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Planning Report



Battery Energy Storage System

Connection Works

1120 Thompsons Road Cranbourne West

Macquarie Corporate Holdings Pty Limited

September 2021

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1120 Thompsons Road, Cranbourne West

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Document Control

Date Prepared	Version Number	Author	Reviewer	Distributed
1 September 2021	1	J Mulligan	L.Lowe	Client
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Executive Summary

Macquarie Corporate Holdings Pty Ltd proposes the development of a 200 megawatt/400 megawatt hour lithium ion battery to be known as the Rangebank Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) at 280 Evans Road in Cranbourne West. This planning permit application at the neighbouring Ausnet Cranbourne Terminal Station proposes the associated battery storage connection infrastructure namely, an underground cable from the Rangebank BESS site to the terminal and 220kV connection equipment within the existing terminal station footprint.

These works are well removed from neighbouring properties and consistent with the existing terminal station use of the site. Cultural heritage has been addressed through the certification of a Preliminary Heritage Aboriginal Heritage Test, indicating that no further archaeological investigations are required.

Subject Site

The subject site is commonly known as 1120 Thompsons Road, Cranbourne West and can be formally identified as Lot 1 on Plan of Subdivision 823807N.

Proposal

A Planning Permit is sought for a Utility Installation comprising Battery Energy Storage System connection works including an underground connection cable, and connection equipment within the Cranbourne Terminal Station as an integral component of the proposed Rangebank BESS on the neighbouring land parcel.

Planning Controls

Pursuant to the Casey Planning Scheme, the following planning controls apply to the subject land;

Zone

Clause 35.07 – Farming Zone (Schedule 2)

Overlays

Clause 43.04 – Development Plan Overlay (Schedule 1)

The following overlays apply to part of the land but are well removed from the works and therefore not considered relevant to the application –

Clause 45.01 – Public Acquisition Overlay (Schedule 1)

Clause 45.12 – Specific Controls Overlay (Schedule 10)

Clause 44.05 – Special Building Overlay

Permit Triggers

A planning permit is required under the following provisions of the Casey Planning Scheme:

- Clause 35.07-1 – a permit is required to use land for a Utility installation.
- Clause 35.07-4 – a permit is required to construct or carry out buildings or works associated with a use in Section 2 of Clause 35.07-1.

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Cultural Heritage

A Preliminary Aboriginal Heritage Assessment (PAHT) was certified for the proposal by Officer of the Department of Premier and Cabinet on 15/9/21 advising that the proposal can proceed in its current form without further archaeological investigations.

A small portion of the western portion of the cable route is in part within an area of Cultural Heritage Sensitivity. The proposed activity is not considered to be a high impact activity under 46(3) of the Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018, as the proposed works are for or associated with a purpose for which the activity area was lawfully used prior to 28 May 2007 (utility installation where the works affect an area exceeding 25 square metres). Accordingly, a Cultural Heritage Management Plan or other archaeological investigations are not required prior to the commencement of the development.

Rangebank BESS Planning Permit Application

A separate Planning Permit application is lodged concurrently for the use and development of the Cranbourne BESS, a utility installation and associated works on the adjacent property at 280 Evans Road. It is anticipated that the two permit applications will be considered concurrently.

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Supporting Documentation

1. Planning Permit Application Form
2. Copy of Title Volume 12141 Folio 514
3. Metropolitan Planning Levy Certificate 19290
4. Cable Site Plan, KLM Spatial, Ref 5959.08DE02 V3, 27/9/21
5. Application for Certification of a Preliminary Aboriginal Heritage Test for the purposes of the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006, No 253, certified 15/9/21
6. Arboricultural Construction Impact Assessment 1120 Thompsons Road Cranbourne West, Greenwood Consulting, 3/8/21
7. Planning Permits P542/02 and P453/05 Major Utility Installation and endorsed plans
8. Cranbourne Development Plan Version 2, City of Casey, 2007

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1.0 Planning Summary

The Rangebank Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) builds upon the locational advantage presented by the Ausnet Terminal Station, providing an energy storage facility which will have significant benefits for the State electricity grid, in particular, stabilising supply for industry in the south east.

