



Statement of Environmental Effects

Narrabri North Solar Farm

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0. Document Control

0.1 Document Summary

Document Title	Statement of Environmental Effects
Project Name	Narrabri North Solar Farm
Project Number	RMGE227
Contractor	YES Group (SA) Pty Ltd
Client	Red Mud Green Energy 227 Pty Ltd as trustee for the RMGE 227 Trust

0.2 Revision History

Issue Date	Reviewed By	Date Approved	Approved by
17/02/2026	Michael Cheung		

0.3 Relationship Table

Referenced Document/Plan	Reference Section	Refer to
Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Due Diligence Assessment		Appendix A
Preliminary Biodiversity Impact Report		Appendix B
Narrabri Development Control Plan, Industrial Development Code Compliance		Appendix C
Flood and Stormwater Assessment		Appendix D
Noise Assessment		Appendix E
Glint and Glare Assessment Report		Appendix F
Traffic Impact Assessment		Appendix G
Section 10.7 Planning Certificate		Appendix H

1. Introduction

YES Group SA (Yes Group) is lodging a development application to Narrabri Shire Council (Council) to develop a 4.95MV solar farm with BESS.

This Statement of Environmental Effects (SEE) seeks to propose a solar farm compound comprises of solar arrays, Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), as well as access track, boundary fence, earthwork and associated ancillary facilities at 742 Stoney Creek Road Narrabri 2390.

This SEE is prepared pursuant to Part 3 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021 (the Regulation), to accompany the Development Application (DA) to assess relevant legislations and potential environmental impacts. It demonstrates compliance with the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* and supports informed decision-making by providing a clear understanding of the proposal's environmental, social, and economic implications.

A summary of the proposed development is in Table 1.

Table 1 Summary of the proposed development.

Capacity	4.95MV
Project area	10.31ha
Land use zone	RU1 Primary Production
Solar modules	Approx. 10,400
Battery Energy Storage System (BESS)	4
Driveway	New unsealed private access track proposed within the subject lot
Access	Via Stoney Creek Road
Other	• Earthwork • Vegetation clearance • Cabling • Permanent hardstand area • Temporary construction laydown area and office • Associated equipment • Removal of six (6) paddock trees

1.1 Document structure

This SEE consists of the following sections:

- Section 2 gives details of the site, its surrounding and the locality
- Section 3 illustrates the proposed components of the proposal
- Section 4 addresses the proposal to relevant statutory legislations and strategic plans
- Section 5 evaluates the environmental impact of the proposal
- Section 6 concludes the SEE.

1.2 Applicant background

YES Group (SA) Pty Ltd is a vertically integrated energy solutions provider. The company offers comprehensive services across energy market retailing, project origination, engineering, procurement, and construction (EPC), high-voltage services, and asset management.

Throughout its operation, YES Group has achieved significant milestones, including the installation of over 1,700 rooftop solar systems (each under 1MW) and the development of more than 120 ground-mounted solar farms (each under 5MW). The company has also contributed to major infrastructure projects across Australia's national electricity network.

In 2023, YES Group secured a substantial investment of approximately AUD \$70 million from PATRIZIA and Mitsui, aimed at advancing a solar and battery development program across regional Australia. This initiative is expected to deliver over 150MW of capacity upon completion, providing sustainable energy to approximately 65,000 households and reducing over 335,000 tonnes of CO₂ emissions annually.

YES Group's commitment to innovation and collaboration was recognized at the 2023 Energy & Mining Premier's Awards, where, alongside GPA Engineering, it received the Innovation & Collaboration Award in the Energy Transition Sector. This accolade developed networks of small to medium scale solar farms utilising pastoral land in regional South Australia and regional New South Wales.

Additionally, YES Group partnered with Sungrow to complete significant renewable energy project in South Australia's agricultural belt. This collaboration supports the state's goal of achieving 100% renewable energy by 2027 and underscores YES Group's dedication to sustainable energy solutions.

Through these endeavours, YES Group continues to play a pivotal role in Australia's energy transition, delivering innovative and sustainable energy solutions across the nation.

1.3 Electrical Infrastructure and Functional Operation

The solar farm will generate electricity using photovoltaic (PV) modules arranged across the site. Electricity generated by the PV modules will be collected via cabling and converted to alternating current (AC) at inverter stations located within the development footprint.

The converted electricity will be stepped up to medium voltage using prefabricated transformer stations distributed across the site. Electricity will then be conveyed to a central high-voltage switchboard located near the point of connection, where it will be monitored and exported to the electricity network in accordance with applicable grid requirements.

An auxiliary power supply will be provided to support on-site operational systems, including monitoring, communications, and security infrastructure.

A Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) is proposed as part of the development and will be connected to the site's electrical network. The BESS will allow electricity to be stored and dispatched as required.

Grid Connection

Electricity will be exported to the local distribution or transmission network via a dedicated high-voltage connection, either through underground cabling or overhead lines, depending on the final design and network operator requirements. An independent grid connection process will be led by the appointed Accredited Service Provider (ASP) and engage with Council separate to this DA proposal.

2. Site Details

742 Stoney Creek Road Narrabri 2390 (the site) is located approximately 8km east of the township of Narrabri, within the Local Government Area (LGA) governed by Narrabri Shire Council. The site contains is situation in the allotment of Lot 3 DP1034554.

The site is currently an agricultural land used for cattle farming, the project area is square in shape. There is a gentle slope from the north downwards to south. There is a building owned by the landowner located to the west of the project area. The remaining landscape is mostly open. A total of six scattered paddock trees (Poplar Box trees) is present on site, these trees are not hollow or dead stags. Access to the site from the private track linking to Stoney Creek Road.

There is a total of 10 sensitive receptors located within around 3km of the site. They are of low-density dwellings. There is also a residential cluster further down south and is buffered by the two vegetated areas. The sensitive receptors (as represented as SR) are identified as below:

- SR1: 740 Stoney Creek Road Narrabri 2390. Closest SR to site, approximately 1km to the west.
- SR2: 758 Stoney Creek Road Narrabri 2390. Approximately 1.40km to the west.
- SR3: 920 Stoney Creek Road Narrabri 2390. Closest SR to site. Approximately 1km to the northeast.
- SR4: 22 Mccutcheon Lane Narrabri 2390. Approximately 1.40km to the northeast.
- SR5: 851 Stoney Creek Road Narrabri 2390. Approximately 1.53km to the north.
- SR6: 126 Mccutcheon Lane Narrabri 2390. Approximately 2.15km to the northeast.
- SR7: 669 Stoney Creek Road Narrabri 2390. Approximately 1.92km to the northwest.
- SR8: 625 Stoney Creek Road Narrabri 2390. Approximately 2.30km to the northwest.
- SR9: 567 and 585 Stoney Creek Road Narrabri 2390. Approximately 2.45km to the northwest.
- SR10: 977 Stoney Creek Road Narrabri 2390. Approximately 1.76km to the northeast.



Figure 1 Map of SR. (Source: Google Earth)

To its locality, the surrounding is characterised by farmland and conservation areas. A pistol club and the Narrabri Airport are located to the west of the subject lot. There are three habited places (including the building owned by the landowner) in the form of dwellings located within 1km radius of the project area. Figure 2 and Figure 3 shows the aerial photos of the surrounding. Figure 4 to Figure 8 shows the photos of the current site conditions.

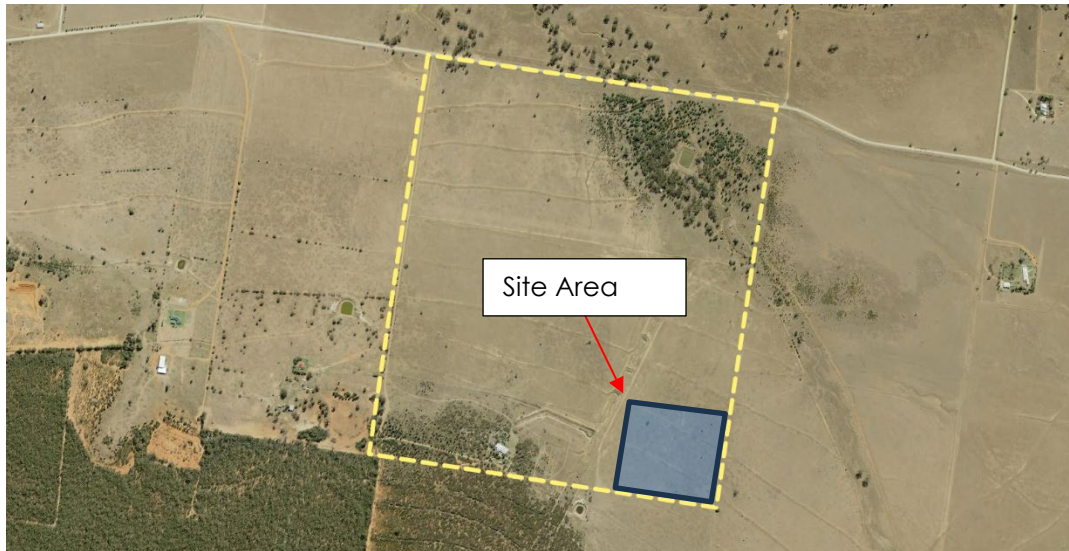


Figure 2 Aerial of the site surrounding (Source: NSW Planning Portal Spatial Viewer)



Figure 3 Aerial of the wider locality (Source: NSW Planning Portal Spatial Viewer)



Figure 4 Current land condition of the site area. Looking towards east.



Figure 5 Site looking towards south.



Figure 6 Site looking towards north.



Figure 7 Site looking towards west.



Figure 8 Existing private access track to site area, connecting to Stoney Creek Road.

2.1 Site History

The site has been historically used for farmland and agricultural uses. According to the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Due Diligence Assessment prepared by Red-Gum Environmental Consulting, the subject land has been subject to extensive historical disturbance since at least the mid-nineteenth century, including broad-scale vegetation clearing, cropping, grazing, and contour grading.

There was no building or any habitable use in the project area. The site was mostly open land in the past. A desktop search using the NSW Environment Protection Authority Contaminated land record of notices shows no records of contamination on site. As indicated from the Section 10.7 Planning Certificate acquired from Council, there has been no recent DA being approved over the past 2 years on the subject lot.

3. The development

3.1 Development component

The proposal includes a solar farm to be located at the southeastern side of Lot 3 DP1034554, the BESS units to be located around the bottom (south) of the site compound with associated ancillary facilities. Primary access to the proposed solar farm via Stoney Creek Road with an existing private track into the site compound. This existing private track runs along the western boundary of the subject lot.

