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BrightNight

Mortlake Energy Hub Consultation Outcomes Report - Planning Permit Application

ADVERTISED PLAN



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1. Project Description

1.1 Introduction to BrightNight

BrightNight is a world leader in large scale renewable energy solutions, excited to bring its bright ideas to regional Australia. BrightNight is committed to the responsible development of safe, reliable, renewable power for Australia's transition to a green energy future.

As a long-term owner/ operator of renewable projects, BrightNight's engagement with communities is based on enduring relationships and a relentless customer centric approach. BrightNight's stakeholders are priority when considering every aspect of the development process from land acquisition through to construction.

BrightNight's Australian team is passionate, driven, and committed to determining the best energy storage and dispatch solution for each unique community, including its cutting-edge hybrid model of co-located large scale solar Photovoltaic (PV) and Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS). Its local experts are backed by industry leaders in the United States and around the world, who have a proven record of developing, delivering, and operating large scale renewable energy projects.

1.2 Project Overview

The proposed MEH will generate up to 360MW of solar energy and will have the capacity to store a further 600MW through a BESS. This amount of generation will be able to power 70,000 homes. The project will connect to the existing Mortlake Terminal Station which is located in close proximity to the proposed project site. This connection will be established through a proposed substation, equipped with 33 kV underground cables to the east of the existing terminal station.

The proposed MEH site will be located on a 900-hectare property that is currently used for pastoral grazing. BrightNight intends to apply its state-of-the-art Agri solar practices to the site which means that current agricultural practices will be able to harmoniously coexist with the PV installations. BrightNight is currently seeking a planning approval permit for the project under the Planning and Environment Act 1987 (the P&E Act) and the Victoria Planning Provisions (VPP). As part of the approval process, and in line with BrightNight's commitment to delivering sustainable renewable energy project outcomes that are sympathetic to the community, direct neighbour landscape and surrounding region, the team has undertaken consultation and engagement within the Mortlake community.

This **Consultation Outcomes Summary Report** includes:

- an overview of the key engagement and consultation activities undertaken during the development and planning permit approval application process
- a summary of emerging areas of interest and concern, and how the team has and will continue to address these issues throughout the development process.
- early insight into community values and potential economic and social investment areas through direct and legacy benefit-sharing initiatives.
- a summary of our next steps for consultation and engagement with further details provided under Appendix A—CSEP.

1.3 Project Site Context

Mortlake is located in the south-west of Victoria, 50 kilometres northeast of the city of Warrnambool, within the Local Government Area (LGA) of Moyne Shire. Mortlake residents (1447) make up just six per cent of the Moyne Shire's total population of 17,374. The population distribution is roughly equal between men and women, a split which is comparable to Australia as a whole. Across age groups, however, the communities described here have a median age of 45, which is eight years older than that of the wider Australian community. The Mortlake community is supported by two schools and is largely an agricultural region, supporting the Hamilton wool district and the broader southwest Victorian dairy industry.

The Moyne Shire forms a large proportion of the South West Victoria Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) and is a major growth area for wind and solar energy development in Victoria. Within Moyne Shire there are five operational wind farms, two under construction, three with permits (but not yet constructed) and three seeking permits or in the feasibility stage. The area is also being considered by several solar farm developers.

If developed, the MEH will be one of the large-scale renewable energy projects in the Moyne Shire. The Moyne Shire Council has highlighted several cumulative impact concerns including noise, visual, traffic, road, housing and environmental impacts that have been consistently raised as areas of concern. The Moyne Shire Council strongly feels that a strategic land use planning approach which manages cumulative impacts is needed to stop further clusters and mitigate future impacts, as well as a long term economic and social benefit plan for host communities.

To successfully deliver the MEH within the Moyne Shire Council, BrightNight will need to ensure that the key cumulative impacts highlighted by the Council are considered and addressed.

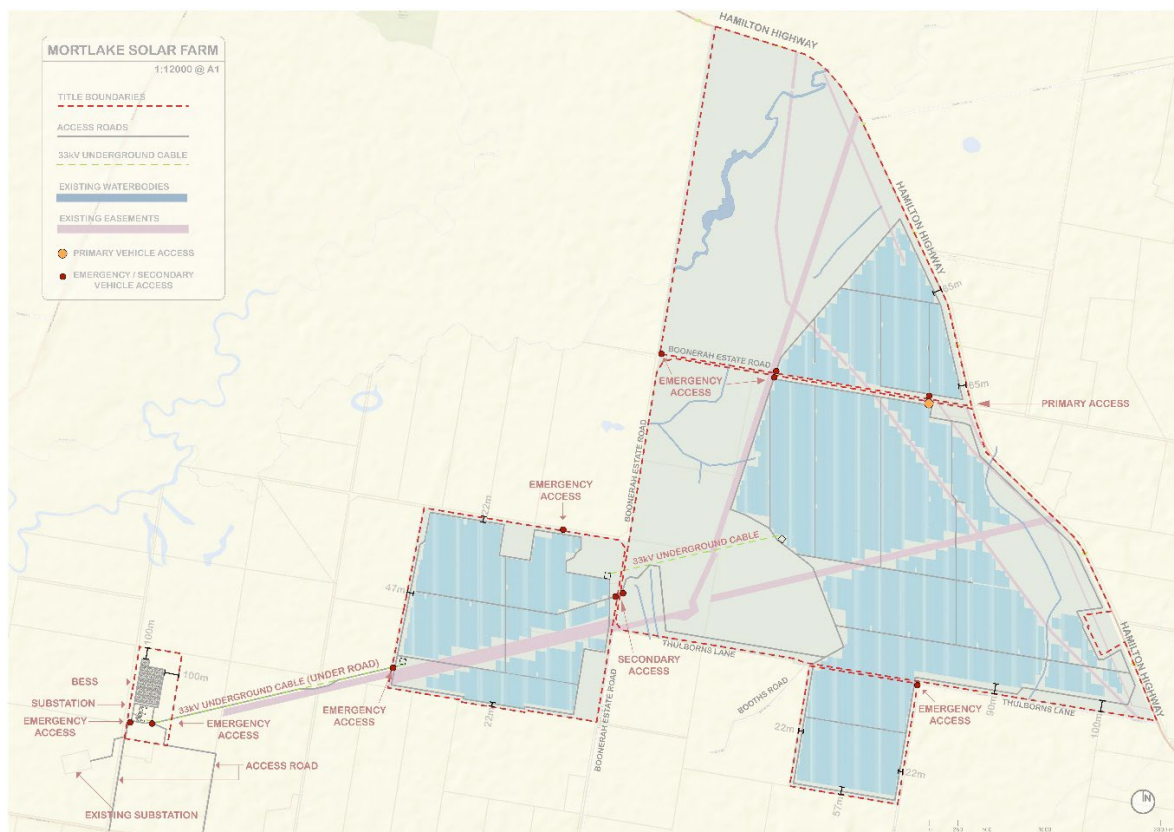


Figure 1 Proposed Project Site Location

South West Victoria Renewable Energy Zone (REZ)

The MEH project is located within the South West Victorian REZ. There are many aspects in the rollout of REZs where collaboration and empowerment of the local community can enhance the REZ model. BrightNight is mindful that REZ decisions can be strengthened with local community participation and has included several methods of involving and empowering the South West REZ community in their approach to past, current and ongoing community engagement initiatives.

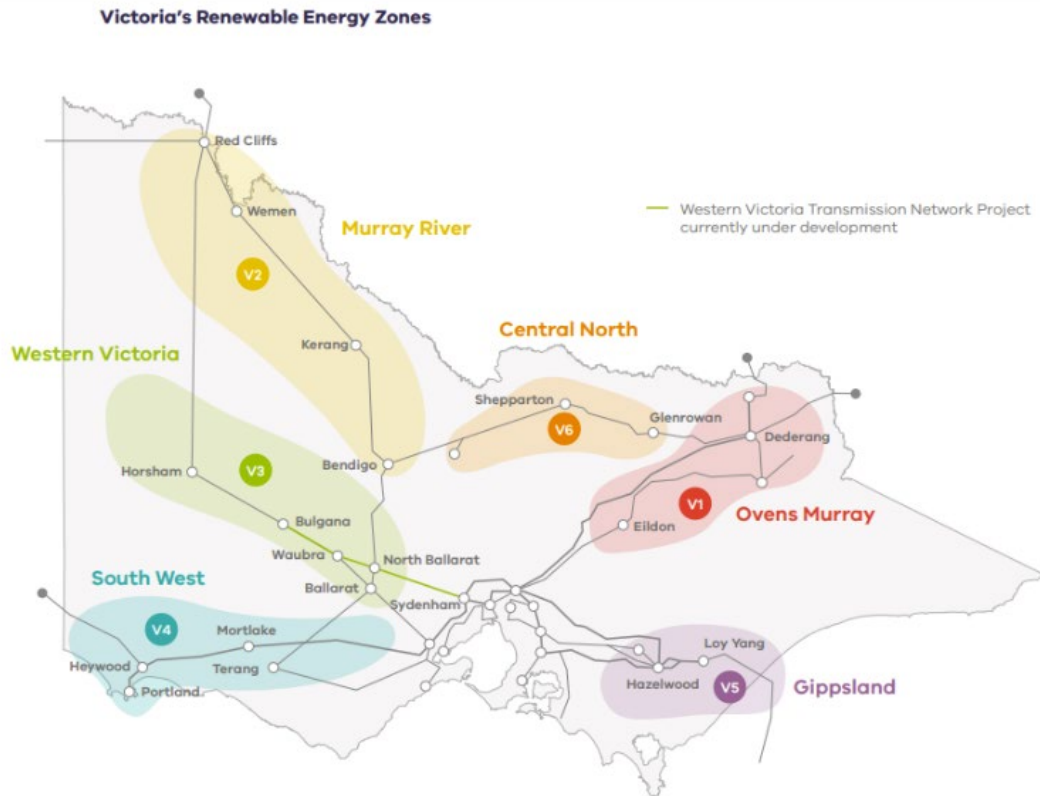


Figure 2 South West Victorian REZ

2. Engagement considerations, principles and frameworks

An overarching Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan (CSEP) has been prepared to support the preparation of the planning permit application (see Appendix A). The CSEP considers the strategic and local contexts of the project area and the requirements under the planning pathway for solar projects in Victoria. This includes adhering to the legislative, planning, and regulatory approval processes required to assess the Project, considering local government community strategic plans, benefit sharing guidance from the Victorian Government and the Clean Energy Council, and the Victorian Government's First Nations engagement principles.

Planning Permit Application - Community engagement requirements

As part of the planning permit application process, a number of considerations relating to community engagement requirements need to be determined by the proponent, with the final decision resting with the Responsible Authority (Minister for Planning). This includes provision for other statutory approvals as part of the application process, such as State and/or Commonwealth environment assessments. For the MEH, the Minister for Planning has determined an Environment Effects Statement (EES) is not required to be completed due to the minimal impact the proposed project is expected to have on the environment.

Therefore, BrightNight's approach to community and stakeholder engagement is tailored to support, and where possible, exceed the guidance for solar developments set out by the Department of Energy, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) by:

- Engaging early, and addressing community concerns and issues in a transparent and responsive way
- Engaging Traditional Owners from the outset to understand local culture and history and seeking advice on suitable assessment of cultural heritage values, in the absence of a requirement for a mandatory assessment
- Ongoing engagement with local and state government (Councils, Departments and agencies).

3. Consultation and engagement objectives

Early, transparent, and respectful engagement is essential to successful project development. The BrightNight project team is committed to building genuine, trusted relationships with communities and stakeholders to facilitate meaningful discussions, mitigate project impacts, and incorporate the region's needs and values to deliver sustainable project and community outcomes.

BrightNight's engagement and consultation for the project will focus on meeting the below objectives:

- Effectively engage with stakeholders on matters they can influence based on policy, the Project, and the planning process.
- Integrate feedback and engagement outcomes into Project decision-making.
- Build constructive relationships to position BrightNight as a trusted community partner.

This plan aligns with BrightNight's overarching commitment to stakeholder engagement, which is based on the guiding principles of:

- Communicating decisions that will affect stakeholders as early as possible, transparently, and through channels they can access
- Listening to feedback and being clear with stakeholders about where they can influence outcomes / co-create / participate in the decision-making process, or where they are being advised / informed
- Incorporate stakeholder feedback wherever possible and follow through where there has been a commitment made.

4. Stakeholders

Key stakeholders identified are outlined in Table 1. A summary of the engagement outcomes and purpose for each stakeholder interaction or touch point has been provided in Table 3.

Initial engagement with the community and stakeholders from the Moyne Shire Council and agencies has been neutral/positive, with a strong interest and desire to explore partnerships to address anticipated positive and negative impacts of all renewable developments currently in planning in the region.

Consultation with direct neighbours has identified a number of areas of concern, which BrightNight will continue to seek to resolve in collaboration with the concerned residents.

Engagement with stakeholders will continue during the pre-construction, construction and operational stages of the project, and further stakeholders will be identified and added to the stakeholder matrix at the project progresses.

Table 1 Key stakeholders and their influence on the project

Stakeholder Type	Department/group	Relevance
State and Federal Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Member for Wannon, The Hon. Dan Tehan (Lib) - Shadow Minister for Immigration Member for Western Victoria, The Hon. Gayle Tierney (Labour) - Minister for Skills and Tafe; Minister for Regional Development Member for Lowan, The Hon. Emma Kealy (NP) - Deputy Leader of the National Party, Shadow Minister for Agriculture Member for South-west coast, The Hon. Roma Britnell (Lib) Member for Western Victoria, The Hon. Jacinta Ermacora (Labour) Member for Western Victoria, The Hon. Sarah Mansfield (Greens) Member for Western Victoria, The Hon. Joe McCracken (Lib) Member for Western Victoria, The Hon Bev McArthur (Lib) 	High influence
Victorian Energy Agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AEMO Services Department of Transport and Planning Department of Transport and Planning (Roads) Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action 	High influence
Local government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cr Ian Smith, Mayor Cr Karen Foster, Deputy Mayor Peter Brown, CEO (Acting) Cr Jim Doukas, Councillor Cr Damian Gleeson, Councillor Cr Jordon Lockett, Councillor Cr Daniel Meade, Councillor Cr James Purcell, Councillor Jodie McNamara, Director of Environment, Economy and Place 	Medium influence
First Nations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council First Peoples – State Relations 	Medium influence

Direct neighbours	Neighbours with adjoining site boundaries	High influence
Neighbours	Within 2km (excluding directly impacted properties)	Medium influence
Host landowner	Private landholder	High influence
Emergency Service Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr Tony Spooe, Mortlake CFA Captain SES Mortlake Unit Ambulance Victoria – Mortlake Branch Mortlake Police Station 	Medium influence
Mortlake community	Community members living within the Mortlake township adjacent to the Project	Low influence
Community organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mortlake Lions Club Rotary Club of Mortlake CWA Mortlake 	Low influence
Education providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mortlake College P-12 St Colman’s Catholic school (P-6) Mortlake Kindergarten READY SET GO Childcare Hawkesdale P12 College Port Fairy Consolidated School Koroit And District Primary School 	Low influence
Renewable energy developments In the Moyne Shire Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mortons Lane Wind Farm Macarthur Wind Farm Salt Creek Wind Farm Yambuk Wind Farm Hawkesdale Wind Farm Ryan Corner Wind Farm Codrington Wind Farm Dundonnell Wind Farm Macarthur Wind Farm Mortlake South Wind Farm 	Low influence
Media /social media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mortlake Dispatch Western District Farmer The Standard (Warrnambool) 95.3 Coast FM Warrnambool 94.5 3YB FM ABC South West Victoria Mortlake Community Noticeboard (Facebook Group) 	Low influence

5. Engagement approach

BrightNight’s fundamental engagement commitment has been applied to this project, ensuring community has information readily available about the Project and key stakeholders are communicated with at appropriate milestones and developments throughout each stage. Given the saturation of renewable energy wind farm projects in the Victorian Southwest REZ, and the Moyne Shire’s public position on cumulative impacts of such projects, BrightNight has undertaken an engagement approach that is personal and has focused on consultation and engagement with the landowner and identified direct neighbours; meetings with council, local members of parliament and First Nations representatives; and opportunities for broader community engagement at local events and pop ups.

The focus of the communications during the planning phase of the project has been to provide information about the differentiation of the hybrid solar BESS project (to that of other projects existing in the area) and seek input from the community about the proposed development and responding and addressing the community’s concerns in a timely manner.

