

# Murchs Corner BESS

<b>TOPIC</b>	Engagement Activities Summary Memo
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<b>DATE</b>	19/12/2025

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## 1. Introduction

As set out in the Murchs Corner Community & Stakeholder Engagement Plan (CSEP) (July 2025), the Project team want to ensure that neighbours, the Darlington community and key stakeholders are proactively and meaningfully informed, consulted and involved with the Project throughout the planning, development, assessment and delivery stages.

Community and stakeholder engagement is fundamental to delivering positive and effective outcomes for both energy projects and the local community. As part of the early design and engagement phase of the Proposal, the Project team has engaged with neighbours, the broader Darlington community and a range of stakeholders, prior to planning submission. Summaries of these activities are listed below.

## 2. Neighbours & Community

To ensure the broader community had opportunities to be involved in the Proposal, the Project team hosted a Community Drop In Session (CDIS) on 12 November 2025 at the Darlington Mechanics Institute Hall. The purpose of the CDIS was to provide information about the Proposal to neighbours and the community, provide an opportunity to ask questions and voice opinions, encourage engagement in the planning process, as well as establish a point of contact for the Proposal.

Direct contact was made with landowners prior to the CDIS.

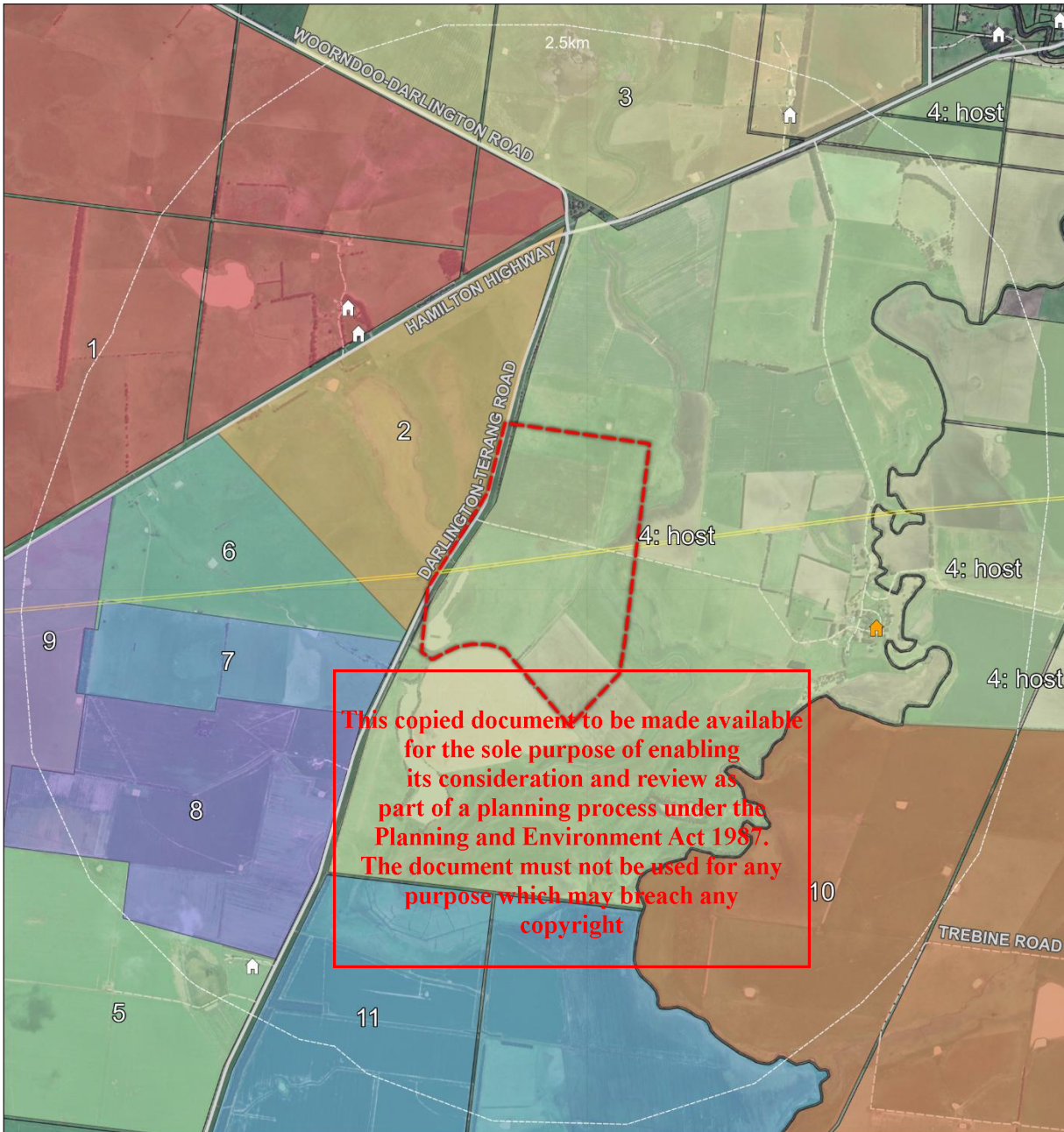
### Neighbour engagement

In the weeks prior to the CDIS, introduction/invitation letters (see Attachments) were sent to neighbours within 2.5km of the Project Area (see Figure 1), including some direct phone calls and emails.