The site will be secured with the proposed boundary fencing (chain-link fence), and an access gate to the west of the project area. Other associated ancillary facilities are also proposed, and are detailed in the following supporting component. Landscaping strip will be provided along the northern boundary. Vegetation clearance and earthwork will be kept at minimum only for the foundation of the solar array, the hardstand area, the 10m APZ and for access.

There are no permanent utilities proposed as the site is anticipated to be mostly unmanned once in operation. Temporary amenities such as toilets will be provided during the project construction phase, to be detailed in the separate Construction and Environment Management Plan (CEMP).

Electrical cabling will be connected to the grid from the mid-northern site to the existing 22kv grid powerline across the middle of the subject lot. Detailed connection works will be facilitated between the applicant, Essential Energy as Distribution Network Service Provider (DNSP) and relevant ASPs. This will be a separate process independent of this DA.

The proposed development of the solar farm, BESS and associated equipment can be broken down into following core and supporting components as listed below.

The proposed development includes the following core component:

- Erection of Photovoltaic (PV) panels (Array Areas)
- Erection of BESS facility
- Erection of ancillary electrical infrastructure, including Inverter stations, HV switchboards and MVPS

Detailed design and final equipment specifications for ancillary electrical infrastructure will be confirmed at Construction Certificate stage.

Additionally, the proposed development also includes the following supporting component:

- A new unsealed private track connecting to the site area from the existing private track
- Earthwork for cabling and foundation of the solar array
- Boundary fence of 2.4m high with access gate accessed from the west of the lease boundary
- Power poles and powerline extension connecting to the existing grid network (separate to this DA)
- Associated cabling and equipment for the functioning of the solar farm
- Vegetation clearance
- Removal of six (6) trees

3.2 Construction stage

The construction phase is anticipated to last approximately six months, with a peak period spanning two months, being month 3 and month 4. During this time, up to 20 personnel will be present on-site at any given time, working within standard daylight construction hours: 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM, Mondays to Fridays, 8:00 AM to 1:00 PM Saturdays. There will be no work conducted on Sundays or public holidays.

Key parameters during the peak construction period are as follows:

- **Peak daily workforce:** up to 20 personnel onsite.
- **Vehicle movements per day (peak):** approximately 3 heavy vehicle movements and 10 light vehicle movements.
- **Construction duration:** 6 months total.

The sequencing of the proposed works is below:

1. Early site works
 - a. Establishment of temporary construction laydown area, offices and amenities
 - b. Vegetation clearance
 - c. Earthwork
 - d. Boundary fence establishment
2. Core works
 - a. Construction of Array Areas
 - b. Construction of BESS facility
 - c. Construction of other associated equipment
 - d. Construction of track
 - e. Laydown of hardstand area
3. Associated works
 - a. Cabling works
 - b. Vegetation screening

3.3 Operation stage

During the operation of the solar farm, all electricity generated works will operate without manual aid. This means the project site will not have regular staff presence on site. The only staff presence is when regular maintenance activity is scheduled. There will be occasional maintenance visits by staff. It is expected that only one to two vehicles will be on site. The staff can park their car to the side of the proposed driveway, or near the access gate. Routine operational maintenance will occur during standard working hours only, excluding emergencies. Activities include:

- Equipment inspections:
 - 3 visual inspections annually (1 electrician + 1 light vehicle)
 - 1 major annual shutdown inspection (2 electricians + 2 light vehicles)
- Ground cover maintenance:
 - 4 visits per year for vegetation control
 - Equipment includes a light vehicle and tractor or zero-turn mower
- Unplanned Visits: Approximately 4 unplanned light vehicle visits per year
- Anticipated total annual visits: 1-3 every 3 months, 12 maximum per year

Total operational traffic is therefore limited to intermittent maintenance visits, typically 1–2 vehicles quarterly, and expected to generate minimal traffic or noise impact.

3.4 Decommissioning stage

The proposed solar farm is expected to operate for about 20-30 years. Once the project reaches the end of the operational life, a new DA would be submitted to obtain approval for demolition in accordance with Clause 2.7 of the NLEP.

4. Statutory and Strategic Framework

4.1 Commonwealth Legislation and New South Wales Act

4.1.1 *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 No.203 (E&A Act)*

The objects of the EP&A Act are as follows:

- (a) to promote the social and economic welfare of the community and a better environment by the proper management, development and conservation of the State's natural and other resources,*
- (b) to facilitate ecologically sustainable development by integrating relevant economic, environmental and social considerations in decision-making about environmental planning and assessment,*
- (c) to promote the orderly and economic use and development of land,*
- (d) to promote the delivery and maintenance of affordable housing,*
- (e) to protect the environment, including the conservation of threatened and other species of native animals and plants, ecological communities and their habitats,*
- (f) to promote the sustainable management of built and cultural heritage (including Aboriginal cultural heritage),*
- (g) to promote good design and amenity of the built environment,*
- (h) to promote the proper construction and maintenance of buildings, including the protection of the health and safety of their occupants,*
- (i) to promote the sharing of the responsibility for environmental planning and assessment between the different levels of government in the State,*
- (j) to provide increased opportunity for community participation in environmental planning and assessment.*

The proposal is consistent to the objects (a), (b), (c), (e), (f) and (j) for the social, economic and environmental benefits that it can bring, with respect to the promotion of renewable energy, job generation, increased electricity supply, and the proposal is designed to minimise environmental impact to the locality.

Integrated development

Division 4.8 of the EP&A Act identifies development that requires additional approval other than the development consent under a list of Act as provided in clause 4.46.

This proposal does not require any additional approval listed under clause 4.46. Therefore, this proposal is not an integrated development.

Subordinate Legislation

Table 2 summarised all relevant subordinate legislation and policy applicable to the proposal.

Table 2 Subordinate Legislation and Policy

Environmental Planning Instrument	Narrabri Local Environmental Plan 2012 (NLEP) State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021 (ISEPP 2021) State Environmental Planning Policy (Planning Systems) 2021 (SEPP (Planning Systems) 2021) State Environmental Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards) 2021 State Environmental Planning Policy (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021
Development Control Plan	Narrabri Development Control Plan 2026 (NDCP)
planning agreement that has been entered / draft planning agreement that a developer has offered to enter into under section 7.4	N/A
The Regulation	Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021

The following subsections will provide an assessment against the Subordinate Legislations outlined above.

4.1.2 National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974

The National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 includes provisions for the protection and recording of Aboriginal objects in NSW.

An Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Due Diligence Assessment (ACHDDA) was undertaken by Red-Gum Environmental Consulting using both desktop searches and field survey as part of this development application, in accordance with the *National Parks and Wildlife Regulations 2009* and the *Due Diligence Code of Practice for the Protection of Aboriginal Objects in NSW*.

The ACHDDA concluded that no Aboriginal objects, sites, or areas of archaeological potential were identified within the development footprint, and that the land has been subject to extensive historical disturbance associated with long-term agricultural use. On this basis, the assessment determined that the proposed development is unlikely to result in harm to Aboriginal objects, and that an Aboriginal Heritage Impact Permit (AHIP) is not required.

Should any Aboriginal archaeological material be uncovered during earthworks or construction, all activities must immediately halt at the discovery site. The NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) must be notified without delay to ensure proper evaluation and management of the find. It is important to emphasise that the proposed design changes do not impact the previous due diligence conducted concerning Aboriginal and cultural heritage. All prior assessments and protective measures remain in full effect.

4.1.3 Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016

The Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 (BC Act) is designed to preserve a healthy, productive, and resilient environment for the long-term benefit of the community, in line with the principles of ecologically sustainable development. To support these objectives, the BC Act

2016 regulates endangered species and communities and establishes a framework for a Biodiversity Offset Scheme.

As part of this application, a Biodiversity Assessment was conducted by Red-Gum Environmental Consulting Pty Ltd, in accordance with Section 7.3 of the BC Act, to assess the potential impacts of the proposed development on any threatened species or communities listed under the Act. The findings of this assessment are discussed in Section 5.3.

4.2 Environmental Planning Instruments

4.2.1 *State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021 (ISEPP 2021)*

ISEPP 2021 provides flexibility by identifying certain development to be permitted with consent, without consent, as exempt or complying development.

Chapter 2, Division 4 of the ISEPP 2021 specifies the planning pathway for electricity generating works or solar energy systems. Pursuant to Clause 2.36 (1)(b) of the ISEPP 2021, the proposed development of an electricity generating works that is in a prescribed non-residential zone is permitted with consent. Areas defined as 'prescribed non-residential zone' are as follows:

- (a) RU1 Primary Production,
- (b) RU2 Rural Landscape,
- (c) RU3 Forestry,
- (d) RU4 Primary Production Small Lots,
- (e) E4 General Industrial,
- (f) E5 Heavy Industrial,
- (g) IN1 General Industrial,
- (h) IN2 Light Industrial,
- (i) IN3 Heavy Industrial,
- (j) IN4 Working Waterfront,
- (k) SP1 Special Activities,
- (l) SP2 Infrastructure,
- (m) W4 Working Waterfront.

The proposal is in RU1 Primary Production zone under the *Narrabri Local Environmental Plan 2013* that is a prescribed non-residential zone. It is therefore permitted with consent.

4.2.2 *State Environmental Planning Policy (Planning Systems) 2021 (SEPP (Planning Systems) 2021)*

Under the SEPP (Planning Systems) 2021, certain developments are classified as State Significant Developments (SSD). Schedules 1 and 2 of the SEPP outline the criteria for this classification. The proposed development does not meet any of the specified thresholds or criteria to be declared a State Significant Development.

Additionally, the SEPP identifies Regionally Significant Developments under Schedule 6. Clause 5(a) of Schedule 6 specifies that electricity-generating works exceeding a \$5 million capital investment value is considered Regionally Significant Developments. As the capital investment value of this proposal exceeds the relevant threshold, the proposed development is classified as a Regionally Significant Development under the SEPP. It is acknowledged that the determination authority is the Regional Planning Panel.

4.2.3 *State Environmental Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards) 2021*

This SEPP address environmental risks and promote resilience. It regulates development in coastal areas, hazardous industries, and contaminated lands to protect ecosystems, public

safety, and human health. The policy ensures proper management of high-risk sites and aligns development with state environmental objectives.

Chapter 4 of the SEPP requires the consent authority to consider any potential contamination status of the subject land prior to issuing a consent. A search on NSW EPA's 'List of NSW contaminated sites notified to the EPA' and 'POEO Public Register' is conducted and found no records on land contamination. There are no records of contaminated sites notified to the EPA in Narrabri. All records of POEO Public Register in Narrabri are listed below:

[Home](#) [Public registers](#) [Contaminated land record of notices](#)

Search results

Your search for: LGA: NARRABRI SHIRE COUNCIL

Matched 2 notices relating to 1 site.

