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Darnum Battery Energy Storage System

Planning Permit Application Report

Final

August 2026

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SAMSUNG C&T REA

Darnum Battery Energy Storage System

Planning Permit Application Report

Final

Prepared by
Umwelt (Australia) Pty Limited

On behalf of
Darnum BESS Pty Ltd (ACN 694 489 828) as trustee of the Darnum
BESS Trust (ABN 84 694 489 828), owned by Samsung C&T
Australia (SREA)

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Report No.: 32137 / R01
Date: August 2026

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Acknowledgement of Country

Umwelt acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and their continuing values, culture and connection to the land, waters and sky.

We pay our respects to Elders past and present.

The below image is from the artwork *Yapung Maryiyang* (Pathway Forward) by Saretta Fielding.



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Executive Summary

This Planning Assessment Report has been prepared by Umwelt on behalf of Darnum BESS Pty Ltd (ACN 694 489 828) as trustee of the Darnum BESS Trust (ABN 84 694 489 828) (the Applicant), owned by Samsung C&T Renewable Energy Australia (SREA) (ABN 74 661 046 331) to support the planning permit application for the Darnum Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) Project (the Project) under the Baw Baw Planning Scheme (the Planning Scheme), and pursuant to Section 47 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

This report describes the Project and its context, identifies and assesses the Project against applicable legislation and relevant planning policies in accordance with the Planning Scheme.

Project Overview

The Project comprises a 200 megawatt (MW) / 800 megawatt-hour (MWh) utility-scale battery energy storage facility, including battery enclosures, associated transformers, an on-site substation and switchyard, internal access roads, drainage infrastructure, and ancillary services. The Project is proposed on land at 875 Darnum–Shady Creek Road, Shady Creek, within the Farming Zone.

The Project will connect directly to the existing 220 kV Yallourn-Rowville transmission line, enabling efficient use of established transmission infrastructure and avoiding the need for new off-site transmission corridors.

Site Use and Context

The Project Site is located within a modified rural landscape largely cleared of native vegetation, characterised by broadacre agriculture, rural roads, shelterbelts, farm buildings and existing electricity transmission infrastructure. Patches of native vegetation and scattered trees are present. No landscape-related planning overlays apply to the site.

The Development Footprint of the Project is approximately 7 hectares (ha) within a broader landholding of approximately 51.2 ha, allowing the continued use of the balance of the land for agricultural purposes. The nearest dwelling to the Project is the host landowner residence located approximately 160 metres to the east of the proposed BESS compound. The nearest non-host dwellings are located approximately 450 metres to the west and approximately 480 metres to the north.

Assessment Approach

The Project has been assessed against the Baw Baw Planning Scheme and the objectives of planning in Victoria set out in Section 4 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

A precautionary assessment approach has been adopted, applying conservative assumptions where uncertainty exists to identify potential impacts and inform mitigation. This approach is supported by a comprehensive suite of technical investigations addressing biodiversity, landscape and visual amenity, noise, bushfire risk, hazard and safety, surface water, traffic and transport, and community and stakeholder engagement, with outcomes informing the final Project design. A Cultural Heritage

Management Plan (CHMP) for the Project is also being prepared concurrently in accordance with the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* (AH Act) to identify, protect, and appropriately manage Aboriginal cultural heritage values that may be present within the Project area.

Assessment Outcomes

Landscape and Visual Amenity

The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) assessed landscape and visual impacts. Visual impacts from publicly accessible viewpoints are assessed as Nil, Negligible or Low, with photomontages demonstrating that, while the Project would be visible from some locations, it would not be a dominant feature in the view.

A dwelling assessment undertaken at a residential property on Baldwins Road assessed the overall visual impact as Low. From this property, existing vegetation would largely screen the proposed BESS modules and noise wall, with views primarily limited to the upper sections of the proposed gantry and monopole structures associated with the transmission line connection and the proposed lightning rods. Consistent with the findings of the dwelling and public viewpoint assessments, the LVIA concludes that the Project would not result in unacceptable landscape or visual impacts.

Noise and Amenity

An Environmental Noise Assessment (ENA) has been prepared for the Project and concludes that operational noise can be effectively managed through appropriate mitigation measures. The ENA was undertaken in accordance with the Environment Protection Regulations 2021 (EP Regulations) and EPA Victoria Publication 1826.5: *Noise limit and assessment protocol for the control of noise from commercial, industrial and trade premises and entertainment venues* (Noise Protocol). The assessment considered noise emissions from the proposed Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), transformers and associated electrical infrastructure.

The assessment found that compliance with the applicable Noise Protocol limits can be achieved at all neighbouring dwellings through the proposed 6 m high acoustic noise wall surrounding the BESS compound and substation. For the host landowner dwelling, compliance can be achieved through additional mitigation measures, including a localised acoustic barrier adjacent to the dwelling, with the final design and configuration to be confirmed during detailed design.

The assessment adopted conservative modelling assumptions, including the use of noise data for the Tesla Megapack 2 XL in place of the proposed Tesla Megapack 3 technology, which is expected to generate lower noise emissions. Overall, the assessment concludes that operational noise impacts can be appropriately managed and do not represent a constraint to the development of the Project.

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Bushfire Risk

Bushfire risk has been assessed through a Fire Risk Management Plan (FRMP), which concludes that risk can be appropriately managed through a risk-based approach to site layout, design and access, consistent with the Country Fire Authority (CFA) *Design Guidelines and Model Requirements for Renewable Energy Facilities* and the CFA *Guidelines for Fire Safety Studies for Battery Energy Storage Systems*. The Project incorporates defendable space and asset protection zones, compliant emergency vehicle access, and an on-site firefighting water supply to support emergency response.

Radiant heat protection is integrated into the design of the BESS infrastructure, and a fire-water retention system is provided to capture and manage contaminated firefighting runoff. Collectively, these measures reduce bushfire risk to an acceptable level and prioritise the protection of human life and surrounding assets.

Hazard and Safety

Hazard and safety risks have been assessed through a Preliminary Hazard Analysis (PHA) undertaken in accordance with Hazardous Industry Planning Advisory Papers (HIPAP) No. 4 and No. 6. The assessment identifies potential hazard scenarios associated with the Project and applies established risk and consequence screening criteria to evaluate the potential for off-site impacts.

The PHA concludes that, with the incorporation of appropriate design, siting and operational controls, the Project does not give rise to any credible hazard scenarios with unacceptable off-site consequences. Potential risks associated with battery system failure, fire and thermal runaway, electrical and transformer faults, and electromagnetic fields were considered and assessed.

The PHA confirms that these risks can be appropriately managed through inherent design features, site layout and operational controls, including the use of lithium iron phosphate (LFP) battery chemistry, compliance with recognised safety standards, fire detection and protection systems, and separation distances that limit hazard propagation beyond the Project boundary. With these measures in place, the identified risks are considered to have low likelihood and limited consequence and can be acceptably managed throughout construction and operation.

Surface Water and Catchment Protection

Surface water impacts have been assessed through a Surface Water Assessment (SWA), which concludes that the Project avoids direct impacts to waterways, riparian corridors and wetlands and is not affected by mapped riverine flooding. An ephemeral drainage line within the Project Site will be retained with appropriate setbacks, ensuring existing drainage functions are maintained.

A conceptual stormwater design has been developed to maintain pre-development drainage patterns and flow paths, through measures including diversion of external catchment flows, on-site detention and controlled discharge. Water quality risks will be managed during construction and operation through standard erosion, sediment and spill management measures, and fire-water retention system ensuring that downstream receiving environments are protected. With these measures in place, surface water impacts are assessed as minor and manageable, and downstream water quality and catchment processes will be protected.

