Appendix G

Desktop Geotechnical Assessment

ib vogt Australia Pty Ltd

Giddi Battery Energy Storage System and Trafalgar East Hybrid Solar Farm - Stage 1 and 2

Geotechnical Desktop Assessment

November 2025

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Question today
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Giddi Battery Energy Storage System and Trafalgar East Hybrid Solar Farm - Stage 1 and 2

Geotechnical Desktop Assessment

ib vogt Australia Pty Ltd

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A	21 November 2025	Geotechnical Desktop Assessment Draft
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Reviewed by:	David Annan Kerri Halliday	4/11/2025	
Approved by:	Alex Moody	17/12/2025	

WSP acknowledges that every project we work on takes place on First Peoples lands.
We recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as the first scientists and engineers and pay our respects to Elders past and present.

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1 Introduction

ib vogt Development Australia Pty Ltd (ib vogt) is seeking to develop the Giddi Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and Trafalgar East Hybrid Solar Farm, collectively referred to as the Project. The Project is located in Trafalgar East, approximately 130 kilometres (km) east of Melbourne (see Figure 1.1), and spans two properties with a combined area of approximately 360 hectares.

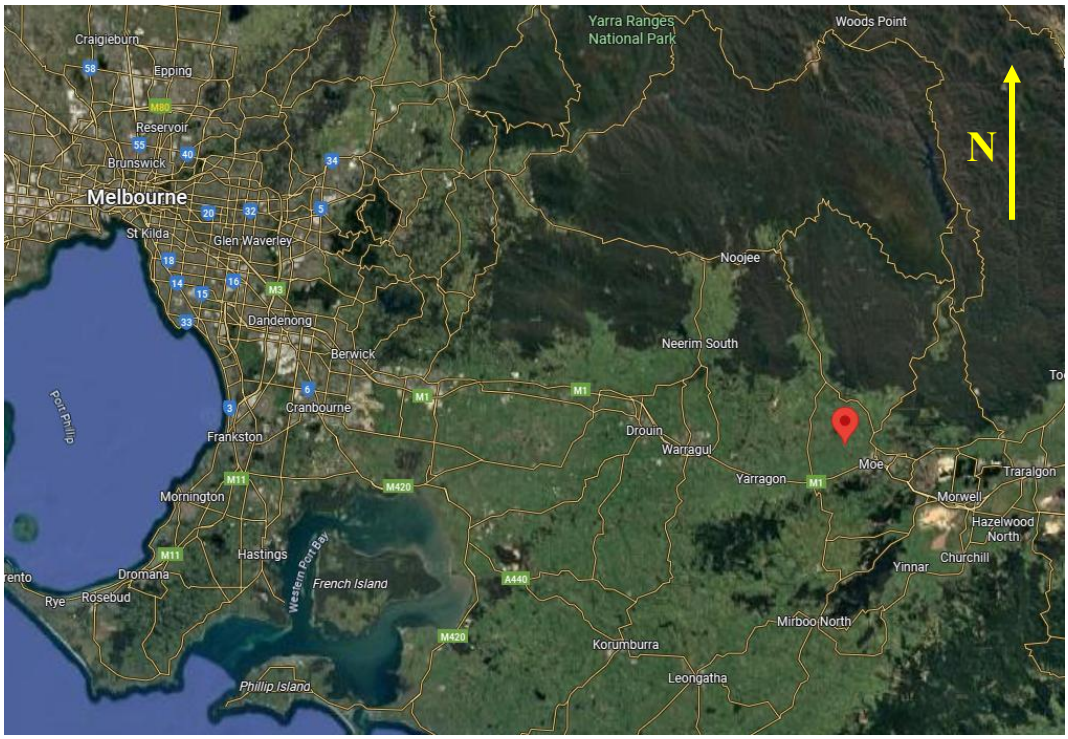


Figure 1.1 Project location approximately 130 km east of Melbourne, as indicated by red arrow (map source: Google)

To meet grid connection requirements the Project will be delivered across two stages. Giddi BESS (Stage 1), includes the installation of a 360-megawatt (MW) BESS, a substation, and a 220 kilovolt (kV) connection to the existing AusNet transmission line (Rowville to Yallourn) that traverses the Site. This stage will be located on the property at 59 Rowells Road, Trafalgar East, which is currently used for growing commercial feed for cattle and sheep, and includes a goat dairy. The Project layout is shown in Figure 1.2.

