assessment Report in accordance with the provisions of section 8.3.5 of PBP 2019 has been provided as **ATTACHMENT 6**.
Water Management Act 2000	▪ ss 89, 90, 91	N/A – There are no mapped watercourses or waterbodies within 40m of the development.

Section 7.11 – Development Contributions

Development contributions will be required to be calculated and charged in accordance with the Mid Coast Contributions Plan 2016 (CP) where applicable.

3.1.2 BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION ACT 2016

The purpose of the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 (BC Act) is to maintain a healthy, productive, and resilient environment for the greatest well-being of the community, now and into the future, consistent with the principles of ecologically sustainable development.

The Biodiversity Values (BV) Map forms part of the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme Threshold which is one of the triggers for determining whether the Biodiversity Offset Scheme (BOS) applies to a clearing or development proposal. The map is prepared by the Department of

Planning, Industry and Environment (the Department) under Part 7 of the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 (BC Act). As per **FIGURE 5** below, the site does not contain any areas that are mapped on the NSW Biodiversity Values Map, thus automatic entry into the BOS is not triggered.

However, the proposed development will result in impacts to approximately 11.15 ha of native vegetation, which is above the area clearing threshold of 1 ha based on the Study Area's minimum lot size of 40 ha. As such the proposed development triggers entry into the BOS, requiring a Biodiversity Development Assessment Report (BDAR) to support this development application.

A BDAR has been prepared to meet the requirements of the Biodiversity Assessment Method (BAM) established under Section 6.7 of the BC Act and is provided at **ATTACHMENT 4**. This assessment utilises methods detailed within the BAM Order 2020a to identify biodiversity values inherent within the site, including known and potentially occurring threatened species and ecological communities, and quantifies impacts of the proposal upon these values.

Figure 5 - Biodiversity Values Map (NSW Planning Portal, 2025)

The BDAR finds that the site does not contain any mapped areas for threatened species or mapped biodiversity values and outlines suitable mitigation measures to offset the minor ecological impact that the proposal will have on the site. Some of the hollow-bearing trees and most of the ground hollows on site have been avoided. As such, the proposal has avoided significant impacts to nesting habitat for hollow dependant threatened species. The ecosystem credits required to offset the impact equate to 175, as follows:

- PCT 3435 – Hunter Coast Lowland Flats Damp Forest – 16
- PCT – 3998 – Lower North Creekflat Mahogany Swamp Forest – 4
- PCT 3435 – Hunter Coast Lowland Flats Damp Forest – 93

3.1.3 RURAL FIRES ACT 1997

As per **FIGURE 6**, the site is identified as Bushfire Prone Land - Vegetation Categories 1 & 3. The proposed development is not identified as special fire protection purpose

development, however a Bushfire Assessment Report in accordance with the provisions of section 8.3.5 (Wind and solar farms) of PBP 2019 has been provided as **ATTACHMENT 6**.

Figure 6 - Bushfire Prone Land (NSW Planning Portal, 2025)

The Bushfire Assessment Report outlines a number of mitigation measures during construction and ogoing operation for the proposal, which will be implemented accordingly, including:

- Hot work and fire risk work to be performed only in accordance with a Hot Work and Fire Risk Work Procedure and general risk management strategies
- Preparation and implementation of a Bushfire Emergency Management and Evacuation Plan
- A 10m APZ around the proposed solar farm shall be implemented and ongoing vegetation monitoring and management shall be performed
- Three 220kL water tanks are proposed and will be dedicated to firefighting purposes
- Access shall be constructed and maintained to RFS requirements
- A Bushfire Emergency Response Plan shall be prepared

3.1.4 WATER MANAGEMENT ACT 2000

The site is not within 40m of any watercourse and there are no mapped waterbodies or watercourses on site (**FIGURE 7**).

Figure 7 - Watercourses Map (NSW Planning Portal, 2025)

No physical works are proposed within 40m of an applicable watercourse, and therefore referral to NRAR is not required.

The subject site is located within a Drinking Water Catchment (**FIGURE 8**); however, the proposed development will have no impact of the quality or quantity of water entering and exiting the catchment.

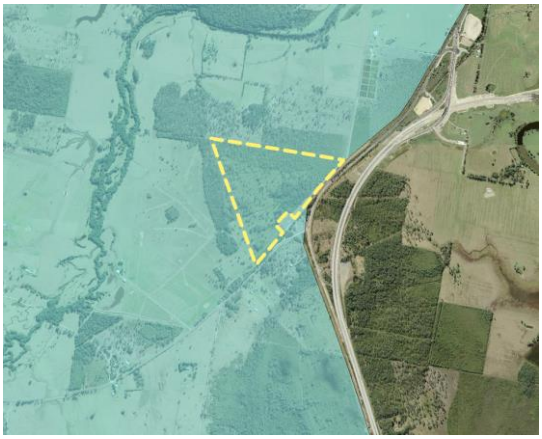

Figure 8 - Drinking Water Catchment Map (NSW Planning Portal, 2025)

The development incorporates an appropriately managed and maintained stormwater management system that will minimise the impacts of stormwater on the land. Refer to accompanying Civil Works Plan and Stormwater Management Report contained as **ATTACHMENT 3** and **ATTACHMENT 10**. No neighbouring properties, developments, or waterways will be impacted.

No chemicals or harmful waste will be disposed of on the land. All construction waste is to be disposed of to Council requirements, and no operational waste will be generated. Erosion and sediment control measures will be implemented prior to the commencement of works and maintained during the period of construction.

To this extent, no further consideration of the Water Management Act is required.

3.1.5 ROADS ACT 1993

Road management between Roads and Maritime Services and councils in NSW provides for three categories of road: State, Regional and Local. The *Roads Act 1993* provides for roads to be classified as Freeways, Controlled Access Roads, Tollways, State Highways, Main Roads, Secondary Roads, Tourist Roads, Transitways and State Works. The classification of a road empowers Roads and Maritime Services to exercise broad authority over some, or all, aspects of legally classified roads and to provide financial assistance to councils.

Access to the site is existing via Booral Road at the Southern end of the site, which later adjoins to the Pacific Highway.

Booral Road is identified as a local government road under the maintenance of Mid Coast Council (**FIGURE 9**).

Figure 9 - Road Network Classifications Map (TfNSW, 2025)

The existing access arrangent will require modification and upgrade. As a result, a Section 138 approval will be required.