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Traffic and Access

Traffic and access impacts have been assessed through a Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA), which concludes that traffic associated with the Project can be safely accommodated by the existing road network. Construction activities will result in a temporary increase in vehicle movements, primarily associated with equipment deliveries and workforce access, and can be effectively managed through a Traffic Management Plan (TMP) addressing construction vehicle routing, site access arrangements, traffic safety measures and road condition management.

During operation, traffic generation will be minimal, limited to infrequent operational and maintenance visits, with no material impact on the surrounding road network anticipated.

Biodiversity

Biodiversity values have been assessed through an Ecological Assessment undertaken in accordance with the Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation (DEECA, 2025) and relevant Commonwealth and State legislation. The assessment identifies that the Project Site is located within an agricultural landscape characterised by historic clearing of native vegetation, with remnant native vegetation largely confined to discrete patches in the north-west and east of the assessment area.

The assessment concludes that potential impacts to biodiversity can be acceptably managed through a combination of impact avoidance, minimisation and mitigation measures incorporated in the Project design.

Native vegetation removal is limited to 0.671 ha of Lowland Forest (EVC 16) associated with site access. This comprises of 0.148 ha of native vegetation patches and 0.522 ha of scattered trees. It is noted that no removal of hollow-bearing trees and no removal of threatened or protected flora is proposed. Targeted surveys confirm that no threatened ecological communities occur within the assessment area and that the Project is unlikely to result in significant impacts to threatened species listed under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act).

Potential impacts to threatened fauna are confined to small, localised losses of foraging habitat, with key habitat features, dispersal pathways and aquatic environments retained. With the implementation of recommended mitigation measures and the provision of native vegetation offsets in accordance with the Guidelines, residual biodiversity impacts are considered low in likelihood and limited in extent and can be acceptably managed throughout construction and operation.

Community and Stakeholder Outcomes

Community and stakeholder engagement for the Project involved consultation with nearby landowners, the local community, Traditional Owners, Council, referral authorities and other stakeholders through direct correspondence, meetings and community information sessions.

The engagement process identified key issues raised by stakeholders, including noise, visual and landscape impacts, bushfire risk and safety, site access and traffic, construction impacts, and long-term operation and decommissioning. Issues raised through engagement informed the scope and focus of technical assessments prepared for the Project, including noise, landscape and visual, bushfire, hazard and safety, and traffic assessments.

Engagement was undertaken at a stage where Project design was still being developed, allowing feedback to be considered as part of the design and assessment process. The Engagement Summary Report shows how issues raised through consultation were considered in developing Project design responses and mitigation measures, including infrastructure layout, setbacks, landscape treatment, access arrangements, and safety. The proponent has committed to continued engagement through the planning process and subsequent phases of the Project.

Strategic and Policy Considerations

The Project facilitates essential electricity system infrastructure that supports the transition to renewable energy, enhances grid reliability and resilience, and makes efficient use of existing transmission assets. It aligns with State planning policy supporting renewable energy and energy storage, while managing local impacts through site-specific mitigation measures.

The Project appropriately balances local environmental and amenity considerations with broader State and regional benefits, including energy security and economic investment, contributing to a net community benefit.

Conclusion

The assessment of the Project, informed by the supporting technical investigations, demonstrates that it represents an orderly and efficient use of land for infrastructure of State significance. Identified potential impacts on landscape character, amenity, environmental values, and human health and safety have been assessed and can be managed to acceptable levels through the Project's siting, design, mitigation measures, and permit conditions.

On balance, the proposal represents an orderly and efficient use of land, is consistent with the planning policy framework, and delivers a net community benefit. The proposal is therefore considered acceptable from a planning perspective and suitable for approval, subject to appropriate permit conditions.

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Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Description
AEP	Annual Exceedance Probability
APZ	Asset Protection Zone
ASL	Above sea level
BESS	Battery energy storage system
BMO	Bushfire Management Overlay
CaLP Act	<i>Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994</i> (Vic)
CEMP	Construction Environmental Management Plan
CFA	Country Fire Authority
CFA Guidelines	Design Guidelines and Model Requirements for Renewable Energy Facilities, Version 4.4, June 2025
CHMP	Cultural Heritage Management Plan
CMA	Catchment Management Authority
DCCEEW	Australian Government Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water
DEECA	Victorian Government Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action
DELWP	Former Victorian Government Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (functions mostly transferred to DEECA and DTP)
DCPO1	Development Contributions Plan Overlay – Schedule 1
DFP	Development Facilitation Program
DTP	Victorian Government Department of Transport and Planning
DTSO	Declared Transmission System Operator
EE Act	<i>Environment Effects Act 1978</i> (Vic)
EIIA	Extractive Industry Investigation Area
EES	Environment Effects Statement
EMF	Electromagnetic field
ENA	Environmental Noise Assessment
enHealth	Environmental Health Standing Committee (enHealth) (2018)
EPA	Environment Protection Authority (Vic)
EP Act	<i>Environment Protection Act 2017</i> (Vic)
EP Construction Guidelines	EPA Publication 1834: Civil construction, building and demolition guide (2025)
EP Regulations	Environment Protection Regulations 2021 (Vic)
EPBC Act	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> (Cth)
ERS	Environment Reference Standard
ESO	Environmental Significance Overlay
FFG Act	<i>Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988</i> (Vic)
FRMP	Fire Risk Management Plan

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Abbreviation	Description
FTE	Full-time Equivalent
FZ	Farming Zone
GED	General Environmental Duty
GIA	Grid Impact Assessment
GLaWAC	Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation
GW	Gigawatts
HIPAP	Hazardous Industry Planning Advisory Papers
kV	Kilovolts
LFP	Lithium iron phosphate
LGA	Local Government Area
LVIA	Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
MNES	Matters of National Environmental Significance
MPS	Municipal Planning Strategy
MW	Megawatts
MVA	Megavolt-ampere
MWh	Megawatt hour
NEM	National Electricity Market
NSA	Noise Sensitive Area
Native Vegetation Guidelines	Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation (DEECA 2025)
Noise Protocol	EPA Publication 1020.31 Noise mitigation assessment protocol for the control of noise from commercial, industrial and trade premises, and entertainment venues (September 2025)
O&M	Operations and maintenance
OEM	Original Equipment Manufacturer
OEMP	Operations Environmental Management Plan
OSOM	Over-sized over-mass
P&E Act	<i>Planning and Environment Act 1987</i> (Vic)
PHA	Preliminary Hazard Analysis
Planning Scheme	Baw Baw Planning Scheme
PPF	Planning Policy Framework
RAP	Registered Aboriginal Party
RCS	Regional Catchment Strategy
RM Act	<i>Road Management Act 2004</i> (Vic)
SCTS	Shady Creek Terminal Station
SECV	State Electricity Commission of Victoria
SLO	Significant Landscape Overlay
SREA	Samsung C&T Renewable Energy Australia Pty Ltd
SWA	Surface Water Assessment

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Abbreviation	Description
TIA	Traffic Impact Assessment
TMP	Traffic Management Plan
VHI	Victorian Heritage Inventory
VHR	Victorian Heritage Register
VPO	Vegetation Protection Overlay
WGCMA	West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority

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1.0 Introduction

This report has been prepared on behalf of Darnum BESS Pty Ltd (ACN 694 489 828) as trustee of the Darnum BESS Trust (ABN 84 694 489 828) (the Applicant), owned by SREA (ABN 74 661 046 331), to support a planning permit application for a utility-scale battery energy storage system (BESS), known as the Darnum BESS (the Project). The Project is proposed to be developed on land at 875 Darnum-Shady Creek Road, Shady Creek (the Project Site) located approximately 7 km north of Darnum and approximately 8 km north-east of Warragul within the Baw Baw Shire Local Government Area (LGA) of Victoria (see **Figure 1.1**).

