

16 August 2019

Benalla Rural City Council  
Statutory Planning Unit  
Attention: Joel Ingham  
PO Box 227  
Benalla VIC 3671

Dear Joel

**PLANNING PERMIT APPLICATION**

**Development and Use for a Renewable Energy Facility (Solar) and Utility Installation, Removal of Native Vegetation, Construction and Display of Business Identification Signage and Car Parking  
Goorambat, Victoria**

AECOM Australia Pty Ltd (AECOM) is lodging this planning permit application on behalf of Neoen Australia Pty Ltd (the applicant) in relation to the proposed use and development of a Renewable Energy Facility (Solar) and utility installation, removal of native vegetation, construction and display of business identification signage and car parking associated with the Goorambat East Solar Farm (the Project) located within the district of Goorambat, Victoria (the site).

The proposal has been considered in the context of all relevant policies and provisions of the Benalla Planning Scheme and has considered the *Solar Energy Facilities – Design and Development Guideline (July 2019)*. The Project is considered compliant with this Guideline.

The Project has been a community initiative. The Project site was chosen by Neoen to have minimal impacts on surrounding communities, the environment and other land use activities while also seeking to support Victoria's endeavours to provide new, sustainable energy generation into the National Electricity Market. Specifically:

- The site has direct access to high voltage powerlines within the site minimising the potential for adverse off-site impacts.
- The project will not result in the loss of highly productive agricultural land given the opportunity to be compatible with cropping and/or grazing activities and will not adversely impact on ongoing operation or expansion of agricultural land uses in the region.
- The site contains open, cleared areas that can be used for Project infrastructure so that native vegetation removal can be avoided and minimised.
- There is suitable road access for heavy and light vehicles via the classified road network and a generally well-maintained local road network in the immediate vicinity of the site.
- The topography is relatively flat meaning solar panels can be installed with minimal excavation requirements limiting potential changes to the natural landscape.
- The site is away from existing sensitive receptors including the Goorambat Township, and will not adversely change the landscape character or visual amenity of key public areas of interest and viewpoints. The changes to visual amenity for nearby sensitive receptors have been assessed as being low or able to be appropriately mitigated through measures such as screening.
- The Project has been setback from designated waterways within the site and located away from the floodplain of any major water courses.
- The surrounding community have been overall supportive of the proposal with particular interest in generation of local jobs, investment in regional areas, community benefit-sharing and support for Australia's transition to renewable energy.

To assist with consideration of this proposal, please find enclosed the following information.

- A completed and signed copy of the *Application for a Planning Permit* form
- A recent copy of the Certificate of Title
- Town Planning Report prepared by AECOM (dated 16 August 2019)
- Design Response Details
- Community Relation Plan, prepared by Neoen (dated 15 August 2019)
- *Site Management and Integration of Agriculture* (dated 23 May 2019), prepared by AgriSci Pty Ltd
- *Flora and Fauna Assessment Report – Goorambat East Solar Farm* (dated 16 August 2019), prepared by AECOM
- *Cultural Heritage Assessment* (dated 14 August 2019) prepared by Andrew Long and Associates
- *Glint and Glare Assessment* (dated 16 August 2019) prepared by AECOM
- *Surface Water Assessment* (dated 16 August 2019) prepared by AECOM
- *Traffic Impact Assessment* (dated 16 August 2019) prepared by AECOM
- Agricultural Assessment (dated 16 August 2019) prepared by Phillips AgriBusiness
- *Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment* (dated 16 August 2019) prepared by Hansen Partnerships
- *Framework Environmental Management Plan* (dated 16 August 2019) prepared by AECOM

We trust that this application is to your satisfaction and look forward to your consideration of this proposal.

Please contact Kristina Yan on 0488 554 461 or [kristina.yan@neoen.com](mailto:kristina.yan@neoen.com) if you require any further information or have any queries with regards to this matter.

Yours faithfully



**David Knight**  
Principal Environmental Planner