As detailed within the Traffic Impact Assessment provided as **ATTACHMENT 9**, the proposal will generate minimal traffic movements during construction and operation of the proposed development and will not comprimise the safety or function of the road reserve. To this extent, no further consideration is required.

3.2 STATE ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING POLICIES (SEPPS)

All State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPPs) have been considered. The following SEPPs are considered relevant to the proposed development and discussed in further detail below.

- *State Environmental Planning Policy (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021*
  - *Chapter 4 – Koala Habitat Protection 2021*
- *State Environmental Planning Policy (Planning Systems) 2021*
- *State Environmental Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards) 2021*
  - *Chapter 4 – Remediation of Land*
- *State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021*
  - *Chapter 2 – Infrastructure*
- *State Environmental Planning Policy (Planning Systems) 2021*
  - *Schedule 6 – Regionally Significant Development*
- *State Environmental Planning Policy (Primary Production) 2021*

3.2.1 SEPP (BIODIVERSITY AND CONSERVATION) 2021

CHAPTER 4 – KOALA HABITAT PROTECTION 2021

This policy aims to encourage the proper conservation and management of areas of natural vegetation that provide habitat for koalas to ensure a permanent free-living population over their present range and reverse the current trend of koala population decline. The Koala SEPP applies to each Local Government Area listed in Schedule 1 of the SEPP. Where a Koala Plan of Management (KPoM) applies to the land, Clause 8 of the Koala SEPP applies to the development.

The MidCoast Koala Conservation Strategy applies to Mid Coast (Great Lakes) LGA and the subject site.

As per the MidCoast Koala Conservation Strategy, the site is mapped as occupied koala habitat (**FIGURE 10**).

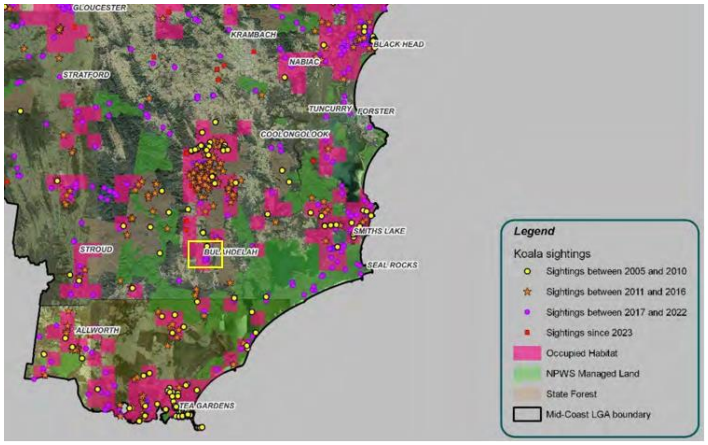

Figure 10 - Occupied Koala Habitat Map (MidCoast Koala Conservation Strategy, 2025)

The Biodiversity Development Assessment Report contained as **ATTACHMENT 4** has considered the impact of the development as per the SEPP and the MidCoast Koala Conservation Strategy.

Despite the development site predominantly representing 'Occupied Habitat', the proposed activity is considered unlikely to significantly impact this habitat given the site is not considered to be potential koala habitat and no koalas have been observed on the site recently or historically.

3.2.2 SEPP (RESILIENCE AND HAZARDS) 2021

The Resilience and Hazards SEPP aims to promote the protection and improvement of key environmental assets for their intrinsic value and the social and economic benefits they provide.

CHAPTER 4 – REMEDIATION OF LAND

The object of this Chapter is to provide for a state-wide planning approach to the remediation of contaminated land.

In accordance with Clause 4.6 a consent authority must not consent to the carrying out of any development on land unless it has considered whether the land is contaminated. Where the land is contaminated a consent authority must determine if the land is suitable in its contaminated state for the development or alternatively determine that the land would be suitable once remediated.

The site is currently zoned RU2 – Rural Landscape and consists of native vegetation and open area of scrub. A review of the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) contamination register (June 2025) confirms that no contamination, the subject of regulation by the EPA, is identified on or near the site. The site has no known prior historic use which suggests contamination may have occurred. As such, the land is unlikely to be subject to contamination and does not warrant further investigation. Therefore, the land is considered suitable for the proposed development.

3.2.3 SEPP (TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE) 2021

CHAPTER 2 – INFRASTRUCTURE

The purpose of this Chapter is to facilitate the effective delivery of infrastructure across the state and to identify matters to be considered in the assessment of developments adjacent to particular types of infrastructure.

Division 4, Electricity generating works or solar energy systems

Part 2.3 – Division 4 – Electricity generating works or solar energy systems

2.36 Development permitted with consent

(9) ***Solar energy systems –*** *Development for the purpose of a solar energy system may be carried out by any person with consent on any land.*

The proposed use of the land for a solar farm (as a solar energy system) is considered to be compatible with adjoining agricultural land uses and may be carried out with consent on any land.

Section 2.42 - Determination of development applications for solar or wind electricity generating works on certain land

(1) This section applies to development in a regional city for the purposes of electricity generating works using a solar or wind energy source that is—

(a) State significant development, or

(b) regionally significant development.

(2) Development consent must not be granted unless the consent authority is satisfied that the development—

(a) is located to avoid significant conflict with existing or approved residential or commercial uses of land surrounding the development, and

(b) is unlikely to have a significant adverse impact on the regional city's—

(i) capacity for growth, or

(ii) scenic quality and landscape character.

As the proposed development is regionally significant (per Section 3.2.4 below), this section applies.

The primary concern of the proponent is to maintain and enhance the natural environmental qualities of the site and surrounding area by seamlessly integrating the proposed solar farm into the existing landscape. The retention of existing native vegetation, proposed additional landscaping, and considered positioning and layout of the solar farm have resulted in a proposal that successfully and sensitively interfaces a renewable energy facility into the existing rural landscape.

The small size of the lot and presence of existing native vegetation limit the agricultural opportunities available. As such, the site is not considered to be highly-productive agricultural land.

The proposed solar farm therefore remains the highest and best use of the site and will not restrict or deprive agricultural opportunities in the locality.

Division 5, Subdivision 2 Development likely to affect an electricity transmission or distribution network

Section 2.48 – Determination of development applications – Other development

The existing site is not connected to reticulated electricity however connection is readily available via overhead powerlines. The development is carried out immediately adjacent to an electricity substation, therefore the electricity supply authority is triggered pursuant to Section 2.48(1)(b. ii). It is anticipated that referral to the electricity authority is warranted in this instance.