Some neighbours attended the CDIS, and there have been additional follow-up meetings and correspondence regarding the project. Notes have been included in the summary within the following CDIS sub-section.

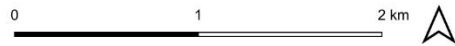
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### Property Map

2511 - Murchs Corner BESS



**LEGEND**

**Proposal**

Project Area

**Existing Features**

500kV Transmission line

Roads

**Dwellings**

Non associated

Associated

**Property Landowners**

1

10

2

3

4: host landowner

5

6

11

7

8

9

Version: 1.0

Date: 02/10/2025

Disclaimer: This plan is preliminary and subject to detailed studies and approval.

Darlington WF source: Project layout plan (version 30) 12/06/2024

Figure 1 - Mailout plan

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## Community Drop In Session (CDIS)

### Advertising

The CDIS was advertised twice in the Mortlake Dispatch (as well as letters to neighbours and residents in Darlington) and notices placed in community noticeboards in Noorat, Derrinallum, Mortlake and in local business (Darlington pub, Clarks pies, Mortlake). Email invitations were sent to the following key stakeholders:

- Moyne Shire Council Councillor group: Cr. Karen Foster (Mayor), Cr. Jordan Lockett (Dep Mayor), Cr. Jim Doukas, Cr. Lisa Ryan, Cr. Susan Taylor, Cr. Lloyd Ross, Cr. Myra Murrihy, Executive Team: Mark Eversteyn (CEO), Jodie McNamara (Director Environment, Economy and Place) and Senior Energy Projects Officer: Vicki Askew-Thornton.
- Dan Teehan MP (Member for Wannon (Federal))
- Emma Kealy MP (State, Member for Lowan District) and Richard Riordan MP (Member for Polwarth, neighbouring electorate)
- Corangamite Shire Council Councillor group and Executive team (neighbouring LGA)
- Victorian Upper House Members for Western Victoria (Bev McArthur, Jacinta Ermacora, Gayle Tierney, Sarah Mansfield, Joe McCracken)
- Local CFA brigades (including Darlington)

### Project Team attendance

Landowners / Proponents: Clive Jamieson, landowner  
 Bobby Jamieson, landowner  
 Andrew Clark  
 Leah Smythe  
 Rob Tempone

Consultants: Simon Reed & Will Reed, Robert Luxmoore  
 Billy Greenham, Cogency

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### Collateral

- Information boards (x6)
- Site photo board (x1)
- A3 Posters (x2)
- Benefit sharing brainstorm poster (x2)
- 'How to influence a project' factsheet

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### Attendees

Over the 3-hour period, 16 attendees visited and spoke to the project team. These included neighbours, residents of Darlington, and the Moyne Senior Energy Projects Liaison.

### Key issues and discussion notes

Topic	Details
<b>Council liaison</b>	
<b>Traffic impacts</b>	Scheduled meeting with Council engineering team to discuss road and traffic impacts. Advised the traffic impact assessment is an important assessment to Council.
<b>Communication</b>	Appreciated the host landowner was present.

	Noted it's a late public announcement. Suggested in-person representation for the upcoming Councillors presentation in Mortlake on 25 November 2025.
<b>Benefit sharing</b>	Interested to understand the community benefits.
<b>Community</b>	
<b>Energy reliability</b>	Noted brownouts and blackouts are problems in Darlington. Hopes the Proposal can improve energy reliability.
<b>Siting</b>	Suggested moving the BESS location further east, away from neighbouring dwellings.
<b>Neighbour communication</b>	Concerned about the timing of neighbour communication and public announcement of the Proposal. Concerns there is a lack of transparency.
<b>Benefit sharing</b>	Criticism that benefits will be concentrated to the landowner and broader community without sufficient focus on neighbours. Suggested that neighbours should not be lumped in with broader community benefits.
<b>Fire risk</b>	Concerned about fire risk to nearby properties. Concerned that the local fire brigade won't want to enter the BESS property.
<b>Traffic</b>	Concerned about the impact of construction traffic to Darlington-Terang Road.
<b>Amenity</b>	Concerned about noise and visual impact to nearby properties. Concerned about the industrialisation of the landscape. Concerned and unsure about the scale of the Proposal.
<b>Project ownership</b>	Questioned the future ownership of the Proposal.
<b>Darlington Wind Farm</b>	Questioned the Project's relationship to the proposed Darlington Wind Farm.
<b>Renewables</b>	Some attendees expressed general interest in other projects and renewables.

