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Australian Government  
Department of Climate Change, Energy,  
the Environment and Water

EPBC 2020/8818

Ms Lisa Bradley  
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Via: [Lisa.Bradley@nt.gov.au](mailto:Lisa.Bradley@nt.gov.au) Cc: [Kylie.Fitzpatrick@nt.gov.au](mailto:Kylie.Fitzpatrick@nt.gov.au); [Sarah.Smith3@nt.gov.au](mailto:Sarah.Smith3@nt.gov.au)

**Additional Information - Draft Environmental Impact Statement - Australia-Asia PowerLink**

Dear Ms Bradley

Thank you for your email of 11 March 2024 inviting comment on the additional information to the draft environmental impact statement (EIS) for the Australia-Asia PowerLink project proposal. The department is generally satisfied the further information provided adequately addresses matters relevant to the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act).

The department notes the new proposed Overhead Transmission Line (OHTL) route deviates from the action referred under the EPBC Act and the subsequent variation approved on 27 October 2021. The department recognises the OHTL route deviation as a necessary mitigation measure to reduce the likelihood of impacts to Ghost Bat. The department also notes the alternative route will result in a larger disturbance footprint and may result in an increased impact to other matters protected under the EPBC Act. To ensure these changes can be adequately considered by the Minister, the department recommends the proponent submit a variation request under section 156A of the EPBC Act. Information provided as part of the variation request should clearly articulate any new or increased impacts (in hectares) through adopting the new OHTL route. The department recommends the variation request include a buffer to allow for flexibility if realignments are required as a result of ongoing stakeholder engagement.

The department notes that ground truthing surveys have not been completed for all MNES within the proposed footprint. Should the action be approved under the EPBC Act, conditions may require avoidance and adaptive management measures be implemented.

If you have any questions, or require further information, please contact the EPBC Assessment Officer, Annabelle Philip, by email to [Annabelle.Philip@dcceew.gov.au](mailto:Annabelle.Philip@dcceew.gov.au) (and cc [eadsaandtsection@dcceew.gov.au](mailto:eadsaandtsection@dcceew.gov.au)) or telephone 02 5156 3382 and quote the EPBC reference number shown at the beginning of this letter.

Your sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tanya Stacpoole'.

Tanya Stacpoole  
Director, SA and NT Assessments  
Environment Assessments West  
20 March 2024

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