The proposed battery works within the terminal station land will comprise a cable connection from the Rangebank BESS site to the terminal and connection infrastructure within an existing terminal station compound.

The key planning issues associated with the proposal are as follows;

- The utility infrastructure works are entirely consistent with the use of the land for the existing major utility installation,
- The recent certification of a Preliminary Aboriginal Heritage Test indicates that no further archaeological investigations are required.
- All works will be substantially distanced from nearby residential properties, and the cable will be located underground, accordingly it is not considered the proposal will impact the amenity of the surrounding area.
- The detail of the connection infrastructure within the existing transmission station compound is yet to be designed by the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) and Ausnet, it is therefore proposed that any permit to issue include a condition requesting submission of plans prior to the commencement of works.
- Some vegetation will require removal for the cable route, however this vegetation is planted by hydroseeding and accordingly no permit is required for its removal. The cable route is not within the most densely planted area, and extensive areas of boundary planting will still remain.

In addition to the above, we submit that given there are no amenity impacts to the surrounding area, that notification of this application under s.52 should not be required by the Planning Authority.

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2.0 Background Information

2.1. Pre-Application Meeting

A pre-application meeting was held on 16th December 2020. The meeting was attended by Michael Juttner, Sam Mason, Mitchell Connolly, and Nihal Altuntas (Department of Land, Water and Planning), Tom Best (Macquarie Holdings Pty Ltd), Steven Murphy (land owner) and Louise Lowe (KLM Spatial). More recently, a pre-application was held with Sam Mason and other DELWP officers on 2nd September 2021 prior to the lodgement of the application.

The Rangebank BESS proposal has been discussed on an ongoing basis with Peter Hobbs, Principal Planner at the City of Casey over the last year, and an information session was held with senior Council management (including Kathryn Seirlis, Manager Growth and Investment) on 19th August 2021. The City of Casey has taken a keen interest in the proposal and has facilitated other development approvals at 280 Evans Road in recent months.

A similar pre-application meeting was held with Fire Rescue Victoria on 24th August 2021 and was attended by officers, Colin Rose, Kevin Beardmore and Angus Mair.

It was determined to lodge a stand-alone permit application for the BESS connection infrastructure, given the separate ownership of the Ausnet land and in light of cultural heritage considerations, which have recently been resolved.

2.2. Previous Planning Permits

The Ausnet Cranbourne Terminal site was granted a Planning Permit (P542/02) for a Major Utility installation comprising two terminal stations and access to a Road Zone Category 1 (Thompsons Road) in 2003. It appears that the facility has been developed in accordance with the endorsed plans.

Of relevance to the current application, the endorsed plans identify:

- 220kV Switch yard which will be the location of the proposed BESS connecting infrastructure, and
- Mounding along the western boundary of the terminal station (adjacent to the BESS) and hydroseed planting of the mound as shown in the endorsed Landscape Plan. The construction of the BESS cable connection will require removal of some of this planted vegetation along the connection route.

Planning permit 453/05 was granted on 6/10/05 for a temporary access to Thompsons Road.

The Thompsons Road upgrade works completed recently by Major Projects installed a railway overpass on Thompsons Road adjacent to the site. New road access to the site is now provided to the terminal via Rangebank Drive to a signalised intersection on Thompsons Road, to the north-west of the site.

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3.0 Proposal

Broadly, the proposal is for utility installation works comprising an underground cable and connection equipment within the Cranbourne Terminal Station to facilitate the operation of the proposed Rangebank BESS (Battery Electrical Storage Systems) on the neighbouring land parcel.

3.1. Development

The underground cable is proposed to extend from the western boundary of the site, approximately 250 metres north of Breens Road, to the 220kV yard of the Ausnet terminal. The cable route will have a length of approximately 280 metres. The cable will pass through a vegetated mound adjacent to the boundary and then extend across cleared land to the terminal.