(1) This clause applies to a development application (or an application for modification of a consent) for development comprising or involving any of the following—

(a) the penetration of ground within 2m of an underground electricity power line or an electricity distribution pole or within 10m of any part of an electricity tower,

(b) development carried out—

(i) within or immediately adjacent to an easement for electricity purposes (whether or not the electricity infrastructure exists), or

(ii) immediately adjacent to an electricity substation, or

(iii) within 5m of an exposed overhead electricity power line,

(d) development involving or requiring the placement of power lines underground, unless an agreement with respect to the placement underground of power lines is in force between the electricity supply authority and the council for the land concerned.

(2) Before determining a development application (or an application for modification of a consent) for development to which this clause applies, the consent authority must—

(a) give written notice to the electricity supply authority for the area in which the development is to be carried out, inviting comments about potential safety risks, and

(b) take into consideration any response to the notice that is received within 21 days after the notice is given.

The solar farm will be 5.83MW DC that will generate 4.4MW AC of renewable power to be fed directly into the grid via the adjoining Essential Energy sub-station. The electrical design of the farm also has the capacity to enable a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) to be retrofitted of up to 2MW/4MWh at a later time, which will allow for a proportion of the generated power to be stored for release into the grid during periods of Peak Usage.

The proposed development will have no impact on the existing overhead powerlines and associated easements located within the Southern corner of the site.

The proponent has formed an initial agreement with Essential Energy for the connection into their established infrastructure.

Paul Sun Energy has worked with Essential Energy in designing a compatible system that will co-exist with the substation infrastructure located on the property and the surrounding network. A Connection Services Agreement (CSA) has been formalised between the parties.

Essential Energy will also be notified and referred to for assessment as part of the DA process. However, it is considered unlikely that there would be any impact on the operation of the existing overhead infrastructure as a result of the proposal.

Division 12A, Subdivision 2 Development adjacent to pipeline corridors

Section 2.76 – Determination of development applications

The proposed development is not in the vicinity of a 'licenced' gas pipeline corridor as defined under Section 2.76 (2).

Accordingly, the proposed development does not trigger referral to any pipeline operator pursuant to Section 2.76.

Division 17, Subdivision 2 Development in or adjacent to road corridors and road reservations

The site adjoins Booral Road, which is a local road, under the maintenance of Mid Coast Council. Booral Road connects to the Pacific Highway, which is a State Road, however the connection point is approximately 2km from the site. As such, referral to Transport for NSW (TfNSW) for development on or adjacent to a classified road is not triggered under Section 2.118.

A Traffic Impact Assessment has been provided as **ATTACHMENT 9** to demonstrate that the proposal will generate minimal traffic movements during construction and operation of the proposed development and that the proposal will not compromise the safety or function of the road reserve or network, noting that the increase in traffic is negligible.

Section 2.122 – Traffic Generating Development

As per Column 1 of the table to Schedule 3, the proposed solar farm is not classified as a traffic generating development.

3.2.4 SEPP (PLANNING SYSTEMS) 2021

Schedule 6 – Regionally Significant Development

5 Private infrastructure and community facilities over $5 million

Development that has a capital investment value of more than $5 million for any of the following purposes—

(a) air transport facilities, electricity generating works, port facilities, rail infrastructure facilities, road infrastructure facilities, sewerage systems, telecommunications facilities, waste or resource management facilities, water supply systems, or wharf or boating facilities,

(b) affordable housing, child care centres, community facilities, correctional centres, educational establishments, group homes, health services facilities or places of public worship.

Development that is state and regionally significant is identified in *State Environmental Planning Policy (Planning Systems) 2021*. Private infrastructure, including electricity generating works, that have a capital investment value (CIV) of over $5 million are declared as Regionally Significant Development. The proposed Solar Farm development has a CIV of $10.322 million (**ATTACHMENT 13**) and is therefore identified as Regionally Significant Development. Therefore, this application will be determined by the Hunter and Central Coast Regional Planning Panel as Regionally Significant Development. Despite the CIV more than $10 million, the proposal does not meet the criteria of Schedule 1 - Clause 20 of the SEPP referring to State Significant Development.

3.2.5 SEPP (PRIMARY PRODUCTION) 2021

SEPP (Primary Production) 2021 applies to the proposed development due to the zoning of the land. The aims of the SEPP applicable to the proposed development include to facilitate the orderly economic use and development of lands for primary production, to reduce land use conflict and sterilisation of rural land by balancing primary production, residential development and the protection of native vegetation, biodiversity and water resources and to encourage sustainable agriculture.

Chapter 2 of the Primary Production SEPP currently specifies matters to be considered when determining development applications for rural subdivision or rural dwelling houses. It specifies that the following matters be taken into account when determining whether to grant development consent to development on land to which this clause applies;

(a) the existing uses and approved uses of land in the vicinity of the development,
(b) whether or not the development is likely to have a significant impact on land uses that, in the opinion of the consent authority, are likely to be preferred and the predominant land uses in the vicinity of the development,
(c) whether or not the development is likely to be incompatible with a use referred to in paragraph (a) or (b),

(d) any measures proposed by the applicant to avoid or minimise any incompatibility referred to in paragraph (c).

The development has been assessed in response to the above considerations;

(a) Existing and approved uses surrounding the site consist of agricultural enterprises of a range of scales,

(b) The proposed development will not have significant impact on the surrounding land uses given the densely vegetated perimeter of the site, providing significant separation from surrounding properties,

(c) The site is located amongst compatible rural land uses with no potential conflicts identified,

(d) No incompatibility or land use conflicts have been identified that would require any mitigation measures.

While the site is mapped as State Significant Agricultural Land (SSAL) (**FIGURE 11**), the small size of the lot and presence of existing native vegetation limit the agricultural opportunities available.