BrightNight’s approach to engagement and consultation is underpinned by consistent, targeted, and meaningful activities, that align to the below principles:

- **Engage early and often** to establish and build relationships with key stakeholders including local council and occupiers of neighbouring land to identify any risks and concerns.
- **Genuine engagement** by providing clear and concise information about the Project, including impacts and benefits, providing opportunities for consultation relevant to the level of impact and interest in the Project, and in collaboration with potentially affected landholders and community members.
- **Local focus** to proactively develop two-way communication channels tailored to the needs and interests of the local community.

To inform the planning permit application process, to date, the team has completed one in-region visit, meetings with key stakeholders, ministerial briefings and extensive face to face, online and telephone engagement with the host landowner and direct neighbours (within 2km of the proposed development site).

Early engagement for the MEH commenced from September 2023, and has continued through to the completion of this report (April 2024). Preliminary engagement activities with stakeholders presented an opportunity to introduce the Project, form relationships, gather some early views on renewable energy projects in the area and inform the iterative development of the community and stakeholder engagement strategy for the Project.

Further extensive community and stakeholder consultation will continue, with BrightNight’s next round of in-region community visits scheduled for May 2024. All engagement activities are aligned to the overarching project milestones, and where required, an agile and flexible approach is required to accommodate changes to the project development, construction and operational milestones.

5.1 Project timeline

Figure 3 MEH Project timeline



6. Engagement tools

The table below summarises engagement and communication tools deployed to enhance community understanding of the project, renewable energy generally and support informed stakeholder choices around sentiment, key issues and views on how the project and the REZ generally could bring sustainable and meaningful benefits to the region.

Early stakeholder mapping, core engagement objectives and in consideration of the planning permit requirements, BrightNight has used a mix of traditional, digital and face-to-face tools. Communication and engagement tools and techniques for the Project will evolve as we learn more about the communication preferences of the local community and adapt our channels to become more targeted and fit for purpose as development progresses .

Table 2 identifies the communication and engagement tools used during the planning permit application phase of the MEH project.

Table 2 Engagement tools implemented during the Planning Permit Application Phase

Engagement activity	Description	Key stakeholders	Purpose
Project webpage	Establish a project website and continuously update with new information and relevant planning documents as required.	All	Inform
1800 number and email	Communication channels for stakeholders and community to contact the project team, provide feedback and submit concerns/queries at any time	All	Inform
Ministerial briefing packs	Introduction/ project briefing materials to support discussions with local, state and federal MPs.	State and Federal MPs	Inform
Direct Neighbour Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuously engage with neighbours to identify emerging issues or concerns for further assessment, update Project timelines and seek input on any negotiables. Build a social licence that aims to be a good neighbour. Socialise neighbour payments framework and opportunities for discussion and input 	Mortlake direct neighbours with adjoining boundaries with the proposed project site	Involve
Landowner meetings	Continuously engage with host landowner to address any emerging issues or concerns, update on timelines and seek input to community engagement.	Host landowner	Involve
Neighbours within 2km of proposed project site	Provide options for neighbours to engage in the project development through direct meetings (if requested), engagement at community events and participation in the development of the Community Benefit Fund.	Neighbours within a 2km radius	Inform
Briefings/meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early engagement with key stakeholders to introduce the Project, start building relationships, inform on engagement approach and understand community issues and preferred ways of communication. 	Council Govt. Agencies Emergency Service Providers Traditional Owners	Inform Involve

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue building relationships, update key stakeholders on Project milestones, collaborate on the Community Benefits framework, and display an ongoing commitment to communities. 		
Community information session/pop up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform the community about the MEH and BrightNight Seek community views on potential options for community benefit sharing and promote opportunities for community involvement 	Mortlake community and surrounding suburbs/regions	Inform
Contact us/ engagement register	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record of community touch points including queries, complaints, questions and concerns. Provide the community with multiple options to provide feedback and share their views on the project (email, phone, face to face, website contact page) 	Project team	Inform
Letters and Emails	<p>Early engagement with State, Local and Federal MPs and agencies to discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project scope for MEH Community and regional stakeholder engagement approach Views, concerns, and opportunities regarding the project Community benefit sharing, and skills development and training opportunities among the local workforce. 	Local MP Federal MP State MP Government agencies	Inform
	Engage in direct communication with landowner and direct neighbours to introduce project, notify of intention to engage with Mortlake community, outline current project phase and proposed visual impact assessments that may require pre-approval/access to private properties, provide point of contact for engagement within the project team.	Host landowner Direct Neighbours	Inform
Project fact sheets and flyers	Fact sheets to support community awareness and understanding of key issues including: fire management, glint and glare, noise management and road access.	All	Inform

7. Overview of consultation and engagement activities

The consultation and engagement activities undertaken as part of the planning permit application process have been summarised in Table 3. This summary represents all the activities that have been undertaken between September 2023 and April 2024.

Key outcomes were collated from the activities undertaken during the in-region engagement and other engagement (phone calls, emails) and have been summarised below.

7.1 Summary of consultation and engagement activities

Table 3 Summary of consultation and engagement activities

Tool	Timing	Target stakeholders	Purpose	Summary of outcomes/activity
Host landowner interactions	9 & 12 September 2023 19 October 2023 21 & 23 November 2023 2 January 2024 12 February 2024 13 March 2024	Host landholder	Early engagement with the host landowner included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to the project and timelines for development • Addressing any emerging issues or concerns • Consultation on agri-solar including fencing and other requirements • Assistance with understanding the local and social context, including identification of direct neighbours. • Discussing a fit-for-purpose approach to community benefit sharing initiatives. 	Host landowner is positive. Meetings were held onsite, project updates/ sentiment from neighbouring properties.

Tool	Timing	Target stakeholders	Purpose	Summary of outcomes/activity
Direct neighbour interactions	12 September 2023 20 October 2023 21,22, 23 November 2023 12 February 2024 13,14,15 March 2024	Direct neighbours with an adjoining site boundary	<p>Early engagement and consultation with direct neighbours to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand and address any emerging issues or concerns, and update on project timelines. Address questions around potential impacts on each property Confirm communication preferences and appetite for frequency of communication and ongoing engagement opportunities. Share early framework on direct shared benefits for Mortlake community, listen to ideas on neighbour benefits and seek views on community valued initiatives 	<p>Of the 6 direct neighbours, 3 feel positive, or neutral towards the project. Three direct neighbours oppose the project.</p> <p>Direct neighbours raised the below topics for discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traffic Visual impact Bushfire hazard Access points Insurance (perceived increased premiums due to increased fire risk as a result of solar installations) Neighbourhood benefit agreements. Glare and glint Heat island effect Standard hours of work
Neighbours within 2km	17 November 2023	Residents located up to 2km within the proposed project site	<p>Provide information via a letterbox drop. Information provided to neighbours included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project scope and benefits Proposed development timelines Contact information for the project team Options for engagement, (1:1 meetings with project team; community pop-ups). 	<p>The project team letterbox dropped neighbours within the 2km range.</p> <p>No communication from these stakeholders was received.</p>
Community pop-ups (appendix h)	10 December Mortlake Market 10 December Mortlake Recreation Reserve	Mortlake community and surrounding areas/regions/visitors	<p>Community information sessions provided a platform for BrightNight to commence early community engagement. The sessions provided an opportunity for the community to understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project scope and benefits Proposed development timelines General information about the solar panel anatomy, BESS anatomy 	<p>The Project team had meaningful conversations with around 19 community members at the community pop up. The feedback from conversations is summarised below:</p> <p>Community feedback on previous engagement with other renewable developers</p> <p>As a Renewable Energy Zone (REZ), community members were keen to share examples of positive</p>

Tool	Timing	Target stakeholders	Purpose	Summary of outcomes/activity
	10 December Mortlake Recreation Reserve		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The role BrightNight will play in the region, and the importance they place on community involvement in the project, particularly on the development of benefit sharing initiatives. 	<p>engagement e.g. Mortlake South Wind Farm and negative engagement e.g. new project-specific transmission lines. Open and honest communication is important to this community, who are well-versed in wind farm projects.</p> <p>Community benefit fund activity recommendations</p> <p>Community members provided feedback on how best the Project can support the region with community centred benefit sharing initiatives from sponsoring local sporting clubs to more strategic opportunities such as installation of an EV fast charging station.</p> <p>Community members reiterated the importance of community decision making in the development of any shared benefit arrangements.</p> <p>Key community and business groups to connect with</p> <p>It was clear the community is important. There are a few trusted organisations and individuals within the community that BrightNight was encouraged to connect with.</p> <p>Housing, local procurement and education & training</p> <p>Use the trades and business in Mortlake.</p>
Council meetings	21 November 2023	Moyne Shire Council	<p>The project team held a workshop with Councillors from the Moyne Shire Council to introduce them to the project. Information shared with Councillors included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> General project information Application progress, timelines Community consultation approach 	<p>Councillors asked a number of questions with regard to how the project would bring benefit to the region including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jobs, local employment and training opportunities Visual impacts and amenity, including options for screening

Tool	Timing	Target stakeholders	Purpose	Summary of outcomes/activity
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council engagement approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing and accommodation options for construction workers, including innovative housing options (modular housing at the caravan park), housing in outer areas Investment in community through measured and appropriate community engagement as well as careful consideration of legacy initiatives for long-term community benefit sharing.
	13 March	Moyne Shire Council Department of Environment	Provide an update on the project (site and assessments) to the Shire's Manager for Environment and Energy	No key issues or concerns were raised. Council representative provided BrightNight with communication preferences and advised on approach to engage Councillors and Officers.
Victorian State Government Agency meetings	5/10/2023	Department of Transport and Planning	Project introduction, outline of key considerations for the design, agency feedback	No key issues or concerns were raised. The Department noted the need to clearly address all requirements of the Moyne Planning Scheme and the Solar Design Guidelines and also clearly articulate permit triggers and any environmental impacts.
	15/03/2024		Presented the finalised site design, discussed timeframes to lodgement, sought updated agency feedback	
	20/10/2023	Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action	Project introduction, outline of key considerations for the design, agency feedback	As a result of feedback from the Department, the project team has: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritised the protection of native vegetation in the siting and design of the solar energy facility. Completed Growling Grass Frog Survey and Targeted Spring Flora and Brolga Surveys Received confirmation that no EES or EPBC referral required for the MEH.
	18/03/2024		Outlined biodiversity impacts and sought updated agency feedback	

Tool	Timing	Target stakeholders	Purpose	Summary of outcomes/activity
	5/10/2023 (invited to inception pre-app with DTP/DEECA – did not attend) 25/03/2024 – pre-application meeting	Country Fire Authority	BrightNight met with CFA to provide a briefing on the project and seek feedback on the proposed development.	CFA advised BrightNight to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure appropriate setbacks are provided to all vegetation, including on the BESS site, and that suitable site access can be provided. • Finalise bushfire risk assessment
	17/10/2023	Department of Transport and Planning – Roads	BrightNight project team provided a presentation to Officers and sought feedback on the proposed development from stakeholders.	The Department advised that a Transport Impact Assessment was required to resolve detailed traffic requirements and that consideration of appropriate setbacks to DTP roads was required.
Traditional Owner meeting	8/11/2023 Initial engagement	Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation (EMAC)	Presentation of project to EMAC, the registered Aboriginal party for the Mortlake area (including the proposed project site). Discussion included an overview of the project, proposed construction methodology and site layout options.	<p>Eastern Maar provided some historical context to the area and strongly suggested the developer undertake a voluntary Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP), if a mandatory CHMP is not triggered under the Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018.</p> <p>EMAC also noted there should be consideration of environmental aspects, including intangible cultural heritage values. For example, native plant species to be impacted, or eagle strike at wind farms (totem animal).</p> <p>EMAC committed to consult internally regarding potential intangible values relevant to the location and confirmed that geotechnical testing could proceed without a CHMP.</p>
	11 & 12/12/2023 Site walkover		Walkover of site to inspect key locations for potential cultural heritage; identify and record any surface Aboriginal cultural heritage; document	In collaboration with Traditional Owners, a Comprehensive Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Due Diligence Assessment was undertaken to determine

Tool	Timing	Target stakeholders	Purpose	Summary of outcomes/activity
			extent of previous ground disturbance in the study area.	the cultural heritage values of the site. As a result it was determined that no mandatory CHMP required. Commitment to prepare a voluntary CHMP prior to construction.
State and Federal MP engagement	9 December 2023 February 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Member for Lowan, The Hon. Emma Kealy (NP) - Deputy Leader of the National Party, Shadow Minister for Agriculture Member for South-west coast, The Hon. Roma Britnell (Lib) Member for Western Victoria, The Hon. Jacinta Ermacora (Labour) Member for Western Victoria, The Hon. Sarah Mansfield (Greens) Member for Western Victoria, The Hon. Joe McCracken (Lib) Member for Western Victoria, The Hon Bev McArthur (Lib) 	The Project team sent letters of introduction to the project and options for meetings with the project team.	No written responses were received, however, two meetings with MPs were requested as a result of first round of introduction letters (see below).
	12 January 2024	Roma Britnell MP Member for South West Coast (Liberal Party)	MP Briefings to introduce the MEH, understand key issues/areas of concern, what value the project could bring to the region.	No key issues around the MEH raised. Project team sought feedback on how Ms Britnell MP would like to keep informed of the project.
	27 March 2024	Emma Kealy MP Member for Lowan, Shadow Minister for Agriculture		Key issues raised by Ms Kealy MP included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning for a robust, and long-term community benefits, for example, whether there may be options for 'free energy' for a

Tool	Timing	Target stakeholders	Purpose	Summary of outcomes/activity
				<p>period of time</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decommissioning – who is responsible for removing the infrastructure at end of life, and who pays for it's removal from site • Project insurance – what are the requirements for renewable energy developers to pay for insurance, particularly where assets may be damaged by hail or fire • Support for proposal to run the transmission line underground, given the community sentiment around over land transmission lines in the region and beyond.

7.2 Summary of communication activities

Table 4 provides a summary of one-way communication activities undertaken to date. These activities were designed to reach a cross-section of community within the Moyne Shire Local Government Area, with a specific focus on residents within the Mortlake region, and provide a single, consistent source of information to the community. Communication activities were also used to promote the information sessions and outline ways for community to provide feedback on the Project.

Table 4 Summary of communication activities

Engagement activity	Date / time	Key stakeholders	Purpose	Reach
Project fact sheet (appendix b)	December 2023	All stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce project • Share project timeline • Outline engagement opportunities 	23 fact sheets distributed during community pop up Fact sheet also available via project page on BrightNight website
Fact sheets (appendix c)	February 2024	All stakeholders	Four specialised fact sheets providing information on topics of interest/concern raised by community members/ direct neighbours including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire management • Glint and Glare • Noise Management • Road Access 	N/A
Newspaper advertisement – Mortlake Dispatch (appendix d)	November 2023 December 2023	Mortlake and surrounding communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise awareness of the project • Encourage attendance at community information sessions 	Circulation: 277/issue
Community flyer (appendix e)	November 2023	Mortlake region direct neighbours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project overview • Dates and times for community drop in sessions • Project website and contact details. 	Within 2 km of project site
Project Maps (appendix f)	November 2023 February 2024	All stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Original proposed project site location and context to surrounding properties; and current site map, based on amendments made during consultation 	Direct neighbours Community
Webpage (appendix g)	Ongoing	All stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project updates • Contact details • Project resources including fact sheets 	Webpage visitors
Stakeholder mapping	Ongoing	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a comprehensive stakeholder map including the current level of influence/interest, sentiment, etc. 	N/A

8. Summary of key themes

Consultation and engagement outcomes from the activities undertaken during the planning permit application were broadly identified as falling under all three areas of sentiment (positive, neutral, negative) with the key areas of impact/interest identified in Table 5 below.