This report describes the Project and site context, outlines the technical assessments and engagement activities undertaken to inform Project planning and design, and provides a detailed planning assessment of the Project against the Baw Baw Planning Scheme (the Planning Scheme) and other relevant legislation, policy and guidance documents.

1.1 Project Overview

The Project would comprise the following key components:

- A 200 Megawatt (MW) / 800 Megawatt-hour (MWh) BESS compound, including 196 battery modules, 49 x 6.36 Megavolt-Amperes (MVA) step-up transformers and associated cabling.
- An on-site 33/220 kilovolt (kV) Project substation, including a 240 MVA HV transformer, switchgear/control rooms, harmonic filters, and associated infrastructure.
- A switchyard to facilitate Project connection into the National Electricity Market (NEM) via the existing 220 kV overhead transmission line (Yallourn Power Station to Rowville Terminal Station) that runs across the southern portion of the Project Site.
- Ancillary infrastructure and works including site access, internal access roads and parking, operations and maintenance facilities, stormwater infrastructure, noise walls and radiant heat walls, fire water tanks and systems, asset protection zones, lightning protection, lighting, signage, security devices and fencing, landscaping/screening.

The Project would have a total Development Footprint of approximately 7 ha, inclusive of approximately 2.5 ha for the BESS compound, approximately 3.0 ha for the Project substation, switchyard and grid connection, along with approximately 1.5 ha for ancillary infrastructure external to the main infrastructure compounds. These areas include the required Asset Protection Zones (APZs), which are incorporated into the Project layout in accordance with the Fire Risk Management Plan (**Appendix G**) and the CFA *Design Guidelines for Renewable Energy Facilities*.

Access to the Project is planned directly from Darnum-Shady Creek Road via a modified version of the existing crossover which currently provides access to the host dwelling and associated farm infrastructure and operations. A secondary access is also proposed off Darnum-Shady Creek Road near the southern site boundary and would function primarily as an emergency access.

The BESS would have a capacity of 200 MW active power and 800 MWh battery storage capacity, which would improve the stability of the NEM by storing electricity during period of low demand, and releasing during periods of high demand.

The Applicant is proposing to utilise the Tesla Megapack 3. Tesla is a mature and established provider in the Australian market. However, the final supplier, number and location of Project components are subject to refinement through detailed design, tender and procurement processes.

Upper limit quantities and power level estimates are provided to ensure the assessment and any subsequent approval maintains the flexibility required in the detailed design stage following Project approval. Similarly, while an indicative design is provided, the delineation of the Project Site provides for the assessment and flexibility of minor layout changes in the final detailed design. Together this ‘upper limit’ or ‘worst case’ approach ensures that all impacts of construction, as well as operation and decommissioning, are considered and that any recommendations and mitigation strategies would be appropriate for the final detailed design. This approach would allow the Project to maximise potential benefits from the rapid technology advancements currently underway in the BESS industry.

Construction is expected to commence in 2027 and take up to 18 months to complete. For planning purposes, an Indicative Construction Envelope of approximately 20.5 ha has been identified to encompass areas required for access, material and equipment laydown, staff parking and amenities, offices, and construction water supply, along with temporary working buffers around the Development Footprint. Not all of the Indicative Construction Envelope is expected to be disturbed for the construction of the Project. Additional temporary construction areas beyond the permanent infrastructure footprint would be minimised, wherever practicable, to reduce disturbance impacts, and would be investigated once the construction contractor is appointed and detailed construction scheduling/sequencing has been confirmed.

The Project would operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and has an expected 25-year operating lifespan. At the conclusion of this 25-year period, the BESS components may be replaced or refurbished to extend the life (subject to market conditions) or otherwise decommissioned.

If planning approval is granted, the development plans, technical assessments and management plans required by the permit conditions to be submitted for endorsement by the responsible authority would reflect the detailed design and selected Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) technology. This approach enables the final design of the Project to integrate newer technologies, which are rapidly evolving to produce more efficient, lower cost and lower emissions BESS.

Being located outside a proposed Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) identified in VicGrid’s 2025 Victorian Transmission Plan (2025 VTP), it is noted that under VicGrid’s Victorian Access Regime, the Project will need to undertake a Grid Impact Assessment for which draft Grid Impact Assessment Guidelines have recently been published by VicGrid. The draft Grid Impact Assessment Guidelines set out the criteria and the application process for renewable energy generation and storage projects outside of REZ to gain access and connect to Victoria’s transmission network.

The proposed Project concept layout plan, including the disturbance area, are shown in **Figure 1.2**. Concept design plans for the Project are provided in **Appendix A**. Further details on the Project are provided in **Section 3.0**.

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1.2 Application Summary

The planning permit application particulars are summarised in **Table 1.1**.

This planning permit application is proposed for submission to the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) under the Development Facilitation Program (DFP) assessment pathway and pursuant to **Clause 53.22** (Significant Economic Development) of the Planning Scheme as the Project meets the relevant eligibility criteria as further discussed in **Section 5.6**.

Table 1.1 Planning Permit Application Summary

Project	Darnum BESS
Applicant / Proponent	Darnum BESS Pty Ltd (ACN 694 489 828) as trustee of the Darnum BESS Trust (ABN 84 694 489 828) (the Applicant), owned by SREA
Site	
Address	875 Darnum-Shady Creek Road, Shady Creek, VIC 3821
Title description	Lot 2 on Plan LP79375 (Project Site – BESS and grid connection) Darnum-Shady Creek Road reserve (site access, including secondary emergency access) Title searches are included at Appendix B .
Title restrictions	Lot 2 on Plan LP79375 is burdened by: - A reservation (the Crown Grant Vol 1869 Fol. 796) in favour of the State Electricity Commission of Victoria (SECV) for the purposes of electricity transmission. - An easement (Instrument A54853) in favour of SECV for the purposes of electricity transmission.
Area	Total site area: 51.2 ha
Development Footprint:	Total approximately 7 ha which includes all permanent infrastructure, including: - BESS compound with APZ (approximately 2.5 ha) - Project substation and associated connection infrastructure with APZ (approximately 3 ha) - Ancillary infrastructure including site access roads, car parking, operations and maintenance facilities, stormwater management infrastructure, safety infrastructure (including noise attenuation and radiant heat walls), fire detection and suppression systems, security fencing, lighting, signage and landscaping (approximately 1.5 ha)
Indicative Construction Envelope:	Total approximately 20.5 ha, including: - Development Footprint: approximately 7 ha (as described above) - Temporary construction disturbance areas: approximately 13.5 ha, including construction access tracks, temporary laydown and storage areas, construction site offices, parking and amenities, construction water supply infrastructure, spoil and materials management areas, construction