Infrastructure associated with the Giddi BESS (Stage 1) includes:

- A 360MW BESS
- Inverters and transformers
- Rooms for control, operation and maintenance
- A switchyard
- A 220kV substation
- Internal access roads
- Perimeter boundary fencing

The Trafalgar East Hybrid Solar Farm (Stage 2) includes the installation of an additional 200 MW BESS and a 200 MW solar power generation array configured with a single 200MW point of connection. This stage is located across the remainder of the Rowells Road property and the adjacent property at 363 Embletons Road which is currently used for grazing beef cattle.

Infrastructure associated with the Trafalgar East Hybrid Solar Farm (Stage 2) includes:

- A 200MW BESS
- A 200MW solar array
- Inverters and transformers
- Rooms for control, operation and maintenance
- A switchyard
- A 220kV substation
- Internal access roads
- Perimeter boundary fencing

A small transmission easement will be required to connect the two properties. It is proposed that this connection utilise an existing council road easement between the sites or adjacent private land.

WSP Australia Pty Ltd (WSP) has been engaged by ib vogt to provide technical assessment services for the planning development application for the Project. A geotechnical assessment is required as part of the suite of required studies to support the development application. This report provides the expected general geological conditions at the site and provides preliminary geotechnical advice based on the currently limited information available on the project infrastructure and the ground conditions.

For this assessment, it is assumed that the infrastructure will be lightly to moderately loaded, with some electrical infrastructure and buildings being relatively sensitive to ground settlement. We have also assumed that some infrastructure such as the BESS, inverters and transformers, switchyards and substations and operations buildings will require a level surface, which may require cut and fill earthworks. Other infrastructure such as the solar arrays, access roads and boundary fencing can generally be located on the existing topography and may only require minimal cut and fill earthworks.

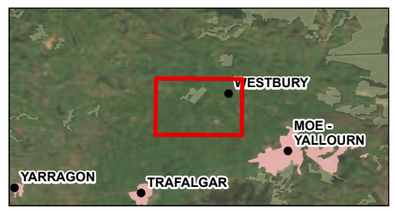
PS217303
Giddi BESS and Trafalgar East Hybrid Solar

Figure 1.2
Site Layout

Legend

- Watercourse
- Existing Gas Pipeline
- Transmission Corridor Option 1
- Transmission Corridor Option 2
- Giddi BESS
- Trafalgar East Hybrid Solar
- Existing 220kV Power Line Easement
- Cadastre

ADVERTISED PLAN



Coordinate system: GDA2020 MGA Zone 55
Scale ratio correct when printed at A3

1:17,000 Date: 26/11/2025

GDA 2020

Data sources: DEWLP, MetroMap WMS Services: World Imagery: Earthstar Geographics

2 Aims and methodology

The aims of the geotechnical assessment are as follows:

- Assess the likely subsurface conditions and groundwater level at the site based on available relevant information in the area.
- Provide preliminary commentary and recommendations regarding the following:
  - Likely geotechnical characteristics of the materials underlying the site, including:
    - Material in situ strength for supporting footings of structures and potential settlement under loads.
    - Material composition and suitability for use in earthworks at the site, including reuse of excavated materials as fill, suitability of materials as pavement subgrade, excavatability, batter stability and erodibility.
  - Potential groundwater levels beneath the site and impacts on the development.
- Comment on the key geotechnical risks associated with the proposed BESS development.
- Comment on data gaps in the information available.
- A recommended scope for intrusive site investigation.

To address the aims of the assessment, a desktop information review of publicly available geological maps and groundwater data in the vicinity of the site has been undertaken. A review of any relevant information that may be available in our archives from nearby sites has also been conducted.

A site visit has not been undertaken as part of the assessment.

3 Review of information

3.1 Topography, Surface Drainage and Vegetation

Published topographical maps and online imagery of the landscape (e.g. Google Streetview) indicates that the topography of the site is flat to gently undulating. The valleys are generally not deeply incised and generally have a relatively flat base. The elevation relief at the site appears to be approximately 30 metres.

The surface drainage system at the site generally runs downwards from north to south in two main creek systems. Several farm dams of different sizes are present in the creek systems.

The vegetation at the site is generally grassland, with the primary land use being agricultural grazing. Mature trees are generally present within road corridors, occasionally along property boundaries and within the base of creek valleys.

3.2 Regional geology

According to the Geological Survey of Victoria (GSV) 1:50,000 Trafalgar geological mapsheet (8121-4 1st Edition, 1983), the mapped surface geology at the site is Tertiary age Haunted Hills Gravels (Tph), described as comprising *'Gravel, sand, often clayey, minor silt, clay; unconsolidated, intensely mottled to red, a yellow and grey when clayey. Cross and graded bedding, minor lamination. Contains ferruginous bands, palaeosols.'* Underlying the Haunted Hills Gravel unit at an unknown depth is likely to be the Latrobe Valley Coal Measures (Tlv), based on the geological cross section on the mapsheet, water bore logs in the area (discussed below) and general geological knowledge of the area. An extract of the Trafalgar geological mapsheet, with the approximate footprint of the project site, is shown in Figure 3.1.