Given the influx of renewable development projects in region and the growing community opposition towards the South West Victoria REZ generally, BrightNight recognises the need to:

- continue to engage the community on the development of MEH
- communicate the broad benefits of a transition to renewable energy
- actively explore opportunities to work with other renewable developers in the area, local and state governments, and energy agencies to maximise social and economic benefits to the region
- continue to engage with direct neighbours and continue to address and resolve concerns and issues

Table 5 Summary of emerging issues and themes

Description of issues/impacts	Source
<p>Fires</p> <p>Insurance premiums Direct neighbours have raised concerns that their insurance premiums will increase as a result of the perceived increased fire risk from the installation of large-scale solar operations.</p> <p>Fire fighting operations Direct neighbours, two of which are volunteer firefighters within the local Mortlake CFA, raised questions about the proposed approach to fighting fires on solar farms within the site boundary and what safety measures are proposed to protect fire fighters and the properties and assets that sit outside the project boundary. Response: BrightNight is currently working with specialists to undertake a fire risk assessment to understand the hazards and risks of fire sources (bushfire and fires associated with assets such as structures, electricity, liquid fuel, BESS and other infrastructure) to determine appropriate mitigation strategies in the event of fire. BrightNight is working with insurance providers and brokers to review any available evidence in relation increased premiums as a result of solar farm developments. Advice on these findings will be shared with direct neighbours as soon as possible.</p>	<p>Direct neighbours, MPs CFA Community</p>
<p>Community benefit sharing initiatives Some community and stakeholders provided feedback on legacy benefit sharing arrangements that would bring long-term benefits to the broad community. There was a clear preference that benefits should be well thought out and region-wide, rather than providing tangible funding initiatives, such as sponsorships of local sporting and recreation clubs. Response: In the next engagement phase, BrightNight will undertake a visioning workshop with community to explore the local values, areas of importance and collect feedback on some social and economic benefits for the community that could be considered in the development of the benefit sharing funding model for the MEH.</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>Traffic management Direct neighbours raised concerns about the use of Boonerah Estate Rd. Previous construction for the installation of project-specific transmission lines tore up the road and increased traffic. One direct neighbour expressly asked for the south end of Boonerah Estate Rd not to be used for project traffic. A second direct neighbour requested that the east end of Boonerah Estate Rd, that joins the Hamilton Hwy, not be sealed. Response: The MEH Traffic Management Plan (TMP) has taken into account the feedback from the direct neighbours and has incorporated the requests in the MEH TMP.</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>Community engagement Given the influx of renewable energy project developments in the region, some community members were interested in sharing their views on the best ways for BrightNight to engage and keep the local community informed of the project. This included preferences for communication activities, understanding the types of involvement and input the community could have on decision making for the project, and key locations/events/activities that would ensure the community voice is representative of a diversity of views within the Mortlake and surrounding regions. Response: In line with BrightNight's communication objectives, the project team will be open and honest in its communication with community, and ensure engagement and consultation activities are adjusted to meet community preferences and expectations. The team will listen to the needs of stakeholders and understand key areas of improvement/lessons learned from other renewable projects.</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>Visual impacts Direct neighbours to the proposed project have raised concerns about change to the visual amenity of the area. Response: BrightNight will continue to engage with direct neighbours on possible mitigations to enhance the visual impact, including tree planting and fencing options.</p>	<p>Direct neighbours</p>

<p>Construction considerations</p> <p>Stakeholders and community have identified some key social and economic issues that will need to be considered prior to construction of the MEH. These include:</p> <p><u>Housing and accommodation</u> – concerns regarding the availability of accommodation for the construction workforce will need to be addressed, including options for innovative housing measures and impacts to local services.</p> <p><u>Procurement and supply of local goods</u> – some community members have requested the project prioritise using local businesses (goods and services) in construction, as well as considering skills, training and employment options for locals.</p> <p>Response: BrightNight will continue to discuss housing and accommodation solutions for the construction workforce with local Council, and where feasible, with other renewable developers in the area.</p> <p>Procurement strategies that focus on prioritising local businesses and service providers in the region will be developed as the project progresses.</p> <p>Opportunities for skills development, training and employment opportunities will be explored as part of the community benefit fund as well as considered in construction partner tenders.</p>	<p>Mortlake community</p>
<p>Impacts to direct neighbours</p> <p>Some direct neighbours to MEH have expressed concern about the impact of the proposed development to their property, in particular the potential loss of value of their homes.</p> <p>Response: As part of the neighbourhood benefit payments, BrightNight is working with direct neighbours (with neighbouring boundaries of the proposed site) to determine appropriate payment arrangements and where required, undertake property valuations. Neighbourhood benefit payments are discussed with each landowner confidentially, and payment arrangements are being assessed for each landowner individually.</p>	<p>Direct neighbours</p>

9. Forward Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan

BrightNight is committed to continued and meaningful consultation and engagement with the Mortlake and surrounding region as the project progresses. We have a range of upcoming engagement activities to keep the community informed, address issues and concerns and involve community in the early establishment of the MEH shared benefit framework.

Immediate and upcoming activities (May 2024) in the region include:

- Meetings with the landowner and direct neighbours (continuing from early May 2024)
- Community pop-up at Mortlake Markets (ongoing, upcoming dates to be confirmed)
- Community benefit sharing fund workshop (Sunday 19 May)

A summary action plan of engagement and consultation activities to support the project during the permit application process and pre-construction phase, is provided in Table 6. In line with our approach to deliver fit-for-purpose communication and in response to BrightNight's continued investment in delivering relevant and community-oriented consultation and engagement activities, this schedule of activities may change.

Table 6 Summary of ongoing engagement activities

Activity	Description / Format / Tools / Resources	Target stakeholders	Purpose	Timeframe	Responsibility
Planning Permit Development and Approvals/Pre-Construction Phase schedule of activities					
Landholder engagement	Continue to engage with host landholder to address any emerging issues or concerns, and update on timelines.	Host landowner	Involve	Ongoing	Premier Strategy Project Manager
Direct Neighbour consultation	Engage with direct neighbours to address any emerging issues or concerns, and update on timelines. Use these meetings to also discuss the Community Benefit Fund and get input from neighbours.	Direct Neighbours	Involve	Ongoing	Premier Strategy Project Manager
Stakeholder Briefings	Continued engagement with key stakeholders to confirm expectations and concerns – update in stakeholder database. Use these meetings to consult on shared benefit preferences and provide an update on the Project approach and timing.	Council MPs Traditional Owners	Involve	Ongoing	Project Manager Premier Strategy
Community Benefit Fund Workshop	Engage a broad cross section of community to present informed opportunities for CBF investment and impact for community	Mortlake community members and groups; direct neighbours; landholders; council	Involve	May 2024	Project team Premier Strategy
Community pop-ups	Continue to engage community on the project at community events such as the Mortlake Markets, which are held every month. This will ensure continued understanding of the project, benefits, and provide an opportunity for community to share their concerns and interest in the MEH and renewables more generally.	All	Inform	Monthly (forward dates tbc)	Project team Premier Strategy
E-newsletter	Produce an e-newsletter to provide updates on Project timing and approach. Invite feedback and offer further opportunities to engage.	Adjacent neighbours Moyne community Key stakeholders	Involve	June 2024	Premier Strategy
E-database	Include promotion of website function for subscription to email updates and stakeholder communications as required.	All	Inform	Ongoing	Premier Strategy

Website	Update the Project website to reflect BrightNight branding, including key project information, information on planning and pre-construction works, including relevant planning documents as required.	All	Inform	Ongoing	Premier Strategy Project Manager
Project fact sheet	Update Project fact sheet, provide during stakeholder and neighbour meetings or as required.	All	Inform	Ongoing	Project Manager Premier Strategy
Media	Set up media monitoring to track coverage of Project construction and development.	All	Inform	Ongoing	Premier Strategy
Community survey	Implement a community survey with selected recipients that are representative of the local community. Use deliberative polling to confirm current sentiments towards the Project and provide feedback to the construction team, to inform approaches to ongoing engagement and issues management.	Neighbours Mortlake community Key stakeholders	Involve	TBC	Premier Strategy
Stakeholder register	Maintain a stakeholder database	Project team	Inform	Ongoing	Premier Strategy Project Manager
Enquiries and Complaints Register	Maintain Enquiries and Complaints Register. Include current enquiries and complaints procedures on the Project website. Monitor the 1800 Project number.	Project team	Inform	Ongoing	Project Manager Premier Strategy
Traditional Owners	Engage further with Traditional Owners for purposes of sharing details of detailed planning outcomes on cultural heritage.	Traditional Owners/ LALCs	Collaborate	Ongoing	Project Manager
Social procurement	Initiate engagement with key stakeholders to identify opportunities the Project can offer to Aboriginal stakeholders, disadvantaged groups, and women.	Community groups, local businesses and networks	Collaborate	TBC	Project Manager Premier Strategy

Appendices

9.1 Appendix A - CSEP

BrightNight Mortlake Energy Hub

Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan



Acknowledgment of Traditional Owners

In the spirit of reconciliation, BrightNight acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea, and community. We pay our respect to their Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

BrightNight is committed to a just, equitable, and reconciled Australia and recognises that we all have a role to play in achieving this vision.

Document control

Change record

Date	Author	Version	Reviewer	Approver	Change Reference
4/12/23 - 24/1/24	Simone Bellears	1	Tania McIntyre Matt Stevens	Rhana Fleming	Creation of CSEP
7/2/24	Simone Bellears	2	Ray Chan	Polly Baranco Ray Chan	Updates to engagement activity and site maps
21/2/24	Simone Bellears	3	Urbis – relevant sections	Polly Baranco Ray Chan	Updates to job numbers and site maps
28/2/24	Simone Bellears	4	Ray Chan	Polly Baranco	
22/4/24	Matt Stevens	5	Simone Bellears	Ray Chan	Changes to milestone dates and project maps. Updates to stakeholder engagement

Periodic evaluation and reviews of this Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan (CSEP) will ensure that it is routinely updated and informed to reflect changing circumstances, community feedback, and ongoing improvements in BrightNight Energy’s community engagement approach.

This will ensure that BrightNight’s communication and engagement remain:

- Relevant to the Project’s evolving needs, issues, and outcomes.
- Responsive and tailored to the needs of key stakeholders and the local community.
- At the leading edge of industry and global best practice.

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Definitions and abbreviations

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
CAG	Community Advisory Group
Cth	Commonwealth
DCCEEW	Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water
DPE	Department of Planning and Environment
DTP	Department of Transport and Planning
EPBC Act	Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999
EP Act	Environmental Protection Act 1994
AEMO	Australian Energy Market Operator Limited
IAP2	International Association for Public Participation
Km	Kilometre
kV	Kilovolt
MEH	Mortlake Energy Hub
MP	Member of Parliament
MW	Megawatt
CFA	Country Fire Association
LALC	Local Aboriginal Land Council
SW REZ	South-West Renewable Energy Zone
TO	Traditional Owners

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Purpose

This Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan (CSEP) has been developed to establish the overarching guidelines, principles, objectives, approach and desired outcomes associated with engaging with the community in and around the proposed development of the Mortlake Energy Hub (MEH).

The Plan outlines the communication and engagement approach to support constructive relationships with stakeholders and the community, mitigate project risks, build BrightNight's reputation within the community, and foster an aligned approach to genuine engagement.

All processes outlined in this document are designed to identify and facilitate opportunities for BrightNight to collaborate, consult, inform and involve stakeholders throughout the various project phases.

The key stakeholders that BrightNight will engage with on this Project include:

- Host landholders
- Neighbouring landholders
- First Nations stakeholders
- Local and State Government representatives
- The broader Mortlake community

Critical aspects of this CSEP include:

- Background context to the Project
- Purpose, scope and objectives of communications and engagement
- Stakeholder analysis to identify specific stakeholder interests relating to the Project
- Analysis of communications and engagement risks
- Key messages
- An outline of engagement activities to mitigate the risks
- An engagement activity schedule that responds to Project milestones and reporting requirements
- A monitoring and evaluation methodology

This live document will be updated in response to stakeholder feedback, Project requirements, and the completion of key milestones.

Introduction to BrightNight

BrightNight is a world leader in large scale renewable energy solutions, and we are excited to bring our bright ideas to regional Australia. We are committed to the responsible development of safe, reliable, renewable power for Australia's transition to a green energy future.

BrightNight understands that for Australians to be able to access clean, affordable energy, we need to find ways to store it, so that it can be dispatched when we need it. We also understand this is a time of change for our communities and we want to understand what is important to people, share our experience and embrace the possibilities together.

As a long-term owner/ operator of renewable projects, BrightNight's engagement with communities is based on enduring relationships and a relentless customer centric approach. We put our stakeholders first and ensure that we handle every aspect of the development process from land acquisition through to construction.

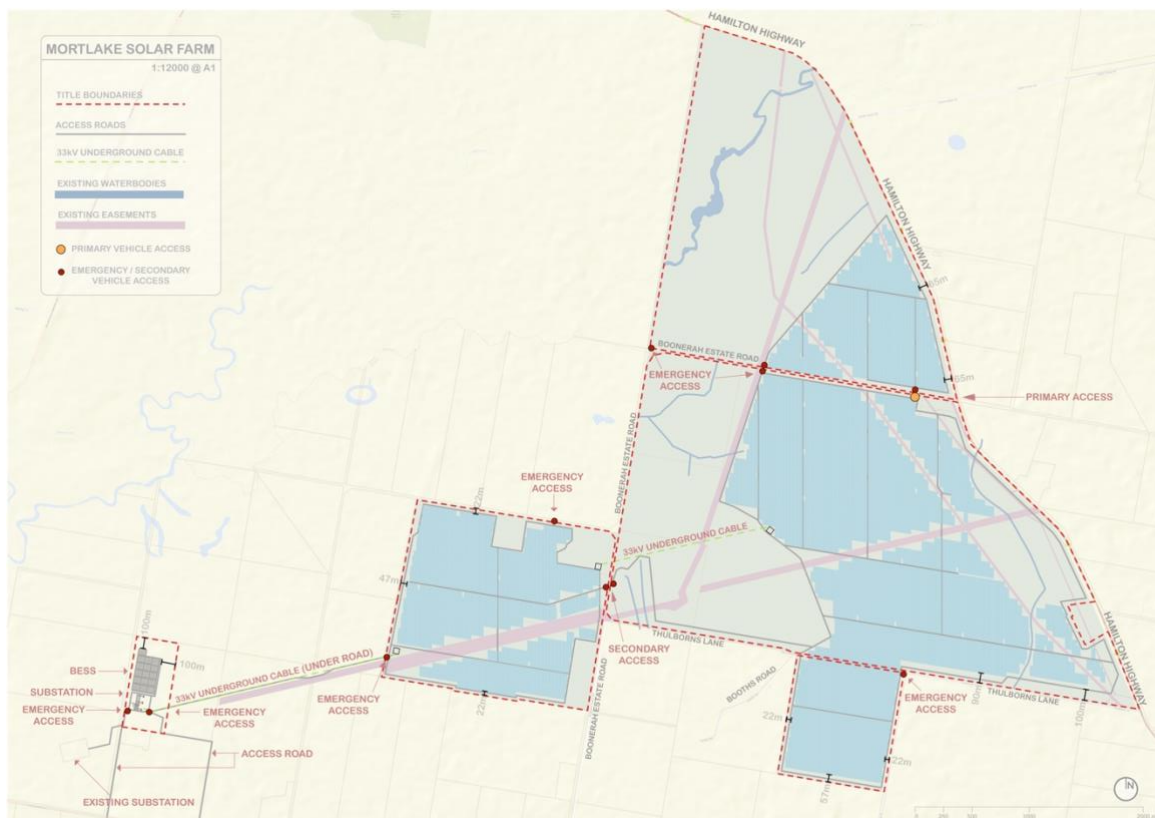
BrightNight's Australian team is passionate, driven, and committed to determining the best energy storage and dispatch solution for each unique community. Our local experts are backed by industry leaders in the United States and around the world, who have a proven record of developing, delivering, and operating large scale renewable energy projects.

Our team is eager to share with Australian communities our cutting-edge hybrid model of co-located large scale solar Photovoltaic (PV) and Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS), to help make renewable energy more affordable.

Project overview

The proposed MEH will generate up to 350MW of solar energy and will have the capacity to store a further 300MW through a BESS. This amount of generation will be able to power 70,000 homes. The project will connect to the existing Mortlake Terminal Station which is located in close proximity to the proposed project site. This connection will be established through a proposed substation, equipped with 33 kV underground cables to the east of the existing terminal station.

The proposed MEH site will be located on a 900 hectare property that is currently used for pastoral grazing. BrightNight intends to apply its state of the art Agri solar practices to the site which means that current agricultural practices will be able to harmoniously coexist with the PV installations.



The MEH will:

- Deliver clean, sustainable and reliable energy to power residences and industry.
- Create jobs and economic benefits for communities.
- Support the development of local supply chains and attract substantial infrastructure investment.
- Facilitate Australia's transition from fossil fuel energy generation.
- Contribute to achieving renewable energy and carbon emission targets set by both the Commonwealth and Victorian governments.
- Ensure the sustainability of the natural environment by mitigating risks to native flora and fauna, as well as the land and waterways.

Timeline

Table 1 – Project timeline

Milestone	Date
Site selection	
Amendment proposal initiated	
Prepare and submit the application	April 2024
Decision	December 2024
Amendment preparation and submission	
Construction to commence	January 2025
Operations to commence	June 2026

Objectives

The objectives that will guide the engagement activities contained within this CSEP include:

- Effectively engage with stakeholders on things that they can influence based on policy, the Project, and the planning process.
- Integrate feedback and engagement outcomes into Project decision-making.
- Build constructive relationships to position BrightNight as a trusted community partner.