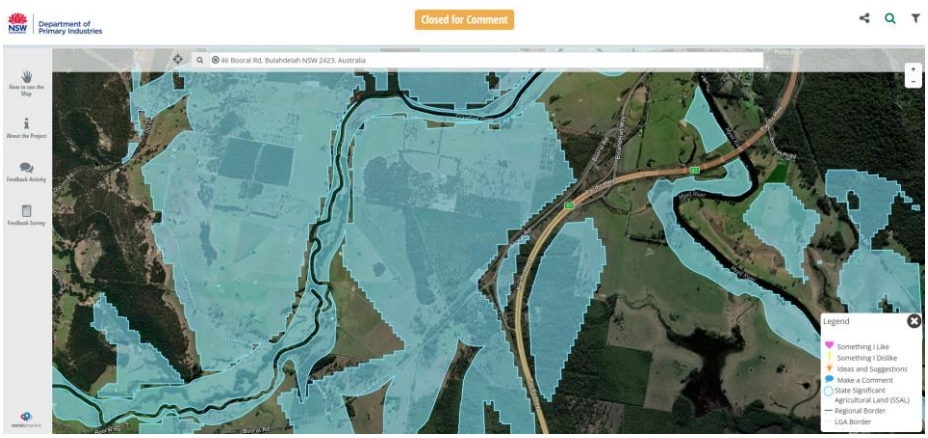

Figure 11 - State Significant Agricultural Land (SSAL) (Department of Primary Industries, 2025)

As such, the site is not considered to be highly productive agricultural land. The proposed solar farm therefore remains the highest and best use of the site and will not restrict or deprive agricultural opportunities in the locality. No significant adverse impact on, or from, adjacent land uses are identified. No sterilisation of rural land is believed to result from the proposed development.

3.3 LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL PLAN (LEP)

3.3.1 GREAT LAKES LEP 2014

The Great Lakes LEP 2014 is the in-force Local Environment Plan applicable to the proposed development. A Draft MidCoast LEP has been endorsed by Council and has been submitted to the NSW DPHI for gazettal. An additional assessment of the Draft LEP is provided under each clause where applicable.

The following parts of the Great Lakes Coast LEP 2014 apply to the proposed development:

- **Clause 2.3 – Zone Objectives and Land Use Table**

The site is zoned RU2 – Rural Landscape under the Great Lakes LEP 2014.

Permissibility

The proposed development incorporates the construction of a solar farm. The development is best described as an electricity generating works, which is permitted in the RU2 zone, defined as follows:

> ***electricity generating works*** *means a building or place used for the purpose of—*
>
> *(a) making or generating electricity, or*
>
> *(b) electricity storage.*

Zone objectives

The objectives of the RU2 zone are as follows:

> • *To encourage sustainable primary industry production by maintaining and enhancing the natural resource base.*
>
> • *To maintain the rural landscape character of the land.*
>
> • *To provide for a range of compatible land uses, including extensive agriculture.*
>
> • *To provide for rural tourism in association with the primary industry capability of the land which is based on the rural attributes of the land.*
>
> • *To secure a future for agriculture in the area by minimising the fragmentation of rural land and loss of potential agricultural productivity.*

While electricity generating works are not listed as a permissible use in zone RU2 under the land use table, the SEPP (Transport & Infrastructure) 2021 prevails over the Great Lakes LEP 2014. Accordingly, the proposed solar farm is permitted with consent on any land in accordance with the SEPP (Transport & Infrastructure) 2021.

The proposed solar farm is a land use that is compatible with surrounding agricultural uses and the objectives of the RU2 Zone.

Draft MidCoast LEP comment: *Under the Draft LEP, the site will be rezoned from RU2 to RU4. It is noted that Electricity Generating works will be listed as a permissible use with consent in the RU4 zone.*

The objectives for the RU4 zone will be:

- *To enable sustainable primary industry and other compatible land uses.*
- *To encourage and promote diversity and employment opportunities in relation to primary industry enterprises, particularly those that require smaller lots or that are more intensive in nature.*
- *To minimise conflict between land uses within this zone and land uses within adjoining zones.*
- *To provide for rural tourism in association with the primary industry production capability of the land which is based on the rural attributes of the land.*
- *To promote productive rural landscapes by minimising the fragmentation of rural land.*
- *To maintain the rural landscape character of the land.*

The proposed development maintains consistency with these objectives.

- **Clause 4.1 – Minimum Subdivision Lot Size**

The objective of this clause is to ensure that lot sizes can accommodate development that is suitable for its purpose and that is consistent with relevant development controls.

Pursuant to the GLLEP Maps, the site is mapped with a minimum lot size (MLS) of 40ha. The total site area is 40ha. Accordingly, the site meets the minimum lot size requirement for the RU2 zone.

Draft MidCoast LEP comment: *Under the Draft LEP, the site will be rezoned from RU2 to RU4. The minimum lot size of 40ha will be retained under the new LEP, for which the site achieves compliance with.*

- **Clause 4.3 – Height of Building**

The objectives of Clause 4.3 are to establish a maximum height of buildings (HoB) to enable appropriate development density, and to ensure that the height of buildings is appropriate for the context and character of the area. The GLLEP identifies a maximum HoB limit for the site of 8.5m. No part of the proposal will exceed 8.5m in height.

As the main component of the proposal, the solar array will have a height of less than 3m (at peak elevation angle).It is considered that the height of the development is appropriate for the locality and will not dominate the existing landscape.

Draft MidCoast LEP comment: *No change.*

- **Clause 4.4 – Floor Space Ratio**

The site is prescribed a floor space ratio of 0.4:1, however, this does not apply to the proposed development.

Draft MidCoast LEP comment: *The site will not be subject to a maximum floor space ratio under the new LEP.*

- **Clause 5.10 – Heritage conservation**

The subject site is not identified within Schedule 5 of the LEP as containing any items or places of heritage significance. An AHIMs Search has been carried out for the site and is provided at **ATTACHMENT 19**. The AHIMs Search identifies that 0 Aboriginal sites have been declared on or near the site (within 200m). No Aboriginal sites fall within the study area. As such, a Preliminary Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment has been undertaken and is provided at **ATTACHMENT 8.**

The assessment concludes that there is no identified Aboriginal heritage constraint to proceed with the proposed construction. Based on the findings of this assessment there is no justification for further archaeological assessment or monitoring. In the unlikely event that an Aboriginal object is identified, all work must stop in the general vicinity of the land and an archaeologist should be contacted to assess the object and, if confirmed, advise on the requirements for an Aboriginal Heritage Impact Permit under section 90 of the NPW Act.