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Project	Darnum BESS
	buffer areas around permanent infrastructure, and other temporary construction-related activities. Not all of the Indicative Construction Envelope is expected to be disturbed. Temporary construction disturbance beyond the development footprint would be minimised wherever practicable to reduce impacts and would be refined following appointment of the construction contractor and confirmation of detailed construction scheduling and sequencing.
Municipality	Shire of Baw Baw
Planning	
Planning Scheme	Baw Baw Planning Scheme
Responsible authority	Minister for Planning Pursuant to Clause 72.01-1 (Minister is responsible authority) the Minister for Planning is the responsible authority for planning permits for the use and development of land for a utility installation used to transmit or distribute electricity and to store electricity if the installed capacity is 1 MW or greater. The Minister for Planning is also responsible authority for a matter to which Clause 53.22 (Significant economic development) applies.
Zones	Farming Zone (FZ) (Clause 35.07)
Overlays	Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO) (Clause 44.06) Development Contributions Plan Overlay Schedule 1 (DCPO1) (Clause 45.06)
Land use definition	Utility installation ('land used to transmit, distribute or store power')
Permit triggers	Clause 35.07-1 – Use of land for a utility installation in FZ Clause 35.07-4 – To construct or carry out building or works for a utility installation in FZ Clause 35.07-4 – To carry out earthworks identified in Schedule 1 to Clause 35.07 (earthworks which change the rate of flow or the discharge point of water across a property boundary) in FZ Clause 52.05-14 – Display of business identification signage in Category 4 area (Farming Zone) Clause 52.17-1 – To remove, destroy or lop native vegetation, including dead native vegetation.
Referral authorities	Clause 66.02-2 – DEECA (Recommending referral authority) Clause 66.02-4 – AusNet (Determining referral authority) Clause 66.02-7 – WorkSafe Victoria (Determining referral authority)
Notice requirements	Notice requirements as per section 52 of the <i>Planning and Environment Act 1987</i> (P&E Act). No additional notice requirements specified in the Planning Scheme.

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1.3 Consultation Summary

The approach to engagement adopted for the Project has been informed by the Victorian Government's Community Engagement and Benefit Sharing in Renewable Energy Development in Victoria Guide (DELWP, 2021) and VicGrid's Draft Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines for Renewable Energy and Transmission Projects (VicGrid, 2025c). Engagement to date has included consultation with the following:

- Landholders and neighbours, including door-knocking, written notifications, small group meetings and targeted technical briefings
- Local and broader community members, through community meetings, a staffed drop-in session, online information and a community survey
- Local government, including project briefings with Baw Baw Shire Council officers and Councillors
- Traditional Owners, through engagement with the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation (GLaWAC)
- Key stakeholders and interest groups, including emergency service representatives, environmental and Landcare groups, community and sustainability groups, industry and business representatives, education and training providers, and regional development organisations
- State government agencies, including pre-lodgement engagement with the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP).

An Engagement Summary Report is included in **Appendix C** and details the engagement activities undertaken, outcomes of engagement, identified social, environmental and economic concerns from a stakeholder / community perspective and the Applicant's response to these. A summary of community and stakeholder engagement is also provided in **Section 7.0**.

Engagement with GLaWAC as the Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP) for the Project Site has been undertaken and will be documented in the Voluntary Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) being prepared for the Project concurrent with this planning permit application.

1.4 Supporting Technical Assessments

This planning permit application is supported by the following technical assessments:

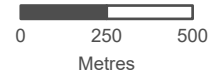
- Engagement Summary Report, prepared by Umwelt, April 2026 (**Appendix C**)
- Ecological Assessment, prepared by Umwelt, May 2026 (**Appendix D**)
- Environmental Noise Assessment, prepared by Resonate, June 2026 (**Appendix E**)
- Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, prepared by AELA, August 2026 (**Appendix F**)
- Fire Risk Management Plan, prepared by Fire Risk Consultants, April 2026 (**Appendix G**)
- Preliminary Hazard Analysis, prepared by Riskcon Engineering, April 2026 (**Appendix H**)
- Surface Water Assessment, prepared by GreenSmart Consulting, April 2026 (**Appendix I**)
- Traffic Impact Assessment, prepared by IMPACT Traffic Engineering, June 2026 (**Appendix J**).

Key findings of these technical assessments are summarised in **Section 6.0**.



FIGURE 1.1
Project Site Location

- Legend**
- Project Site Area
 - Indicative Construction Envelope
 - - - Approximate Distance From BESS Boundary (m)
 - Dwellings
 - Roads
 - Watercourse
 - Existing Transmission Lines
 - Parcel

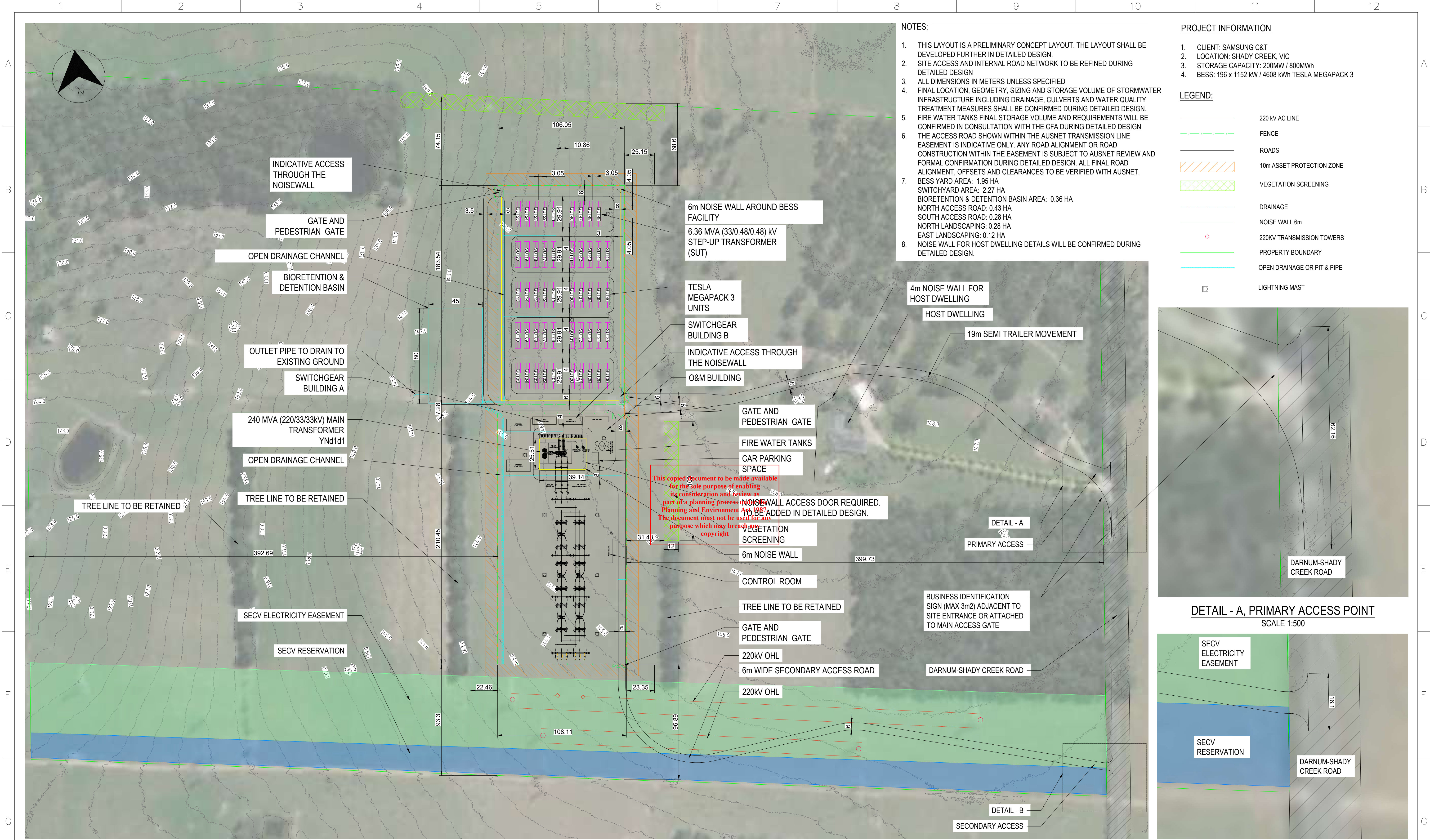


Scale 1:22,000 at A4
GDA2020 MGA Zone 55



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NOTES;