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### Community Sentiment

There was a mix of positive sentiment from the broader community and negative sentiment from three nearby farming families (two farming properties (no residences) approximately 1 km from the BESS, and one farming property/dwelling 4.6 km from the BESS). Feedback varied between support for the proposal, desire to see the community benefit fund shaped to support neighbours and the Darlington community, and questions and concerns on fire risk, traffic impacts, siting and relationship to other projects.

In response, the following actions were taken to address concerns:

- A thank you for attending email was sent to all attendees.
- Follow-up meetings and phone calls have been held with neighbours in November and December 2025 to address technical questions and to discuss neighbour benefits.
- The BESS was shifted 70m east from the property boundary to increase the setback from the boundary with Darlington-Terang Road, creating additional setback for visual minimisation and increased fire protection.
- A second access point closer to Hamilton Highway (primary access for construction vehicles) was introduced to reduce the travel distance of construction traffic and to minimise their impacts on Darlington-Terang Road and the dwelling south of the Project Area
- The project team contacted nearby neighbours who didn't attend the CDIS.
- Tailored communication with nearby neighbours is ongoing.

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## 3. Stakeholder Meetings

Name	Summary	Actions
Department of Transport and Planning (DTP)	<p>A pre-application meeting with DTP was held on 20/10/2025.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DTP agreed that the site is strategically located considering other renewables in the area and at face value appears to be a good site based on siting considerations.</li> <li>Suggested the project team reach out to the CFA.</li> <li>Advised that agricultural implications is important to the Minister.</li> <li>Clarified the project team is not seeking approval for the future terminal station expansion.</li> <li>Suggested reaching out to Corangamite council because of how close they are to the Proposal and that some neighbours aren't in Moyne Shire.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The project team have reached out to the CFA and will continue to engage post planning permit lodgement.</li> <li>An Agriculture Assessment has been prepared as part of the planning application.</li> <li>An invitation to attend the CDIS was sent to Corangamite Shire Council's Councillor group and Executive team.</li> </ul>
Moyne Shire Council Councillors	<p>A pre-application meeting with Moyne was held in person on 25/11/25.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Moyne noted the significant amount of energy projects and desire for coordination</li> <li>Suggested the benefit sharing framework is developed further, and focuses on local benefits</li> <li>Some questions on the BESS technology and connection into the 500kV line</li> <li>Interest in traffic management and Council road use.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The project team are continuing to develop the benefit sharing program.</li> <li>The project team have since met with Council's engineering team to discuss local road and traffic conditions.</li> </ul>
Moyne Shire energy and engineering teams	<p>A pre-application meeting with DTP was held on 17/12/2025.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a school bus stop near the Hamilton Highway/Darlington-Terang Road intersection</li> <li>Expressed a desire for heavy vehicles to fully avoid the school bus route for proposed roads.</li> <li>Suggested consideration of harvest time and planned road upgrades on traffic movements.</li> <li>Acknowledged the benefit of the landowner having local knowledge of the area.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Detailed engineering design and the construction traffic management plan will assess the traffic implications and provide management measures.</li> </ul>

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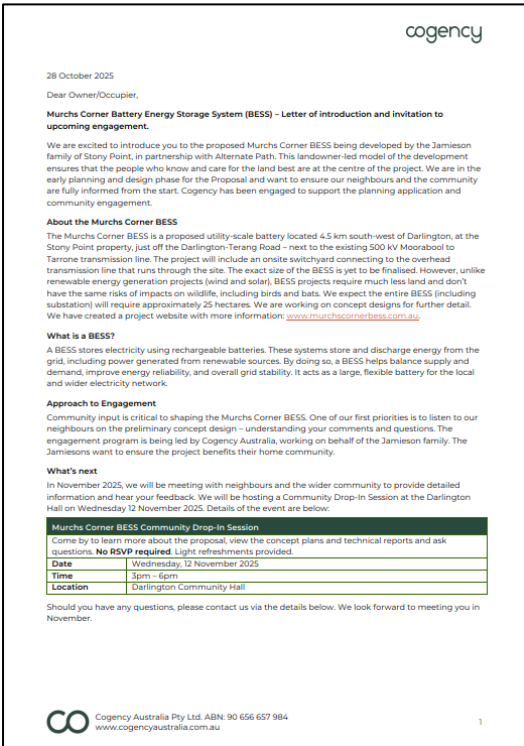
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### Attachments

Newspaper advertisement (27 October & 3 November) and notices



**Letter to nearby residents** (mailed to landowners within 2.5km, and dropped to additional residences within Darlington)



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**Community Drop-in Session (12 November 2025)**



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