[Search Again](#)

[Refine Search](#)

Suburb	Address	Site Name	Notices related to this site
NARRABRI	Westport ROAD	Cargill Soapstock Disposal Site	2 former

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Figure 9 Contaminated land record of notice search result.

[Home](#) [Public registers](#) [POEO Public Register](#) [Licences, applications and notices search](#)

Search results

Your search for: POEO Licences with the following criteria

Suburb - narrabri

returned 13 results

[Export to excel](#)

1 of 1 Pages

[Search Again](#)

Number	Name	Location	Type	Status	Issued date
6957	AFF PROPERTIES NO 1 PTY LTD	21154 KAMILAROI HIGHWAY, NARRABRI, NSW 2390	POEO licence	Issued	03 Jan 2002
3778	BORAL RESOURCES (COUNTRY) PTY. LIMITED	WAVE HILL ROAD, NARRABRI, NSW 2390	POEO licence	Surrendered	22 Oct 1999
902	CARGILL PROCESSING LIMITED	BARANBAR STREET, NARRABRI WEST, NSW 2390	POEO licence	Issued	25 Aug 2000
1477	CSR LIMITED	COLGOORA ROAD, NARRABRI, NSW 2390	POEO licence	Surrendered	18 Feb 2000
20236	G & S Lein Earthmoving Pty Ltd	Sandy Creek Lane, NARRABRI, NSW 2390	POEO licence	Revoked	15 Jul 2013
7196	HUNTER AND NEW ENGLAND AREA HEALTH SERVICE	11 CAMERON STREET, NARRABRI, NSW 2390	POEO licence	No longer in force	21 Mar 2000
11572	MALCOLM FRANCIS GETT	CULGOORA ROAD, NARRABRI WEST, NSW 2390	POEO licence	Surrendered	21 May 2002
200	NARRABRI SHIRE COUNCIL	NEWELL HIGHWAY, NARRABRI, NSW 2390	POEO licence	Issued	18 Dec 2000
10697	NARRABRI SHIRE COUNCIL	NAMOI STREET, NARRABRI, NSW 2390	POEO licence	Issued	01 Nov 2001
11760	NARRABRI SHIRE COUNCIL	Wave Hill Road, NARRABRI, NSW 2390	POEO licence	Surrendered	01 Jun 2004
12193	NARRABRI SHIRE COUNCIL	Yarrie Lake Road, NARRABRI, NSW 2390	POEO licence	Issued	13 Dec 2004
20350	SANTOS NSW (EASTERN) PTY LTD	X LINE ROAD, NARRABRI, NSW 2390	POEO licence	Issued	01 May 2014
20378	SANTOS NSW (EASTERN) PTY LTD	300 Yarrie Lake Road, NARRABRI, NSW 2390	POEO licence	Issued	18 Sep 2014

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Figure 10 POEO search result.

4.2.4 State Environmental Planning Policy (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021

Chapter 3 of this SEPP focus on conserving koala populations and reversing their decline by protecting critical habitats. The policy identifies potential and core koala habitats based on factors such as vegetation types and evidence of koala populations.

The Preliminary Biodiversity Impact Report (BIR) prepared by Red-Gum Environmental Consulting conducted an on-site survey and desktop research. Considering the BIR study, it is unlikely that there will be any potential koala habitat or core koala habitat on site. Refer Section 5.3 for details.

4.2.5 Narrabri Local Environmental Plan 2012(NLEP)



Figure 11 Land zoning map (Source: NSW Planning Portal Spatial Viewer)

Part 2 Permitted or prohibited development

Under the NLEP, the site is zoned RU1 Primary Production:

Zone RU1 Primary Production

1 Objectives of zone

- To encourage sustainable primary industry production by maintaining and enhancing the natural resource base.
- To encourage diversity in primary industry enterprises and systems appropriate for the area.
- To minimise the fragmentation and alienation of resource lands.
- To minimise conflict between land uses within this zone and land uses within adjoining zones.

2 Permitted without consent

Environmental protection works; Extensive agriculture; Forestry; Home businesses; Home occupations; Intensive plant agriculture

3 Permitted with consent

Agritourism; Air transport facilities; Airstrips; Animal boarding or training establishments; Aquaculture; Bed and breakfast accommodation; Boat launching ramps; Boat sheds; Camping grounds; Car parks; Cellar door premises; Cemeteries; Community facilities; Correctional centres; Crematoria; Depots; Dual occupancies; Dwelling houses; Eco-tourist facilities; Educational establishments; Environmental facilities; Extractive industries; Farm buildings; Farm stay accommodation; Flood mitigation works; Freight transport facilities; Helipads; Highway service centres; Home industries; Industrial training facilities; Information and education facilities; Intensive livestock agriculture; Jetties; Landscaping material supplies; Mortuaries; Neighbourhood shops; Open cut mining; Plant nurseries; Recreation areas; Recreation facilities (major); Recreation facilities (outdoor); Roads; Roadside stalls; Rural industries; Rural workers' dwellings; Signage; Veterinary hospitals; Water recreation structures; Water supply systems

4 Prohibited

Any development not specified in item 2 or 3

Development of a solar farm is defined as 'electricity generating work' under the NLEP. Electricity generating work is classified as 'prohibited' in RU1. However, as stated under the ISEPP2021, RU1 is a prescribed non-residential zone and is permitted with consent. Pursuant to Section 3.28 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act*, it is presumed that in the event of any inconsistency between environmental planning instruments, the State Environmental Planning Policy will prevail over a Local Environmental Plan. Hence, the provisions under the ISEPP2021 prevails over the NLEP to apply to the proposal.

As mentioned before, 'electricity generating work' under RU1 zone is within **prescribed non-residential zone** and is permitted with consent. Therefore, the proposal is permitted with consent.

Under the Land Use Table, there are objectives specific to each zone. Table 3 illustrates the consistency the proposed development is in regard to the listed objectives under RU1 Primary Production.

Table 3 Land Use Table Objectives.

Objective	Comment
To encourage sustainable primary industry production by maintaining and enhancing the natural resource base.	Solar farms generate renewable energy, reducing reliance on fossil fuels and lowering greenhouse gas emissions. This supports sustainable practices and enhances the long-term viability of the natural resource base by mitigating environmental degradation.
To encourage diversity in primary industry enterprises and systems appropriate for the area.	Solar energy production diversifies land use by integrating renewable energy systems with existing primary industries. This diversification strengthens the economic base of the area and provides an additional revenue stream for landowners and local businesses. In particular, solar farms are well-suited to areas with high solar exposure and low agricultural productivity, maximising land use efficiency.
To minimise the fragmentation and alienation of resource lands.	The proposed development occurs within the southeast corner of the subject lot. No subdivision is proposed, and the project is obtained through lease agreement with a lease boundary only. There are plenty of untouched area still available on the same lot.

	In general, solar farms are often designed to be temporary or reversible, meaning the land can return to its original use after decommissioning. This avoids permanent alienation of resource lands.
To minimise conflict between land uses within this zone and land uses within adjoining zones.	The entire site and its surrounding are all zoned RU1. The closest adjoining zone (R5 Large Lot Residential) to the compound area is approximately 1.5km to the south. There is no immediate impact to the adjoining zone. Electricity generating works posts no conflict with primary production. The proposed work will be well buffered by the distance and the vegetation to the residents.

Clause 5.21 Flood planning

Clause 5.21 states development consent must not be given unless the proposal is satisfied with the matters set out in clause 5.21.

A Flood and Stormwater Assessment is provided as part of this development application (Appendix D). A discussion of this assessment report in regard to the flooding is discussed in section 5.6 of this SEE report.

Clause 6.1 Earthworks

The proposal seeks the development consent of the solar farm with the associated earthwork. Earthworks form part of the development application.

In consideration of the development consent, the followings are to be addressed:

Table 4 Clause 6.1 compliance table

Matters for consideration	Comment	Compliance
(a) the likely disruption of, or any detrimental effect on, drainage patterns and soil stability in the locality of the development,	Refer Flood and Stormwater Assessment.	Yes
(b) the effect of the development on the likely future use or redevelopment of the land,	The earthwork proposed will not impact on the future decommissioning phase of the solar farm project, nor will it compromise on the land suitability for future development post decommissioning phase of the solar farm project.	Yes
(c) the quality of the fill or the soil to be excavated, or both,	Should any conditions being placed in the consent, filled and excavated soil is to be managed in accordance with Council standards.	Yes
(d) the effect of the development on the existing and likely amenity of adjoining properties,	The proposed earthwork is minimal, and it will not cause adverse amenity impact on any existing and adjoining properties. All construction works including earthwork are expected to finish within a 6-month timeframe.	Yes
(e) the source of any fill material and the destination of any excavated material,	Should any conditions being placed in the consent, filled and excavated soil is to be managed in accordance with Council standards.	Yes
(f) the likelihood of disturbing relics,	The AHIMS search indicate that there are no previously recorded Aboriginal sites within the	Yes

	subject site. Findings from the ACHDDA also support this claim.	
(g) the proximity to, and potential for adverse impacts on, any waterway, drinking water catchment or environmentally sensitive area,	The proposal does not intersect with any water bodies or any mapped areas in relation to waterway, drinking water catchment or environmentally sensitive area.	Yes
(h) any appropriate measures proposed to avoid, minimise or mitigate the impacts of the development.	No specific measures are necessary to avoid, minimise, or mitigate the impacts of the proposed earthworks, as they are expected to have minimal impact, as previously detailed.	N/A

Clause 6.3 Airspace operations

Clause 6.3 of the NLEP applies to developments that may exceed the height limits shown on the Obstacle Limitation Surface (OLS) Map near Narrabri Airport. In such cases, the consent authority is required to consult the relevant referral body to advise that the proposal either does not penetrate the OLS or, if it does, that it does not object or provides conditional support. If conditions are imposed, the consent authority must include them where practicable.

Applicant has acquired a Section 10.7 Planning Certificate from Council, and it identifies the site is within the OLS Map. Figure 12 shows our site is likely to be situated between 271m -290m. Considering that the highest development is the HV switchboard which is no more than 4m in height, all proposed development is well below the height limits set in the OLS that is impacting the site.

In terms of potential glare impact to the functionality of the Narrabri Airport, the Glare Impact Assessment prepared by Environmental Ethos indicated that there is no anticipated glare impact to the Narrabri Airport. Refer Appendix F for the actual Glare Impact Assessment.



Figure 12 OLS Map.

Clause 6.5 Essential services

The proposed development has a private track for vehicular access from the north via Stoney Creek Road. This electricity generating work does not require water or electricity supply or sewage connection as, once operational, the development is mostly unmanned except for occasional maintenance visits by the maintenance staff.