Draft MidCoast LEP comment: *No change.*

- **Clause 5.21 – Flood planning**

Review of the Mid Coast Online Mapping confirms the site is partially affected by flooding. A middle section of the site is identified within a Flood Development Control Area (**FIGURE 12**), where Great Lakes Flood Development Controls apply.

Figure 12 - Flood Planning Level Development Controls (MidCoast Online Mapping, 2025)

As per **FIGURE 13** below, no PMF Flood Development Controls apply.

Figure 13 - PMF Development Controls (MidCoast Online Mapping, 2025)

A Flood Impact and Risk Assessment is provided as **ATTACHMENT 5**, concluding that:

- Sensitive electrical components and other critical infrastructure should be located at appropriate levels (FPL - 7.95m AHD recommended) to avoid risk to property. As per the Survey (**ATTACHMENT 11**) and Civil Works Plan (**ATTACHMENT 3**), the areas around the proposed electrical infrastructure componentry (inverter and BESS etc) have existing natural ground levels of approx. 7.5m AHD. As such, only minor elevation increases of approx. 0.5m would be required. By elevating these components by 0.5m, negligible visual or environmental impacts the proposal will result.
- No risk to life is apparent, as visitation or occupation of the site will be infrequent and short lived for routine maintenance only.
- The proposal will not result in any on-site or off-site flood impacts, due to the minimal built form and physical mass of the development.

Draft MidCoast LEP comment: *No change.*

- **Clause 7.1 – Acid Sulfate Soils**

As per **FIGURE 14** below, the site is not mapped as land containing Acid Sulphate Soils. Accordingly, the provisions of this clause do not apply.

Figure 14 - Acid Sulfate Soils Map (NSW Planning Portal, 2025)

Draft MidCoast LEP comment: *No change.*

- **Clause 7.2 – Earthworks**

The objective of this Clause is to ensure that earthworks for which development consent is required will not have a detrimental impact on environmental functions and processes, neighbouring uses, cultural or heritage items or features of the surrounding land.

The solar array requires minimal earthworks and ground surface disturbance, as it is supported by metal posts at regular intervals rather than an expanse of impervious surface. Earthworks are not anticipated to result in any negative impacts on the subject or adjoining land, or any public place. To this extent, no further assessment against the objectives of Clause 7.2 is required.

Draft MidCoast LEP comment: *No change.*

- **Clause 7.5 – Stormwater management**

Civil works associated with the proposed development will include the proposed perimeter road and stormwater management system. While the proposed development avoids the implementation of large expanses of impervious surface area, stormwater management will manage runoff generated by the solar panels and perimeter road.

Stormwater will be directed via grassed lined swales to 6 larger swales that will terminate at the legal point of discharge (roadside drainage) to the East.

Three 220kL rainwater tanks are proposed to harvest rainwater to be used primarily for firefighting purposes as per the recommendations within the Bushfire Assessment Report (**ATTACHMENT 6**). Overall, it is considered that the proposal will generate minimal stormwater runoff. A Civil Works Plan and Stormwater Management Report are provided as **ATTACHMENT 3** and **ATTACHMENT 10**.

Draft MidCoast LEP comment: *No change other than clause numbering. This clause will be Clause 7.4 under the new LEP.*

- **Clause 7.6 – Drinking water catchments**

The objective of this clause is to protect drinking water catchments by minimising the adverse impacts of development on the quality and quantity of water entering drinking water storages.

The subject site is located within a Drinking Water Catchment (**FIGURE 15**); however the proposed development will have no impact of the quality or quantity of water entering and exiting the catchment.

Figure 15 - Drinking Water Catchment Map (NSW Planning Portal, 2025)

No physical works are proposed within 40m of an applicable watercourse, and therefore referral to NRAR is not required and no impact on the drinking water catchment will result.

The development incorporates an appropriately managed and maintained stormwater management system that will minimise the impacts of stormwater on the land. Refer to accompanying Civil Works Plan and Stormwater Management Report provided as **ATTACHMENT 3** and **ATTACHMENT 10**.

No neighbouring properties, developments, or waterways will be impacted.

No chemicals or harmful waste will be disposed of on the land. All construction waste is to be disposed of to Council requirements, and no operation waste will be generated. Erosion and sediment control measures will be implemented prior to the commencement of works and maintained during the period of construction.

Draft MidCoast LEP comment: *No change other than clause numbering. This clause will be Clause 7.5 under the new LEP. The site will remain within a revised Drinking Water Catchment under the new LEP.*

- ***Draft MidCoast LEP Additional Clause: Clause 7.21 – Protection of rural landscapes in rural and conservation zones***

The objective of this clause is to protect the rural amenity and character of the land to which this clause applies by managing visual impact. The site is identified as land to which this clause applies being RU2 Rural Landscape (under LEP 2024) and RU4 Primary Production Small Lots Under draft LEP).

The development has been assessed in response to the above considerations;

(a) Existing and approved uses surrounding the site consist of agricultural enterprises of a range of scales,

(b) The proposed development will not have significant impact on the surrounding land uses given the densely vegetated perimeter of the site, providing significant separation from surrounding properties,

(c) The site is located amongst compatible rural land uses with no potential conflicts identified,

(d) No incompatibility or land use conflicts have been identified that would require any mitigation measures.

While the site is mapped as State Significant Agricultural Land (SSAL), the small size of the lot and presence of existing native vegetation limit the agricultural opportunities available. The proposed solar farm therefore remains the highest and best use of the site and will not restrict or deprive agricultural opportunities in the locality.

No significant adverse impact on, or from, adjacent land uses are identified. No sterilisation of rural land is believed to result from the proposed development. The proposed development has been designed and located in order to minimise visual dominance and impact, being screened from Booral Road and adjacent properties by existing native vegetation. The positioning of the solar farm within the centre of the site, being largely cleared land, avoids fragmentation of the land.

The small solar farm and considered ancillary features has been designed to maintain consistency with existing rural development in the area and will complement the natural environment and rural setting.

