Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure

Our ref: SSI-48323210-PA-118

John Fisher
Post Approvals Lead - CWO REZ project
Energy Corporation of NSW
Via Email

29 July 2026

Subject: Central-West Orana REZ Transmission – Operational Staging Request

Dear Mr Fisher

I refer to your letter dated 22 April 2026 and further information provided on 15 July 2026 (the request), requesting the Planning Secretary's approval to further stage the preparation of post-approval documents and to combine relevant documents into a single Operational Environmental Management Plan (OEMP) for the Barigan Creek Switching Station (BCSS) component of the Central-West Orana REZ Transmission project (SSI-48323210; Approval). The request also seeks the agreement of the Planning Secretary to prepare the OEMP without undertaking consultation with required parties and without addressing particular requirements of the relevant conditions of Approval.

I note your request proposes to:

- prepare post-approval documents to address the operation phase of the BCSS and associated grid connection, separately from any upgrading and decommissioning of those project components, and separately from the operation, upgrading, and decommissioning of the remainder of the project infrastructure
- consolidate all plans, strategies and programs relevant to the operational phase of the BCSS and associated grid connection into a single OEMP
- prepare the OEMP without consulting with the required parties, including:
    - not consulting with Mid-Western Regional Council (MWRC) concerning the Out of Hours Work Protocol (OOHW) under Condition B13(f)
    - not consulting with CPHR and National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) regarding the Biodiversity Management Plan under Condition B26
    - not consulting with Aboriginal Stakeholders, NPWS or Heritage NSW regarding the Heritage Management Plan under Condition B28

    - not consulting with NPWS, Transport for NSW (TfNSW), Dubbo Regional Council, Mid-Western Regional Council, Upper Hunter Shire Council, Warrumbungle Shire Council or NSW Police regarding the Traffic Management Plan under Condition B35
    - not consulting with MWRC regarding the Waste Management Plan under Condition B51.
- prepare the OEMP to only address requirements specifically relevant to the operation of the BCSS and associated grid connection, as detailed in Attachment A (Revision 1) of the request.

I further note that:

- the request applies only to the BCSS and associated grid connection that will be separately owned, operated and maintained by TransGrid (TransGrid project components), and is limited in scope
- there is expected to be little to no impact to biodiversity and heritage items
- the OOHW Protocol required under Condition B13 (f) does not apply to the operation phase and therefore is not required to be included in the OEMP for the BCSS under the Approval
- the request estimates traffic volumes during operation of the BCSS to be less than 30 light vehicles and 10 heavy vehicles per year
- personnel are not expected to be present during routine operation of BCSS
- no other aspect of the project or approved staging will be affected.

Accordingly, as nominee of the Planning Secretary and in accordance with Condition C3, I approve the amended staging of post-approval documents to address the operation phase of the BCSS and associated grid connection, separately from any upgrading and decommissioning of the TransGrid project components, and separately from the operation, upgrading, and decommissioning of the remainder of the project infrastructure, and to combine them into a single OEMP.

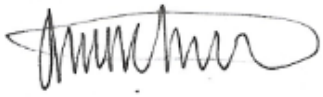
I also agree, as nominee of the Planning Secretary and in accordance with Conditions C4 and C6, to prepare the OEMP for the BCSS and associated grid connection without undertaking consultation with required parties and without addressing particular requirements of the relevant Conditions, as detailed in the request and summarised above.

I note that this agreement is based on the information provided in the request and that the Department reserves the right to request further consultation, if necessary.

You are also reminded that if there are any inconsistencies between the OEMP and the conditions of Approval, the conditions prevail.

If you wish to discuss the matter further, please contact me.

Yours sincerely



Thomas Minchin
Team Leader Transmission Post Approval
As nominee of the Planning Secretary