4.3 proposed instrument

There is no proposed instrument at the time when this development application is lodged.

4.4 Narrabri Development Control Plan 2026 (NDCP)

The NDCP provides specific planning controls for all development within the Narrabri Shire Council. YES Group has engaged Council for a pre-DA meeting, and Council advised YES Group to address all relevant clauses under the DCP, specifically the Industrial Development Code. Council also commented given the unmanned nature of the solar farm during operation, Parking Code is not necessary to comply with as long as appropriate car parking provisions can be achieved. Detailed assessments will be addressed against applicable section of the NDCP in Appendix C.

4.5 Strategic Planning Context

New England North West Regional Plan 2041

The New England North West Regional Plan 2041 sets a long-term vision for the region to grow sustainably by supporting renewable energy, protecting agricultural land, improving infrastructure, and strengthening towns. It encourages economic diversification, especially through projects like solar farms in the Renewable Energy Zone (REZ), while ensuring land use is well-planned and communities remain liveable and resilient.

It is noted from the plan that Narrabri LGA has its priorities to “identify and promote solar and other renewable energy opportunities”. As detailed in Objective 9, although Narrabri is not within REZ, it is a major town with well-connected 132kv transmission powerline, and abundant solar access to the area, making this a viable area for solar farm. It is considered that the proposed development strongly aligns with the objective and priorities set by Narrabri Shire Council and the plan.



Figure 13 Essential Energy Network in Narrabri (source: Essential Energy Network Information Portal).

Narrabri Rural Land Strategy

The strategy outlines focus of the Council on agricultural productivity, economic diversification, and environmental stewardship. The strategy directly supports solar farm development as part of a broader shift toward renewable energy and economic transition in rural zones.

There are few directions envisioned in this strategy in regard to solar farm:

- **Strategic Role of Renewable Energy:** The Strategy recognises Narrabri's high solar exposure and positions the Shire as a prime location for solar farms and renewable energy hubs, supported by existing and planned infrastructure like the Inland Rail and major transmission lines.
- **Employment and Economic Diversification:** Solar farm projects (e.g. 100 MW developments) are noted to contribute significantly to short-term job creation during construction and support a shift away from the declining mining sector. Solar energy is viewed as a priority growth sector in the local rural economy.
- **Planning Priorities:** The Strategy encourages renewable energy development in rural areas, provided it avoids Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land (BSAL) and minimises land use conflicts. It also calls for planning controls to facilitate renewable industries while protecting high-value farming land.

The proposed solar farm aligns with these directions as it provides a reliable source of renewable energy to the Narrabri and its surrounds. The remote nature of the area and visual impact mitigation has been addressed in this application to ensure development does not create land use conflict. Any referrals during the DA assessment period would have the proposal reviewed to relevant energy authorities in collaboration between the applicant, Council and the energy authorities.

Narrabri Local Strategic Planning Statement 2040

The Narrabri Local Strategic Planning Statement 2040 (LSPS) establishes a clear vision for the Shire as a diversified, resilient and sustainable regional centre, balancing its traditional

agricultural base with emerging opportunities in renewable energy. Under Planning Priority 4 – Manage and Support the Transition to Renewable Energy, the LSPS identifies Narrabri's solar exposure, recorded at approximately 19 to 20 megajoules (MJ) of daily sunlight, as a strong foundation for large-scale solar generation. It recognises the Shire's position within the New England North West renewable energy region and its potential contribution to the NSW Government's long-term emissions-reduction objectives. The LSPS also acknowledges the presence of existing and proposed solar developments within the LGA and promotes a strategic and coordinated approach to renewable energy that leverages local climate and infrastructure advantages while carefully managing impacts on agricultural land and rural landscapes.

In this strategic context, the proposed solar farm located approximately 8 km east of the Narrabri township is consistent with the objectives and siting principles outlined in the LSPS. The development is located within a rural setting characterised by low population density and separation from township areas, and in proximity to existing electricity infrastructure. This location reflects the LSPS's emphasis on strategic siting of renewable energy infrastructure, enabling the efficient capture of solar resources while minimising land-use conflict, visual impacts and interface issues with sensitive receivers.

The LSPS also places strong emphasis on protecting primary production and employment lands under Planning Priority 2, and on adapting to climate change and natural hazards under Planning Priority 17. The proposed solar farm has been designed to respond to these considerations by occupying a defined development footprint that avoids fragmentation of surrounding rural land and enables ongoing agricultural use in the broader locality. Appropriate setbacks and landscape buffers are incorporated in the site layout to manage rural interface conditions and maintain compatibility with adjacent agricultural activities, consistent with the LSPS objective of avoiding land-use conflict while supporting economic diversification.

5. Environmental Effects Assessment

This section provides an assessment against environmental effects of the proposed modification.

5.1 Viewpoint analysis

This section evaluates the visual impacts of the proposed development on key viewpoints surrounding the site. The analysis considers the site's context, potential visual intrusion, and mitigation measures. Measurement of the viewpoint analysis will adopt the Landscape character and visual impact rating matrix from the Transport for NSW *Guideline for Landscape Character and Visual Impact Assessment* (Table 5). The impact level for each viewpoint is determined using an **Impact Level Matrix**, which assesses **Magnitude** and **Sensitivity** on a scale of Low, Medium, and High.

Table 5 Landscape character and visual impact rating matrix

Sensitivity	Magnitude			
	High	Moderate	Low	Negligible
	High	High-Moderate	Moderate	Negligible
	Moderate	High-Moderate	Moderate-low	Negligible
	Low	Moderate	Moderate-low	Negligible
	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

- **Magnitude:** Degree to which the development is visible from the viewpoint, and the scale of the development in the viewpoint.
- **Sensitivity:** Importance of the viewpoint for users (e.g., residential areas are high sensitivity, roads are low sensitivity).

Table 6 Magnitude rating table.

Magnitude	Description
High	Highly visible; dominates visual setting due to proximity, scale, or contrast. The development is close to the viewpoint and is large in scale. Significant view loss to residence. Key landscape or local character affected. Examples include tall telecommunications tower in sensitive areas like adjoining residential buildings.
Moderate	Noticeable but not overwhelming; partially blends with surroundings. Key landscape altered but impact on views limited and remain intact to local character. Examples include mid-rise buildings in urban settings or roads aligned with terrain.
Low	Minimally visible; far away or harmonised with the landscape. Minimal impact on views, key landscape and local character remains intact. Examples include structures screened by vegetation or located in rural areas.
Negligible	Barely visible or imperceptible due to distance, obstruction, or integration.

Table 7 Sensitivity rating table.

Sensitivity	Description
High	Very important viewpoint (e.g., residential areas, places with strong local character, heritage item or conservation area, scenic natural sites). Changes likely elicit strong responses. Viewpoint has high number of visitors.
Moderate	Moderately important. Views are not in scenic points and not visible to high number of residents/ visitors. Minimal visual change to places with strong local character or heritage places. Changes noticeable but less impactful.
Low	Limited importance. Changes affecting less sensitive area, or the view/ setting is not important to the working environment (e.g. industrial areas). Small number of visitors. Place is not a heritage place or does not have strong local character.
Negligible	Insignificant viewpoint (e.g. remote or inaccessible areas, low public interaction). Occasion visitors overlooking from roads are viewing from far distance of the site. Visual changes barely noticed. A viewpoint may also be considered to have negligible sensitivity where the proposal is not visible, is fully screened, or does not form part of the visual environment experienced from that location. This may include views at substantial distance, or where intervening landform, vegetation or built form prevents any meaningful visual relationship with the proposal. As a result, visual changes would not be perceived by viewers.

Site Context

The proposed development is located on a 10-hectare parcel of land currently used for agriculture. The site is situated on gently sloping terrain and bounded by:

- **North:** Stoney Creek Road and Mccutcheon Lane. 3 Residential buildings in approximately 2km distance to the project site.
- **East:** Largely agricultural land. 1 Residential building in approximately 2km distance to the project site.
- **South:** Where the Bullawa Creek Conservation Area and another densely forested hill is located. Across these areas there is a residential cluster along Kaputar Road. This residential cluster is effectively screened by the conservation area and the hill.
- **West:** A mix of agricultural uses and forested area. Narrabri Airport is approximately 3.8km west of the site and it is screened by the forested hill.

A total of 6 viewpoints (VPs) are selected to reflected on the viewing conditions of the nearby SRs and public roads, Specifically:

VP1: SR5, Stoney Creek Road

VP2: SR1, SR2

VP3: SR7, SR8, SR9, Stoney Creek Road

VP4: SR3, SR4, SR10, Stoney Creek Road, Mccutcheon Lane

VP5: SR6, Mccutcheon Lane

VP6: Residential cluster at Kaputar Road

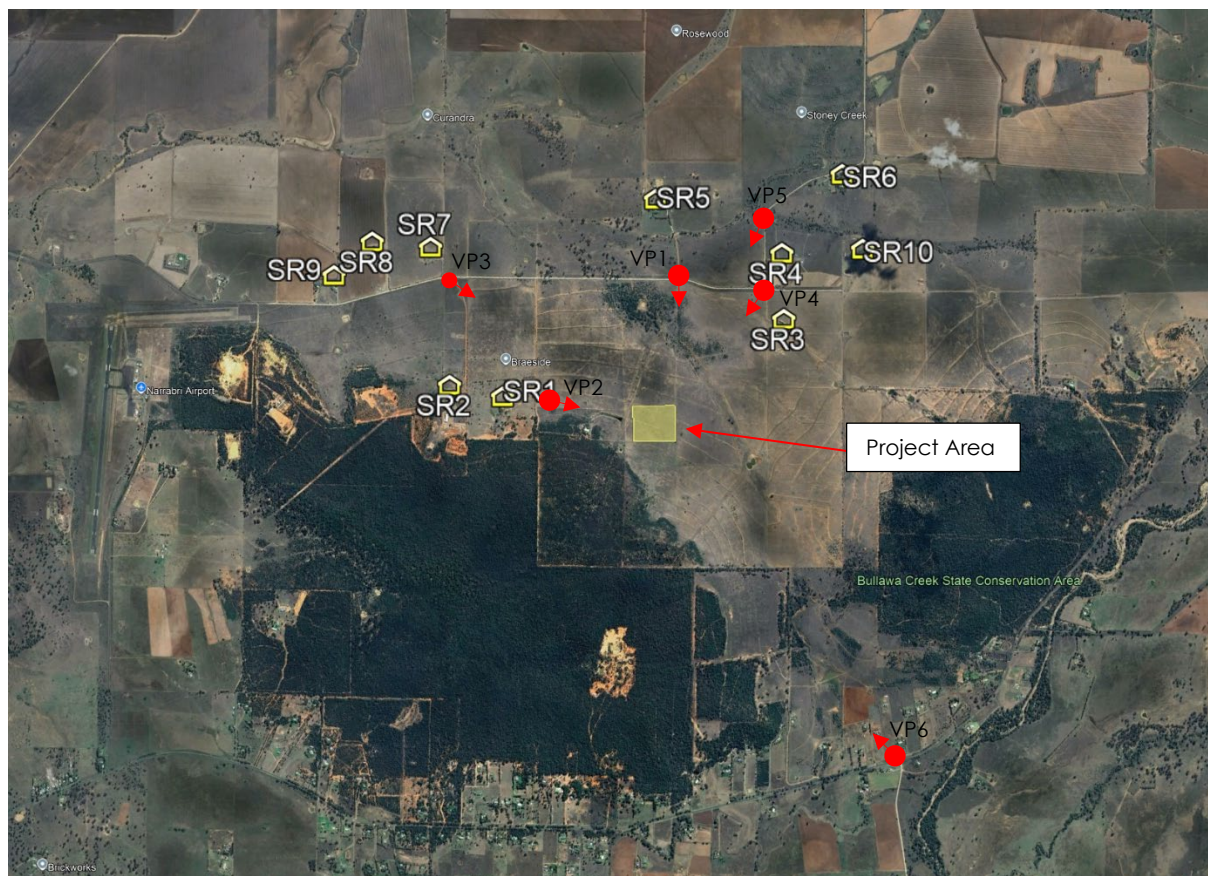


Figure 14 Indicative viewpoints (Source: Google Earth)

Table 8 VP1: Stoney Creek Road viewing from direct north

	
Location Description	Current land use is agricultural. VP1 is approximately 1km north of the site, overlooking both 742 Stoney Creek Road and 918 Stoney Creek Road. This view represent viewpoint from SR5. The VP is mainly characterised by rural farmland with abundant vegetation and minimal human development.
Magnitude	Negligible – Existing vegetation effectively screen the solar farm development. No proposed development is expected to protrude the height of the vegetation screening.
Sensitivity	Negligible – Surrounding uses are all primary production, with no residential uses in line of sight. No significant view presented and the solar farm is effectively screened.
Potential Impact	No visual impact anticipated.

Table 9 VP2: Private track viewing from west

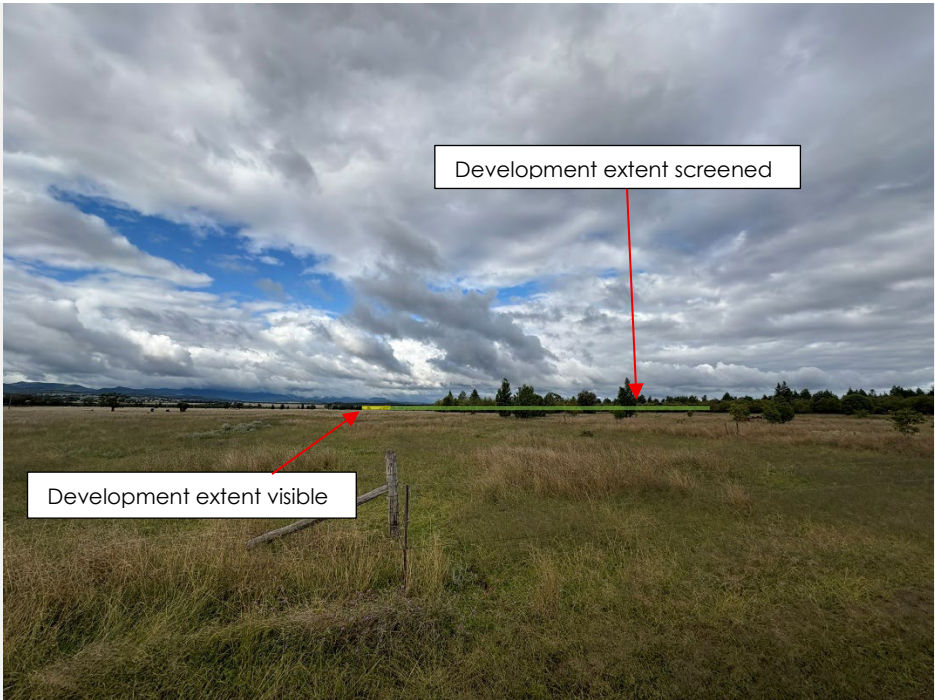
	
Location Description	Current land use is agricultural. VP2 is about 720m west of site, overlooking 742 Stoney Creek Road. This view represent viewpoint from SR1 and SR2. The VP is mainly characterised by rural farmland with abundant vegetation and minimal human development.
Magnitude	Low – The northern bit of the site could be visible to VP2. Though this visible area is distanced away and is also partially screened by existing vegetation.
Sensitivity	Low - Surrounding uses are all primary production, with few residential uses in line of sight when viewing from a distance. No significant view presented and most of the solar farm is effectively screened. This VP is also located on the subject lot's private access track with no public access.
Potential Impact	Given the distance to the site, the northern bit of the proposal could be visible to the residence west of the site (SR1 and SR2), in a visual presence of a line.

Table 10 VP3: Stoney Creek Road viewing from northwest

	 Development barely visible due to distance and vegetation Stoney Creek Road
Location Description	Current land use is agricultural. VP3 is approximately 1.74km away from site, overlooking 678, 740 and 742 Stoney Creek Road. Powerlines, fences, and private tracks are visible. VP3 represents the view from SR7, SR8 and SR9.
Magnitude	Low – 1.74km is distanced away from the site. There are abundant of existing vegetation screening the site. The proposed development is expected to be visually buffered by vegetation.
Sensitivity	Low - Surrounding uses are all primary production. There is only a couple of residential buildings around and their lots are primarily agricultural uses. Stoney Creek Road has very few anticipated visits as it is a no through road connecting to the agricultural properties only. There are no individuals presented on sight and only one vehicle passing by on occasions.
Potential Impact	Minimal impact anticipated. The proposal is unlikely to affect road users or pose visual impact around VP3.

Table 11 VP4: Stoney Creek Road viewing from northeast

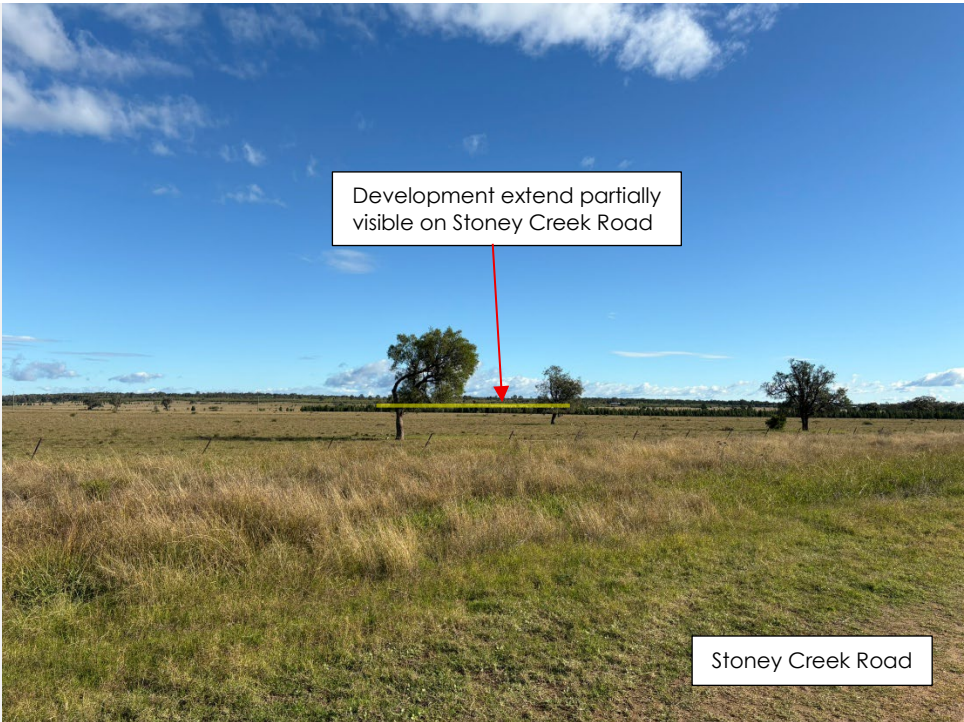
	
Location Description	Current land use is agricultural. VP4 is approximately 1.12km away from site, overlooking 918 and 742 Stoney Creek Road. VP4 represents the view from SR3, SR4 and SR10.
Magnitude	Low – The proposed solar farm will be partially visible from VP4 where the open land extends beyond the vegetated area. However, the development remains screened by existing vegetation, which provides a degree of visual relief.
Sensitivity	Low - Surrounding uses are all primary production. SR3 is the only residential development around this VP, which is about 1km away from the site. There are no significant views around and the proposal is not expected to be obstructive from any viewing angle nor will it impact on the visual character of the surroundings.
Potential Impact	Minor visual impact anticipated when looking south from VP4 due to its higher terrain level. However, given that the existing powerlines and the vegetation buffer, the proposal will be respectfully blend into the VP, providing that additional vegetation strip along the site boundary is proposed.

Table 12 VP5: Mccutcheon Lane viewing from northeast

	
Location Description	Current land use is agricultural and public road. VP5 is approximately 1.6km away from site, overlooking 851 and 742 Stoney Creek Road. VP5 represents the view of SR6.
Magnitude	Negligible – Site is not visible from VP5 due to distance, vegetation and terrain.
Sensitivity	Negligible - Surrounding uses are all primary production. Only a few residential buildings around VP5 and they the proposal is not expected to be visible from their viewpoints.
Potential Impact	No impact anticipated.

Table 13 VP6: Residential cluster viewing from south

	
Location Description	Current land use is agricultural and public road. VP6 is approximately 1.6km away from site, overlooking 723-749 Kaputar Road.
Magnitude	Negligible – Site is not visible from VP6 due to distance and terrain.
Sensitivity	Negligible - Surrounding uses are residential uses. However, the proposal is not expected to be visible from their viewpoints. Hence, no sensitivity impact anticipated.
Potential Impact	No impact anticipated.

Table 14 Viewpoint assessment table

Viewpoint	Magnitude	Sensitivity	Impact Level	Proposed Mitigation Measures
VP1: Stoney Creek Road viewing from direct north	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	None required.
VP2: Private track viewing from west	Low	Low	Low	A landscape strip to be places along the northern boundary of site.
VP3: Stoney Creek Road viewing from northwest	Low	Low	Low	As above.
VP4: Stoney Creek Road viewing from northeast	Low	Low	Low	As above.
VP5: Mccutcheon Lane viewing from northeast	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	None required.
VP6: Residential cluster viewing from south	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	None required.