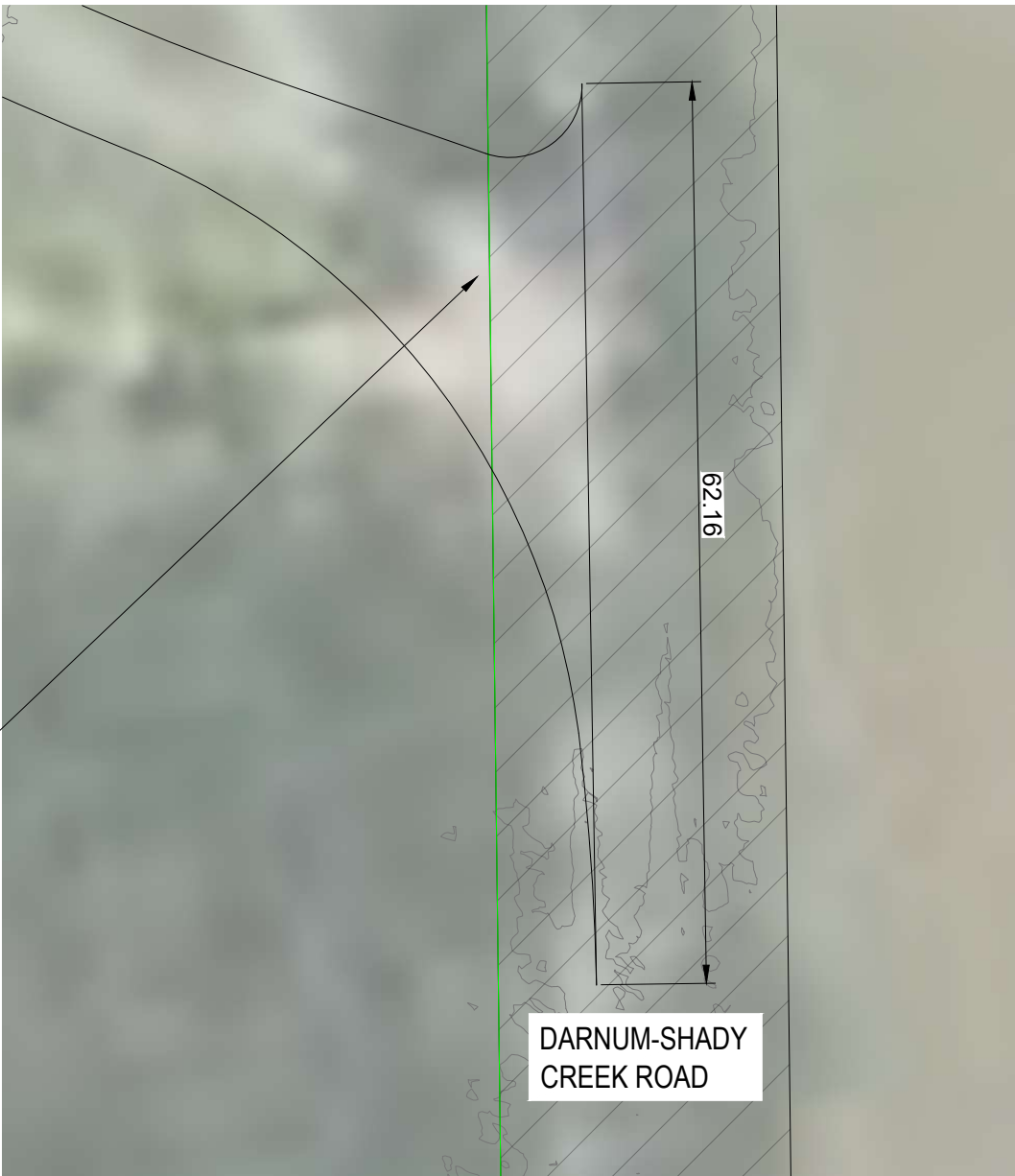
- 1. THIS LAYOUT IS A PRELIMINARY CONCEPT LAYOUT. THE LAYOUT SHALL BE DEVELOPED FURTHER IN DETAILED DESIGN.
- 2. SITE ACCESS AND INTERNAL ROAD NETWORK TO BE REFINED DURING DETAILED DESIGN
- 3. ALL DIMENSIONS IN METERS UNLESS SPECIFIED
- 4. FINAL LOCATION, GEOMETRY, SIZING AND STORAGE VOLUME OF STORMWATER INFRASTRUCTURE INCLUDING DRAINAGE, CULVERTS AND WATER QUALITY TREATMENT MEASURES SHALL BE CONFIRMED DURING DETAILED DESIGN.
- 5. FIRE WATER TANKS FINAL STORAGE VOLUME AND REQUIREMENTS WILL BE CONFIRMED IN CONSULTATION WITH THE CFA DURING DETAILED DESIGN
- 6. THE ACCESS ROAD SHOWN WITHIN THE AUSNET TRANSMISSION LINE EASEMENT IS INDICATIVE ONLY. ANY ROAD ALIGNMENT OR ROAD CONSTRUCTION WITHIN THE EASEMENT IS SUBJECT TO AUSNET REVIEW AND FORMAL CONFIRMATION DURING DETAILED DESIGN. ALL FINAL ROAD ALIGNMENT, OFFSETS AND CLEARANCES TO BE VERIFIED WITH AUSNET.
- 7. BESS YARD AREA: 1.95 HA
SWITCHYARD AREA: 2.27 HA
BIORETENTION & DETENTION BASIN AREA: 0.36 HA
NORTH ACCESS ROAD: 0.43 HA
SOUTH ACCESS ROAD: 0.28 HA
NORTH LANDSCAPING: 0.28 HA
EAST LANDSCAPING: 0.12 HA
- 8. NOISE WALL FOR HOST DWELLING DETAILS WILL BE CONFIRMED DURING DETAILED DESIGN.