This plan aligns with BrightNight’s overarching commitment to stakeholder engagement, which is based on the guiding principles of:

- Communicating decisions that will affect stakeholders as early as possible, in the clearest possible fashion, and through channels they can access.
- Listening to feedback and being clear with stakeholders about where they can influence outcomes / cocreate / participate in the decision-making process, or where they are being advised / informed.
- Incorporate stakeholder feedback wherever possible and follow through where there has been a commitment made.

Engagement requirements and guidelines

Statutory requirements

Consultation and engagement with community members and stakeholders will inform and support the Planning Permit for the development and use of the land for the solar farm and BESS, currently being sought by BrightNight.

This will include:

- Identification of stakeholders including councils, government agencies, and affected communities.
- The approach to engagement, including when, how, and what information has been provided.
- Opportunities that stakeholders will be given to participate in the process.
- Outcomes and findings of the engagement activities, including what was heard, what has or hasn't changed, and why.

International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Quality Assurance Standard

The Quality Assurance Standard was endorsed by the IAP2 Federation in May 2015 and is recognised as the International Standard for Public Participation practice.

Designed to respond to market requirements for evidence that effective community and stakeholder engagement has been delivered, the standard supports the delivery of the IAP2 spectrum of public participation which aims to move engagement from one of inform, consult, or involve to more actively collaborating and empowering stakeholders and local communities.

The standard provides:

- A set of principles to ensure consistency in the quality of consultation and engagement.
- An outline of the important elements of any engagement process and what each stage of a community and stakeholder engagement process should incorporate.
- A quality process by which engagement projects can be assessed.
- Certainty for both practitioners and clients that the community and stakeholder engagement practice has been delivered to these standards.

		INCREASING IMPACT ON THE DECISION				
		INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL		To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
	PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

[The Best Practice Charter for Renewable Energy Developments](#) (Energy Charter) is a voluntary set of commitments for Clean Energy Council (CEC) members designed to clearly communicate the standards that the signatories will uphold in the development of current and new clean energy projects.

As a member of the CEC, BrightNight has committed to engaging respectfully with the communities in which they plan and operate projects, to be sensitive to environmental and cultural values, and to make a positive contribution to the regions in which they operate.

We have developed this Plan to support the 10 commitments outlined by the Energy Charter, included in Appendix 1.

Community Engagement and Benefit Sharing in Renewable Energy Development in Victoria

The [Community Engagement and Benefit Sharing guide](#) sets the Victorian Government's expectations for leading practice community engagement and benefit sharing across all renewable energy technologies. The guide encourages renewable energy developers to consider the cumulative community impacts of proposed developments in some regions and look for opportunities that may exist for strategic co-ordination with other developers and/or industry participants.

Victorian Government's Guidance on Engaging with Traditional Owners

All Victorians – including government departments, agencies, councils, land and resource managers, developers, and tourism operators – should be aware that Traditional Owners have legal rights and interests across their Country. It is important that consideration is given to Traditional Owner rights and interests at the earliest stages of all new projects and activities. The Victorian Government's [Guidance on Engaging with Traditional Owners](#) outlines key engagement principals for engaging with Traditional Owners.

Community context

The Mortlake community

Mortlake is located in the south-west of Victoria, 50 kilometres northeast of the city of Warrnambool, within the Local Government Area (LGA) of Moyne Shire. Mortlake residents (1447) make up just 6 per cent of the Moyne Shire's total population of 17,374. The population distribution is roughly equal between men and women, a split which is comparable to Australia as a whole. Across age groups, however, the communities described here have a median age of 45, which is 8 years older than that of the wider Australian community. The Mortlake community is supported by two schools and is largely an agricultural region, supporting the Hamilton wool district and the broader south west Victorian dairy industry.

The Mortlake region has a rich history with pioneers first settling in the area during the 1850s gold rush. After World War One, when former soldiers were incentivised to become farmers, Mortlake again went through a brief boom as the area was regarded as an "agricultural utopia." Following World War Two, the Mortlake Shire had the highest number of soldier settlers in Australia.

Unfortunately, a series of droughts in the 1980s led to a change in demographics in the region. The younger population started to relocate to urban areas for education and work. Locals blame deregulation—leading to increased competition from larger farms— and more mechanized farming for the area's decline.

Cumulative impacts on the Moyne Shire community

The Moyne Shire forms a large proportion of the South West Victoria candidate Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) and is a major growth area for wind and solar energy development in Victoria. Within Moyne Shire there are five operational wind farms, two under construction, three with permits (but not yet constructed) and three seeking permits or in the feasibility stage. The area is also being considered by several solar farm developers.

If developed, the MEH will be one of the large-scale renewable energy projects in the Moyne Shire. The Moyne Shire Council has (and continues to be) very proactive with highlighting its concerns with regulators, policy makers and developers by making submissions to the various proposed large-scale renewable developments in the area as well as requesting to meet with key energy decision makers (including the Australian Energy Market Operator and MPs) to discuss perceived cumulative impacts. Council has already highlighted several cumulative impact concerns including noise, visual, traffic, road, housing and environmental impacts are consistently raised by the community as areas of concern. The Moyne Shire Council strongly feels that a strategic land use planning approach which manages cumulative impacts is needed to stop further clusters and mitigate future impacts as well as a long term economic and social benefit plan for host communities.

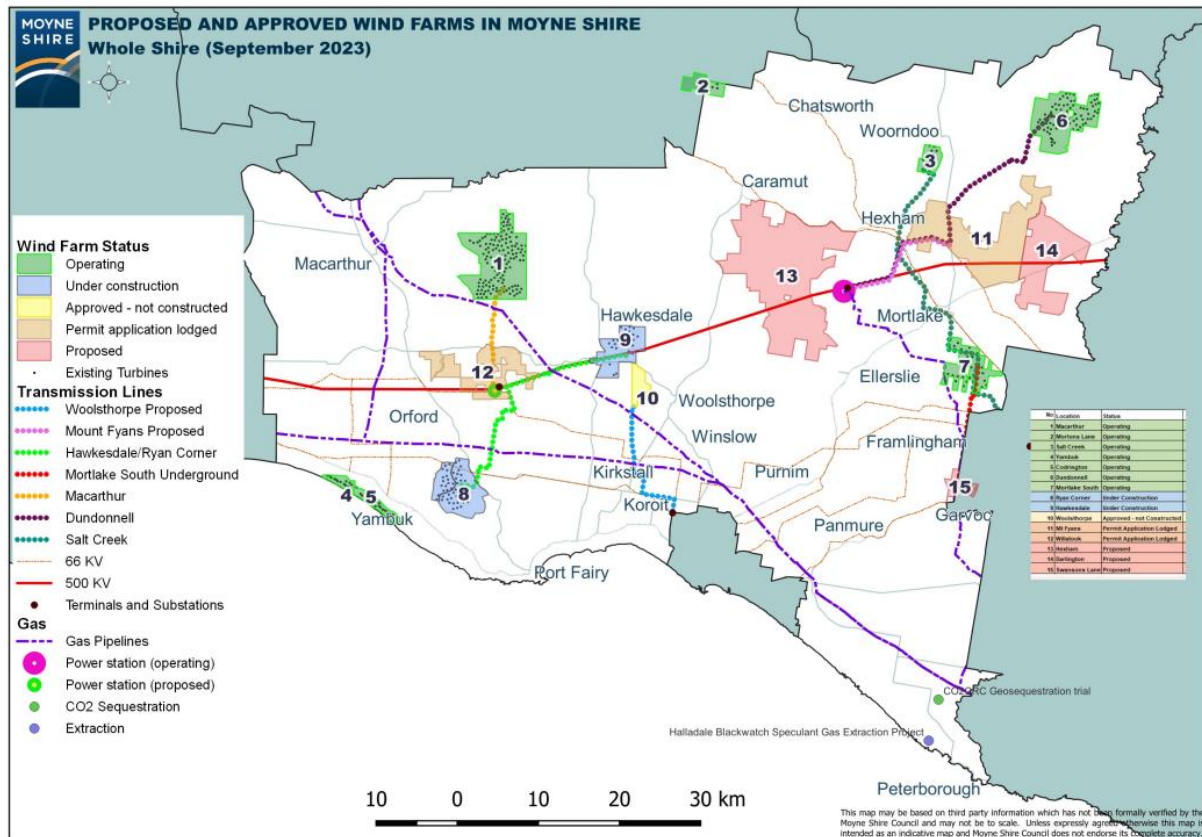
To successfully deliver the MEH within the Moyne Shire Council, BrightNight will need to ensure that the key cumulative impacts highlighted by the Council are considered and addressed. Namely, BrightNight will need to demonstrate:

- A considered Community Benefit Fund that extends benefits to the broader community.
- That powerlines required by the solar farm are given due undergrounding consideration.
- That a robust decommissioning strategy has been considered and developed.

Since 2005, increased renewable projects in the area have led wind farm community funding programs to allocate around AU\$960,000 to local projects in Moyne and the south west region. Since the renewable development uptake in the region, the Moyne Shire Council has been clear about its preference for community benefit sharing programs as opposed to community grant programs.

Renewable developments in the Moyne Shire Council

The saturation of renewable developments in the Moyne Shire area is clearly demonstrated by the following renewable development map.



Map of wind farms and other energy projects in Moyne (Moyne Shire Council website)

The table below further illustrates the compound nature of renewable developments in the Moyne Shire region. The table outlines projects that are currently operational and under construction. There are further projects in the various stages of planning and approvals that are not reflected here.

Table 2 – Surrounding developments

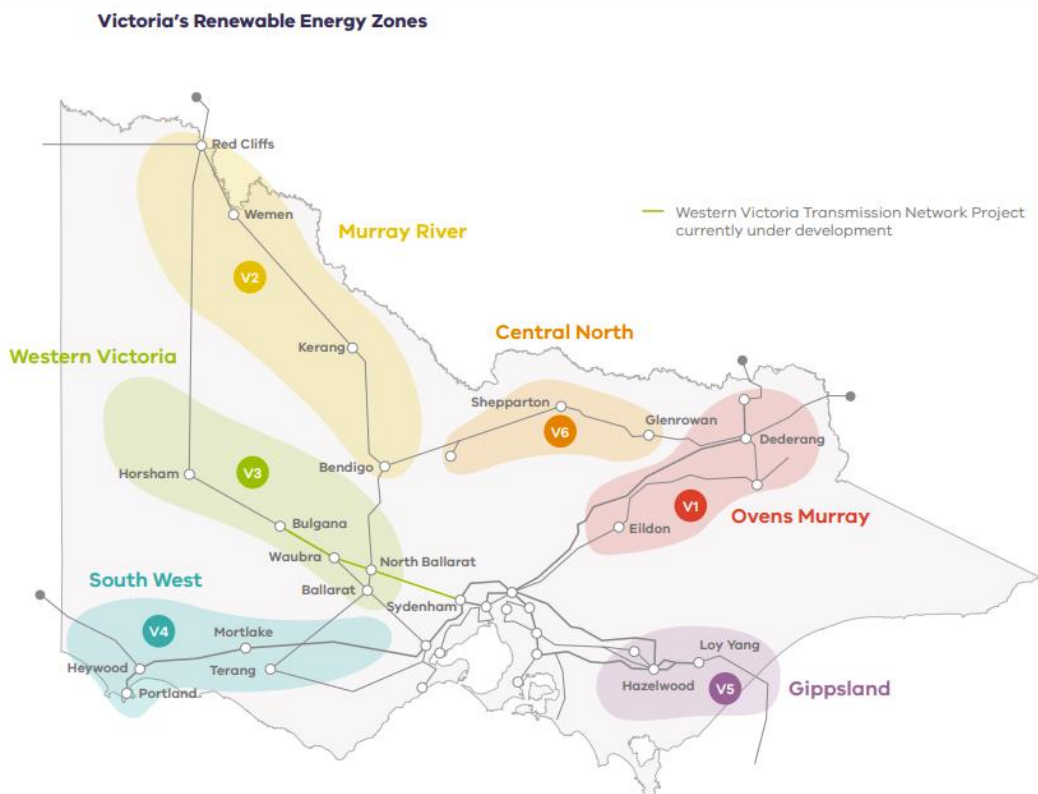
Project name	Developer	Status	Proposed capacity
Codrington Wind Farm	Pacific Hydro	Operational	18 MW
Dundonnell Wind Farm	Tilt Renewables	Operational	336 MW
Macarthur Wind Farm	AGL	Operational	420 MW
Mortlake South Wind Farm	Acciona Energy	Operational	157 MW

Project name	Developer	Status	Proposed capacity
Mortons Lane Wind Farm	CGN Energy	Operational	19 MW
Macarthur Wind Farm	AGL	Operational	420 MW
Salt Creek Wind Farm	Tilt Renewables	Operational	54 MW
Yambuk Wind Farm	Pacific Hydro	Operational	18 MW
Hawksdale Wind Farm	Global Power Generation Australia	Under Construction	97 MW
Ryan Corner Wind Farm	Global Power Generation Australia	Under Construction	218 MW

South West Victoria Renewable Energy Zone (REZ)

The Victorian Government is committed to the development of Renewable Energy Zones (REZs) to actively plan, invest, and develop Victorian REZ electricity network infrastructure, and facilitate beneficial renewable energy generation in each REZ.

The MEH project is located within the South West Victorian REZ. There are many aspects in the rollout of REZs where collaboration and empowerment of the local community can enhance the REZ model. BrightNight is mindful that REZ decisions can be strengthened with local community participation and has included several methods of involving and empowering the South West REZ community in this CSEP.



Key stakeholders

Traditional Owner context

BrightNight is engaging with the Eastern Maar as the Traditional Owners of south-western Victoria. Their land extends as far north as Ararat and encompasses the Warrnambool, Port Fairy and Great Ocean Road areas. It also stretches 100m out to sea from low tide and therefore includes the iconic Twelve Apostles.

“Eastern Maar” is a name adopted by the people who identify as Maar, Eastern Gunditjmara, Tjap Wurrung, Peek Whurrong, Kirrae Whurrung, Kuurn Kopan Noot and/or Yarro waetch (Tooram Tribe) amongst others, who are Aboriginal people and who are:

- descendants, including by adoption, of the identified ancestors; who are members of families who have an association with the former Framlingham Aboriginal Mission Station; and who are recognised by other members of the Eastern Maar People as members of the group.

Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation (EMAC) is the professional organisation that represents the Eastern Maar People of South West Victoria and manages their Native Title rights and Interests.

Key stakeholder groups

The table below identifies the key stakeholder groups that will be engaged throughout the Project. This table will be modified in response to feedback and as additional stakeholders are identified.

A detailed stakeholder mapping exercise has also been completed for the Mortlake Energy Hub project. A process of ranking and recording interests and preferences provides clear guidance on the level of influence and interest each stakeholder is likely to have, informing how BrightNight should engage. The stakeholder mapping exercise will continue to evolve as the Project progresses.

Table 3 – Key stakeholders

Stakeholder group	Details	Objectives	Engagement activities
Host landholders	Landholders hosting solar farm and battery energy storage system on their land.	Ongoing communication and discussions as the Project progresses. Contribution to the Project's progress, ability to provide local knowledge, advice, and input. Involvement in the development and delivery of a community benefit-sharing scheme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One-on-one meetings • Landholder updates • Letterbox drops • Project updates • Invitations and involvement in community events. • Website content and 1800 number.
Directly impacted neighbours (neighbouring property)	Residents with a boundary adjoining the site boundary have the potential to be affected by the visual impact of the solar farm, the noise, and heavy vehicle traffic associated with the construction phase.	To create and maintain a close connection with neighbours that live within a boundary adjoining the project site. To keep direct neighbours informed about the Project from early in process and provide opportunities to raise issues and provide feedback. To ensure that neighbours share in the benefits of the Project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One-on-one meetings • Letterbox drops • Project updates • Community information sessions • Invitations and involvement in community events • Website content and 1800 number.