To the southwest of the site, in the lower elevations of the overall valley, the mapped surface geological units are Quaternary aged stream alluvium (Qra) generally comprising carbonaceous clay, silt, sand and minor gravel, and alluvial terrace deposits (Qrt) generally comprising clay, silt, sand and minor gravel. It is expected that the lower lying areas of the site such as the base of creek valleys will have a minor amount of alluvium present, even where not mapped.

Information from logging of materials encountered by groundwater bore drilling in the vicinity of the site generally does not follow recognised standards, however the material descriptions can provide information on likely changes in geological units with depth. Logging information from Bore WRK042427, located on the southern edge of the site, indicates that materials containing coal were encountered from approximately 42 m depth, which infers that the interface between the Haunted Hills Gravel unit and the underlying Latrobe Coal Measures is at that depth in that location. In Bore 112407, located in the western part of the larger eastern parcel of project land, materials described as 'Lignious Clay' were encountered from 26 m depth, with 'layers of coal' described from 48 m depth. Based on this information, the Latrobe Coal Measures are likely to be at least 20 m below the ground surface at the project site and are unlikely to be encountered by the project development.

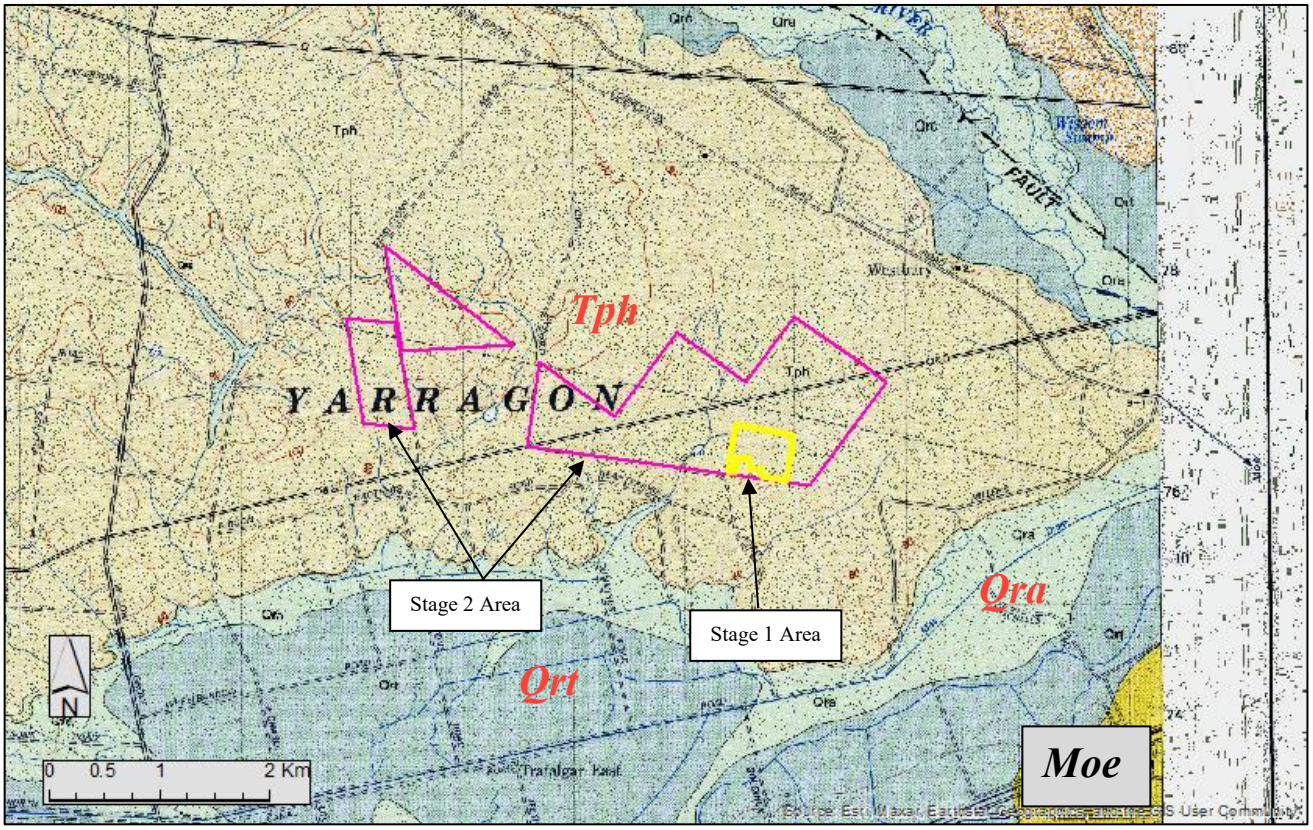


Figure 3.1: Regional Geology (extract of GSV 'Trafalgar' mapsheet) with the approximate site extents shown.