PROJECT INFORMATION

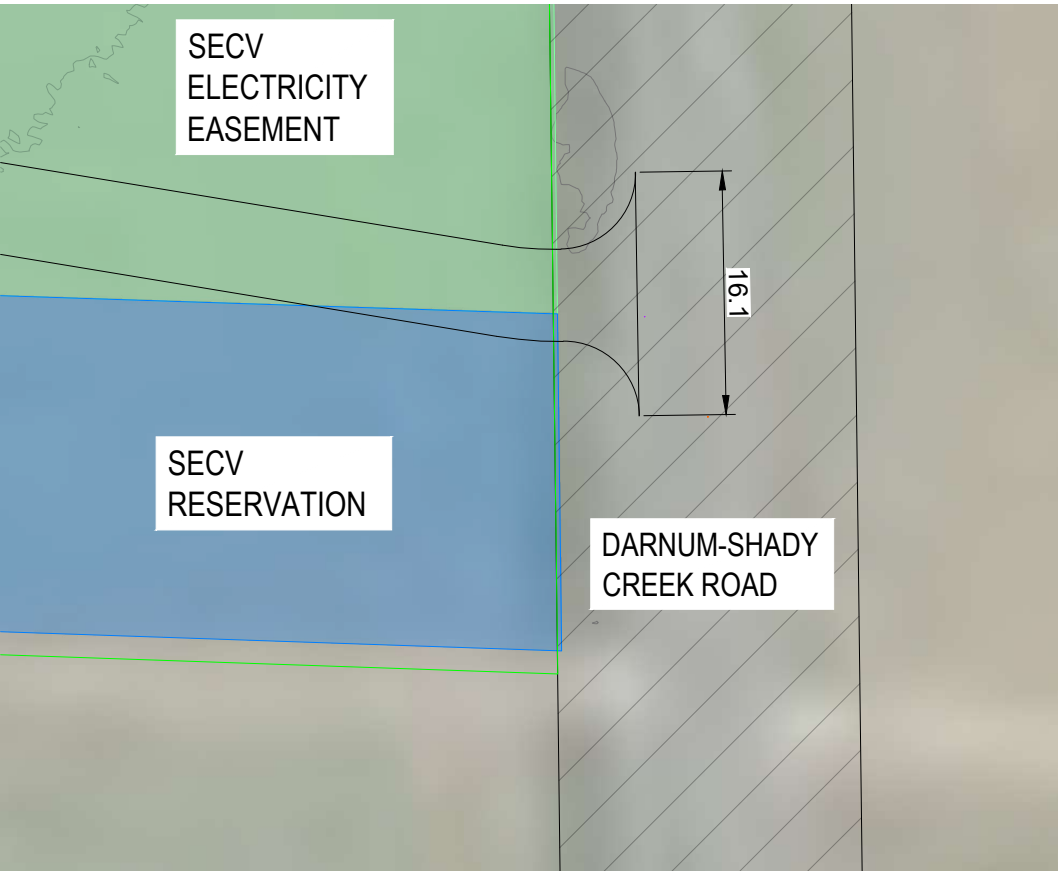
- 1. CLIENT: SAMSUNG C&T
- 2. LOCATION: SHADY CREEK, VIC
- 3. STORAGE CAPACITY: 200MW / 800MWh
- 4. BESS: 196 x 1152 kW / 4608 kWh TESLA MEGAPACK 3

LEGEND:

- 220 kV AC LINE
- FENCE
- ROADS
- 10m ASSET PROTECTION ZONE
- VEGETATION SCREENING
- DRAINAGE
- NOISE WALL 6m
- 220KV TRANSMISSION TOWERS
- PROPERTY BOUNDARY
- OPEN DRAINAGE OR PIT & PIPE
- LIGHTNING MAST



DETAIL - A, PRIMARY ACCESS POINT
SCALE 1:500



DETAIL - B, SECONDARY ACCESS POINT
SCALE 1:500

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SCALE 1:1500

CONCEPT DESIGN

J	CONCEPT DESIGN	MK	GM	RM	JD	30/06/2026
I	CONCEPT DESIGN	MK	GM	RM	JD	10/06/2026
H	CONCEPT DESIGN	MK	GM	RM	MK	29/05/2026
G	CONCEPT DESIGN	MK	GM	RM	JD	20/03/2026
F	CONCEPT DESIGN	MK	GM	RM	JD	13/03/2026
REV	DESCRIPTION	DESIGNED	DRAWN	REVIEWED	APPROVED	DATE

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CLIENT SAMSUNG C&T SHADY CREEK, VIC			
DRAFTER G.MIN	DESIGNER M.KENYI	REVIEWER R.MEYER	APPROVER J.DARKER

TITLE DARNUM BESS SITE LAYOUT SET OUT DIMENSIONS			
PROJECT DATUM	Original Size A1	MIDDLETON GROUP DRAWING NUMBER	
SCALE 1:2000	E CODE	DNB-E-DRG-005 DRAWING NUMBER	J REV

2.0 Site Context and Analysis

2.1 Site

2.1.1 Location

The Project Site is located at 875 Darnum-Shady Creek Road, Shady Creek within the Gippsland region of Victoria, approximately 7 km north of Darnum and 8 km north-east of Warragul (**Figure 1.1**). The Project Site is located in the Baw Baw Shire Local Government Area (LGA).

2.1.2 Land Tenure and Title Restrictions

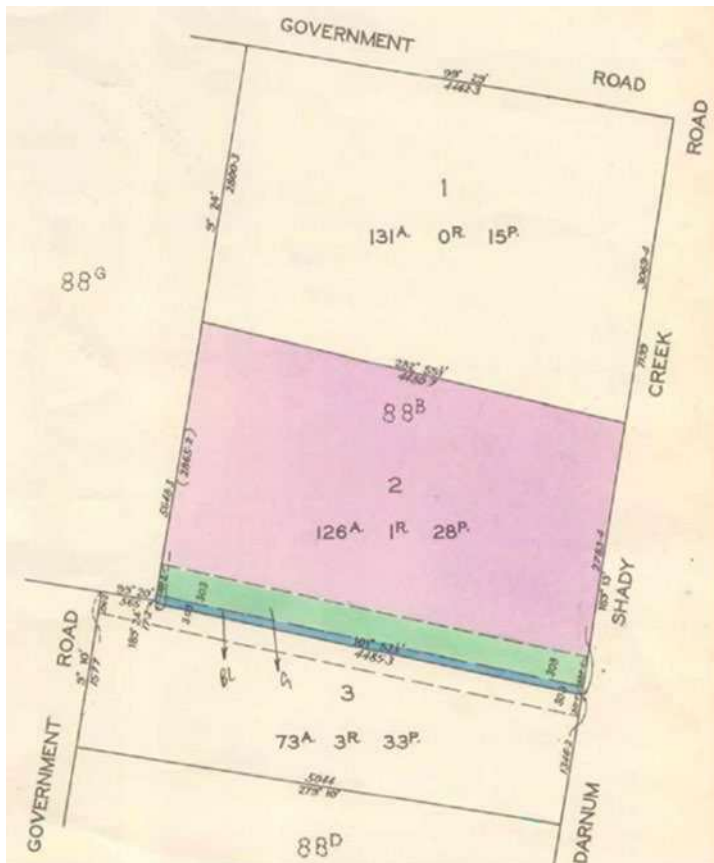
The Project Site comprises a single parcel of privately owned freehold land described as Lot 2 on LP079375 and having a total area of 51.2 ha. The Proponent has secured an option agreement with the landowner to undertake investigations related to the environmental and planning approvals and lease the land required for the Project.

The Project Site is subject to two electricity infrastructure interests on title:

- Reservation in Crown Grant Vol. 6769 Fol. 796 in favour of the State Electricity Commission of Victoria (SECV) (marked in blue, **Figure 2.1**) identified in TP194563D. The reservation allows for the construction and operation of electricity transmission infrastructure and associated access rights for the electricity authority and its successors. Buildings and structures that may obstruct the operation and maintenance of the transmission infrastructure are restricted within the reservation area. The reservation contains the existing 66 kV sub-transmission lines.
- Easement created by Instrument A54853 under TP194563D in favour of SECV (marked in green, **Figure 2.1**). The easement allows for the construction, operation, maintenance and access associated with electricity transmission infrastructure and restricts the placement of buildings and other obstructions within the easement area. The easement contains the existing 220 kV transmission lines into which the Project would connect.