The location of the cable adjacent to the western boundary and within the vegetated area is specified, but the exact location within the cleared area of the Ausnet site is yet to be confirmed by the authority. This will depend upon the connection location in the Ausnet yard. In order to provide for some flexibility for the cable route an 'indicative cable route envelope' is shown on the plans across the cleared area.

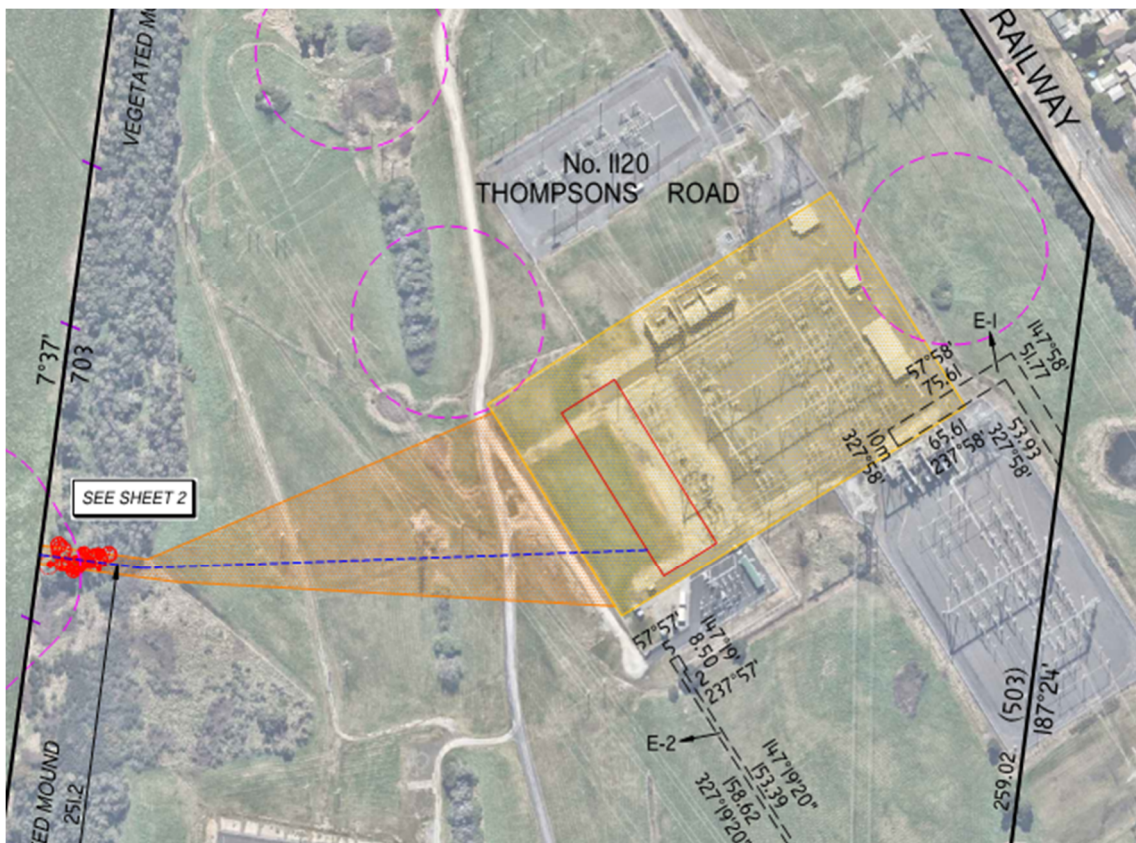


Figure 1: From Cable Site Plan, indicative cable route envelope shown in orange, terminal connection works to be located within red rectangle

The proposed 220kV connection will comprise of three (3) separate cables, each approximately 100mm in width. Two minor fibre conduits will also be contained within the single trench for the infrastructure connection. The main cables will be laid in trefoil and located approximately 1 metre below the surface

The cables will be encased by thermal bedding with a PVC cover (to Australian Standard 4702) protecting them. Topsoil/backfill is then laid with marking tape over the thermal bedding, with a third top layer of base course to complete the cable protection. A typical section of the BESS Cable is provided on the following page.