3.3 Groundwater

Visualising Victoria's Groundwater (VVG) online database contains historical groundwater level information and modelled groundwater levels statewide. The database has identified several bores drilled in the vicinity of the site, however only three bores had recent groundwater level data.

- Bore WRK990057, to the west of Trafalgar Golf Club, has had measured groundwater levels of between approximately 19 m and 20 m below the ground surface between 2009 and 2025.
- Bore 107970, located at the town of Westbury to the east of the site, has had measured groundwater levels of between approximately 13 m and 23 m below the ground surface between 1973 and 2025, with a trend of level lowering occurring from about 1995 onwards.
- Bore 107973, in Joe Tabuteau Reserve in Moe, has had a measured groundwater pressure head level of between approximately 5 m and 25 m above the ground surface level between 1973 and 1998, with a trend of level rising occurring from about 1988 onwards. It is noted that this bore is measuring groundwater levels for a deeper, pressurized aquifer rather than the near surface shallow aquifer.

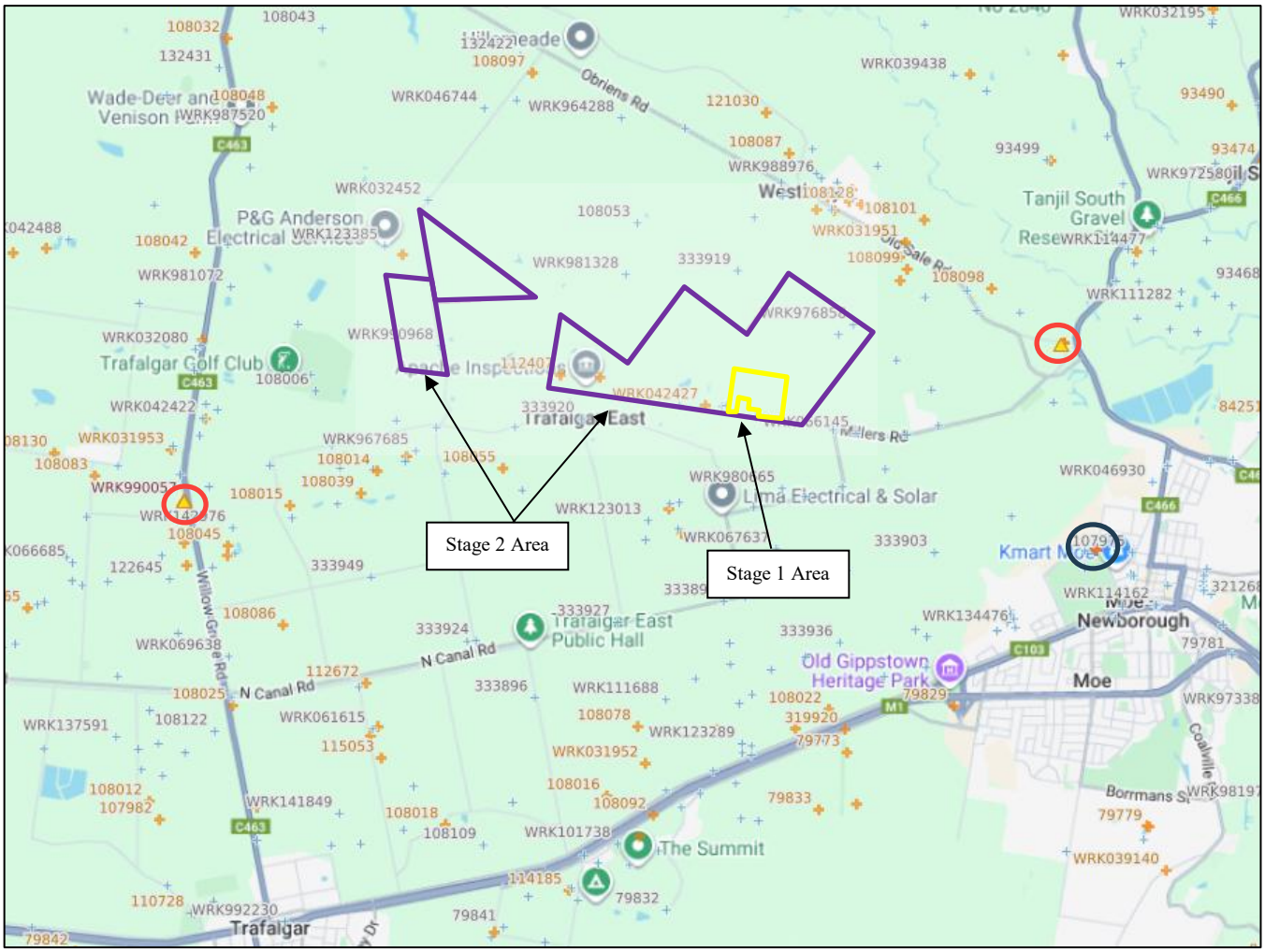


Figure 3.2: Groundwater bores in the vicinity of the site, from the VVG database. Bores circled red have recent monitoring measurements of the near surface aquifer, the bore circled blue has recent measurements of a deeper aquifer.

The modelled regional groundwater levels on the VVG website, shown in Figure 3.3, indicate that the groundwater is between approximately 10 m and 50 m below ground level at the site, with the area of shallowest groundwater being in the creek valley in the central part of the eastern land parcel of the site.

Based on the monitored bores to the west and east of the site, the groundwater level at the site is likely to be in the approximate range of 10 m to 50 m below the ground surface and will not be encountered during site development works, However, locally perched groundwater could potentially be encountered, for example near the dams within the site or following heavy rain or flood events.

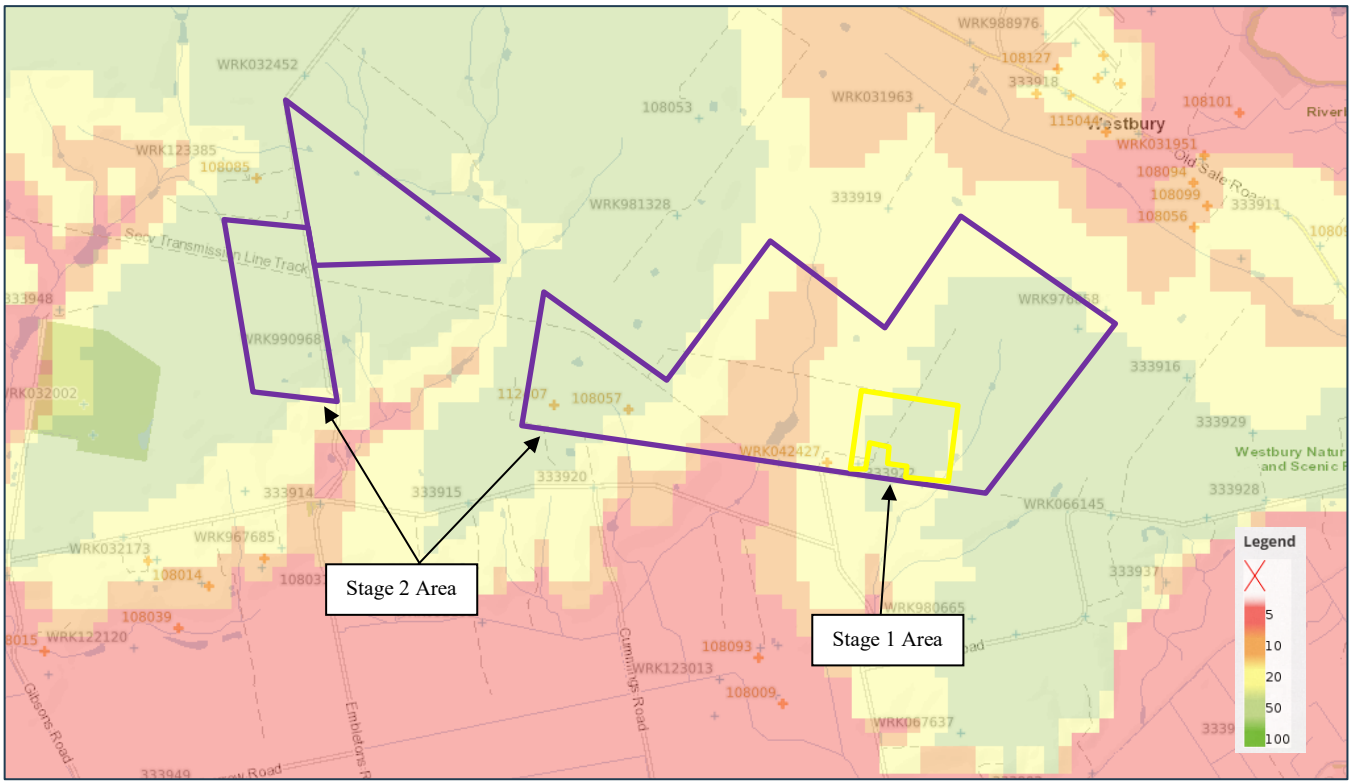


Figure 3.3: Modelled regional groundwater levels in metres below ground level from the VVG website.