Summary of Viewpoint Analysis

The development's visual impact ranges from **Negligible** to **Low**, with the most notable effects on SR3, noting it is 1km away from site. Considering that there are only few residential buildings and they are all 1km and over away from the site, also there are no development that will alter the landscape character or visually protrude to the sky, vegetation strip along the site boundary will be effective. There is no impact on the southern part of the site as there is no receptor, public road or viewpoint presence.

Mitigation measures will be focusing on VP 2, VP3 and VP4. Visual screening will be provided at the northern site boundary, to mitigate visual impact from the identified SR around. A result of this screening mitigation will have SR 3 being visually screened by the northern boundary landscaping when an individual is overlooking from northeast of the site; where to the west, SR1 and SR2 are visually screened by the northern boundary landscaping in addition to the existing vegetation. By proposing landscape strips, it is anticipated that the proposal will be visually screened from any of the assessed VPs, and preserving the rural agricultural character of the area. Figure 15 shows an indicative landscape area to be placed. A formal landscape plan can be provided for Council review once the indicative landscape plan as part of this SEE is assessed.

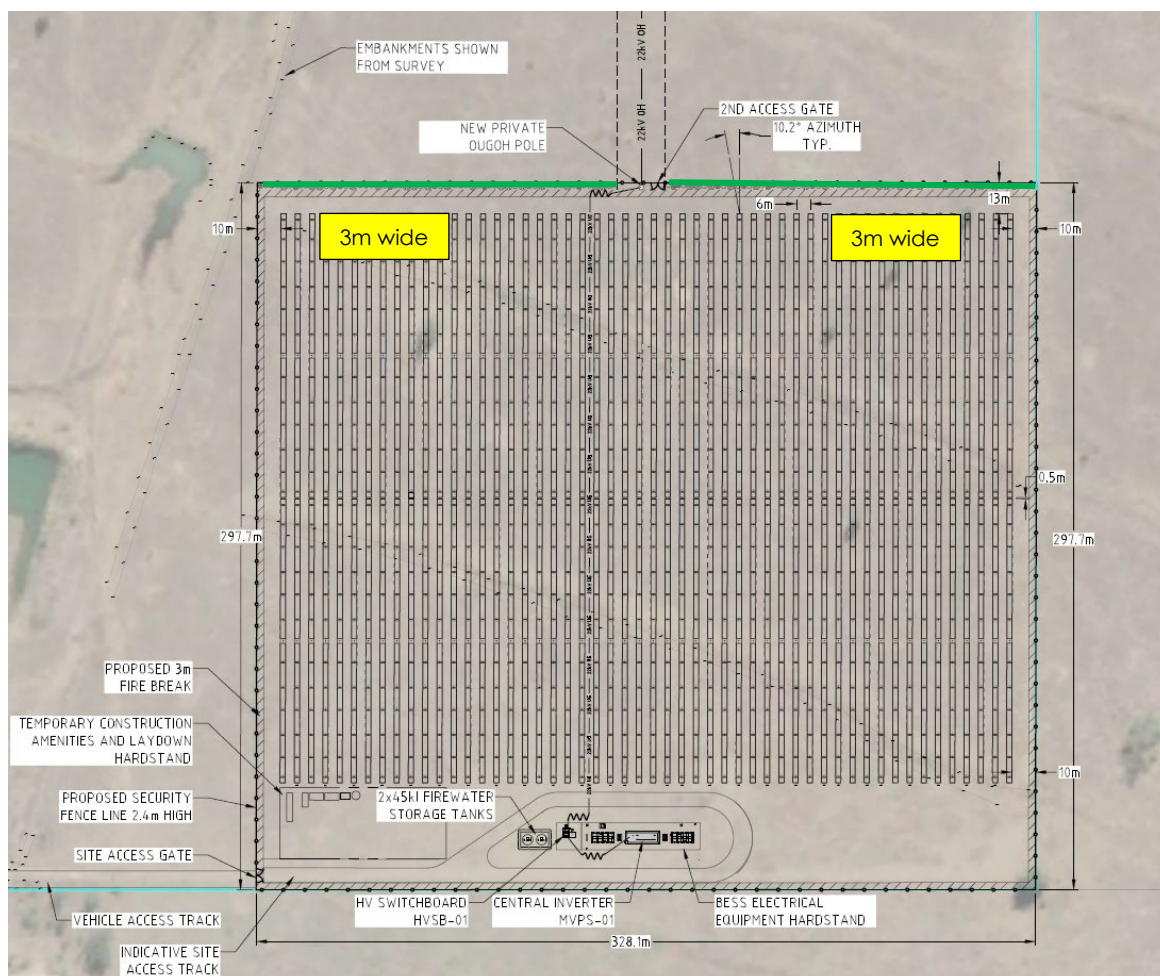


Figure 15 Indicative Landscaping.

5.2 Context and Setting

It is anticipated that the proposed solar farm will have minimal impacts on the surrounding area with agricultural character, due to:

- The maximum height at any point of the proposed development is the HV switchboard which is less than 4m and is lower than a general single storey house. PV panels have an operating height of 2.4m. Such height will not be noticeable when viewing from a long distance.
- There is existing vegetation along Stoney Creek Road and around the site to provide additional screening. Vegetation strips will be added for further screening.
- The closest proposed development to any other building is the fence, and it is well setback from the closest Stoney Creek Road.

5.3 Biodiversity

A Preliminary Biodiversity Impact Report (BIR) prepared by Red-Gum Environmental Consulting is provided in supporting this SEE.

The BIR included a desktop assessment and site inspection and concluded that the proposal is unlikely to result in a significant impact on threatened species, populations, or ecological communities, and therefore does not trigger entry into the NSW Biodiversity Offsets Scheme (BOS). Accordingly, a Biodiversity Development Assessment Report (BDAR) is not required.

The assessment identified that the development footprint is located predominantly within historically cleared and highly modified agricultural land, classified as Category 1 – Exempt Land under the NSW Native Vegetation Regulatory framework. While draft mapping indicates a small portion of Category 2 land within the proposed access route, field verification confirmed this area corresponds to an existing gravel access road devoid of native vegetation, which has been historically cleared and maintained since prior to 1983. No intact Plant Community Types (PCTs) occur within the development footprint.

The BIR identified that the proposal would result in minor and low-value residual impacts, which have been avoided and minimised through site selection and design. These impacts include:

- Use of an existing gravel access road, with no widening proposed, avoiding disturbance to adjacent native vegetation.
- Removal of low-conservation-value derived native groundcover within the development footprint.
- Removal of six (6) scattered paddock trees (two *Eucalyptus populnea* and four *Callitris glaucophylla*), none of which contain hollows or provide significant habitat value.
- Temporary and localised construction-related noise, dust, and ground disturbance, consistent with agricultural land use.
- No clearing of threatened ecological communities, or mapped biodiversity values.

The site does not contain core habitat for threatened fauna, including koala habitat, and no suitable habitat for threatened species was identified within the development footprint. A Test of Significance was undertaken and confirmed that the proposal is unlikely to have a significant direct or indirect impact on threatened species or their habitats.

The development has been deliberately designed to avoid higher-value vegetation patches located within the broader lot, confining all works to previously cleared land and existing infrastructure corridors. Standard erosion and sediment control measures will be implemented to ensure downstream waterways are protected during construction and operation. They will be detailed in the CEMP to be reviewed by certifying authority during Construction Certification application.

Based on the above, the proposed development is considered to result in negligible biodiversity impacts, does not require biodiversity offsets, and is considered acceptable having regard to biodiversity matters under Section 4.15 of the EP&A Act. Refer Appendix B for detailed BIR report.

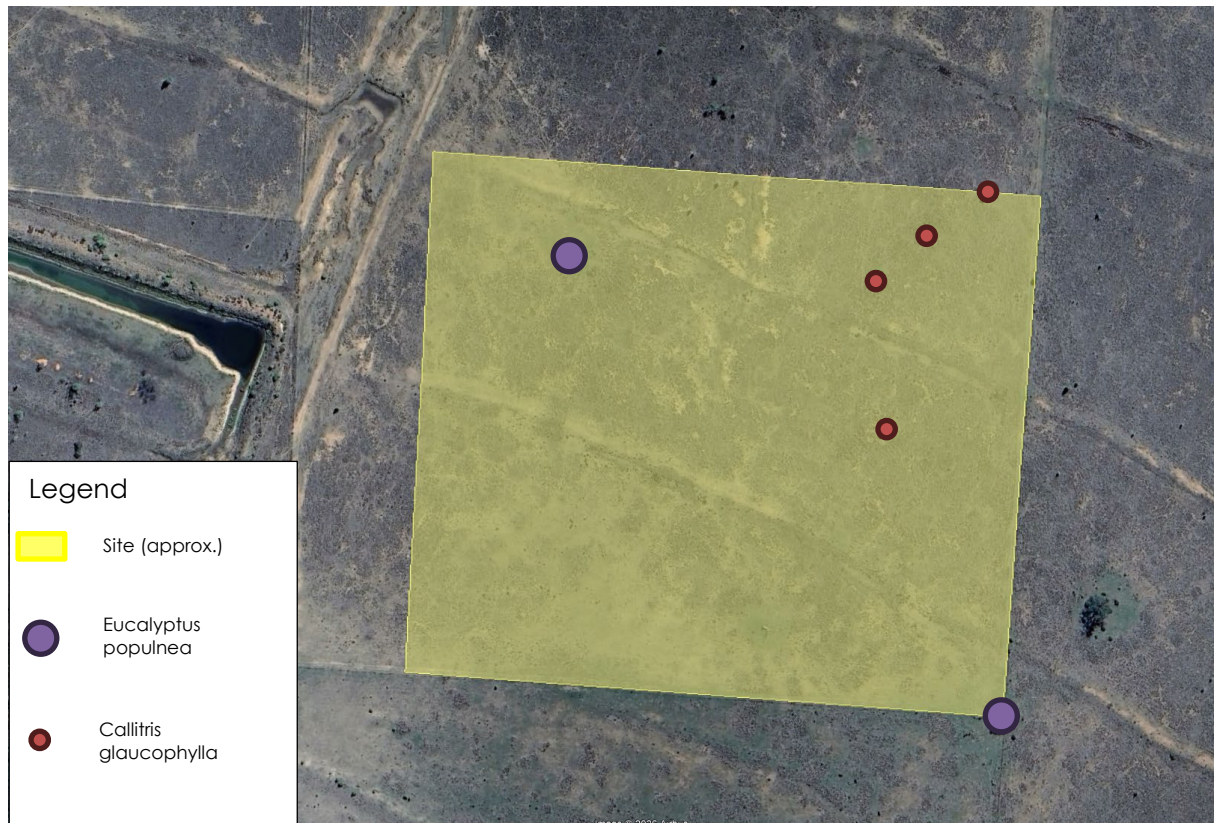


Figure 16 Location of trees to be removed. (Source: Google Earth)

5.4 Heritage

European heritage and conservation area

The proposed development is not mapped within or adjacent to any of the listed heritage items or conservation area under Schedule 5 of NLEP 2012.