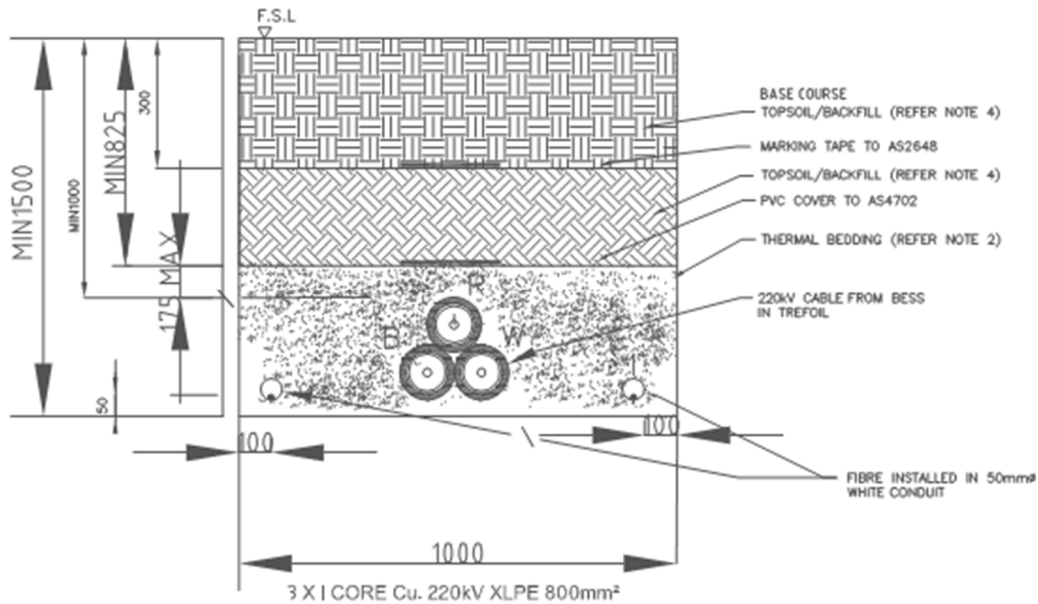


Figure 2: Typical Section of BESS Cable

If the cable is located under an accessway a binder and wearing course is included to ensure that the cable is protected sufficiently.

The cable will be laid in an open trench. The site plans show an allowance for removal of vegetation for a distance of 5 metres on either side of the centre of the trench to allow access for trenching machinery.

The 220kV connection equipment proposed to connect the cable to the existing terminal station will be designed and constructed by Ausnet. The detailed design of these works is yet to be determined but will essentially be a replication of existing infrastructure at the terminal, with the works generally located within the area shown on the Cable Site Plan. These works will comprise the creation of a new connection bay (Bay H) on the existing No 1 220kV Cranbourne Terminal Station Bus and include:

- Installation of 2 rotary double break (RDB) disconnectors,
- Installation of a 220kV Circuit Breaker,
- Installation of CVT's and Cable Surge Diverters,
- Installation of the BESS Cable and Ceiling Ends, and
- Installation of additional CTs into the existing Bus No.1 Bus Protection Scheme.

The detail of the connection infrastructure within the existing transmission station compound is yet to be designed by Ausnet, accordingly it is suggested any permit to issue include a condition requesting submission of plans prior to the commencement of works.

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Figure 3: Ausnet Terminal Station looking south, approximate location of connection infrastructure and cable route

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3.2. Vegetation

An *Arboricultural Construction Impact Assessment* has been undertaken by Greenwood Consulting which assesses the impact of the cable construction on vegetation in the planted mound adjacent to the western boundary. The report finds that 45 trees will require removal and two trees (numbered 3 and 4) can be retained. During construction every effort will be made to reduce the extent of vegetation removal.

The vegetation proposed to be removed was planted by direct seeding as part of the establishment of the Ausnet terminal (as shown in the endorsed plans for Planning Permit P542/02), accordingly the removal of the vegetation is exempt from requiring a permit and no vegetation offsets are required.