3.4 Acid sulfate soils

Acid sulfate soils are natural sediments that contain metal sulfides, commonly pyrite. They are common in permanently saturated soils such as those along the coast and when disturbed or exposed to air the sulfides oxidise and produce sulfuric acid, potentially damaging built structures and the environment. Data from the Australian National Soil Information System (ANSIS) website indicates that the soils at the site have an 'Extremely Low Probability' of containing acid sulfate materials, however the assessment has 'Very Low Confidence'.

Considering the topographic and geological setting of the site, it is unlikely that acid sulfate soils will be present at the site, however field screening testing could be undertaken to confirm this in areas that are more likely to have conditions conducive to the presence of acid sulfate soils, such as permanently saturated, fine grained transported soils such as alluvium in low lying areas.

4 Preliminary Geotechnical Discussion and Recommendations

The recommendations in the following sections are preliminary and will need to be updated once a site specific geotechnical investigation has been completed. The advice provided is based on expected general site conditions and typical infrastructure characteristics for this type or development.

4.1 Likely subsurface conditions

The Haunted Hills Gravel geological unit underlies the site, with potential for minor areas of alluvium to occur in the base of creek valleys, which will be derived from the Haunted Hills Gravel.

A surface layer of topsoil is likely to be present over the site and may be relatively thick considering the agricultural activities that have historically occurred.

The distribution of fill at the site is not known, however based on a review of aerial imagery we consider that the depth of fill is likely to be shallow and limited to local areas such as bunds or mounds of excavated materials near dams or other excavations at the site or as part of the construction of the farm buildings. It is possible that there are backfilled excavations at the site which would be most likely be due to historic farming activities. The source of fill materials is likely to be from the site, however imported fill may have been used for construction of current or previous farm facilities. Considering the limited knowledge of previous site activities, existing fill materials that are present should be considered to have been placed in an uncontrolled manner from an engineering perspective.

The Haunted Hills Gravel unit typically comprises clay, sand and gravel in varying proportions, with typical compositions including gravelly clay or clayey sand. The material is described as ‘unconsolidated’ on the geological mapsheet and this is likely to refer to the material generally not having cemented to a rock strength material. The material is generally encountered as a ‘dense’ or ‘very dense’ sand or gravel or ‘hard’ clay, based on definitions in AS1726:2017 Geotechnical Site Investigations, and is occasionally encountered as a cemented material with ‘very low’ or ‘low’ rock strength.

The Haunted Hills Gravel unit is extensive across the Latrobe Valley region. While some differences in composition and geotechnical characteristics are likely to occur in different areas, based on observations made of Haunted Hills Gravel at different sites in the region, we provide the following general commentary.

The available information suggests that the depth to groundwater at the site is likely to be greater than 10 m. However, there could be the potential to encounter perched water, for example near the existing dam.

4.2 Structure Footings

Based on the high level description of the site infrastructure, we expect that site buildings such as operations buildings to be lightly loaded structures without significant lateral and uplift loads. We also expect that some electrical infrastructure such as switchyards and potentially some substation infrastructure to also be lightly loaded. We assume that the BESS, inverters and transformers and other electrical infrastructure may be more sensitive to ground settlement that other structures at the site. We have assumed that solar panel structures will be supported by pile footings to provide resistance to more significant lateral and pullout design loads.