- **Clause 7.21 – Essential Services**

The consent authority cannot grant consent unless it is satisfied that all services that are essential for the development are available or that adequate arrangements have been made to make them available when required, including:

a. **Water & sewer:** The proposed development will not be connected to reticulated water or sewer services on the site. The proposed storage shed will include a small washroom with toilet. Wastewater will be managed via a proposed septic system. As such, a Section 68 application will be submitted.
b. **Electricity:** Existing electricity services adjoin the site and have capacity to service the proposed development.
c. **Stormwater:** While the proposed development avoids the implementation of large expanses of impervious surface area, stormwater management will manage runoff generated by the solar panels and perimeter road. Stormwater will be directed via grassed lined swales to 6 larger swales that will terminate at the legal point of discharge (roadside drainage) to the East. Overall, it is considered that the proposal will generate minimal stormwater runoff. A Civil Works Plan is provided as **ATTACHMENT 3**.

d. **Access:** Vehicle access to Booral Road is proposed. The external road network maintains suitable capacity to support the proposed additional movements, as detailed within the TIA provided at **ATTACHMENT 9.**

Draft MidCoast LEP comment: *No change other than clause numbering. This clause will be Clause 7.23 under the new LEP.*

3.4 DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PLAN (DCP)

Consideration of compliance and/or consistency with the relevant provisions of the Great Lakes DCP 2013 is provided as **ATTACHMENT 14.** The DCP Compliance Table identifies that the proposed development demonstrates compliance with the relevant provisions of the DCP or overarching objectives where variations are proposed.

3.5 PLANNING STRATEGIES

3.5.1 NSW Renewable Energy Planning Framework

The Renewable Energy Planning Framework has been developed to help NSW transition to renewable energy and to assist in meeting our state's target of net zero emissions by 2050 to ensure a clean, affordable, and reliable electricity supply.

It includes guidelines for wind and solar energy generation and transmission infrastructure and will support the industry by providing more investment certainty and will also make sure that communities benefit from the renewable energy projects they're hosting.

While the framework references large-scale solar energy guidelines only, the guidelines and topics discussed, which include visual impacts, agriculture, decommissioning, and glare, are considered applicable to the proposed development.

These topics, relevant actions and design considerations, and subsequent assessment have been referenced through this SEE, and the proposal has been demonstrated to address them adequately, resulting in a development that exceeds the outcomes identified within the Renewable Energy Planning Framework and all other relevant planning strategies.

3.5.2 MidCoast Regional Economic Development Strategy (REDS) 2023

The MidCoast Regional Economic Development Strategy (REDS) is a collaboration with the NSW Government that provides a platform for MidCoast Council to work with the community and businesses to drive economic growth and helps attract State resources to support economic projects and create employment.

Under Part 8 of the strategy (Looking ahead: Strategic opportunities for growth, resilience and liveability), renewable energy is a key opportunity in focus, with LGAs location between the New England and Hunter-Central Coast Renewable Energy Zones (REZs) presenting an opportunity for the region to play a role in meeting the transmission needs for shifting energy from the REZs to key coastal markets.

The location of the site, being central in the LGA and within proximity to the adjacent zone substation, puts it in direct association with the REDS and is well placed to contribute to the

energy generation and transmission needs of the key coastal markets as well as to inland areas.

3.5.3 MidCoast Council Climate Change Strategy (Phase 1) 2021

The MidCoast Climate Change Strategy (Phase 1) sets out how the LGA aims to reduce emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

To achieve this, actions include:

- investing in renewable energy
- becoming more energy efficient
- sequestering carbon
- transitioning to more sustainable transport options and
- reducing our waste to landfill

While this strategy has been prepared and implemented in relation to Council-owned and operated sites, the proposed development will provide an opportunity for Council to become involved in the purchase and distribution of energy to support Council-owned and operated infrastructure.

As mentioned within the Pre-DA Meeting Minutes (**ATTACHMENT 20** and **TABLE 1**), Mr Rob Scott (Director of Engineering Sewer Plants + Russell Wallace & Dan Aldridge), believes that sewer pumps are using 1/3 of all Council's power and that a potential Power Purchasing Agreement with Council can be discussed upon receipt of the application and commencement of assessment, which could enable the proposal to contribute to the future-proofing and increased capability of Councils sewer pump network.

3.5.4 MidCoast Council Economic Development Strategy 2023-2028

The MidCoast Council Economic Development Strategy is a five-year high-level document that sets the overall intent for the MidCoast to be where people choose to live, work and invest.

The Strategy builds on the NSW Government's Regional Economic Development Strategy (REDS), 2023 update, by reinforcing the key objectives of Attract and Grow.

The economic inputs generated by the proposal are obvious by way of additional employment opportunities as well as the additional energy capacity of the region, supporting residential, commercial, and industrial growth which in turn leads to increased growth and economic input in these sectors.

In addition to the above and as a critical consideration, the proposed solar farm will be the first application of its type for the MidCoast LGA.

The application prepared has demonstrated that small scale renewable energy developments can be sensitively and successfully incorporated into the dominant rural context of the LGA without impact or deprivation of agricultural land, which can set a precedent for further renewable energy development opportunities, contributing to the growth and strengthening of the area.

4 LIKELY IMPACTS OF THE DEVELOPMENT

The likely impacts of the proposed development and constraints affecting the subject site have been explored throughout this SEE. The following sections detail the major potential impacts and constraints in greater detail, in accordance with Section 4.15(1) of the EP&A Act 1979.

4.1 BUILT ENVIRONMENT

4.1.1 CONTEXT, SETTING AND VISUAL IMPACT

The proposed development has demonstrated consistency of the surrounding locality through the environmental planning regulations. The design has been carefully considered and provides contemporary additions to the site whilst retaining significant features and protecting the environment in which it is located.

The proposed development has been designed and located in order to minimise visual dominance and impact, being screened from Booral Road and adjacent properties by existing native vegetation.

The small solar farm and considered ancillary features has been designed to maintain consistency with existing rural development in the area and will complement the natural environment and rural setting.

The primary concern of the proponent is to maintain and enhance the natural environmental qualities of the site and surrounding area by seamlessly integrating the proposed solar farm into the existing landscape. The retention of existing native vegetation, proposed additional landscaping, and considered positioning and layout of the solar farm have resulted in a proposal that successfully and sensitively interfaces a renewable energy facility into the existing rural landscape.

The proposal is compatible with the objectives of the Great Lakes Development Control Plan and there are no anticipated adverse impacts on the built or natural environments because of the proposed development.

4.1.2 ACCESS, TRANSPORT AND TRAFFIC

The site adjoins Booral Road, which is a local road, under the maintenance of Mid Coast Council. Booral Road connects to the Pacific Highway, which is a State Road, however the connection point is approximately 2km from the site.