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4.0 Subject Site and Surrounds

4.1. Subject Site

The subject site is commonly identified as 1120 Thompsons Road, Cranbourne West and can be formally described as Lot 1 on 823807N. There are no encumbrances registered on title.

The site is approximately 37.87 hectares in area, is relatively flat, and irregular in shape. Access is provided via Rangebank Drive the north-west of the site. There is planted vegetation and mounding along the western and southern boundaries of the site.

The site is occupied by the Cranbourne Terminal Station which is owned and operated by Ausnet. A temporary works facility associated with nearby State infrastructure projects is currently located adjacent to the Thompsons Road frontage.

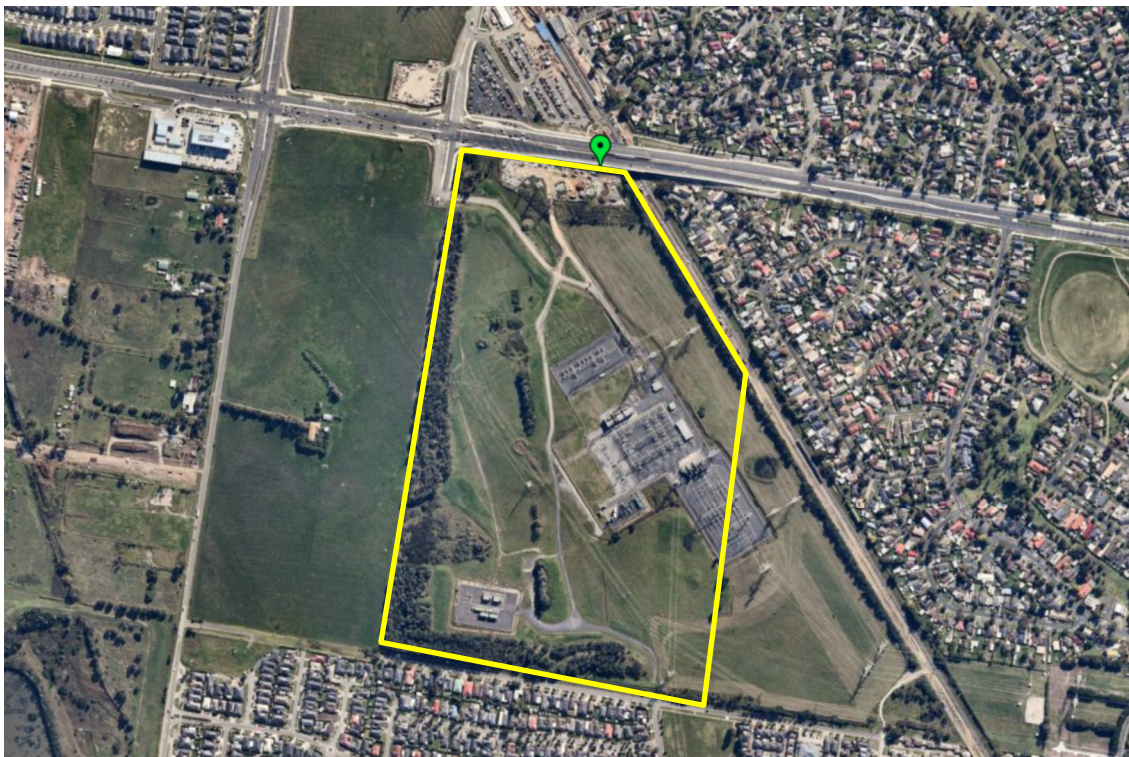


Figure 4: Aerial image of site and surrounds as at 29th April 2021, as sourced from Nearmap,

4.2. Site Context

The following land uses and development directly about the subject site:

- North** Immediately north of the subject site is the Thompsons Road overpass, Merinda Railway Station and car park.
- East** Directly east is the remainder of the Ausnet Cranbourne Terminal Station, railway line and further east is residential development.
- South** South of the site is residential development.