Stakeholder group	Details	Objectives	Engagement activities
Neighbours within 2km (excluding directly impacted properties)	Residents within a 2km radius of the Project site (excluding directly impacted properties) have the potential to be affected by noise, and heavy vehicle traffic associated with the construction phase.	To create and maintain a close connection with neighbours that live within a 2km radius of the solar farm. To keep neighbours informed about the Project from early in process and provide opportunities to raise issues and provide feedback. To ensure that neighbours share in the benefits of the Project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letterbox drop • One-on-one meetings (where requested) • Project updates • Community information sessions • Invitations and involvement in community events • Website content and 1800 number.
Mortlake community (3272 postcode)	Community members living within the Mortlake township adjacent to the Project.	To keep community members informed about the Project from early in the process and throughout. Provide ongoing opportunities to raise issues and provide feedback.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community information sessions • One-on-one meetings (where requested) • Invitations and involvement in community events. • Website content and 1800 number.
Local Council	<p>We will work with the Moyne Shire Council to shape the Community Engagement Strategy and Benefit Sharing Program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cr Ian Smith, Mayor • Cr Karen Foster, Deputy Mayor • Peter Brown, CEO • Cr Jim Doukas, Councillor • Cr Damian Gleeson, Councillor • Cr Jordon Lockett, Councillor • Cr Daniel Meade, Councillor • Cr James Purcell, Councillor • Jodie McNamara, Director of Environment, Economy and Place 	To ensure a positive and collaborative relationship with the LGA that can support the long-term goals of the local community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactive council briefings/ information packs • Letters at key milestones • Project updates • Community information sessions • Invitations and involvement in community events. • Website content

Stakeholder group	Details	Objectives	Engagement activities
State MPs	<p>Member for Western Victoria, The Hon. Gayle Tierney (Labour) - Minister for Skills and Tafe; Minister for Regional Development</p> <p>Member for Lowan, The Hon. Emma Kealy (NP) - Deputy Leader of the National Party, Shadow Minister for Agriculture</p> <p>Member for South-west coast, The Hon. Roma Britnell (Lib)</p> <p>Member for Western Victoria, The Hon. Jacinta Ermacora (Labour)</p> <p>Member for Western Victoria, The Hon. Sarah Mansfield (Greens)</p> <p>Member for Western Victoria, The Hon. Joe McCracken (Lib)</p> <p>Member for Western Victoria, The Hon. Bev McArthur (Lib)</p>	To ensure that the local members are updated on the Project and its progress.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-person Project briefings • Briefing packs/ materials • Letters at key milestones • Invitations and involvement in community events • Website content
Federal MP	Member for Wannon, The Hon. Dan Tehan (Lib) - Shadow Minister for Immigration	To ensure that the local member is updated on the Project and its progress.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-person Project briefings/ briefing packs • Letters at key milestones. • Website content
Local community groups	Proactive or prominent local community groups	To ensure that strong community groups are supported into the future by local investment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One-on-one meetings • Project updates • Community information sessions • Invitations and involvement in community events

Stakeholder group	Details	Objectives	Engagement activities
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website content and 1800 number.
CFA SES Ambulance Victoria Victoria Police	Mr Tony Spoore, Mortlake CFA Captain SES Mortlake Unit Ambulance Victoria – Mortlake Branch Mortlake Police Station	To ensure Project activities abide by safety and regulatory requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide indicative design plans and updates on the Project to prepare for local fire and emergency safety requirements Invitations and involvement in community events Website content and 1800 number.
Schools, TAFEs, and universities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mortlake College P-12 St Colman’s Catholic school (P-6) Mortlake Kindergarten READY SET GO Childcare Hawkesdale P12 College Port Fairy Consolidated School Koroit And District Primary School 	To ensure organisations are updated on education and vocational opportunities associated with the Project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project updates Community information sessions Invitations and involvement in community events Website content and 1800 number.
Business groups / industry stakeholders	We will aim to engage and collaborate with local businesses and business networks to explore opportunities for their participation in the Local Procurement Plan.	To ensure BrightNight is creating opportunities for local businesses to participate in the development of local renewable energy projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-construction local business expression of interest Invitation to local employment and supplier networking session Project updates Community information sessions Invitations and involvement in community events Website content and 1800 number.

Stakeholder group	Details	Objectives	Engagement activities
First Nations stakeholders	<p>We will seek to engage and understand what elements of the Project are culturally relevant and/or sensitive.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation • Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council • First Peoples – State Relations 	Engaging with local Indigenous groups beyond planning requirements such as Cultural Heritage Management Plans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One-on-one meetings • Letters at key milestones • Project updates • Invitations and involvement in community events • Invitation to co-design Indigenous participation/ procurement plans • Website content and 1800 number.
Solar farm opponents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will aim to identify the concerns raised by local opponents of the solar farm. 	To be accessible, help to address concerns proactively, and to have a best practice complaints system in place.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website content and 1800 number • Complaints process implemented and transparent
Advocacy groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will aim to identify and work closely with project advocacy groups. • RE-Alliance 	Discussions on community energy and zero emissions targets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project updates • Invitations and involvement in community events • Website content and 1800 number.
Community organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mortlake Lions Club • Rotary Club of Mortlake • CWA Mortlake 	To provide information and raise awareness of the Project so local community groups can update their members.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project updates • Invitations and involvement in community events • Website content and 1800 number.
VicRoads VicGrid SEC DTP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulator of made and unmade roads and road reserves. 	To ensure Project activities abide by safety and regulatory requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide indicative design plans and updates on the Project to prepare for permit requirements.

Stakeholder group	Details	Objectives	Engagement activities
DJSIR			
Media	Mortlake Dispatch		

Summary of engagement to date (up to 31/1/ 2024)

Landholders and near neighbours

Neighbouring landholders and those situated within 2kms of the project area have been initially contacted via phone call or direct letter mail drop of an introductory flier, to invite them to hear first-hand about the Project, before wider community engagement. Following the direct letter drop, follow up calls and emails were placed with neighbouring landholders and 1:1 engagement has commenced with those that have registered interest. We continue to reach out to a further neighbours who are yet to contact us or register for further information.

BrightNight has provided initial answers to community enquiries, with key areas of discussion including:

- Site location
- Visual amenity changes to the site
- Site access roads and their usage
- The viability of grazing sheep within the solar farm ('Agri-solar').
- Implications for neighbouring landholders regarding insurance, fire risk and/or property values; and
- Cultural heritage

Local Aboriginal Traditional owner group

In November 2023, the Project team (BrightNight and Urbis) met with Eastern Maar Aboriginal Cooperation (EMAC) as the registered Aboriginal party for the Mortlake area, inclusive of the proposed project site location. The project team shared an introduction to the Mortlake Energy Hub, including proposed construction methodology and layout scenarios.

Eastern Maar provided some historical context to the area and strongly suggested the developer undertake a voluntary Cultural Heritage Management plan if a mandatory CHMP is not triggered under the Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018 (Vic). There should be consideration of environmental aspects, including intangible cultural heritage values. For example, native plant species to be impacted, or eagle strike at wind farms (totem animal). EMAC committed to a consult internally regarding potential intangible values relevant to the location and confirmed that geotechnical testing could proceed without a CHP.

Moyne Shire Council

BrightNight presented a high-level overview of the Mortlake Energy Hub project at a meeting with the Moyne Shire Council on Tuesday 21 November 2023. The project details were shared with Councillors and executive team, including former CEO Brett Davis, with the opportunity for questions and comments. Topics discussed included but were not limited to

- Site location
- Solar energy process and benefits
- Housing – workforce impact and location
- Agriculture
- Community benefit fund

The Project team committed to continue ongoing engagement and updates with council as the project progresses. On 2/2/ 24 new CEO was announced: Peter Brown.

Engagement with the broader community

On Sunday 10 December 2023, BrightNight, represented by Polly Baranco and Henry Yip, assisted by Jon Mills (Urbis) and Matt Stevens (Premier Strategy), hosted a pop-up stall at the Mortlake Market from 9am to 1pm. With over 48 stalls, the event provided a platform for BrightNight to commence engaging with the community on its recently launched project, Mortlake Energy Hub. The presence at the market provided BrightNight an opportunity to share project details including location, size of development area, timeline and general information about the solar panel anatomy, BESS anatomy and introduce BrightNight as a new neighbour in the community.

Discussions with stall visitors explored:

- **Good (and bad) engagement examples**

- As a Renewable Energy Zone (REZ), community members were keen to share examples of positive engagement e.g. Mortlake South Wind Farm and negative engagement e.g. new project-specific transmission lines. Open and honest communication is important to this community, who are well-versed in wind farm projects.

- **Community benefit fund activity recommendations**

- With so many community benefit funds committed by various renewable projects in the area, community members shared a range of ideas they thought best supported their community. The ideas ranged from supporting individual organisations e.g. football club jumpers to broader, more strategic opportunities e.g. EV fast charging station. Overwhelmingly, any community benefit fund commitment needs to be developed in consultation with the people of the region.

- **Key community and business groups to connect with**

- It was clear the community is important. There are a few trusted organisations and individuals within the community that BrightNight was encouraged to connect with.

- **Housing, local procurement and education & training**

- Stay local. Use the trades and business in Mortlake. And upskill our people.

State and Federal Member engagement

In conjunction with community member engagements, a letter of information was sent on 9 December 2023 to the office of the local members of the south west district; local member for Lowan and Federal member for Wannon electorate.

Aside from general acknowledgement of receipt, south west MP, Roma Britnell, followed up with request for meeting, which was subsequently held on 12 January 2024, with BrightNight Australian management team, Polly Baranco and Ray Chan.

A second round of communication will be distributed prior to next community engagement in February/ March 2024.

Key features of ongoing engagement will include:

Email updates – email updates are being used to provide information on the Project status, timing, and approach. Options for providing feedback to the Project team are included.

Social procurement planning – development of a social procurement plan is underway to ensure social enterprises and organisations concentrating on the advancement of key social groups have fair and equitable opportunities to obtain work during Project construction and operations.

Social impact assessment – a detailed social impact assessment has been compiled to confirm socioeconomic opportunities and risks. Input from key stakeholders has informed this analysis, which will be used to refine and expand the Project’s engagement approach.

First Nations engagement – ongoing consultation with Indigenous representative groups is being conducted to explore the Traditional Owner’s understanding of the local Country and options for collaborating on the delivery of mutually beneficial initiatives (i.e. employment for Indigenous work crews).

Community and social benefit planning will be multifaceted and adaptive and will align with industry best practice standards.

Engagement and communication approach

Overarching approach

The approach detailed in this plan outlines a process to enable consistent, targeted, and meaningful engagement and will focus on the following guiding principles:

- **Engage early and often** to establish and build relationships with key stakeholders including local council and occupiers of neighbouring land to identify any risks and concerns.
- **Genuine engagement** by providing clear and concise information about the Project, including impacts and benefits, providing opportunities for consultation relevant to the level of impact and interest in the Project, and in collaboration with potentially affected landholders and community members.
- **Local focus** to proactively develop two-way communication channels tailored to the needs and interests of the local community.

Engagement tools and techniques

The table below summarises potential engagement and communications tools to enable participation by stakeholders and community members. Engagement and communications will be structured around key Project milestones and events. Details on when these tools will be implemented are outlined in the Action Plan.

Table 4 - Engagement tools and techniques

Tools	Purpose
Stakeholder and community interactions database/ spreadsheet	BrightNight will maintain a stakeholder and feedback database. This database will capture stakeholder information and specific engagement details, ensuring that stakeholder feedback, concerns, and enquiries are recorded and addressed. The database will be used to record all queries including those raised at community meetings and assign actions to relevant staff to ensure these are followed up promptly.
Project webpage	An BrightNight-branded Australian Project webpage is being finalised to be used as a key interface with stakeholders and the wider

Tools	Purpose
	community. Hosted on BrightNight’s corporate website, it includes general Project information, factsheets, and contact information, including an online feedback form. It will be updated regularly to reflect the latest Project information.
Community enquiry number	BrightNight will promote a toll-free community feedback phone number in all communications.
Email address	A Project email address has been established and is available to stakeholders and the community during the life of the Project. The email will be listed on all collateral being produced for community and stakeholder dissemination.
FAQs	Frequently Asked Questions to enable consistent responses to common questions across the Project team and stakeholders.
Letters	Tailored letters will be used for formal engagement with directly affected stakeholders and MPs. Letters will include relevant updates on the Project and key details such as Project and construction milestones.
Media releases	Media releases will be issued to communicate key messages, milestones, and announcements. Copies will be provided to relevant media outlets, as required. Major Project milestones are to be formally announced through a media event.
In-person meetings	Face-to-face meetings can take a variety of forms including scheduled meetings and site visits. Meetings are designed to offer information about the Project, establish and maintain open lines of communication, and establish a relationship should there be any future concerns or queries related to the Project. Meetings are to have an agenda, with minutes recording key decisions and all meeting participants. Community members will be notified of upcoming meetings via direct emails and follow-up phone calls where they are direct invitees, and via media advertising when the meetings are open to the wider community.
Surveys and questionnaires	Should stakeholder feedback on the proposal and engagement activities be required, online surveys and physical handout questionnaires will be used.

Tools	Purpose
Fact sheets	A relevant fact sheet to be prepared for distribution at community engagement activities to provide Project information on various topics. Fact sheets will also be published on the Project website.
Advertisements (Traditional and Social Media)	Community-focused consultation information will utilise social media platforms and traditional local media advertising to promote awareness, provide updates, and advise on key community meetings and consultation events.
Facilitated meetings	Facilitated meetings between key stakeholders and the Project team to provide transparency and access to technical experts and ultimately build a constructive relationship between BrightNight and the community.
Information events	Where required, local information sessions to support understanding of the Project by broader community members and stakeholders. These may be hosted by BrightNight or may include attendance at local regional events.

Potential risks, issues and concerns

A summary of the key risks and proposed management strategies or messaging is set out below.

Table 5 – Risks, issues and concerns

Subject	Risk / Issue / Concern	Potential management strategy / project response
Mistrust in the consultation process	Stakeholder concerns that the consultation process is 'merely for show' and is not genuine.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear messaging on how stakeholder feedback has been and will continue to be used going forward (transparency). • All team members to show genuine interest in stakeholder feedback and always capture feedback irrespective of sentiment.
Active 'anti' campaign commenced against BrightNight and / or the Project proposal	Engagement and communications focus on vocal minorities (including anti-renewable groups) taking focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structured and transparent early engagement. • Consistent approach to engagement and communications.

Subject	Risk / Issue / Concern	Potential management strategy / project response
	away from the broader engagement process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of consultation with broad stakeholder groups, with varied interests. • Structured and responsive (rather than reactive) issues management. • Positive media strategy.
	Unsupportive community and / or the activation of community / landholder protest groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structured and transparent early engagement. • Consistent approach to engagement and communications, including Project benefits targeted at the local community. • Development of a local procurement strategy.
Negative media interest	Media takes a negative interest in the Project and launches an active campaign with a negative focus.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structured media strategy to address media issues. • Clear media protocols for management of media enquiries. • Transparent, open, ongoing communications to external stakeholders. • Ongoing appropriate issues management.
Project impact concerns	Cultural heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing engagement and collaboration with key stakeholders, including Aboriginal groups and other heritage knowledge holders. • Develop clear messaging on how cultural heritage assessments are conducted and what happens if an artifact or place of significance is identified and confirmed.
	Construction impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consulting with the local community to include construction impacts. • Development of a construction impact management and mitigation strategy

Subject	Risk / Issue / Concern	Potential management strategy / project response
		<p>addressing potential construction impact including traffic, noise, and air quality.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of an emergency response plan.
	Environment, flora and fauna	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing engagement and community involvement in identifying key areas of flora or fauna importance. • Develop clear messaging on how ecology surveys are conducted and what happens if specific flora or fauna are identified and confirmed.