The development incorporates two access points. One in the Southern corner which provides direct access to Booral Road, and another at the existing substation, with the majority of traffic to utilise the Southern entry point.

The proposed development allows for five vehicles to be parked on site at any given time near the proposed storage shed, which is surplus to what will be required for ongoing management and maintenance of the site. The development parking spaces are designed in accordance with the requirements outlined in Australian Standard Parking Facilities.

A Traffic Impact Assessment has been provided as **ATTACHMENT 9** to demonstrate that the proposal will generate minimal traffic movements during construction and operation of the proposed development and that the proposal will not compromise the safety or function of the road reserve or network, noting that the increase in traffic is negligible.

4.1.3 PUBLIC DOMAIN

The proposed development will not have any negative impacts on any public domain. The development contributions derived from this development will provide infrastructure and public domain improvements in accordance with Mid Coast framework.

4.1.4 SERVICES

The subject site is provided with the following services:

a. **Water & sewer:** The proposed development will not be connected to reticulated water or sewer services on the site.
   The proposed storage shed will include a small washroom with toilet. Wastewater will be managed via a proposed septic system. As such, a Section 68 application will be submitted.
b. **Electricity:** Existing electricity services adjoin the site and have capacity to service the proposed development.
c. **Stormwater:** While the proposed development avoids the implementation of large expanses of impervious surface area, stormwater management will manage runoff generated by the solar panels and perimeter road. Stormwater will be directed via grassed lined swales to 6 larger swales that will terminate at the legal point of discharge (roadside drainage) to the East. Overall, it is considered that the proposal will generate minimal stormwater runoff. A Civil Works Plan is provided as **ATTACHMENT 3**.
d. **Access:** Vehicle access to Booral Road is proposed. The external road network maintains suitable capacity to support the proposed additional movements, as detailed within the TIA provided at **ATTACHMENT 9.**

4.1.5 NOISE AND VIBRATION

The only nearby receptor is the existing dwelling located at 46 Booral Rd to the West to the site.

It is anticipated that the proposed solar farm and electrical equipment will generate negligible noise during operation. The site will be generally un-manned and would see only limited active work when contractors are present on site for maintenance purposes.

Generous setbacks from the site boundary, extensive proposed landscaping, and the configuration of the solar farm layout have been carefully considered to mitigate any potential noise impacts.

No incompatible or adverse noise or vibration impacts have been identified as unacceptable in this location during construction or ongoing operation.

4.2 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

4.2.1 ECOLOGICAL

The site does not contain any areas that are mapped on the NSW Biodiversity Values Map, however, triggers the clearing threshold (1ha), through the proposed removal of approximately 11.15 ha native vegetation. The BDAR provided at **ATTACHMENT 4** finds that the site does not contain any mapped areas for threatened species or mapped biodiversity values and outlines suitable mitigation measures to offset the minor ecological impact that the proposal will have on the site. Some of the hollow-bearing trees and most of the ground hollows on site have been avoided. As such, the proposal has avoided significant impacts to nesting habitat for hollow dependant threatened species. 113 biodiversity offsets will be required.

As per the landscape plan provided, selective planting proposed will be 4 times the amount that is required to be removed, improving the ecological state of the site.

It is noted that upon the end of the proposed solar farms lifespan and subsequent decommissioning, the site can be remediated and returned to original form for alternative uses. The non-invasive mounting system and non-hazardous (non-contaminating) nature of the solar farm would allow the remediation process to be undertaken without complexity or complication.

4.2.2 LANDSCAPING

A Landscape Plan is provided as **ATTACHMENT 2.**

Extensive landscaping is proposed along the Southwestern boundary to provide privacy and separation from the adjacent property to the West.

Buffer planting within the APZ will consist of 70m lengths with 10m breaks between to ensure a discontinuous gap per bushfire requirements. Buffer sections proposed to be densely planted with a mix of trees and shrubs of various heights to provide screening to western neighbours and for travellers heading North on Booral Road.

The remainder of the site around the solar farm and under the array is to remain as managed grassland.

The landscape design proposed has been developed in conjunction with critical factors including bushfire requirements and ecological assessment, with the proposed landscape design achieving improvement of the site through the addition of native and hardy species.

The proposed landscaping consists of a mix of trees and shrubs of varying heights, ensuring an appropriate planting density is achieved to provide suitable visual screening and consistency with the existing landscape.

When combined with the extensive existing native vegetation surrounding the site, proposed solar farm will not be visible from outside the site and the natural and rural character of the locality will be maintained. A security perimeter fence is proposed to enclose the solar farm array.

4.2.3 ARCHAEOLOGY

An AHIMs Search has been carried out for the site and is provided at **ATTACHMENT 19.** The AHIMs Search identifies that 0 Aboriginal sites have been declared on or near the site (within 200m). A Preliminary Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment has been prepared and is provided at **ATTACHMENT 8**. The Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment prepared concludes that there is a low probability of objects occurring in the proposed development. The proposal does not seek to destroy, deface, damage or move an object from the land. The area of the proposed development is in an existing disturbed area and unlikely to show any visual signs of objects. If any burials/skeletal remains, shell middens or stone artefacts are found, all work is to cease immediately, and the relevant parties notified.

4.2.4 HERITAGE

The subject site is not identified within Schedule 5 of the LEP as containing any items or places of heritage significance.

4.2.5 STORMWATER

Stormwater drainage resulting from the proposed development can be catered for in accordance with Council's requirements. Stormwater from the proposed development will be managed onsite via the proposed stormwater management plan and associated report prepared by DRB Consulting Engineers and submitted with the application, which would result in the achievement of Council targets and pre-development flowrates. The key civil design outcomes are as follows:

Civil works associated with the proposed development will include the proposed perimeter road and stormwater management system.

While the proposed development avoids the implementation of large expanses of impervious surface area, stormwater management will manage runoff generated by the solar panels and perimeter road.

Stormwater will be directed via grassed lined swales to six larger swales that will terminate at the legal point of discharge (roadside drainage) to the East.

Three x 220kL rainwater tanks are proposed to harvest rainwater to be used primarily for firefighting purposes as per the recommendations within the Bushfire Assessment Report (**ATTACHMENT 6**).

Overall, it is considered that the proposal will generate minimal stormwater runoff.

4.2.6 WASTE MANAGEMENT

4.2.6.1 Construction

Construction is estimated to take place for 16-20 weeks, in which time all subcontractors will manage and dispose of waste accordingly. Constructors will also ensure that waste is appropriately streamed and recycled where possible to minimise waste landfill contributions.