West To the west is 280 Evans Road which is to be developed as the Rangbank Business Park within the Cranbourne West Precinct Structure Plan area. The Rangebank BESS is proposed immediately adjacent to this boundary.

The broader area can be described as a mix of established residential development and emerging commercial/industrial development as provided for by the Cranbourne West Precinct Structure Plan.

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5.0 Planning Assessment

5.1. Permit Triggers

A Utility Installation includes the following:

Land used to transmit, distribute or store power, including battery storage.

A planning permit is required for Utility Installation under the following provisions of Farming Zone of the Casey Planning Scheme;

- Clause 35.07-1 – a permit is required for the use of the site as Utility Installation (Section 2 Use).
- Clause 35.07-4 – a permit is required to construct or carry out buildings or works associated with a use in Section 2 of Clause 35.07-1.

5.2. Zoning

The subject land is located within the Farming Zone – Schedule 2 of the Casey Planning Scheme.

Under Clause 35.07 the purpose of the Farming Zone is to:

- *To provide for the use of land for agriculture.*
- *To encourage the retention of productive agricultural land.*
- *To ensure that non-agricultural uses, including dwellings, do not adversely affect the use of land for agriculture.*
- *To encourage the retention of employment and population to support rural communities.*
- *To encourage use and development of land based on comprehensive and sustainable land management practices and infrastructure provision.*
- *To provide for the use and development of land for the specific purposes identified in a schedule to this zone*

The application of the Farming Zone to the site is somewhat of anomaly within this urban area, and agriculture has long ceased on the site. The Cranbourne Terminal Station is a permitted non-agricultural use of the land and the proposed connection works are consistent and compatible with that use. The proposed use is consistent with existing 'infrastructure provision' on the land, and the connection infrastructure is considered to support a sustainable use being the Rangebank BESS, which will improve stability and efficiency of electricity supply within the State.

The following decision guidelines (as relevant) are required to be assessed for applications proposing the carrying out of works:

General issues

- *The capability of the land to accommodate the proposed use or development, including the disposal of effluent.*
- *How the use or development relates to sustainable land management.*
- *Whether the site is suitable for the use or development and whether the proposal is compatible with adjoining and nearby land uses.*
- *How the use and development makes use of existing infrastructure and services.*

The proposed BESS Cable is associated with and supports the existing use of the land for an approved transmission facility; accordingly, the land is eminently capable of supporting the proposed use. The use is sustainable as it will through the delivery of infrastructure support the State, south-east industry and local community through electricity reliability. The BESS Cable will be laid underground and therefore will not be visible from surrounding properties, and the terminal station compound is well removed and for the most part screened from surrounding land uses by trees and mounding. The appearance of the new terminal station works will vary little from the works infrastructure already in place.

Environmental issues

- *The impact of the proposal on the natural physical features and resources of the area, in particular on soil and water quality.*
- *The impact of the use or development on the flora and fauna on the site and its surrounds.*
- *The need to protect and enhance the biodiversity of the area, including the retention of vegetation and faunal habitat and the need to revegetate land including riparian buffers along waterways, gullies, ridgelines, property boundaries and saline discharge and recharge area.*

The proposal will not impact soil or water quality. Vegetation removal is required as part of the cable installation however, the chosen cable route is less dense with trees than the area further north, as noted in the Arboricultural assessment, thereby limiting tree removal. We note that the trees are not remnant but have been planted within the last 20 years as part of the Ausnet facility. Extensive planting will remain north and south of the cable route ensuring habitat opportunities are retained.

5.3. Development Plan Overlay

The area of the proposed works is Development Plan Overlay (Schedule 1) under Clause 43.04. The purpose of this overlay is to identify areas which require the form and conditions of future use and development to be shown on a Development Plan, before a permit can be granted to use or develop the land.

The *Cranbourne Development Plan Version 2.1* dated 2007 is the approved Development Plan for Schedule 1 of the Overlay.