Aboriginal heritage

An Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Due Diligence Assessment was completed by Red-Gum Environmental Consulting Pty Ltd (Red-Gum) (Appendix A) in accordance with the *Due Diligence Code of Practice for the Protection of Aboriginal Objects in New South Wales*. The report conducted desktop review as well as a site survey on foot.

The desktop assessment identified that there are no recorded Aboriginal cultural heritage sites within the subject site or the broader cadastral lot. An Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System (AHIMS) search confirmed that no Aboriginal objects have been previously recorded within the site boundary, with the nearest recorded sites located approximately 2.4 kilometres from the site within Bullawa Creek State Conservation Area. These sites are associated with creek corridors and conserved landscapes and are not representative of the landform or disturbance history of the proposal site. The assessment also considered regional archaeological patterns, which indicate that Aboriginal sites in the Narrabri area are most commonly associated with permanent water sources, elevated

landforms, intact native vegetation, and less disturbed landscapes. None of these characteristics are present within the proposed development footprint.

The subject land has been subject to extensive historical disturbance since at least the mid-nineteenth century, including broad-scale vegetation clearing, cropping, grazing, and contour grading. Aboriginal Site Decision Support Tool modelling indicates that the site has experienced moderate to high accumulated impacts, reducing the likelihood that intact archaeological deposits would be preserved. The site is located more than 1 km from permanent watercourses and does not contain any landforms identified by the Due Diligence Code as having elevated archaeological sensitivity, such as dunes, ridgelines, rock shelters, caves, or areas within 200 metres of water.

A site survey focused on areas of ground surface exposure and previously disturbed land across the proposed development footprint. Ground surface visibility was variable but sufficient to assess areas most likely to reveal cultural material if present. The survey identified extensive evidence of historical agricultural disturbance, including grading, cultivation, and imported materials. No Aboriginal objects, scarred or culturally modified trees, or potential archaeological deposits were identified during the field inspection, and no areas of undisturbed land with archaeological potential were observed.

The site is located within the traditional lands of the Gamilaroi (Gomeri) people; however, the assessment did not identify any tangible Aboriginal cultural heritage values within the development footprint. Based on the results of the desktop assessment and field survey, the proposal is considered unlikely to result in harm to Aboriginal objects or places. As such, no further Aboriginal cultural heritage assessment is required for the proposal.

In accordance with best practice and legislative requirements, standard unexpected finds procedures will be implemented during construction. Should any suspected Aboriginal objects or ancestral remains be discovered during works, the following procedure will be followed:

1. **Cease Work:** Immediately cease all work in the immediate vicinity of the discovery and establish an appropriate exclusion zone to prevent further disturbance.
2. **Protect the Discovery:** Do not handle, remove, disturb or further harm the suspected Aboriginal object. Secure the area to prevent inadvertent access by personnel, vehicles or plant.
3. **Record the Find:** The Site Supervisor shall record the location of the discovery, including photographs, GPS coordinates and a brief description of the object and surrounding area.
4. **Notify Site Management:** The Site Supervisor shall immediately notify the Environmental Manager and Project Manager, who will arrange for assessment by a suitably qualified Aboriginal cultural heritage specialist.
5. **Assessment and Notification:** The heritage specialist will assess the discovery to determine whether it constitutes an Aboriginal object under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*. Where a previously unrecorded Aboriginal object is confirmed, the discovery shall be reported in accordance with Section 89A of the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*. Heritage NSW will be notified as soon as practicable, and any additional statutory notification, consultation or management requirements will be implemented in accordance with the Aboriginal Due Diligence Assessment and relevant legislative requirements.
6. **Management of the Discovery:** The Proponent shall cooperate with Heritage NSW, the heritage specialist and, where required, relevant Aboriginal community representatives to facilitate the recording and assessment of the discovery, compliance with statutory requirements, and implementation of any necessary management measures.

7. **Resumption of Works:** Construction activities within the exclusion zone shall not recommence until the discovery has been appropriately assessed, any required management measures have been implemented, and all relevant statutory requirements have been satisfied. Where required, works shall only recommence following written advice or approval from Heritage NSW.

5.5 Bushfire

The site is mapped as bushfire prone (Vegetation Category 3). In accordance with Section 8 of the *Planning for Bushfire Protection 2019* (PBP), the proposed development will comply with the following:

- Includes a minimum 10m clearance area between any proposed development and the perimeter fence as an APZ, maintained to the standard of an IPA for the life of the development; and
- Prior to the commencement of work, the Preparation of a Bush Fire Emergency Plan will be provided for certifying authority when lodging the Construction Certificate. The plan will identify all relevant risks and mitigation measures associated with the construction and operation of the solar farm, including:
 - Implementation of specific measures to prevent or reduce the risk of fire ignition.
 - Restriction of certain activities during total fire ban periods.
 - To ensure the availability and accessibility of fire-suppression equipment, adequate water supply, and clear access routes.
 - Proper storage and regular maintenance of fuels and other flammable substances.
 - The informing of local NSW RFS Fire Control Centre about any planned activities during the bushfire danger period that could ignite nearby vegetation, ensuring suitable weather conditions for the work.
 - Development and maintenance of an effective bushfire emergency management plan.

5.6 Flooding, stormwater, soil and erosion control

A Flood and Stormwater Assessment (FSA) prepared by NESE is provided to support this SEE (refer Appendix D). The assessment was undertaken as a desktop study, utilising digital elevation models (DEMs) and LiDAR data, with hydrologic and hydraulic analysis undertaken using DRAINS modelling. Rainfall inputs were derived from Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) data and simulations were undertaken for events up to the 1% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP), including consideration of climate change allowances.

The site contains a number of existing contour banks and gently falls toward the north-east. The nearest mapped watercourse under the Water Management (General) Regulation is located approximately 280 metres north-east of the site, and a grassed waterway is present to the west. Existing stormwater runoff follows established overland flow paths consistent with the surrounding landscape.

The FSA demonstrates that post-development stormwater behaviour will not materially differ from pre-development conditions, with modelling confirming no adverse off-site flood impacts during the 1% AEP event. The assessment further confirms that the site is not subject to flooding from any identified nearby waterways, including when climate change factors are considered. Accordingly, the proposed solar farm is considered flood-compatible, and its operation will not be adversely affected by flooding.

For assessment purposes, the flood modelling assessed a conservative internal mitigation scenario, assuming smoothing of internal ground levels and the inclusion of a low internal

berm to manage overland flow around infrastructure. These measures were assumptions and recommendations for modelling only, included to test a conservative scenario, and are not required to achieve flood neutrality or to avoid off-site impacts.

The development proposes to retain existing ground levels and contour banks, with no site-wide earthworks, flattening, or regrading proposed. Retention of existing topography preserves established flood storage and surface roughness characteristics, which is appropriate given the low-velocity inundation regime identified for the site. On this basis, the internal berm assessed in the flood modelling is not required and is not proposed as part of the development.

The need for a berm is directly linked to the extent of site earthworks. Should site flattening or regrading be undertaken in the future, an internal berm can be implemented to manage overland flow in accordance with the approach assessed in the Flood and Stormwater Assessment.

Where minor localised earthworks are required during construction, standard temporary stormwater and erosion controls (such as diversion banks and channels) will be implemented in accordance with best-practice construction management. A CEMP will be prepared and submitted to the appointed private certifier and/or Council prior to the issue of a Construction Certificate. The CEMP will include detailed measures for water quality management, erosion control, and sedimentation management.

5.7 Noise

A Noise Assessment of noise emissions was conducted by Muller Acoustic Consulting (MAC) (dated June 2025) had identified 10 receptors around 3km for the project site area, to be assessed against the proposal including the operation of 4 BESSs. The report conducted a computer modelling using DGMR against Noise Policy for Industry released by Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) with recommended noise levels in dB LAeq.

Since preparation of the Noise Assessment, the BESS layout has been refined, with the BESS units relocated from the northern part of the internal compound to the southern-middle portion of the compound. The revised layout remains within the same development footprint and does not introduce any additional noise-generating equipment, alter the number of BESS units, change the assessed operating assumptions, or change the proposed hours of operation.

The identified sensitive receivers are generally located to the west, north, northwest and northeast of the project site, with the nearest identified receivers approximately 1 km or more from the site. The relocation of the BESS further south within the compound is therefore expected to maintain, and in most cases slightly increase, separation between the BESS units and the primary sensitive receiver directions assessed in the Noise Assessment.

On this basis, the revised BESS siting is expected to result in an equivalent or slightly reduced acoustic impact compared with the arrangement assessed in the Noise Assessment. Accordingly, the Noise Assessment remains suitable to support the Development Application.

The report identified that both construction and operation noise levels will satisfy applicable noise management levels at all receivers. Whether construction vehicles passing through the roads, or any generated noise from the proposed solar farm will remain negligible. Details of the predicted construction noise levels are provided in Table 15 to Table 17 of the Noise Assessment in Appendix E.

Table 15 Predicted Operational Noise Levels (Source: MAC)

Receiver	Description/Address	Predicted Noise Level	PNTL dB LAeq(15min)	Compliance
		dB LAeq(15min)	Day/Eve/Night ¹	Achieved
SR01	740 Stoney Creek Road	<30	40/35/35	✓
SR02	678 Stoney Creek Road	<30	40/35/35	✓
SR03	920 Stoney Creek Road	<30	40/35/35	✓
SR04	22 McCutcheon Lane	<30	40/35/35	✓
SR05	851 Stoney Creek Road	<30	40/35/35	✓
SR06	126 McCutcheon Lane	<30	40/35/35	✓
SR07	669 Stoney Creek Road	<30	40/35/35	✓
SR08	625 Stoney Creek Road	<30	40/35/35	✓
SR09	585 Stoney Creek Road	<30	40/35/35	✓
SR10	977 Stoney Creek Road	<30	40/35/35	✓

Note 1: Day - the period from 7am to 6pm Monday to Saturday or 8am to 6pm on Sundays and public holidays; Evening - the period from 6pm to 10pm; Night - the remaining periods.