The footing systems that are planned to be adopted for the infrastructure is unknown at this time. Considering the typical characteristics of the Haunted Hills Gravel, we provide the following commentary for different footing systems:

- Haunted Hills Gravel materials are typically weakly cemented and have significant loss of strength when disturbed compared to in situ materials, likely due to breakdown of the cementation between soil particles. Hence it is important that this characteristic is considered in design and planning construction activities.
- Footings should be embedded in and supported by natural materials rather than fill. For shallow footings, fill, topsoil and alluvium (where present in low lying areas) should be removed to expose the underlying Haunted Hills Gravel materials. For deep footings, the fill, topsoil and alluvium materials should be disregarded in pile capacity calculations and embedment depth should commence from the top of the Haunted Hills Gravel unit.
- For shallow footings, the materials at typical shallow footing depths at the site, below the fill and topsoil that may be present at the surface, are expected to comprise very stiff to hard clays or dense to very dense sands or gravels, with weak cementation possible. The cementation may become stronger with depth and may be variable within the material. With regards to bearing capacity, lightweight structures are expected to be able to be founded on the Haunted Hills Gravel soil materials. For preliminary design purposes, an allowable bearing capacity of 100 kPa may be adopted for proportioning shallow footings for lightly loaded structures, assuming that footings are embedded a minimum of 0.3 m into undisturbed 'very stiff' or stiffer clay or 'dense' or better sand of the Haunted Hills Gravel.
- For deep footing systems, the typical characteristics of the Haunted Hills Gravel materials and the response to different construction methods may influence the selection of the footing system used. The likelihood of cemented materials up to low rock strength, as well as the potential significant loss of strength of materials upon disturbance, are likely to make driven or screw piles less favourable compared to concrete filled bored piles. Depending on the design loadings that could occur on the structures, shallow footings could be considered, with potentially deeper embedment depth that typical shallow footings, acting as an anchor block. Anchored shallow footings could also be considered as an alternative.
- The Haunted Hills Gravel materials are expected to include low or medium plasticity fines, which typically do not have high amounts of shrink/swell with moisture content changes.

Site investigation works will need to be undertaken to obtain information on the subsurface geotechnical conditions to confirm the commentary above and to also provide geotechnical engineering design parameters for the subsurface materials.

Further commentary and recommendations on footing design and construction would be provided in the geotechnical site investigation report.

4.2.1 Site classification to AS2870

The Haunted Hills Gravel materials are expected to include low or medium plasticity clay, which typically does not have high shrink/swell reaction to moisture content changes. On this basis, for the purposes of preliminary assessment of the site classification in accordance with AS2870 (2011) "Residential slabs and footings", the site classification is estimated to be Class S or Class M, indicating low or moderate characteristic surface movement with seasonal soil moisture changes.

This preliminary estimate should be confirmed by undertaking appropriate site investigations at the structure sites to obtain further information on soil reactivity and in consideration of the design that may include a working platform.

4.3 Earthworks and Pavements

4.3.1 Cut and Fill

The relatively low relief of the site over the likely footprint size of the facilities means cut and fill to level the site is likely to be relatively limited.

For cuts, assuming 'very stiff' or stiffer clays or 'dense' or denser sands and gravels, and weak cementation is present, a recommended preliminary permanent unsupported batter slope angle of 2H:1V, could potentially be adopted for batters

up to 5 m high in these materials, based on observations of road cuts in the region (refer to Section 4.5). For temporary batters (exposed for up to 3 months) a batter slope angle of 1H:1V could be adopted. For shallow temporary excavations up to approximately 1 m deep, such as shallow footing excavations, unsupported vertical sidewalls may be able to be constructed, however this should be assessed on a case by case basis during construction, with sidewalls battered to lower angles as necessary, with geotechnical advice.

Considering the potential for erodibility of the Haunted Hills Gravel materials (refer to Section 4.5), permanent batters should be treated to reduce potential for erosion from surface water flows to occur. This could include diversion of surface water flows away from the batters by surface drainage, and/or covering the batters to protect the batters from water flows.

It is not known if materials arising from excavations will be suitable for reuse as fill materials, either in engineered fill applications or as general fill for other purposes such as landscaping. Haunted Hills Gravel materials are used in some areas of the region as fill, as the combination of fines portion and coarse granular materials is known to respond well to compaction, however the tendency for the fines portion to disperse when the materials are disturbed means that even if the materials are found to be suitable for use as compacted fill, the materials may be unsuitable due to dispersivity. A potential solution to this is to include a protective layer of suitable low permeability, erosion resistant material over the placed Haunted Hill Gravel fill materials.

4.3.2 Pavement considerations

The pavement usage and associated design requirements are not known at this time, however, preliminary commentary on the suitability of the in situ site materials as subgrade as well as pavement layers can be provided:

- Topsoil, fill and alluvium materials at the site should be considered unsuitable for pavement subgrade. These materials should be stripped prior to construction of pavement layers for the roads.
- Assuming ‘very stiff’ or stiffer clays or ‘dense’ or denser sands and gravels, the in situ Haunted Hills Gravel materials should be suitable as pavement subgrade materials, if covered by engineered pavement layers. Regarding design parameters such as California Bearing Ratio, this would be assessed as part of the geotechnical site investigation after field assessment of the materials is undertaken.