Community Engagement Action Plan

Table 6 – Community Engagement Plan

Activity	Description / Format / Tools / Resources	Target stakeholders	Purpose	Timeframe	Responsibility
Construction Phase					
Start of construction media	Issue proactive media release to mark the start of construction. Highlight local benefits and local employment targets, approaches, and outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Media 	Inform	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Engagement Advisor Project Manager
Key stakeholder meetings	Further meetings with key stakeholders to introduce the Project Manager and EPC where necessary. Invite feedback on the planned approach to monitor for new issues/concerns.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council MPs Regulatory Authorities Local community groups 	Involve	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Engagement Advisor Project Manager EPC
Site signage	Provide informative site signage in addition to minimum compliance signage. This will include contact details for the community.	All	Inform	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Manager EPC
Community benefit fund	Establish a community benefit fund advisory committee via local advertising and newsletter coverage and host the first meeting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local council Neighbours Mortlake Community General community 	Collaborate	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Manager

Activity	Description / Format / Tools / Resources	Target stakeholders	Purpose	Timeframe	Responsibility
	Provide and agree on a term of reference.				
Building capacity for local employment	Continue discussions and face-to-face introductions with key employment and economic representatives to establish the best means of supporting local hire objectives with EPC.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local suppliers Local workers 	Inform	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Manager
Social procurement	Continue engagement with key stakeholders to engage organisations that work directly with Aboriginal stakeholders, disadvantaged groups, and women, to offer opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traditional Owners/ Aboriginal businesses Local NFP Employment agencies Schools 	Collaborate	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Engagement Advisor
Community e-newsletter	Continue production of community e-newsletter and provide updates on construction as required. Deliver to neighbours within 3km, and email to key stakeholders and community database.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neighbours Key stakeholders 	Inform	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Engagement Advisor
Transport route engagement	Consider additional stakeholders impacted by transport route, and site deliveries, and commence targeted engagement in advance of transport occurring.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transport route residents Australia Post local service 	Involve	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Manager

Activity	Description / Format / Tools / Resources	Target stakeholders	Purpose	Timeframe	Responsibility
Neighbours	Continue close engagement with neighbours to inform them of Project progress, and timings, and monitor for issues as they arise. Implement the use of construction amenity funds as required to mitigate impacts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighbours 	Collaborate	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Engagement Advisor
Agrisolar	Continue to consult with host landholders on agrisolar design requirements, including site design, fencing, etc. Incorporate on-site meetings to assess progress and identify any operational issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landholders 	Collaborate	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Manager
Emergency services	Continue to engage with RFS and other emergency services to ensure the Project supports local emergency response.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency services 	Inform	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Manager
Ongoing media and community outreach	Continue to provide factual, informative media stories to local papers to update the community/stakeholders on Project achievements and deliverables against social benefits and local procurement plans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media • Mortlake community • Moyne LGA 	Inform	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications

Activity	Description / Format / Tools / Resources	Target stakeholders	Purpose	Timeframe	Responsibility
Enquiries and Complaints Register	Maintain Enquiries and Complaints Register and respond in line with procedure. Monitor 1800 Project number and website enquiries. Periodically report feedback from this process to the construction team to adjust approach / engagement plans if required.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project team 	Inform	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Manager
Community drop-in session	Consider hosting an onsite or nearby community drop-in session for community members to meet with the construction team and participate in an informal update / discussion on ongoing works onsite.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neighbours Mortlake community 	Involve	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Engagement Advisor
Community engagement monitoring and review	Periodically monitor / assess quality, timelines, and reach of engagement initiatives. Confirm engagement plan is meeting the proposed objectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project team 	Inform	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Engagement Advisor

Activity	Description / Format / Tools / Resources	Target stakeholders	Purpose	Timeframe	Responsibility
Operations Phase					
Start of operations media/event	Consider running a start of commercial operations media event announcement. Invite key stakeholders, and neighbours as an opportunity to share the outcomes delivered by the Project to date.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media • Neighbours • Council • MPs • Special interest groups • Project team 	Inform	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Engagement Advisor • Project Manager
Project fact sheet	Redevelop Project fact sheet to suit operations and use for distribution in hard copy during school visits, tours, and the website.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All 	Inform	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asset Management (TBC)
E-newsletter	The final edition of the e-newsletter to detail the approach to asset management and to support the transition into operations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighbours • Mortlake community 	Inform	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asset Management (TBC)

Activity	Description / Format / Tools / Resources	Target stakeholders	Purpose	Timeframe	Responsibility
Neighbour relations	Maintain relations with immediate neighbours via direct communications, involvement in wider community activities, and provision of an annual onsite event. Use neighbour communications for early identification of issues and risks (i.e. noise).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighbours 	Involve	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asset Management (TBC)
Enquiries and Complaints Register	Ongoing implementation of formal enquiries and complaints procedure to ensure ongoing best-practice management of community contacts. Maintain 1800 Project number.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All 	Involve	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asset Management (TBC)
Incident response procedure	Specific communications and engagement input to incident management to ensure community and stakeholder perspectives are included (i.e. media management, neighbour notifications).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All 	Inform	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asset Management (TBC)
Community benefit fund	Implement annual community grants commitment each year, to run for the life of the asset. Implementation includes planning, activation (advertising and stakeholder communications), media, and liaison with social benefit partners in collaboration with the grants committee.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighbours • Council • Mortlake community 	Collaborate	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asset Management (TBC)

Activity	Description / Format / Tools / Resources	Target stakeholders	Purpose	Timeframe	Responsibility
Council and Emergency Services meeting	Maintain periodical meetings with the Council Mayor and General Manager (Council, quarterly). Maintain annual site meetings with RFS before the bushfire season.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emergency services Council 	Collaborate	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asset Management (TBC)
Website	Maintain the existing MEH project page on corporate website and update it with relevant operations, news, and community news as required. Maintain as the primary source of detailed project information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All 	Inform	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asset Management (TBC)

Activity	Description / Format / Tools / Resources	Target Stakeholders	Purpose	Timeframe	Responsibility
Decommissioning Phase					
<p>As part of the responsible management of all assets, BrightNight will develop a Decommissioning Plan in the later years of the Project.</p> <p>The DA requires this 12 months before decommissioning. Engagement with neighbours and key stakeholders remains a key activity before and through this phase.</p> <p>An engagement plan will be developed alongside the Decommissioning Plan and will include the following essentials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continuation of the Enquiries and Complaints Register, 1800 number and website. - Collaboration with Council and key community groups to forward-plan for potential impacts on the socioeconomic status of the region. - Informative communications on the approach to decommissioning, timing, impacts, and mitigation of environmental concerns. - A structured approach to ensure the site can return to full grazing/agricultural land use, in close cooperation with landholders. - Support for onsite personnel to transition to other employment in the area. - Support for community groups and grant recipients to sustain partnership programs and initiatives. 					

Key messages

The following messages are based on this CSEP’s objectives, guiding principles and key issues. The messages are to be updated as the Project progresses and customised for the communications channels outlined in this CSEP. It is recommended BrightNight FAQ document accompanies the messaging to stakeholder groups that require detail or response to specific concerns.

Table 7 – Key Messages

General BrightNight and Project topics	Key messages
<p>About BrightNight</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BrightNight is a world leader in large scale renewable energy solutions, and we’re excited to bring our bright ideas to regional Australia. • Our technology is safe, reliable and will provide Australian households with access to affordable clean energy. • BrightNight is a long-term owner of renewable energy projects, and we are committed to maintaining meaningful relationships with communities where our projects are based. • Community engagement is based on an undertaking to inform, educate, gather feedback. BrightNight is focussed on people, and creating meaningful, enduring partnerships with local communities. We prioritise safety over all else. • BrightNight’s Australian team is passionate, driven, and committed to determining the best energy storage and dispatch solutions, for each unique community. Our local experts are backed by industry leaders in the United States and around the world, who have a proven record of developing, delivering, and operating large scale renewable energy projects. <p>Engagement philosophy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a long-term owner of renewable projects, BrightNight is committed to ongoing engagement with the community and creating enduring, open relationships based on informing, educating, gathering feedback and responding. We understand this is a time of change in rural and regional Australia and we want to share our experience, understand what is important to people and embrace the possibilities together. • We know some people may have questions about renewable energy operations in their community and we are eager to meet and address these concerns. • BrightNight invites the Mortlake community to stay actively involved in this project to ensure their views and ideas are heard and responded to as part of the development process.

General BrightNight and Project topics	Key messages
	Upcoming community sessions will provide an opportunity for people to learn more about and provide feedback.
Addressing Australia's Energy transition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BrightNight is well-positioned to ensure the Australian energy market mobilises renewable power investments that provide continuous power products. • Under the Paris Agreement, Australia is committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions to 26-28 per cent below 2005 levels, by 2030. Victoria's target is to be 95 per cent reliant on renewable energy by 2035. • Australia's energy target is at risk of not being met, due to delays in the progression of green energy projects caused by transmission challenges. • For every Australian to be able to access clean energy, we require ways to store and dispatch it, when it is most needed. • BrightNight is working to support the clean energy transition.
About the Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BrightNight is proposing the development of a hybrid model which optimises co-located large scale solar PV (Photovoltaic) and battery energy storage systems (BESS). The Mortlake Energy Hub will produce 350 MW solar energy and store a further 300 MW through a BESS which will connect to the existing Mortlake Terminal Station. • This connection will be established through a proposed substation, equipped with 33 kV underground cables to the east of the existing terminal station. • Mortlake Energy Hub will be located on a 900-hectare property that is currently used for pastoral grazing • Mortlake Energy Hub embraces Agri solar practices, so the identified site can be used harmoniously for farming and solar energy generation. • Up to 400 jobs are expected to be created during the construction phase and there will be continued economic benefits for the community, associated with ongoing employment and the engagement of local services.

General BrightNight and Project topics	Key messages
<p>About Project benefits</p>	<p>BrightNight's Mortlake Energy Hub (MEH) project benefits include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local employment boost • Sustainable jobs • Community investment • Enhanced energy supply • Grid reliability • The MEH Project will create approximately 400 full-time equivalent jobs during the peak construction period, injecting economic vitality into the local community. • The employment opportunities created through the MEH Project will benefit the Mortlake economy, without putting unnecessary strain on rental and accommodation options, with discussions underway to develop a housing plan • Over the project's 30+ years of operation, it will provide approximately five permanent jobs, ensuring long-term employment opportunities for the local workforce. • BrightNight's commitment extends beyond energy generation to include direct local investment through a Community Benefit Fund, further enriching the region's development. • The solar asset integrated into the Mortlake Energy Hub Solar Farm will significantly contribute to increased electricity generation capacity, bolstering the area's energy resources. • With the battery energy storage system, the project will offer increased dispatchable electricity, firming capabilities, and enhanced system strength services, ensuring a reliable and stable energy grid. • BrightNight is dedicated to collaborating with the Moyne Shire Council, negotiating a Community Benefit Fund that will benefit the community and the region as a whole.
<p>About solar power</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solar energy is a renewable source of energy that can be converted into electricity using a range of ever-improving techniques. • Solar photovoltaic (PV) panels are currently the most widespread type of solar PV technology, however, other types of solar PV are being developed that can be integrated into buildings, such as flexible PV and even PV paint. • That's why companies like BrightNight are investing in solar energy, an inexhaustible energy source that sustainably meets our emerging energy needs. • Solar panels harness sunlight to produce energy, relying on the light rather than the heat. It is common for panels to become less effective in extreme heat. • Solar panels and their components are safe for the plants, animals, and people who live around them.

General BrightNight and Project topics	Key messages
	<p>Pros</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's a renewable and available resource. • It's easy to install. • No noise occurs during energy production. • Low maintenance. <p>Cons</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy can only be produced during daylight hours – that's why we're investing in storage solutions. • The amount of sunlight available depends on location, time of day, time of year, and weather conditions. • Needs lots of space.

Stakeholder Group	Key messages
<p>Host landholders Direct engagement with BrightNight and Urbis</p>	<p>FOR ALL STAKEHOLDER GROUPS: Always refer to BrightNight's engagement commitment to communicate early and listen, respond and, where possible, act, on feedback received. Thank you for supporting Australia's clean energy transition.</p> <p>We acknowledge the diversification of your business model and will ensure our communications with your neighbours are respectful and timely, so that this does not define your relationships.</p> <p>Your ongoing knowledge and advice will be invaluable as the project progresses.</p> <p>We want your involvement in the establishment and delivery of the community benefit-sharing scheme</p>
<p>Direct neighbours</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BrightNight is committed to informing you of the project and listening to you through face-to-face 1:1 interactions. • We know you will have questions relating to your property and [insert contact] is available to speak with you. You are also welcome to attend our upcoming community events (insert relevant dates). • We will gather feedback and provide information and updates. How often would you like to hear from us?
<p>Neighbours to 3km</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BrightNight is a long-term owner of renewable energy initiatives. This underpins our community engagement philosophy since we are establishing relationships with communities during the development phase, that will endure for the lifetime of our projects.

Stakeholder Group	Key messages
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our consultation is genuine, and we welcome your input. • BrightNight invites you to attend one of our drop-in information sessions (insert relevant dates) at [insert location] where people can learn more about the project plans and have a say on a range a of community-based initiatives. • We want to provide you with early, and regular communication about the project and hear your feedback on the issues that matter to you, as a neighbour directly interested in the project. • We will ensure you are able to share in the project's benefits. • We look forward to providing further details on the shared community benefit fund and hearing your ideas on where the community can best utilise this investment
<p>Mortlake community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We know the community has concerns about the transmission lines required to connect renewable energy projects to the grid. We are pleased to advise that the Mortlake Energy Hub proposes to use existing infrastructure and connect to the existing transmission lines, minimising the visual impact of our project. • Large-scale solar farms need access to electricity transmission and distribution networks. They also need large expanses of flat and flood-free land. Panels can be raised to allow sheep grazing and some types of horticulture. • BrightNight is committed to consulting with the residents of Mortlake and surrounding areas, to understand the shared issues and specific needs of people living and working within the Moyne Shire. • BrightNight is eager to share its project development plans with the community through upcoming activities including [insert details] • Your feedback will help shape this project and people can keep track of developments via our website project page [insert link]. • BrightNight is working in collaboration with Moyne Shire Council to ensure genuine consultation and shared outcomes for residents and local businesses.
<p>Council</p> <p>Messaging should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledge council's role. • Balance community concerns about 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BrightNight's model represents progress towards zero emission targets, with minimal impact due to reliance on existing infrastructure via the Mortlake substation terminal. • BrightNight is applying known and proven technology that utilises the existing infrastructure– creating no further visual impact for the community. • BrightNight's hybrid model provides council with a solution to support an innovative and progressive renewable project

Stakeholder Group	Key messages
<p>transmission lines with support for renewables and energy-progressive strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage active listening. • Convey a willingness to work with council to provide innovative solutions to perceived challenges. <p>Issues important to Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects co-located with existing lines. • Committing to assessing agricultural land impact during development (opportunity to promote Agrivoltaic practices). • Committing to a process which will consider wildlife protection. • Advocating for neighbour financial benefits from renewable power generation (community investment) which benefit the wider community, rather than individual landowners. 	<p>within the shire, without adding new transmission lines to the grid.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BrightNight is keen to learn from the council's experience of community impact and benefits in regard to renewable projects in its shire. • Mortlake Energy Hub embraces Agri voltaic practices, which means the designated land [insert site] is used for both farming and solar power. • Studies report benefits to livestock, soil and grass. • BrightNight is a long-term owner of renewable initiatives. This underpins our community engagement philosophy to establish relationships with communities as early as possible in the development phase, which will endure for the lifetime of our projects.

Stakeholder Group	Key messages
<p>State MPs</p> <p>Track record of delivery (including any instances of hybrid model).</p> <p>Company financial overview (e.g. – revenue, growth forecasts, debt levels, share price, details of other investments and assets).</p> <p>Expected job creation and economic uplift figures.</p> <p>No new overhead transmission lines/undergrounding of transmission to Mortlake terminal.</p> <p>Benefits of hybrid model and BrightNight expertise in this area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of BrightNight’s key objectives is to give confidence to regulators, governments, decision-makers, and other stakeholder representatives by demonstrating our engagement approach. • We acknowledge the important role you play as a conduit for community concerns and, we would like to directly engage you early and often on the MEH project and planning progress. As we have shared directly with them: • Rest assured, we have a strong track record in honestly engaging with the communities in which our projects are based to understand the local nuances, and ensure members have a say in the direct and indirect benefits. • We recognise the fact the MEH Project’s success lies mostly in ensuring the community is well-informed and not surprised about the project’s progress. • We understand we need to build trust and a solid foundation with the community and like any relationship, this takes time and lots of nurturing.
<p>Federal MP</p> <p>Company financial overview.</p> <p>Track record of delivery.</p> <p>Uniqueness of hybrid model and utility in renewable energy transition – potential for more of this kind of project once Mortlake established?</p> <p>Commitment to Australian energy transition (including detail of any other planned Australian projects).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of BrightNight’s key objectives is to give confidence to regulators, governments, decision-makers, and other stakeholder representatives by demonstrating our engagement approach. • BrightNight has shared its commitment with the community: • Rest assured, we have a strong track record in honestly engaging with the communities in which our projects are based to understand the local nuances and ensure members have a say in the direct and indirect benefits. • We recognise the fact the MEH Project’s success lies mostly in ensuring the community is well-informed and not surprised about the project’s progress.