Within the Development Plan the terminal station site is shown as ‘Mixed Use/Medium Density Residential’ in Figure A. The objectives of the Development Plan include:

To protect the amenity of existing/future residential areas by providing sufficient buffers to:.....

- the proposed terminal station and high voltage transmission line easements;

The Development Plan is somewhat inconsistent, as the land was identified for medium density purposes in 2007 even though a Planning Permit was granted in 2003 for the Major Utility Installation on the site. The Development Plan does however acknowledge the importance of the terminal station. Accordingly, it is considered the additional works within the terminal station site for utility purposes is generally consistent with the intent of the Development Plan and the approved permitted use.

The specific requirements and conditions of the Schedule relate to subdivision and are not relevant to the application.

It is understood that the City of Casey is considering revoking the Cranbourne Development Plan as development is largely complete within the area of the Development Plan.

6.0 Strategic Planning Policy Assessment

6.1. Planning Policy Framework (“PPF”)

The Planning Policy Framework (PPF) is in place to ensure that the objectives of Section 4 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 are implemented through appropriate land use and development planning policies. These policies incorporate environmental, social and economic factors that contribute towards the achievement of net community benefit and sustainable development.

The following policies are of relevance to the current proposal:

- Clause 15.03 – Aboriginal Cultural Heritage: *To ensure the protection and conservation of places of Aboriginal cultural heritage significance*
- Clause 13.02-1S – Bushfire Planning - *To strengthen the resilience of settlements and communities to bushfire through risk-based planning that prioritises the protection of human life.*
- Clause 15.02-1S – Energy and Resource Efficiency - *To encourage land use and development that is energy and resource efficient, supports a cooler environment and minimises greenhouse gas emissions.*

As outlined earlier in this report a PAHT has been certified by Officers of the Department of Premier and Cabinet and no further archaeological investigations of the site are required, addressing this policy in full.

The land is within a Bushfire Prone Area. The connecting cable will be underground and shielded by multiple layers of protective materials, and therefore bushfire risk will therefore not increase. Additional connection works at the terminal station will form part of the overall facility and existing fire management practices are expected to continue to be undertaken by Ausnet.

The proposed works will allow the Rangebank BESS proposed at 280 Evans Road to connect to the Ausnet Cranbourne Terminal Station facilitating the storage and distribution of energy during peak times of demand. The proposal will significantly contribute to energy efficiency embracing this planning policy.

6.2. Local Planning Policy Framework (“LPPF”)

The Local Planning Policy Framework (LPPF) is comprised of the Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) and Local Planning Policies. The elements of the Local Planning Policy Framework including Municipal Strategic Statement relevant to this proposal include:

- Clause 21.04 – Environment – the relevant strategy: *Embrace new green technologies which lead to improved energy efficiency and environmentally sustainable outcomes.*
- Clause 21.18 – Cranbourne West - *To develop a new industry and business park to improve economic development and employment opportunities within Cranbourne West and the wider Cranbourne region that is sustainable, well landscaped and has high levels of amenity and accessibility.*

The connection infrastructure is a critical to the operation of the Rangebank BESS. This technology directly responds to the policy intent for the Cranbourne West precinct given that it is a new industry and an innovative and sustainable development for the region.

The cable connection works will be underground and within the current terminal station compound and therefore will not impact on the amenity of the area. The works will generally not be visible to surrounding residential areas. The extent of planted vegetation to be removed will be minimal in the context of the extensive planting around the terminal site.

6.3. Provisions That Require, Enable or Exempt a Permit

6.3.1. Clause 52.17 – Native Vegetation

Pursuant to 52.17-1, a permit is required to remove, destroy or lop native vegetation unless the table to Clause 52.17-7 specifically states that a permit is not required. As outlined below vegetation that was planted as a result of direct seeding is exempt from permit removal.

