

HOPELAND solar

FACT SHEET

Environment and Approvals



About the project

Hopeland Solar project is located between Dalby and Chinchilla in the Western Downs region of Queensland, 230 km west of Brisbane.

The project comprises a solar farm and Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and will be connected to the existing substation infrastructure associated with Powerlink's adjacent Western Downs Substation.



Summary of Environmental Impacts

Ecological surveys across the project area and connection to Western Downs Substation were completed between 2023-2025. The purpose of the surveys was the identification of ecological values and Matters of National Environmental Significance (MNES) species to inform the environmental approvals.

Within the Project Area, 65% (472 ha) is regrowth vegetation, 19% (139 ha) is remnant native vegetation, and 16% (118 ha) is cleared agricultural land with negligible regrowth. Most native vegetation occurs in the south, with Brigalow and Eucalypt threatened communities in the north and east. Dominant species include Poplar Box, Gum-topped Box, Ironbark, and Brigalow.

Avoid, mitigate, manage and offset

Under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (EPBC Act), the preferred approach to managing impacts on MNES follows a clear hierarchy (as shown below). Projects should first avoid significant impacts through careful design and planning. Where avoidance is not possible, impacts must be mitigated by reducing the severity through further design changes or protective measures.

Management strategies then ensure ongoing compliance and ecological integrity during project implementation. Finally, if residual impacts remain, offsetting is applied to deliver measurable conservation outcomes that maintain or improve the viability of affected MNES.



Avoid

100% of the Brigalow Threatened Ecological Community (TEC) and most of the remnant eucalypt open forest will be avoided and retained through careful design and planning by our development team.



Mitigate

We have incorporated a koala corridor of 100m width to connect remnant vegetation located in the centre of the solar area to allow koalas to utilise it during the operation phase.



Manage

Once the Hopeland Solar and BESS Project is operational, we are committed to ongoing management and restoration to ensure long-term sustainability and address any emerging environmental or operational issues.



Offset

Despite best efforts to avoid and mitigate impacts, the project will have an impact to 136ha of koala foraging and breeding habitat that will be offset by our securing a property in Brovinia. The property will be managed over 20 years by the project to increase its koala habitat quality.

Environmental approval process

Australia's environment is a vital part of our natural identity, our First Nations heritage and our economy. One of the key ways we protect it is through the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act).

The EPBC Act and regulations are Australia's main national environmental legislation. They provide a way to protect and manage nationally and internationally important plants, animals, habitats and places.



Aligning with the EPBC process

Stage One

Self-assessment, impact minimisation and referral

A self-assessment was conducted in early 2023 that included both desktop analysis and on-ground investigations to understand the ecological values present. The outcome of the self-assessment was that project construction and operation activities are unlikely to result in significant impacts to threatened animals suited to the existing habitat, such as the Koala and Corben's Long-eared Bat.

Referral decision

We referred the project in October 2023 to the Federal Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) based on potential impact on habitat for threatened animal species – which while not found during surveys, still need to be considered as they may be present.

The referral was made available for public comment in January 2024. A decision notice was received in February 2024, confirming that the Project will be a Controlled Action, with an assessment pathway via Preliminary Documentation.

This assessment method is selected when project impacts are short- and medium-term, or recoverable, and DCCEEW requires more information about mitigation or offset strategies.

You can see the Stage 1 Decision on the EPBC referral portal here: [Referral summary - EPBC Act Public Portal](#)

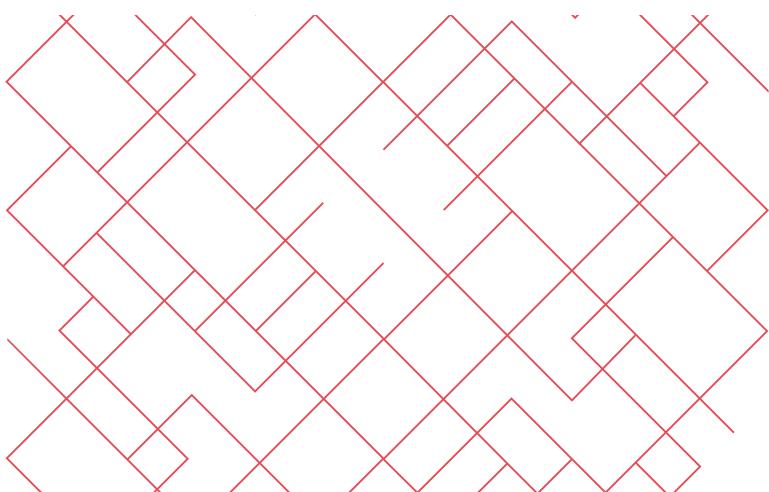
Stage Two

Preliminary Documentation

The Project was varied on 26 June 2025 to include a transmission line connection under the same referral as the solar farm, to be included in this Preliminary Documentation. The Delegate to the Minister of Environment approved the variation with Section 156 of the EPBC Act.