Stakeholder Group	Key messages
Local community groups	<p>We will keep you up to date as the project progresses.</p> <p>If there are community organisations with ideas on how we can partner with you, please contact us to discuss.</p>
Country Fire Authority	<p>We will keep you up to date as the project progresses.</p> <p>We want to work with you to ensure our project activities abide by safety and regulatory requirements.</p>
Business groups / industry stakeholders	<p>We want to work with you to understand possible ways you can participate in the development of the project.</p> <p>We will be encouraging flow-on financial benefits for local businesses</p>
First Nations stakeholders	<p>BrightNight is committed to a relationship with Eastern Maar as the local Indigenous authority, to advise on the development phase and help inform a responsible and culturally sensitive plan for the Mortlake Energy Hub project.</p> <p>We acknowledge and respect Traditional Owner's understanding of Country.</p> <p>We'll be exploring options for collaborating with Traditional Owners on the delivery of mutually beneficial initiatives (i.e. employment for indigenous work crews).</p>
Project opponents	<p><i>* These messages are based on current assumed concerns. They will require further work dependent on each individual opponent/ group, their questions' their tone etc.</i></p> <p>A reminder: FOR ALL STAKEHOLDER GROUPS: Always refer to BrightNight's engagement commitment to communicate early and listen, respond, and, where possible, act, on feedback received.</p> <p>We share your commitment to environmental preservation. Let's work together to address concerns and find sustainable solutions for solar farm development that minimise ecological impacts.</p> <p>Your input is invaluable. We're dedicated to meaningful engagement and open dialogue to address your concerns and ensure our project benefits the entire community.</p>

Stakeholder Group	Key messages
	<p>We value our heritage. Let's collaborate to identify and protect cultural and historical sites while still promoting sustainable energy solutions.</p> <p>Our commitment is to work closely with you to design solar farms that are visually harmonious with the surroundings. Let's explore landscaping, screening, and aesthetic design options to minimise any visual impact and maintain the scenic character of this community.</p>
Community organisations	<p>As per community group messaging provided above.</p> <p><i>*Further work will be required to respond to each group based on their questions; their tone; their current knowledge and interest in the project etc</i></p>
VicRoads	<p>We will keep you up to date as the project progresses.</p> <p>We want to work with you to ensure our project activities abide by safety and regulatory requirements.</p>

Governance

The following processes and protocols will be used for the proactive management of information sharing throughout the life of the Project.

Table 8 - Governance

Project requirement	Responsibility
Written communications protocol	All material for public distribution will be approved by BrightNight before distribution.
Emails, community enquiries, and complaint letters	<p>Written responses will be approved by the Project team before distribution.</p> <p>Enquiries, along with responses, will be recorded in the stakeholder and issues database with the appropriate thematic 'tags' identified.</p> <p>Stakeholder details are to be managed according to the requirements of the Privacy Act 1988.</p>
Phone or in-person enquiries	The details of calls or enquiries will be recorded in the stakeholder and issues database.
Media and political enquiries	<p>Media enquiries will be referred to BrightNight as soon as practicable.</p> <p>Enquiries from political representatives and their offices will be referred to BrightNight as soon as practicable.</p>

Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring

Engagement and communication processes will be monitored and reviewed to:

- Ensure the techniques being used are effective

- Identify new stakeholders
- Respond to any new issues
- Ensure staff/ subcontractors are complying with community protocols.

This will be achieved by:

- Reviewing enquiries and complaints data to identify unresolved or recurring issues and emerging trends
- Informal discussions with stakeholders and the community
- Informal discussions with members of the Project team
- Media monitoring.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Clean Energy Council's Best Practice Charter for Renewable Energy Developments

- 1.** We will engage respectfully with the local community, including Traditional Owners of the land, to seek their views and input before finalising the design of the project and submitting a development application.
- 2.** We will provide timely information, and be accessible and responsive in addressing the local community's feedback and concerns throughout the lifetime of the development.
- 3.** We will be sensitive to areas of high biodiversity, cultural and landscape value in the design and operation of projects.
- 4.** We will minimise the impacts on highly productive agricultural land where feasible, and explore opportunities to integrate continued agricultural production into the project.
- 5.** We will consult the community on the potential visual, noise, traffic and other impacts of the development, and on the mitigation options where relevant.
- 6.** We will support the local economy by providing local employment and procurement opportunities wherever possible.
- 7.** We will offer communities the opportunity to share in the benefits of the development and consult them on the options available, including the relevant governance arrangements.
- 8.** We commit to using the development to support educational and tourism opportunities where appropriate.
- 9.** We will demonstrate responsible land stewardship over the life of the development and welcome opportunities to enhance the ecological and cultural value of the land.
- 10.** At the end of the project's design or permitted life we will engage with the community on plans for the responsible decommissioning, or refurbishment/repowering of the site.

Appendix 2: BrightNight Stakeholder Feedback Framework

In line with the Australian/New Zealand Standard Guidelines for complaint management and recommendations from the Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner (AEIC), BrightNight Energy has established a transparent process for managing complaints and concerns raised by community members. The process involves the following key steps:

Contact Details for Complaints:

Project Website: <https://brightnightpower.com/mortlake-energy-hub-community/>

Telephone Number (toll-free): 1800 849 633

Email: mortlakeenergyhub@brightnightpower.com

Mail: Level 3, 162 Collins Street, Melbourne VIC 3000

- These contact details will be prominently displayed on the project's public website, community consultations, and relevant project documentation.

Step 1: Receive and register a complaint

- Contact can be made verbally or in written form through various channels.
- Inquiries or concerns are responded to directly and recorded in the stakeholder register.
- For complaints, standardised information is collected, including the complainant's details, a unique reference number, and details of the complaint.
- Information is recorded in the Complaints Register.

Step 2: Acknowledging complaints

- Non-urgent complaints are acknowledged within three business days; urgent complaints receive a response within 24 hours.
- Acknowledgment includes a summary of the complaint, a reference number, an opportunity for clarification, the proposed investigation approach, and an estimated response timeframe.

Step 3: Investigating complaints

- The Project Manager ensures thorough investigation, delegating as necessary.
- Records of the investigation, including site visits, consultations, and evidence collection, are maintained.

Step 4: Responding to stakeholder/complainant

- The results of the investigation are clearly explained to the complainant, including findings and proposed resolution.
- The complainant determines the satisfaction with the resolution.

Step 5: Closing the complaint

- If resolved satisfactorily, the Project Manager closes the complaint and issues formal correspondence to the complainant.
- If not satisfied, the complainant has a right to review by the Project Manager or can contact the Australian Energy Infrastructure.

Step 6: Recording and registering the complaint

- Upon closing, the Complaints Register is updated with details of the investigation, proposed resolution, acceptance, implementation, and reasons for closure.

Escalation of complaint

If the complaint cannot be resolved by the BrightNight Energy Project Team, options for external review include:

- Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner
- Energy and Water Ombudsman Victoria
- Australian Energy Regulator

9.2 Appendix B – Project fact sheet

Mortlake Energy Hub



350 MW solar installed capacity with the ability to generate over 600,000,000 kWh per year = **Power for nearly 70,000 homes**



Clean energy produced per year = **528,000 metric tons of CO₂** kept from entering the atmosphere

Who Is BrightNight

BrightNight is a world leader in large scale renewable energy solutions and committed to the responsible development of safe, reliable, renewable power for Australia's transition to a green energy future.

BrightNight's Australian team is passionate and driven to determine the best dispatchable energy solution for each unique community. Our local experts are backed by industry leaders in the United States and around the world, who have a proven record of developing, delivering, and operating large scale renewable energy projects.

As an independent power producer, we work to become a part of your community so we can support your region's long-term goals over the life of our project.



For every Australian to be able to access clean energy, we require ways to store and dispatch it, when it is most needed. BrightNight is proposing the **development of a hybrid which optimises co-located large scale solar PV (Photovoltaic) and battery energy storage systems (BESS).**



Solar panels and their components are **safe for the plants, animals, and people who live around them.** Remember, the fundamental purpose of solar energy is to be environmentally friendly. As such, panels do not generate emissions of any kind and do not pose any health risks.



Mortlake Energy Hub will produce **350 MW solar energy and store a further 300 MW** through a BESS which will connect to the existing Mortlake terminal station. This connection will be established through a substation, equipped with transformers to the east of the existing terminal station.



Panels are secured to posts which are driven into the ground without concrete. This makes them especially **environmentally friendly** for the land they call home.



Mortlake Energy Hub will be **located on a 900-hectare property** chosen due to its close proximity to an existing substation, meaning existing power infrastructure can be utilised. It will allow solar energy to be stored in the BESS and distributed quickly and efficiently to homes and businesses in peak demand when the sun isn't shining.



A common misconception is that solar panels create glare. However, **solar panels are designed to absorb sunlight** and convert the sun's rays into energy. Because of this, panels are designed to avoid producing glare as any light reflected is lost energy.



The land is primarily used for pastoral grazing and because **Mortlake Energy Hub embraces Agrivoltaic practices**, the site can be used harmoniously for farming and solar energy generation.



When a solar project's life is complete, the project is removed, the site is turned to its original condition, and **the majority of project materials will be recycled.**



Solar projects make great neighbours! They operate quietly and are monitored remotely. You won't be able to hear the day-to-day operation of the project and you'll only notice onsite personnel for occasional maintenance on equipment and landscaping.



Our solar projects are safe and secure. We monitor the projects 24/7 with remote monitoring technology. And we install fencing around the perimeter to prevent unauthorised entry.

9.3 Appendix C – Fact sheets



Fire Management

All renewable energy projects, including solar farms and Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) in Victoria must be developed in accordance with the CFA Design Guidelines and Model Requirements: Renewable Energy Facilities Version 4, (August 2023).

These guidelines provide standard considerations and measures for fire safety, risk and emergency management in designing, constructing and operating new renewable energy facilities, and upgrading existing facilities.

BrightNight takes fire risk management seriously and will implement robust measures to prevent and manage potential fire incidents associated with the Mortlake Energy Hub. In the event of a fire emergency, BrightNight will work with local emergency services to ensure effective coordination and response.

Management Planning

In the planning and design phase of Mortlake Energy Hub, BrightNight will liaise early with CFA to develop fire and risk management plans.

- A Risk Management Plan will articulate the risk management process and its outcomes, including the specific site hazards/risks and their analysis, control measures, and the monitoring and review process.
- A Fire Management Plan is based on the outcomes of the Risk Management Plan, and will outline the activities, processes and accountabilities for the ongoing management of fire risk at the facility.

Mitigation Strategies

Mitigation strategies will provide an appropriate level of risk reduction for Mortlake Energy Hub and will significantly lower risk of impacts from the solar farm facility to life, property, agricultural and environmental assets.

Key mitigation measures include:

- Implementation of ignition prevention procedures
- Maintaining grass at below 100mm in height during a declared fire danger period
- Establishing fire breaks around the perimeter of the facility
- Providing bulk static water supply and equipment for firefighting purposes
- Providing emergency access routes to ensure efficient movement on and around the site
- Implementation of design and systems to prevent, monitor, and suppress operational hazards
- Establishment of sound emergency management arrangement

Key takeaways

- All renewable energy projects must be developed in accordance with CFA guidelines.
- Risk and Fire Management Plans will be developed to ensure site hazards and risks are recognised and addressed.
- Mitigation measures such as site maintenance, easy access to water supply and emergency routes to be established prior to operation.

"Building a solar energy facility should not increase the risk of bushfire in the area."

Victorian Solar Energy Facilities Design and Development Guideline October 2022



Glare and Glint

Glare (which occurs over a continuous period), and glint (a brief flash of light) can cause distraction and result in after-images in the viewer's sight. Each person experiences glare differently based on their pupil diameter and the distance from the pupil to the retina. However, there are some factors which affect glare, and these can include light intensity, glare source size, the extent of vision it occupies, and the distance from the source contribute to this variability. Both natural and man-made surfaces can induce glare and glint.

Solar Panels

Solar panels in solar farms feature low reflectivity glass and an anti-reflective coating to optimise sunlight absorption instead of reflection. The special coating not only minimises glare but also enhances energy yield by allowing more light to reach the solar cells.

Solar panels are often positioned at different angles, which ensures the panels scatter reflections in various directions, mitigating any localised impact. This is a result of the tilting panels typically tracking the sun, ensuring the panel surfaces remain mostly perpendicular to the angle of the sun. Therefore, glare or glint impacts on surrounding areas is unlikely.

A glint and glare assessment has been prepared by Urbis for relevant receptors within 1km of the Project.

The proposed site layout will be designed to ensure there are no glare impacts expected for the Project for all assessed receptors within 1km of the Project.

Furthermore, risk of glare and glint for road users and surrounding residences around the project may be eliminated by proposed perimeter buffer landscaping which, once established, will ensure that surfaces of the panels are not visible, screening any reflections that would have occurred across the terrain.

Professional Assessment

As part of the development phase, BrightNight has commissioned an independent consultant to conduct a Glint and Glare Assessment for Mortlake Energy Hub. This assessment will consider factors such as sun position, panel orientation, and surrounding landscape features, and it will determine the likelihood and extent of glare and glint effects.

Throughout the duration of the project – from development through to operation – BrightNight will conduct ongoing monitoring to ensure the glint and glare impacts are regularly assessed and addressed.

Key takeaways:

- Solar panels are designed to absorb sunlight, not reflect it.
- Solar panels are positioned in various angles mitigating glare impact.
- Solar farms are safely operational in many environments, including airports and military bases.
- An independent assessment will be undertaken to determine glint and glare effects.

Road Management

The construction of Mortlake Energy Hub will generate some traffic as the materials, machinery and equipment are being delivered to and from the site. BrightNight recognises the importance of minimising disruptions to local traffic during the construction phase and is committed to mitigating potential adverse effects.

Before the project's commencement, a Traffic Management Plan (TMP) will be developed in consultation with road authorities. The TMP will outline strategies to minimise road quality impacts and will ensure safe and efficient construction traffic movement.

Traffic Management Plan

Prepared prior to obtaining a building permit, the Traffic Management Plan will outline construction trip levels, haulage routes, and operational measures aimed to minimise traffic impacts. Measures such as routine road inspections, regular maintenance schedules to public roads and railway crossings, and coordination with local authorities to address road damage will all form part of the plan.

Access Routes

During the construction of the Mortlake Energy Hub, major highways and main roads will be used where possible. Local roads may be upgraded to accommodate construction traffic.

BrightNight will maintain close collaboration with contractors to ensure planned deliveries, coordination with other road users, and advance notice of disruptions. Noise management and dust suppression mitigation measures will be addressed within an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) prior to the commencement of works.

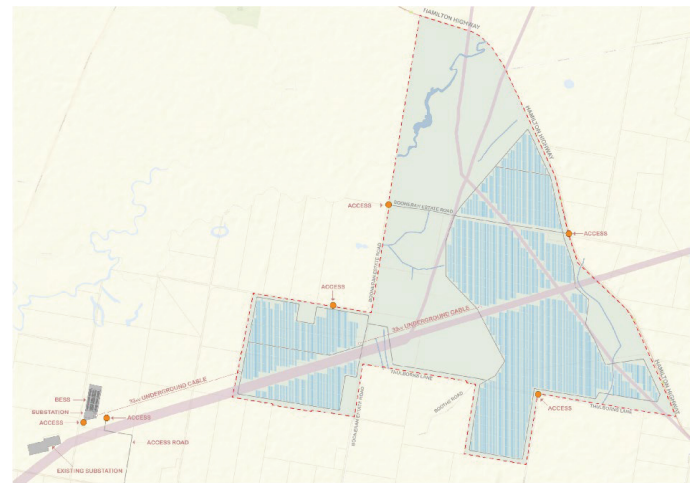
Access Points

Access points to the solar farm are strategically located to minimise disruptions to nearby houses.

Specific access details will be outlined in the project's development plan and will consider community feedback and local regulations.

Boonara Estate Road

Boonara Estate Road will be used for site access during construction. A Traffic and Transport Impact Assessment will accompany the town planning submission to ensure limited impact on surrounding road networks.



Key Takeaways

- Prior to construction, a Traffic Management Plan will be developed to minimise traffic impacts
- Major highways and main roads will be used during construction phase where possible
- Boonara Estate Road will be used for site access during the construction phase

9.4 Appendix D – Newspaper advertisement

Australian-first embryo transfer a success

A SMALL stud now boasts the first successful embryo transfer in the Icelandic horse breed.

Garvoc's Litli Stadur Icelandic Horses recently announced the successful transfer between donor mayor Funa, father Kulur and recipient mare Svipa.

The process involves a seven-day old embryo being flushed from the donor mare and transferred in to the recipient mare.

Weekly scans allow a 45-day period before the transfer is considered safe, after which the recipient mare will carry the foal to term and nurse until weaning.

Litli Stadur Icelandic Horses owner Nele Koemle said she had made the decision to attempt the transfer as the donor mare, Funa, was among her "most cherished" horses after first being imported among her first Icelandics in 2008.