The Project layout has been designed to minimise the extent of permanent infrastructure within the areas affected by the reservation and easement. The BESS compound, Project substation, transformers, operations and maintenance building, noise walls and other primary operational infrastructure are located outside the affected land. Within the electricity easement, the Project proposes a secondary/emergency access track and two steel monopoles required to facilitate connection between the Project substation and the existing 220 kV transmission line. The primary Project infrastructure is located outside the reservation area, which will continue to be available for its intended electricity transmission and access functions. The Project has been designed to avoid materially affecting the operation, maintenance or access rights associated with the existing electricity infrastructure interests. The final alignment and design of the secondary access track and monopoles will be confirmed during detailed design in consultation with the relevant electricity network operator.

No other restrictions on title have been identified. A copy of the title searches is included at **Appendix B**.



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Figure 2.1 Location of Electricity Easement (green) and Reservation (blue) Burdening the Project Site (identified in TP194563D)

2.1.3 Existing Land Use and Development

The Project Site primarily comprises an open, agricultural landscape which has been largely cleared of native vegetation and is used for grazing. Patches of native vegetation and some scattered trees are present in the north-west, north-east, and south-east parts of the site. There are three shelterbelts of planted trees (Monterey Cypress) within the central parts of the Project Site and two water bodies (farm dams) near the northern and western site boundaries.

The Project Site currently contains a dwelling, large shed and cattle yard which are located on the eastern part of the site and are accessed off Darnum-Shady Creek Road. The existing dwelling, large shed and cattle yard will remain on site during the operation of the BESS. The closest dwelling to the proposed Project is the host dwelling located approximately 160 m east of the BESS compound, with the closest neighbour dwellings located approximately 450 m west and approximately 480 m north of the BESS compound.

The existing 220 kV overhead transmission line (Yallourn Power Station to Rowville Terminal Station) runs across the southern portion of the Project Site on land subject to an easement in favour of the SECV for the purposes of electricity transmission as described in **Section 2.1.2**. A 66 kV overhead sub-transmission line also runs across the southern portion of the Project Site (and adjacent land to the south) and is subject to a Crown Grant reservation in favour of the SECV for the purposes of electricity transmission as described in **Section 2.1.2**.



Photo 2.1 Looking West at the Existing Dwelling on the Project Site from the Site Access Point

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Photo 2.2 Looking South at the Proposed BESS Compound Site from the Northern Boundary of the Project Site



Photo 2.3 Looking North at the BESS Compound Site Screened by Existing Vegetation

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Photo 2.4 Looking West through North-west at the existing Yallourn- Rowville 220 kV Easement where it crosses Darnum-Shady Creek Road

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2.1.4 Existing Access

The Project Site has a 560 m frontage to Darnum-Shady Creek Road. The existing dwelling and associated farming infrastructure and operations are accessed via an existing driveway off Darnum-Shady Creek Road.

Darnum-Shady Creek Road extends north towards Yarragon-Shady Creek Road and Thurlows Road, and south towards its intersection with the Princes Highway at Darnum. Darnum-Shady Creek Road is classified as a local road managed by Council. In the vicinity of the Project Site, Darnum-Shady Creek Road has been constructed with a sealed road pavement measuring approximately 6.0 m allowing for one lane of traffic in each direction.

2.1.5 Landform and Topography

The Project Site is situated within gently undulating terrain characteristic of the West Gippsland lowlands. The topography of the Project Site is relatively flat to gently sloping. The highest elevation occurs along the north-eastern boundary at 155 m above sea level (ASL) and the lowest along the south-western boundary at 130 m ASL. Surrounding land is similarly characterised by gently rolling hills and low ridgelines, interspersed with shallow drainage depressions. Slopes are gradual, with local relief rarely exceeding 20 m.

2.1.6 Hydrology

The Project Site is located within the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority (WGCMA) waterway management district. The Project Site is not located within a Special Water Supply Catchment Area or declared Irrigation District.

An unnamed ephemeral gully (a designated waterway) containing two existing farm dams is located within the north-western part of the Project Site. Surface water runoff within the Project Site drains in a south-westerly direction into this ephemeral gully before discharging across the western boundary to an unnamed waterway located approximately 1.1 km west of the Project Site. This unnamed waterway drains in a south to south-westerly direction towards the Moe River approximately 8 km downstream of the Project Site. Site elevations indicate that Shady Creek, which is located approximately 2.2 km to the north-east, appears to be hydrologically disconnected from the Project Site.

The Project Site is located within the Latrobe Basin, a key sub-catchment of the West Gippsland Catchment. Grazing and other agricultural uses have impacted the condition of the local waterways with Shady Creek and Moe River classified as being in 'moderate' and 'poor' condition respectively.

Available information and advice from WGCMA indicate that the Project Site has low risk of flooding during a 1% AEP rain event.

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Figure 2.2 Surface Water Environment of Project Site

(Source: Figure 4 of SWA, Greensmart, 2026)

2.1.7 Flora and Fauna

The Project Site primarily comprises an open, agricultural landscape which has been largely cleared of native vegetation. Patches of native vegetation and some scattered trees are present in the north-west, north-east, and south-east parts of the Project Site. There are three shelterbelts of planted trees (Monterey Cypress) within the central parts of the Project Site, which will be retained for screening purposes during construction and operation of the Project.

The Ecological Assessment identified that native vegetation within the Project Site comprises Ecological Vegetation Classes (EVCs) historically associated with Lowland Forest and riparian environments, occurring predominantly within the more intact patches in the north-west and eastern portions of the site, including along the road reserve. Vegetation quality ranges from low to high, reflecting varying levels of historical disturbance from clearing, grazing and agricultural land use. The majority of the Project Site supports improved exotic pasture, with limited understorey diversity and low habitat value for native flora.

A small number of scattered native canopy trees, both large and small, occur throughout the Project Site and provide some habitat value for woodland-dependent fauna, particularly for foraging and landscape connectivity. No hollow-bearing trees were identified within areas proposed for removal.

No threatened ecological communities listed under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) or *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* (FFG Act) were recorded within the Project Site.

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One threatened flora species, Green Scentbark (*Eucalyptus fulgens*) listed as Endangered under the FFG Act, was recorded within the Project Site, occurring in the eastern portion. No threatened or protected flora species are proposed to be removed as part of the Project.

The Project Site contains habitat that may be utilised by several threatened fauna species, including woodland-dependent birds and amphibians. In particular, patches of native vegetation and scattered trees provide potential foraging habitat for species such as Gang-gang Cockatoo, Blue-winged Parrot and Powerful Owl. An ephemeral drainage line and farm dams in the north-western portion of the Project Site may provide opportunistic habitat for amphibian species, including the Growling Grass Frog and Southern Toadlet. These aquatic and riparian features will be avoided by Project works.

Overall, the ecological values of the Project Site are considered moderate to low across much of the site, reflecting extensive historical modification, with higher-value vegetation and habitat largely confined to discrete patch areas that have informed Project design and impact avoidance measures.

2.1.8 Cultural Heritage

2.1.8.1 Aboriginal

The Project Site is not located within any mapped areas of Aboriginal cultural heritage sensitivity. The Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP) for the area containing the Project Site and Activity Area is GLaWAC.

A search of the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register (VAHR) was undertaken on 19 September 2025 as part of the desktop assessment informing a Voluntary Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) currently being prepared for the Project. The VAHR search did not identify any registered Aboriginal Places within the Project Site or its immediate vicinity. One registered Aboriginal Place, comprising a low-density artefact distribution, was identified approximately 5 km from the Project Site.

