



Matthew Parton
NEON AUSTRALIA PTY. LTD.
16 Marcus Clarke St
Canberra ACT 2601

Dear Mr Parton

**Additional information required for preliminary documentation.
Victorian Big Battery Project, Moorabool, Victoria (EPBC 2020/8614)**

I am writing to you in relation to your proposal to construct a battery storage facility at the Moorabool Terminal Station site, 680 Ballan Road Moorabool, Victoria.

On 26 May 2020, a delegate decided the proposed action is a controlled action, requiring further assessment and an approval before it can proceed. The delegate also decided the proposed action will be assessed by preliminary documentation. Further information is required to be able to assess the relevant impacts of the proposed action.

Details of the further information required is at [Attachment A](#).

Please find attached an invoice for Stage 2 fees at [Attachment B](#). Fees will be payable prior to each stage of the assessment proceeding. Payment of the Stage 2 fees is required for the Department to consider the further information provided in response to this request. Further details on cost recovery are available on the Department's website at: <http://www.environment.gov.au/epbc/cost-recovery>.

If you have any questions about the assessment process or the further information required, please contact William Bonney, by email to William.Bonney@awe.gov.au, or telephone (02) 6274 1028, and quote the EPBC reference number shown at the beginning of this letter.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lucy Butterfield'.

Lucy Butterfield
Director
Victoria and Tasmania Assessments Section
Environment Approvals Branch

10 June 2020

**REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
ASSESSMENT BY PRELIMINARY DOCUMENTATION**

Victorian Big Battery Project, Moorabool, Victoria (EPBC 2020/8614)

On 26 May 2020 it was determined that the proposed action to construct a battery storage facility including associated infrastructure, at the Moorabool Terminal Station site, at 680 Ballan Road, Moorabool, Victoria, is likely to have a significant impact on listed threatened species and communities (sections 18 and 18A) protected under Part 3 of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act).

Based on the information contained in the referral, it is presumed that an important population of the vulnerable Striped Legless Lizard (*Delmar impar*) and the critically endangered Natural Temperate Grassland of the Victorian Volcanic Plain ecological community occurs on the site.

The Department considers that further information is required to properly assess the potential impacts of the proposed action. As such it was also determined that the proposed action will be assessed by preliminary documentation. Preliminary documentation for the proposal will include:

- The information contained in the original referral.
- The further information you provide on the impacts of the action and the strategies you propose to avoid, mitigate and/or offset those impacts (as described below).
- Any other relevant information on the matters protected by the EPBC Act.

Where relevant information was provided at the referral stage, incorporate or refer to this information as necessary in the consolidated preliminary documentation, you will be required to publish all of this information for public comment once the preliminary documentation is accepted by the Department. The information must allow for a member of the public to understand the proposed action and all relevant impacts to Matters of National Environmental Significance (MNES).

The preliminary documentation should be sufficient to allow the Minister (or delegate) to make an informed decision on whether or not to approve, under Part 9 of the EPBC Act, the taking of the action for the purposes of each controlling provision.

Please consider all relevant conservation advices, recovery plans, threat abatement plans and guidance documents, in determining and managing likely impacts for relevant species. Departmental documents regarding listed threatened species can be found at: <http://www.environment.gov.au/cgi-bin/sprat/public/sprat.pl>.

The preliminary documentation must address the matters set out below.

1. GENERAL CONTENT, FORMAT AND STYLE

The preliminary documentation should be provided as one document with attachments and in a format that is objective, clear and succinct. Where appropriate the documentation should be supported by:

- a) The best available scientific literature.
- b) Relevant maps, plans, diagrams and technical information. Maps and diagrams must be clearly annotated, in colour and of high resolution.

- c) Details on relevant uncertainties, including whether impacts are unknown, unpredictable or irreversible.

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

- a) The location, boundaries and size (in hectares), and a description of all components of the action.
- b) The anticipated timing and duration (including start and completion dates) of each phase of the project.

3. RELEVANT IMPACTS

- a) An assessment of potential impacts (including indirect and facilitated impacts) that may occur as a result of the proposed action on any MNES.

4. PROPOSED AVOIDANCE AND MITIGATION MEASURES

- a) A description of the avoidance and mitigation measures proposed for matters impacted (including those in adjacent areas), include:
 - o A statement of the outcome and performance target, the ongoing management and monitoring and location and timing of each measure.
- b) An assessment/demonstration of how effective these measures are likely to be and describe the reduction in impacts to MNES.

5. RESIDUAL IMPACTS/PROPOSED OFFSETS

If residual impacts are likely to be significant please provide an offset package to compensate for residual impacts to MNES. This should consist of an offset proposal key commitments and management actions for delivering and implementing a proposed offset.

Offsets must directly contribute to the ongoing viability of the species and ecological communities and deliver an overall conservation outcome that improves or maintains the viability of the protected matter, as compared to what is likely to have occurred if neither the action nor the offset had taken place. The offset proposal should demonstrate how the conservation outcome will be delivered for the protected matter.

The proposed offset must meet the requirements of the Department's *EPBC Act Environmental Offsets Policy* (October 2012) available at:

www.environment.gov.au/epbc/publications/epbc-act-environmental-offsets-policy.

The Department's *Offset Assessment Guide* may be used as a guide to estimate the area of offset required to adequately compensate for the residual impacts of the project, it is available at: www.environment.gov.au/epbc/publications/epbc-act-environmental-offsets-policy

A project officer within the Department will assess the offset based on the information provided in the offset proposal using the offsets assessment guide.

The proposal must include, but not be limited to, the following:

- a) A description of the offset site(s) including location, size, condition and environmental values.
- b) Details of the surveys undertaken in accordance with the survey guidelines used to confirm the presence of the protected matter at the offset site.

- c) Details of the quality of the offset site including vegetation condition assessment (VQA) and habitat characteristics for the protected matter must also be included.
- d) Details of on-going threats to the protected matter including the extent and type of weeds present.
- e) A comparison of these environmental values to the impact site.
- f) Justification of how the offset meets the *EPBC Act Environmental Offsets Policy*.
- g) The specific environmental outcomes to be achieved.
- h) Details on how the offset will be secured, managed and monitored to meet these environmental outcomes, including:
 - i. Management actions, performance targets, monitoring methodology and review criteria.
 - ii. Responsibility and timing for implementation of actions.

Please note, in all cases targets and criteria should be specific and measurable. Offsets required by the State can contribute to offset obligations under the EPBC Act if those offsets also meet the requirements of the *EPBC Act Environmental Offsets Policy*.

Please also provide evidence of engagement with any third parties engaged to deliver the proposed offset (including the proposed landowner of the offset site and any entity providing a security mechanism for the offset), and confirmation that those third parties are able to deliver the aspects of the proposed offset for which they are responsible, as described in the offset management plan.

6. OTHER APPROVALS AND CONDITIONS

If progressed from information provided in the referral, information on any other requirements for approval or conditions that apply, or that you reasonably believe are likely to apply, to the proposed action.

7. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC

Please describe the economic and social impacts of the proposed action, including projected costs and benefits, such as employment opportunities expected to be generated.

8. ENVIRONMENTAL RECORD OF PERSON PROPOSING TO TAKE THE ACTION

If updated from the referral, please describe the environmental record of the person proposing to take the action, including if there are any proceedings under Commonwealth, State or Territory law for the protection of the environment or the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources

9. CONCLUSION

Please provide an overall conclusion as to the environmental acceptability of the proposal with regards to the objects and requirements of the EPBC Act including the principles of Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD). You may wish to include a statement as to whether or not the controlled action should be approved and may recommend conditions pertaining to an approval.