"Embryo transfer is getting done more and more in the horse world, but this is the first Icelandic horse in Australia which has had it done," she said.

"I'm very proud to be part of that history.

"I started looking in to it because I have a couple of mares I really like, and one mare is older and has had 11 babies (Funa), so I liked the idea of having another baby out of her but without her having to carry it.

"I approached Steve and Michelle Williams at Total Equine Genetics because they're the experts, the best you can get."

The Icelandic breed has been popular in western Europe, Scandinavia and North America.

They are known for their gentle temperament, curiosity and friendliness in addition to their long winter coats.

The breed is considered, pound-for-pound, the strongest breed of horse and is widely admired for their purity due to strict Icelandic import laws.

Mrs Koemle, who was born in Austria, said she had a deep admiration for the breed.



Making history: A south west stud has been part of Australian history, with the first successful embryo transfer in an Icelandic horse breed. 2023D

"I like the temperament, they're very human-oriented, and I like riding them," she said.

"I'm not a competitive rider, I just ride for fun, but I grew up riding in Europe.

"I've imported horses and added to the gene pool because there are only around 400 Icelandic horses in Australia.

"I've imported several mares and stallions over the past 15-20 years, during which time we've been the first to import frozen semen from Europe and also had the first AI-bred Icelandic foal in Australia."

A large concentration of Icelandic horses in Australia reside in the south west, with the breed growing in popularity in recent times.

"They've really grown in popularity over the last four or five years," Mrs Koemle said.

"We're doing a bit more promotion or working with different owners on different things, such as going to pony clubs.

"They're just not well known over here."

Among the surge in popularity is the Icelandic breed being a five-gaited horse, which is considered ideal for seasoned riders.

While many breeds are three-gaited with a walk, trot and gallop, the Icelandic horses have two additional gaits; the t□lt, a four-beat gait with two or more legs on the ground simultaneously, and a flying pace (or Skeið), a two-beat gait in which horses can move the front and back leg on the same side simultaneously.

To learn more about the Icelandic breed visit Litli Stadur Icelandic Horses at icelandichorses.org.au or follow on social media at www.facebook.com/litlistadur.



Fondness: Mrs Koemle said she deeply admired the Icelandic horse breed. 2023D

Roma BRITNELL MP
State Member for South West Coast

Working for you

- 94 Liebig Street, Warrnambool
- (03) 5562 8230
- Roma.Britnell@parliament.vic.gov.au
- [RomaBritnellMP](https://www.facebook.com/RomaBritnellMP)

BrightNight is a world leader in large scale renewable energy solutions and we are excited to bring our bright ideas to regional Australia.

BRIGHTNIGHT
Power when you need it

We will be in the neighbourhood

Over the coming weeks, we will be in Mortlake and would be happy to hear from you!

You can find us at:

Sunday 10 December
Mortlake Market - 9am - 7pm
Community Drop In at Mortlake Recreation Reserve - 2pm - 5pm

Monday 11 December
Community Drop In at Mortlake Recreation Reserve - 8am - 11am

For more information, email us:
MortlakeEnergyHub@brightnightpower.com

We are committed to the responsible development of safe, reliable, renewable power for Australia's transition to a green energy future. Mortlake has been identified as the preferred location for our proposed solar farm project and BrightNight is investigating a site nearby, chosen due to its close proximity to an existing substation, meaning existing power infrastructure can be utilised.

The ideal site location will allow solar energy to be stored and distributed quickly and efficiently to homes and business in peak demand when the sun isn't shining.

BrightNight is committed to working with the local community to identify issues and understand what is important, so we can work together and help shape this important project.

9.5 Appendix E – Community Flyer

BrightNight is a world leader in large scale renewable energy solutions and we are excited to bring our bright ideas to regional Australia.

BRIGHTNIGHT
Power when you need it

We will be in the neighbourhood

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Over the coming weeks, we will be in Mortlake and would be happy to hear from you!

You can find us at:

Sunday 10 December

Mortlake Market - 9am - 1pm

Community Drop In at Mortlake Recreation Reserve - 2pm - 5pm

Monday 11 December

Community Drop In at Mortlake Recreation Reserve - 8am - 11pm

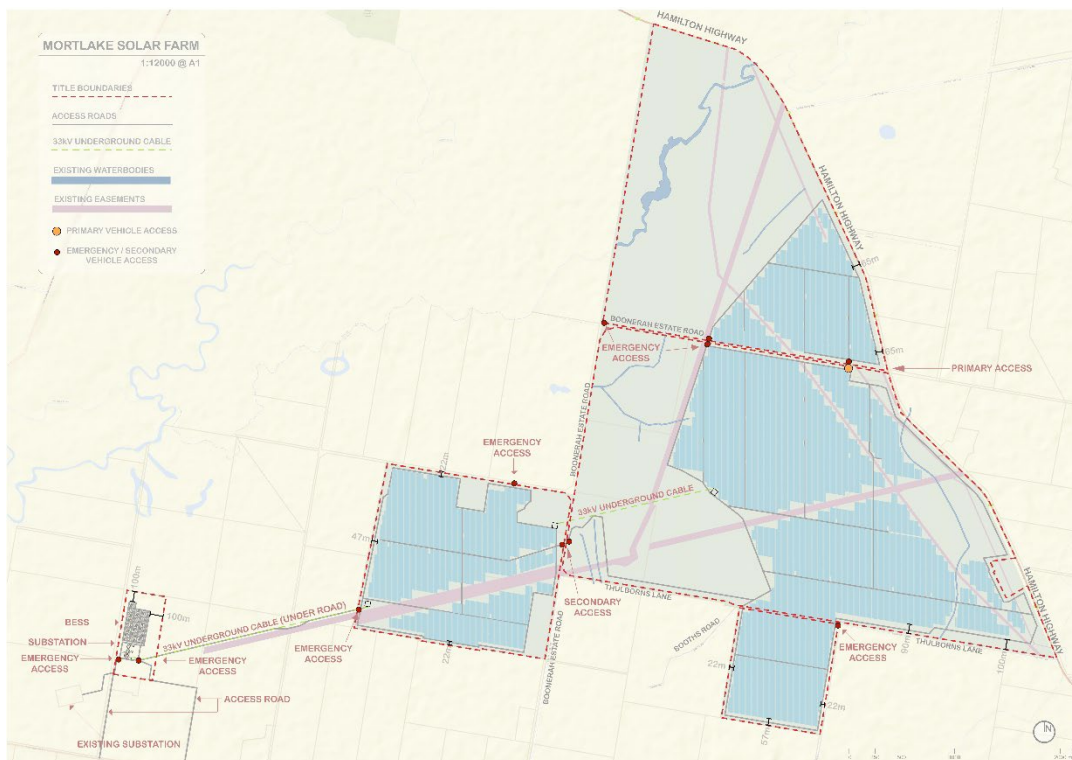
Alternatively, you can contact Matt on **0438 327 123** (during business hours) to arrange a face to face meeting at a time that suits you.

9.6 Appendix F – Project Map

Project Map 1



Project Map 2



9.7 Appendix G – Webpage

<https://brightnightpower.com/mortlake-energy-hub-community/>



Dispatchable, renewable power that is available when it is needed most

For every Australian to be able to access clean energy, we require ways to store and dispatch it, when it is most needed. BrightNight is proposing the development of a hybrid model which optimises co-located large-scale solar PV (Photovoltaic) and battery energy storage systems (BESS).

The Mortlake Energy Hub will produce 350 MW of solar energy and store a further 300 MW through a battery energy storage system (BESS), which will connect to the existing Mortlake terminal station. This connection will be established through a substation equipped with transformers to the east of the existing terminal station.

350 MW
Clean, renewable solar power

300 MW
Energy stored via BESS

900
Hectare property

Dual-use site
Project will incorporate an agrivoltaic feature

Want to Learn More?

Download the fact sheets below for more information on the BrightNight Mortlake Energy Hub.

[MORTLAKE COMMUNITY BROCHURE](#)

[ANATOMY OF A BATTERY ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEM \(BESS\)](#)

[ANATOMY OF A SOLAR PROJECT](#)

Mortlake Energy Hub

Here are a few highlights from our recent community event. Thanks to everyone who joined us!



Dual land use means mutually beneficial

A common question we encounter is whether building solar projects results in the loss of usable farmland—and its earning potential. In fact, solar farming and agriculture are well-matched, making agrivoltaics a desirable and complementary way to utilise existing agricultural land.

BrightNight's industry-leading agrivoltaics projects are thoughtfully designed and meticulously installed for seamless integration with land to ensure optimal benefit with the lowest impact for co-located agricultural activities. This allows partnering landowners to enjoy the multitude of benefits that come with maximising the use of their land.

At the Mortlake Energy Hub, we're evaluating what type of agrivoltaic solution would best suit the land and support local needs. Options include planting native species of plants, using land between solar panels for certain row crops, or welcoming animals like sheep to freely graze the project area.

BrightNight in your community

Our renewable power solutions and our approach to community partnership are industry-leading. Throughout our development process, we dedicate time and resources to understanding local needs and the community's vision for their future. To accomplish this, we incorporate community feedback during every phase of the development process. We view community engagement and feedback as valuable tools to improve our project designs and local partnerships. Our community engagement work includes:

- Building local partnerships with businesses and community leaders
- Collecting community project feedback and incorporating it into the project's final design
- Providing ongoing updates to the community over the course of our work

We bring more than renewable power to the communities we serve. By talking with local leaders, non-profit organisations, business owners, and landowners, we learn about local needs and community goals. These can include the need for more job training opportunities, a special interest in utilising project land for native plant species, or the need to promote the community's commitment to sustainable energy leadership. We then convert this information into action and find ways to serve the community as a local neighbour. Whatever the need, BrightNight leverages its powerful team of experts to develop power and partnership.



We are committed to delivering the highest value in sustainability

Low Water Impact

Solar electricity is a smart choice for water conservation; this form of power generation requires minimal water use for occasional module cleaning.

Low-Impact Infrastructure

The Mortlake Energy Hub is structured and designed to be quiet and have as little impact on its neighbors as possible. The project will not contribute to noise or light pollution in the area.

Agrivoltaics

A solar farm combined with a traditional agricultural activity, such as grazing, is referred to as "agrivoltaics." Sheep grazing maintains productive land and reduces vegetation management costs. Also, sheep are solar friendly; in fact, they enjoy the shade from our solar panels!

Project FAQs

Thanks to exciting renewable energy adoption across the globe, most people are familiar with the benefits of solar power. But how it's developed, constructed, and maintained is complex. We've compiled a few FAQs to help address your questions.

- + How are solar projects installed?
- + How much electricity is generated by solar panels?
- + How do developers select the land they want for a solar project?
- + What are the financial benefits of a renewable power project for a community?
- + How do solar projects affect surrounding property values?
- + Is solar compatible with agriculture?
- + Do solar projects create glare?
- + Are there any health and safety concerns related to a solar project?
- + Are there long-term groundwater or stormwater concerns with utility-scale solar?
- + Who is responsible for the decommissioning of a solar project?

Talk to the Team

We're excited to bring the Mortlake Energy Hub to Victoria and will continue to update this page with the most current information on local meetings and project developments. In the meantime, you can always talk with a member of our Mortlake Energy Hub project team. Whether you have a question, concern, or suggestion, we want to hear from you!

CONTACT
The Mortlake Energy Hub Team
1-800-849-6333
MortlakeEnergyHub@brightnightpow.com

9.8 Appendix H – Community pop-up outcomes summary



Mortlake Energy Hub

Community Engagement Summary

Main Event:



Mortlake Market,
Mortlake Market Square,
Sunday 10 December 2023, 9am–1pm

Additional community drop in sessions:



Mortlake Recreation Reserve,
Sunday 10 December 2023, 2pm–5pm



Mortlake Recreation Reserve
Monday 11 December 2023, 8am–11am



Overview

On Sunday 10 December 2023, BrightNight, represented by Polly Baranco and Henry Yip, assisted by Jon Mills (Urbis) and Matt Stevens (Premier Strategy), hosted a pop-up stall at the Mortlake Market from 9am to 1pm.

Held on the 2nd Sunday of the month, October to June, in the Mortlake Market Square, the Mortlake Market is conducted by the Mortlake Community Development Committee Inc. (MCDC) and organised by its Mortlake Community Market sub-committee of local representatives.

With over 48 stalls, the event provided a platform for BrightNight to commence engaging with the community on its recently launched project, Mortlake Energy Hub. The presence at the market provided BrightNight an opportunity to share project details including location, size of development area, timeline and general information about the solar panel anatomy, BESS anatomy and introduce BrightNight as a new neighbour in the community.

On Monday 11 December, the engagement team, consisting of Ray Chan and Jamal Awar (BrightNight), Matt Stevens (Premier Strategy) and Grace Brown (Urbis) made themselves available to any members of the public, at drop-in sessions held at the Mortlake Recreation reserve. Despite pre-advertisement, these sessions were not well attended and for this stage of the engagement, Premier recommends more high-traffic public thoroughfares such as the market.



“Great idea to install a charging station because Mortlake is a transit town”

“If renewables are going to meet target, we have to get moving”

“Open, honest engagement is important”

“More consultation with community”

Community Member Feedback

Key insights

Visitors to the pop-up were interested to

- Know who BrightNight was
- Understand more about the location and size of the project
- Understand more about solar as a form of renewable energy
- Comprehend what a BESS system was and how it worked

Discussions with the community members reflected:

Good (and bad) engagement examples

As a Renewable Energy Zone (REZ), community members were keen to share examples of positive engagement e.g. Mortlake South Wind Farm and negative engagement e.g. new project-specific transmission lines. Open and honest communication is important to this community, who are well-versed in wind-farm projects.

Community benefit fund activity recommendations

With so many community benefit funds committed by various renewable projects in the area, community members shared a range of ideas they thought best supported their community. The ideas ranged from supporting individual organisations e.g. football club jumpers to broader, more strategic opportunities e.g. EV fast charging station. Overwhelmingly, any community benefit fund commitment needs to be developed in consultation with the people of the region.

Key community and business groups to connect with

It was clear the community is important. There are a few trusted organisations and individuals within the community that BrightNight was encouraged to connect with.

Housing, local procurement and education & training

Stay local. Use the trades and business in Mortlake and upskill our people.



“I am a solar citizen (house is off-grid)”

“Have to go green”

“Use local contractors for the project”

“It will attract business to Mortlake”

Community Member Feedback

Collateral



Fact Sheet



Resident Flyer



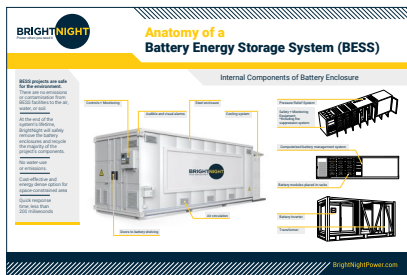
Newspaper Advertisement



Tear Drop Banners



Table Cloth



A1 BESS Poster



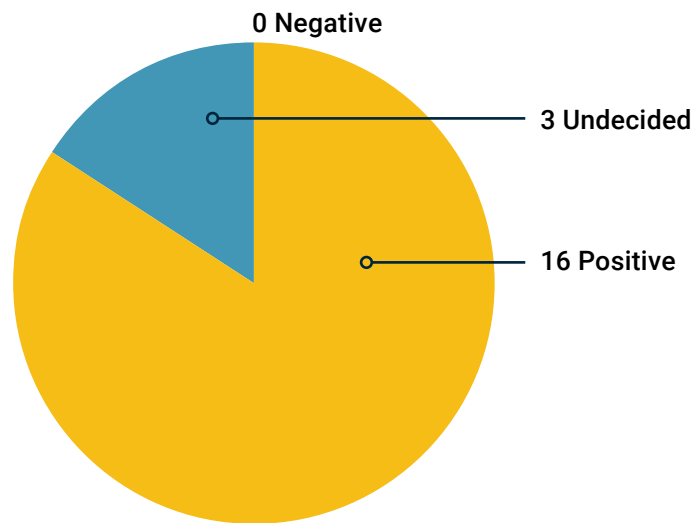
A1 Solar Poster



Key Data



Sentiment



15 in-depth discussions
(>10 minutes each)



13 brief conversations
(< 10 minutes each)



48 stall holders

23 Fact sheets given out



Engagement demographics ranged from community members in their early 30's - 80's.



“Create infrastructure to support people to stay in town e.g. caravan park”

“Make sure people most impacted benefit from project”

“The community benefit fund needs to have more consultation with the community”

Community Member Feedback