Table 16 Predicted Construction Noise Levels (Source: MAC)

Receiver	Description/Address	Predicted Noise Level Range	Highest Predicted Noise Level	NML Standard Hours	Compliance
		dB LAeq(15min) ¹	dB LAeq(15min)	dB LAeq(15min)	Achieved
SR01	740 Stoney Creek Road	<30	<30	45	✓
SR02	678 Stoney Creek Road	<30 - 24	<30	45	✓
SR03	920 Stoney Creek Road	30 - 42	42	45	✓
SR04	22 McCutcheon Lane	<30 - 38	38	45	✓
SR05	851 Stoney Creek Road	<30 - 41	41	45	✓
SR06	126 McCutcheon Lane	<30 - 37	37	45	✓
SR07	669 Stoney Creek Road	<30 - 37	37	45	✓
SR08	625 Stoney Creek Road	<30 - 31	31	45	✓
SR09	585 Stoney Creek Road	<30 - 38	38	45	✓
SR10	977 Stoney Creek Road	<30 - 35	35	45	✓

Table 17 Predicted Construction Road Traffic Noise Levels (Source: MAC)

Road Type/Name	Offset Distance to Receiver	Predicted Noise Level	RTN Criteria	Compliance Achieved
Arterial, Sub Arterial and Collector Roads	15m	45dB LAeq(15hr)	60dB LAeq(15hr)	✓
Local Roads	15m	48dB LAeq(1hr)	55dB LAeq(1hr)	✓

5.8 Glint and Glare

A Glint and Glare Assessment Report was prepared by Environmental Ethos to support this SEE. The report used Solar Glare Hazard Analysis Tool (SGHAT) which is a widely adopted method used to analyse glare. SGHAT was conceived and validated by Sandia National Laboratories in the United States specifically to quantify when/where glare can occur from PV arrays and the likely ocular impact at defined observation points. It became the industry reference and is now delivered commercially as ForgeSolar, which incorporates the SGHAT methodology and satisfies the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) glare analysis requirements. A viewshed analysis was also conducted.

The report conducted the glint and glare analysis against all residential receivers within 3km of the site; roads and rail lines within 1km of the site, as well as the flight path analysis of Narrabri Airport. A total of 11 residential receivers were conducted.

The assessment showed that there is no anticipated glare impact on all identified residential receivers and Stoney Creek Road. The result also showed that there is no glare impact anticipated to the flightpaths from Narrabri Airport. It is concluded that any glare impact to the residential receivers, roads and flightpath are unlikely. Accordingly, no mitigation measures are necessary given the negligible impact. As a standard approach and as recommended by the assessment report, we will provide the CEMP to the appointed private certifier/ Council prior to the issue of Construction Certificate. The CEMP will include a section for glare management measures. Refer Appendix F for the Glint and Glare Assessment Report.

5.9 Traffic, Carparking and access

A Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) was conducted by Intersect Traffic dated 7 July 2025 (Appendix G). The study examined the effects of car parking on site, traffic, and site access.

Assessment against existing road network and alternate transport modes are conducted. The traffic route includes only 1 state road which is Kamilaroi Highway. The assessment concludes there will be up to 9 vehicle movements per hour (vtp) to and from site during peak AM and PM in construction stage, and 2 vtp every 3 month in operation. Such additional volume increases are well below the two-way mid-block capacity for the local and state road network (LoS C).

For parking, the site has sufficient area for on-site parking during both construction and operation stages that satisfy the provision of an AS2890.1-2004.

It is also concluded that there will be no impact on public traffic in terms of volume generation, or demand increase for buses.

Based on the above, it is concluded that the proposal will not adversely impact on the local and state road network and complies with all relevant requirement from Council and other authorities.

5.10 Landscaping

Landscaping will be provided in the form of boundary landscape strip to act as visual screening for the identified sensitive receptors. The proposed vegetation planting along the northern boundary fence is to provide visual screening for all 7 identified SRs. Appropriate species will be chosen with an expected mature height of 3m. Refer Section 5.1 for indicative landscaping. A formal landscape plan with vegetation species will be provided to Council for approval at post-DA stage but prior to Construction works starting.

5.11 Waste Management

A Waste Management Plan is to be submitted for Council/Certifier's approval when applying for the Construction Certificate. All refused, spoil and material unsuitable for on-site use is removed and will be captured in the Waste Management Plan.

5.12 Air Quality

The proposed development is expected to have minimal impact on air quality. The construction of the solar farm will not require extensive earthworks, although some pile driving for footings will be necessary. Once operational, the solar farm will not involve any activities that would result in adverse air pollution.

5.13 Social, economic and environmental benefits

The proposed 5MW solar farm is poised to deliver significant environmental, economic, and social benefits, aligning with public interest and supporting New South Wales' (NSW) renewable energy objectives.

Environmental Benefits

- **Reduction in Greenhouse Gas Emissions:**

A 4.95MW solar farm in NSW can generate approximately 13,870 megawatt-hours (MWh) of clean electricity annually, assuming the average AC capacity factor of 32% in NSW (EV Foley 2024). According to the report *National Greenhouse Accounts Factor* prepared by the Commonwealth Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW 2022), this document includes the emissions intensity factor for grid electricity in New South Wales, which is approximately 0.73 tonnes of CO₂ per MWh for electricity consumed from the grid. This generation capacity translates to a reduction of about 10,122 tonnes of CO₂ emissions each year for the proposed 4.95MW solar farm.

- **Support for Renewable Energy Targets:**

NSW is committed to delivering at least five Renewable Energy Zones (REZs) as part of its Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap, aiming to support 6,300 construction jobs and 2,800 ongoing jobs by 2030 (NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment 2020). The objective alignment with aforementioned New England North West Regional Plan 2041 and Council's Rural Land Strategy further supports this statement.

The development of this solar farm contributes to these targets by enhancing the state's renewable energy capacity.

Economic Benefits

- **Job Creation:**

It is expected that the proposed 4.95MW solar farm in can involve up to 20 personnel over a six-month period. This employment supports local contractors and stimulates regional economic activity. It is expected during construction phase, preference to the local contractors is preferred for local economic benefits and not generate additional accommodation pressure.

- **Local Economic Stimulation:**

Engaging local businesses for construction and maintenance services injects revenue into the regional economy. Additionally, landholders hosting the solar farm benefit from diversified and reliable income streams, which can protect farming families from income loss during poor harvests or droughts.

- **Energy Market Competitiveness:**

Increasing renewable energy capacity contributes to stabilising and potentially lowering energy costs. The NSW Government's commitment to renewable energy projects is on track to deliver enough renewable energy to power more than 1.5 million NSW homes, following multiple approvals of wind and solar projects in 2023 (Minister for Energy and Climate Change & Minister for Planning and Public Spaces 2024).

Social Benefits

- **Community Support for Renewable Energy:**

According to NSW Climate and Energy Action, community attitudes toward renewable energy in NSW are overwhelmingly positive, with 89% of respondents supporting the construction of solar farms in the state (NSW Climate and Energy Action n.d.). This strong public endorsement reflects a shared commitment to sustainable energy solutions.

- **Intergenerational Equity:**

Investing in renewable energy infrastructure ensures that future generations benefit from a cleaner energy supply and a reduced environmental footprint. The NSW Government's initiatives in renewable energy are designed to support a transition to sustainable energy, benefiting both current and future generations.

- **Enhanced Energy Security:**

The diversification of energy sources through renewable projects like the proposed solar farm enhances energy security by reducing reliance on fossil fuels and mitigating risks associated with energy imports. The NSW Government's Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap aims to deliver significant renewable energy infrastructure by 2030, supporting energy security in the state.

5.14 The Public Interest

The proposed development aligns with the public interest for the following reasons:

- It is permissible with consent within the zone under the ISEPP 2021 and adheres to all relevant provisions of the NLEP;
- It complies with all applicable controls outlined in the NDCP;
- It minimises impacts on heritage, land resources, the site's context and setting, flooding, stormwater, flora and fauna, bushfire risk, visual and glare effects, noise and vibration, access, transport and traffic, and waste management;
- It supports the goals of the New England North West Regional Plan 2041, LSPS, and Council's Rural Land Strategy by contributing to renewable energy generation and economic benefits for the Shire; and
- It enhances the electricity network by providing additional supply from renewable sources.

6. Conclusion

This SEE has been prepared by YES Group under Section 4.15 of the EP&A Act to seek for a Development approval. The proposed development is summarised below:

- Erection of 10.31 ha solar farm with PV panels of approximately 10,400 solar modules
- Erection of four (4) BESS units
- New driveway and access gate
- Perimeter fence covering the site area
- Associated ancillary facilities
- Earthwork
- Vegetation clearance and removal of paddock trees

The SEE conducted a thorough assessment of the proposal and is concluded that:

- The proposed solar farm will benefit the Narrabri locality in social, economic and environmental aspects with its additional electricity generation, job creation and advocate of renewable energy.
- The proposal complies with all applicable legislation, including the EP&A Act, Environmental Planning Instruments and is mostly compliant with the DCP.
- The anticipated visual impact, glint and glare is minimal that it will not cause adverse visual impact affecting the views, vista, and the landscaping amenity.
- The site does not impact on any European or Aboriginal heritage.
- The proposal will have minimal impact on noise, ecology, biodiversity, and complies with the guideline for bushfire or flood hazards.

Based on the reasons outlined above, the proposed development is considered appropriate and merits the Council's approval. Accordingly, Council's consent is respectfully sought to approve this proposal, allowing the development to proceed in line with the outlined plans and considerations.

Reference

DCCEEW 2022, *Australian National Greenhouse Accounts Factors*, DCCEEW.

EV Foley 2024, 'NSW home to 15 of top 20 performing solar farms in March', *PV Magazine*, 5 April, accessed 17 February 2026, < [NSW home to 15 of top 20 performing solar farms in March – pv magazine Australia](#)>.

Minister for Energy and Climate Change, and Minister for Planning and Public Spaces 2024, *Clean energy projects up and running to power 1.5 million homes*, NSW Government, accessed 17 February 2026, < [Clean energy projects up and running to power 1.5 million homes | NSW Government](#)>.

NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment 2020, *NSW Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap*, NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment.

NSW Climate and Energy Action n.d., *Solar Energy*, Climate and Energy Action, accessed 17 February 2026, <[Solar energy | NSW Climate and Energy Action](#)>.

Appendix A Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Due Diligence Assessment

Appendix B Preliminary Biodiversity Impact Report

Appendix C Narrabri Development Control Plan, Industrial Development Code Compliance

Appendix D Flood and Stormwater Assessment

Appendix E Noise Assessment

Appendix F Glint and Glare Assessment Report

Appendix G Traffic Impact Assessment

Appendix H Section 10.7 Planning Certificate