It is known that local roads in the Latrobe Valley region use Haunted Hills Gravel materials as surface pavement layers for unsealed roads. It is likely that not all materials in this geological unit are suitable for this purpose, and materials with suitable proportions of coarse granular and fine materials are sourced from selected locations where quarries are present. Further investigation would need to be undertaken into the details of utilisation of these materials in construction of unsealed roads.

4.4 Excavation conditions

Topsoil and fill materials are expected to have easy excavation conditions for small or larger powered excavation equipment.

For Haunted Hills Gravel materials, the near surface materials are expected to have soil strength and should have relatively easy excavation conditions for small or larger powered excavation equipment. Underlying the soil layer, the materials may have cemented zones which may be very low or low rock strength. These materials may require a larger excavator (20 or 30 tonne) to efficiently excavate. It is currently not known if cemented materials are present at the site within the depth range of proposed project construction excavations.

4.5 Erosion and Dispersivity

The Haunted Hills Formation soils and other associated Quaternary aged geological units derived from the Haunted Hills Formation have been observed at other Latrobe Valley sites to be susceptible to erosion, which causes the fine grained portion of the soil to disperse and be transported away, leaving the coarser grained portion in place. Over time, the sand and gravel portion may also be transported away, accumulating as granular deposits. This process appears to occur primarily where the soils have been disturbed, as signs of significant erosion of undisturbed in situ soil such as creek base rutting are generally not observed.

Exposures of Haunted Hills Gravel materials in road cuttings in the general area of the site, viewed in Google Streetview, indicate some susceptibility to erosion, however the cuts appear to have relatively good performance where materials are cemented and undisturbed and there has not been long term concentrated surface water flows. An example along Willow Grove Road, to the north of the site, is provided in Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1: Cutting exposure of Haunted Hills Gravel, to the north of the site. (Image source: Google)

If the high dispersivity when disturbed characteristic is applicable for the Haunted Hills Gravel materials underlying the site, this aspect should be considered in the management of open excavations during construction, the handling of excavated materials and the suitability of the excavated materials for reuse as fill.

4.6 Earthquake classification

According to the AS1170.4 (2024) hazard class maps, a site hazard factor (Z) of 0.10 should be adopted for the Latrobe Valley. Given the likely sub-surface profile (depth to rock greater than 60 m), the site sub-soil class assessed in accordance with AS1170.4 (2024) is likely to be either Class C_e – Shallow Soil or Class D_e – Deep or soft soil depending on the soil strength. For preliminary purposes we suggest adopting Class D_e. Targeted geotechnical investigations are required to assess the site sub-soil class for detailed design.

5 Geotechnical considerations and data gaps

Based on our desktop assessment, a key geotechnical data gap is the absence of a targeted intrusive investigation at the site, to provide information about the subsurface conditions including the presence, depth and extent of topsoil and fill, the engineering characteristics of the subsurface materials in particular the Haunted Hills Gravel unit, and further information about the depth to groundwater. Further details on the proposed development including the location of infrastructure items would be required to advance the investigation and assessment of geotechnical conditions at the site.

WSP has assumed that a targeted geotechnical investigation will be undertaken to support any future BESS or solar farm development and to assess the subsurface conditions. The scope of future investigation is expected to include the following items:

- Assessment of the subsurface profile relevant to the proposed development, for example via the drilling of geotechnical boreholes (with in situ testing such as standard penetration tests in the boreholes), and the excavation of test pits.
- Assessment of the topsoil thickness as well as the presence, depth and nature of uncontrolled fill.
- A site walkover to assess the existing site conditions, the performance of existing structures and pavements at the site and investigate examples of the usage of local subsurface materials in construction.
- Assessment of the groundwater depth, based on measurements in monitoring standpipes that may be installed as part of the geotechnical investigation.
- Field and laboratory electrical and thermal resistivity tests.
- Geotechnical laboratory testing, including particle size distribution, Atterberg limits, material dispersivity and shrink-swell index tests to assess the engineering characteristics of the natural subsurface materials at the site. Laboratory CBR and associated compaction tests should also be undertaken for earthworks pavement design purposes.
- Considering the potential for subsurface material strength to influence footing options, geophysics methods could be considered to provide subsurface material density (and inferred strength) across the site, which may assist with decisions on suitable footing types over the relatively large solar farm area.

Further recommendations and commentary on the geotechnical conditions at the site, geotechnical design and construction considerations and provisional of geotechnical design parameters would be provided after the site investigations are undertaken.

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