Our independent consultant, ERM, has been preparing the Preliminary Documentation, which includes a detailed project description, assessment of environmental impacts, mitigation and offset strategies, and responses to any requests from DCCEEW.

DCCEEW is reviewing the documentation for adequacy. Once the Minister (or delegate) considers the final documentation meets the requirements, he or she will provide direction to Pacific Partnerships to exhibit the documentation for public review. Once the final documentation has been deemed to meet the requirements, the Minister (or delegate) decides whether to approve the action under Part 9 of the EPBC Act.



Stage Two (continued)

Public exhibition

You can have your say on the Preliminary Documentation when it is exhibited. We will let you know when the documents are available through advertisements in newspapers and other media. We will also provide information at our website: <https://www.hopelandsolar.com.au>

The documents will be available for comment for at least 10 business days, where comments can be lodged electronically or by mail.

Hard copies of the Preliminary Documentation will be available at the following locations:

Chinchilla Library - 68-86 Heeney Street, Chinchilla QLD 4413

State Library of Queensland - Stanley Place, South Brisbane QLD 4101

Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (Canberra) - John Gorton Building, King Edward Terrace, Parkes ACT 2601.

The documents will also be able to be viewed in electronic form here: <https://www.hopelandsolar.com.au/our-project/environmental-approvals>

Public comment

Written submissions should be directed to Pacific Partnerships, PO Box 1077, Fortitude Valley QLD 4006.

Email submissions should be directed to: contactus_hopeland@hopelandsolar.com.au

Assessment decision

This decision will be announced on our project website and via the EPBC Public Portal.

Environmental approval pathway



Preliminary Documentation approved by DCCEEW



Public invited to comment on Preliminary Documentation during exhibition



Public feedback taken into account, with updated Preliminary Documentation provided to DCCEEW for assessment



DCCEEW makes a recommendation to the Minister after Preliminary Documentation has been republished



Proposed Action is approved by the Minister



Cultural heritage and First Nations People

As part of our commitment to achieve excellence in Aboriginal cultural heritage, we conducted cultural heritage surveys and engaged with representatives of the Traditional Custodians of the land, the Barunggam People.

This has been underway since 2022, to understand the site's cultural significance and preserve cultural heritage within the site.

The project voluntarily entered into a Cultural Heritage Management Agreement, which necessitated that the project conduct a detailed cultural heritage assessment and survey of the site to further develop our understanding of the country and agree proposed mitigation measures.

We have established a number of exclusion zones on the site for the protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage.

Engagement with the Barunggam People will continue throughout delivery and operation.



About us

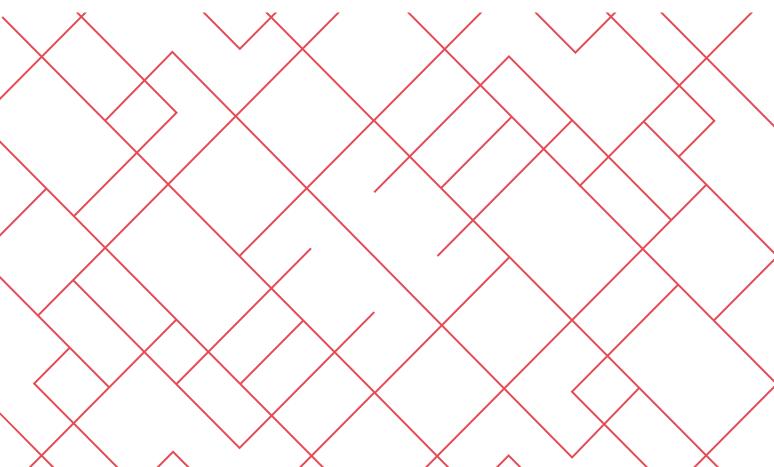
Hopeland Solar is being developed by Pacific Partnerships, a leading infrastructure developer and owner with local experience and presence in Australia and New Zealand.

Pacific Partnerships draws on the strength of the wider CIMIC Group, a global leader in building, infrastructure and concessions, to create, finance, own, deliver and operate sustainable solutions that unlock benefits for our communities.

Pacific Partnerships acquired development rights to the project in July 2023, securing its land leases from the private landowner.

The Project has a Development Approval (DA) for the solar farm, which was approved by the Western Downs Regional Council.

Find out more about the project on our website here: <https://www.hopelandsolar.com.au>



Stay connected

We're here to answer your questions and looking forward to making new connections in the Western Downs.

Please call or email us via the contact details at the bottom of the page and we will respond promptly.

For more information, visit our website by scanning the QR code to the right.