Planted vegetation	<p>Native vegetation that is to be removed, destroyed or lopped that was either planted or grown as a result of direct seeding.</p> <p>This exemption does not apply to native vegetation planted or managed with public funding for the purpose of land protection or enhancing biodiversity unless the removal, destruction or lopping of the native vegetation is in accordance with written permission of the agency (or its successor) that provided the funding.</p>
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The Landscape Plans endorsed under Planning Permit P542/02 indicate the mound areas were planted by direct seeding and hydroseeding, as shown in the extract from the plan below. Accordingly, no planning permit is required to remove the vegetation, and vegetation offsets do not need to be considered.

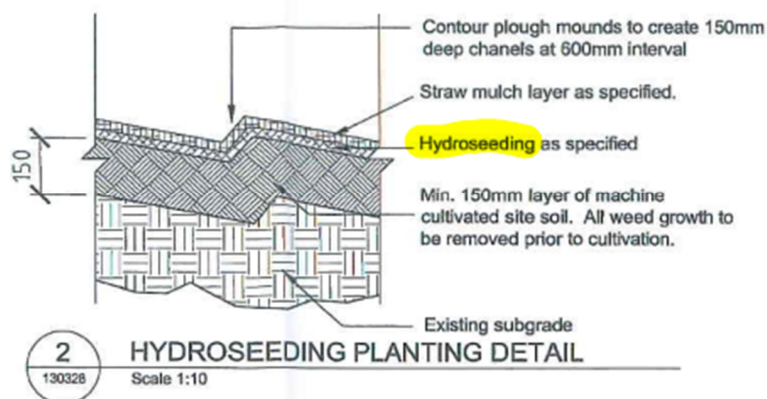


Figure 5: From Endorsed Landscape Plan, Planning Permit P542/02

(It is noted that some tubestock was planted as part of the entry planting of the facility but the balance of the planting appears to be by way of seeding).

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6.4. General Requirements and Performance Standards

6.4.1. Clause 53.13 – Renewable Energy Facility (Other than Wind Farm Facility)

The purpose of this clause is *to facilitate the establishment and expansion of renewable energy facilities, in appropriate locations, with minimal impact on the amenity of the area.*

The connection infrastructure is a key component of the proposed Rangebank BESS. The facility will stabilise the grid and improve energy reliability and assist with smoothing energy input through residential solar panels. The connection cable will not be visible from the surrounding properties as it will be installed underground and therefore, has no impact on the amenity of the area. Proposed works within the existing terminal station compound are similarly well distanced from residential properties with think planting and mounding along the southern and western boundaries of the site.

6.5. Clause 65 - Decision Guidelines

In determining whether a permit should be granted, the responsible authority must decide whether the proposal will produce acceptable outcomes in terms of the decision guidelines set out in Clause 65.

The following outlines how the proposal appropriately responds to each of the decision guidelines:

- The proposal is consistent with the purpose and intent of the Policy Framework as outlined in this Statement.
- The proposal is consistent with the objectives of the Farming Zone through supporting the provision of important infrastructure in the area.
- Consideration of environmental impacts to the biodiversity have been considered by choosing a cable location that lessens the removal of planted vegetation, noting that no permit is required for vegetation removal.
- The bushfire risk will not increase as a result of this development as it is able to be managed under the existing fire management framework at the Ausnet Facility.
- The connection infrastructure will be undergrounded or within the existing terminal compound and therefore, will have no negligible amenity impacts to neighbouring properties.

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7.0 Conclusion

This Planning Statement has demonstrated the proposed utility installation comprising cable connections and associated infrastructure in the existing terminal compound, is consistent with the requirements of the Casey Planning Scheme. The proposal will ensure that the Rangebank Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) proposed at 280 Evans Road, Cranbourne West is able to operate, with the infrastructure proposed establishing the connection to the Ausnet Cranbourne Terminal Station.

The Rangebank BESS is a significant infrastructure investment by Macquarie Corporate Holdings Pty Limited which will assist to stabilise the State electricity supply by providing additional storage capacity for the Ausnet terminal station, enabling discharge of supply at times of peak demand. The proposal is considered to present a strategic resource opportunity and an appropriate planning outcome and accordingly is consistent with the purpose and intent of the relevant planning controls and policies.

END OF ASSESSMENT

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