Due to the prefabricated nature of the development and minimal ancillary construction work required, minimal amounts of waste will be generated.

A Site Waste Management Plan is provided as **ATTACHMENT 12.**

4.2.6.2 Operation

During operation, the proposed solar farm will generate extremely little waste products. Waste generated will be limited to general waste created by workers visiting the site for maintenance and will include items such as food and drink packaging, cleaning product packaging, and empty material packaging such as replacement part packaging.

All general waste generated on-site will be taken off-site immediately, with no long-term waste storage or ongoing collection service required. A general waste collection service provided by Council will be available however will not be relied upon.

4.2.6.3 Decommissioning

It is noted that upon the end of the proposed solar farms lifespan and subsequent decommissioning, the site can be remediated and returned to original form for alternative uses.

The non-invasive mounting system and non-hazardous (non-contaminating) nature of the solar farm would allow the remediation process to be undertaken without complexity or complication.

Much of the structural and electrical componentry can be recycled, as components contain valuable rare metals and other recyclable materials.

Photovoltaic solar panels consist of up to 95% recyclable materials, including aluminium, glass, silicon, silver, copper, indium, and germanium, with up to 17% of a solar panel, by weight, able to be recycled in Australia currently.

Panels are dual glass with no plastic backing sheet, therefore reducing plastic composition and improving module environmental recyclability.

4.3 SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

4.3.1 SOCIAL & ECONOMIC

This development contributes to allowing Australia to diversify the economy and protect it from fossil fuel reliance via renewable energy development.

Being located adjacent to an existing zone substation, the subject site presents an opportunity to contribute to the renewable energy industry and will provide residents in the region with affordable and reliable energy.

Given its location and limited environmental constraints, the proposed solar farm is considered the highest and best use of the site and will result in unparalleled social and economic benefits for the local and wider community.

4.3.2 SAFETY, SECURITY AND CRIME PREVENTION

As shown on the Site Plan provided as **ATTACHMENT 1**, security fencing around the perimeter of the solar farm is proposed, in addition to the existing rural fencing around the site as a whole.

Four secure access gates are distributed along the perimeter of the facility, providing secure entry and exit options to the solar array.

A 24/7 remote back to base security system will be installed with direct link to a local security company for regular ongoing and emergency on-site inspections.

Proposed landscaping as per **ATTACHMENT 2**, in conjunction with existing natural vegetation, will shield the proposed solar farm from public view, decreasing the likelihood of crime and trespassing.

The proposed development is not likely to create any significant safety, security, or crime concerns on or around the site.

The proposed solar farm will be enabled with remote monitoring in real-time, allowing for constant remote surveillance and monitoring of the facility.

Upon identification of any potential faults or security breaches, action can be taken indirectly from control centre or by deploying a local contractor to site.

5 SUITABILITY OF THE SITE

The proposed development is a suitable use of the site. The application includes all elements required under the relevant planning instruments and policies and there are no anticipated negative impacts on the locality because of the development. This development is permissible under the LEP and has addressed any relevant concerns through this SEE. The proposal will enable creation of additional employment opportunities, support the needs of the community, and advocates for renewable and sustainable energy.

The development will meet the requirements of the BCA and relevant Australian Standards The site is therefore considered appropriate for the development.

6 PUBLIC INTEREST

The public interest is best served by the orderly and economic use and development of land for purposes permissible under the relevant planning regime and predominantly in accordance with the prevailing planning controls. The development proposal as outlined by this SEE, has minimal impact on the surrounding locality and is considered compatible with the development in the area.

The development is considered to be in the public interest as it:

- Is a permissible form of development,
- Is consistent with the applicable environmental planning instruments, and
- It provides a positive response to the objectives of the Mid Coast LGA.

The proposal represents a positive contribution to the Mid Coast LGA and is considered to be in the publics' best interest.

7 SUBMISSIONS AND CONSULTATION

As part of the DA consideration process, it is envisaged Council may place the proposal on public exhibition and send neighbor notification letters to adjoining or adjacent properties. We welcome the opportunity to respond to any submissions.

8 CONCLUSION

This SEE has shown that the development is within the public interest, from a social, economic and environmental perspective. The proposed development is the most suitable option for the development of the site. Any relevant matters have been addressed through this SEE. The key reasons why the proposed development is appropriate are as follows;

- The proposed development is permissible on the site with consent and is appropriately zoned and located;
- No adverse impact on the existing character or amenity of the area will result;
- The development will have positive economic impacts for the site and the broader region;
- The land has the capacity to accommodate the development on site whilst managing or mitigating potential environmental issues, as summarised within this SEE and detailed within the specialist reports submitted with this application.
- The location of the site, being central in the LGA and within proximity to the adjacent zone substation, puts it in direct association with the REDS and is well placed to contribute to the energy generation and transmission needs of the key coastal markets as well as to inland areas.
- A potential Power Purchasing Agreement with Council can be discussed upon receipt of the application and commencement of assessment, which could enable the proposal to contribute to the futureproofing and increased capability of Councils sewer pump network.
- The economic inputs generated by the proposal are obvious by way of additional employment opportunities as well as the additional energy capacity of the region, supporting residential, commercial, and industrial growth which in turn leads to increased growth and economic input in these sectors. In addition to the above and as a critical consideration, the proposed solar farm will be the first application of its type for the MidCoast LGA. The application prepared has demonstrated that small scale renewable energy developments can be sensitively and successfully incorporated into the dominant rural context of the LGA without impact or deprivation of agricultural land, which can set a precedent for further renewable energy development opportunities, contributing to the growth and strengthening of the area.
- The small solar farm and considered ancillary features has been designed to maintain consistency with existing rural development in the area and will complement the natural environment and rural setting.

- Being located adjacent to an existing zone substation, the subject site presents an opportunity to contribute to the renewable energy industry and will provide residents in the region with affordable and reliable energy.

- Given its location and limited environmental constraints, the proposed solar farm is considered the highest and best use of the site and will result in unparalleled social and economic benefits for the local and wider community.

It is considered that the proposal will have no significant impact on the surrounding properties to that it is likely to adversely affect their enjoyment or amenity. We look forward to the Council's determination regarding this matter. If we can provide any further information or clarity, please don't hesitate to contact us.