



lightsource bp

**GOULBURN RIVER SOLAR FARM**

Part B Amendment Report

**FINAL**

January 2024

# 1.0 Introduction to Part B

Goulburn River Solar Farm is a large-scale renewable energy project proposed by Lightsource bp Development Services Australia Pty Ltd to generate solar renewable energy to supply New South Wales. The Project is located within the Upper Hunter Local Government Area of NSW, approximately 28 kilometres southwest of the township of Merriwa. The Project is located on an agricultural property which is surrounded by the Goulburn River National Park. The Project Area comprises of two freehold properties that span across multiple lots, covering an area of approximately 2,000 ha, with the Development Footprint occupying 792.19 ha.

An Environmental Impact Statement was prepared for the Project and placed on public exhibition by the Department of Planning and Environment from Tuesday 13 June to Monday 10 July 2023. During the public exhibition period 56 unique submissions made by the public as well as submissions from two local councils and 11 government agencies were received. A detailed response to the issues raised during the public exhibition period is provided in the Response to Submissions Report (December 2023).

Since submission of the Environmental Impact Statement, Lightsource bp Development Services Australia Pty Ltd has conducted a thorough review of the layout and optimized the Project design to enhance its efficiency while minimizing associated environmental and social impacts. This amended project design is hereafter referred to as the Amended Project. The Amended Project modifies the Environmental Impact Statement Project to refine transport routes and include public road upgrades, increase Battery Energy Storage System capacity and provide the option for a decentralised Battery Energy Storage System, incorporate construction of an additional transmission tower and reflect minor changes to the Development Footprint. The Amended Project also proposes a more detailed approach for workforce accommodation.

Revised technical assessments have been undertaken to address the potential impacts associated with the Amended Project, including clarification on how these differ from the Environmental Impact Statement Project. Assessments have been undertaken for potential impacts associated with Traffic and Transport, Biodiversity, Aquatic Ecology, Social (Accommodation and Employment), Noise and Vibration, Hazards, Water, Visual, and Aboriginal Heritage.

The Amendment Report is provided in two parts. Part A comprises all the assessments, with the exception of Biodiversity.

Part B comprises the Assessment of Impacts for Biodiversity, and must be read in conjunction with Part A. Both parts of the Amendment Report should also be read in conjunction with the Response to Submissions Report.

The Amended Project represents a Project that will form an essential part of the energy transition, with a fully optimised constructible design. This Amendment Report confirms that, while there are some unavoidable impacts from the Amended Project, the extent of such impacts has been minimised through the design process and will be further minimised through implementation of management measures to the extent practicable.

Part B includes two updated reports; the Goulburn River Solar Farm Biodiversity Development Assessment Report and the Goulburn River Solar Farm Public Road and Culverts Biodiversity Development Assessment Report. These reports have been revised to document the results of additional survey effort and subsequent reduction in the size of the Development Footprint, as well as to assess the impacts of the Amended Project.

Submissions made by the Biodiversity and Conservation Division have been addressed in both Biodiversity Development Assessment Reports and summarised in Table 1.2 of the Goulburn River Solar Farm Biodiversity Development Assessment Report.

The proposed amendments to the Environmental Impact Statement Project outlined in Part A of the Amendment Report are consistent with the relevant objectives of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* and the principles of ecologically sustainable development and do not significantly change the nature of the Project originally proposed. The potential impacts can be avoided or managed and mitigated appropriately. Further management and mitigation measures as a result of the Amended Project are discussed in further detail within Part B of the Amendment Report.