Notwithstanding the absence of known Aboriginal Places within or near the Project Site, predictive modelling and relevant regional CHMPs indicate a moderate to high potential for Aboriginal cultural heritage to be present within the Project Site. This potential is primarily associated with low-density artefact distributions and artefact scatters within shallow subsurface contexts.

Accordingly, a complex assessment has been undertaken as part of the CHMP process currently underway, to further investigate and appropriately manage any Aboriginal cultural heritage that may be present. The findings of all cultural heritage assessments and consultation with the RAP will be documented in the Voluntary CHMP.

2.1.8.2 Historical

The Project Site and its immediate surrounds do not contain any places of historical heritage significance, and no heritage places are listed on the Victorian Heritage Inventory (VHI), Victorian Heritage Register (VHR), or within the Heritage Overlay (HO) of the Baw Baw Planning Scheme.

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2.2 Site Surrounds

2.2.1 Nearby Dwellings

The nearest dwelling to the Project is the existing dwelling on the Project Site, which is owned and occupied by the host landholder. This dwelling (R1) is located approximately 160 m east of the proposed BESS compound. There are two non-host landowner dwellings within 500 m of the Project Site (R2 and R3).

Nearby dwellings are shown on **Figure 2.3** and are assessed noise-sensitive receivers and visual receptors in the ENA (**Appendix E**) and LVIA (**Appendix F**), respectively.

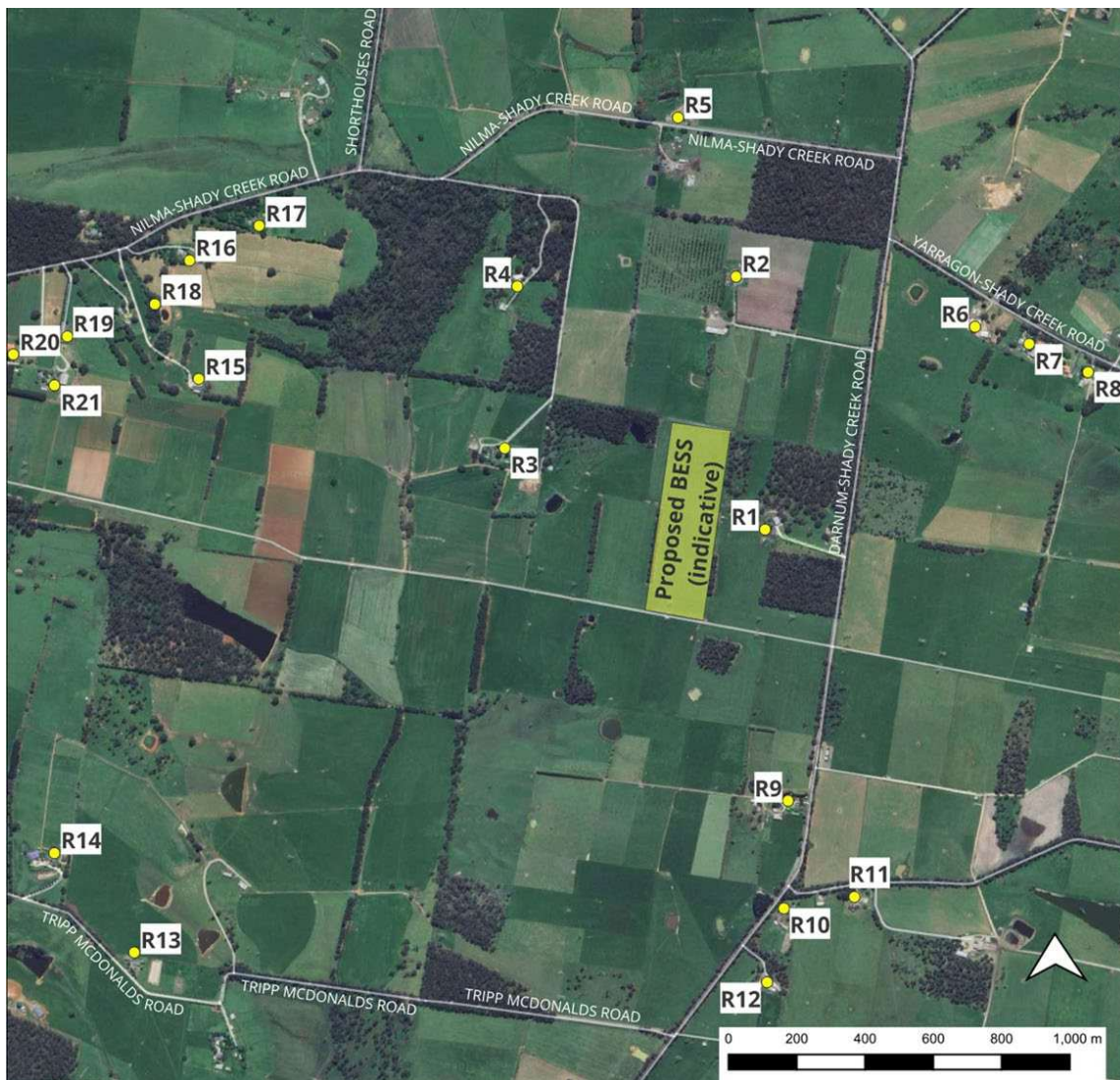


Figure 2.3 Location of Noise Sensitive Receivers (dwellings) Surrounding the Project Site

(Source: Figure 1 of ENA (Resonate, 2026))

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2.2.2 Surrounding Land Uses

Surrounding land is also included in the Farming Zone and predominantly used for mixed farming and grazing. The Shady Creek Hall is located approximately 770 m north-east, along Yarragon-Shady Creek Road.

No large conservation reserves are located within proximity of the Project Site, with the nearest being Sweetwater Creek Nature Conservation Reserve located approximately 7 km to the north, adjoining Neerim State Forest.

The 5,354 ha Trafalgar North Extractive Industry Investigation Area (EIIA) is located approximately 2.5 km east of the Project Site and encompasses the area generally east of Shady Creek through to the Latrobe River. The Trafalgar North EIIA encompasses multiple current extractive industry work authorities, including Work Authority WA521 which applies to the existing operational Gippsland Quarry. The Gippsland Quarry is located approximately 4.5 km north-east of the Project Site and utilises Darnum-Shady Creek Road for deliveries.

2.2.3 Nearby Renewable Energy Projects

The approved Shady Creek Solar Farm is located on the eastern side of Shady Creek approximately 6.5 km east of the Project Site. The Shady Creek Solar Farm comprises a proposed 60 MW solar farm and 60 MW / 120 MWh BESS, located on Bayleys Road, Yarragon.

It is noted that a number of planning permit applications have recently been lodged with the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) for BESS developments in the Baw Baw LGA, including

- Giddi BESS – planning permit application submitted in December 2025, for a BESS and associated infrastructure at 59 Rowells Road, Trafalgar East. If approved, this would be located 14 km east of the Project.
- North Yarragon BESS – planning permit application lodged in February 2026, for a BESS and associated infrastructure, at 713 Yarragon-Shady Creek Road, Yarragon. If approved, this would be located 2.5 km south-east of the Project.

The nearest VicGrid proposed REZ is the Gippsland REZ located approximately 22 km south-east of the Project Site, while the Gippsland Shoreline REZ is located 85 km south-east, adjacent to the Gippsland Declared Offshore Wind Area (see **Figure 2.4**).

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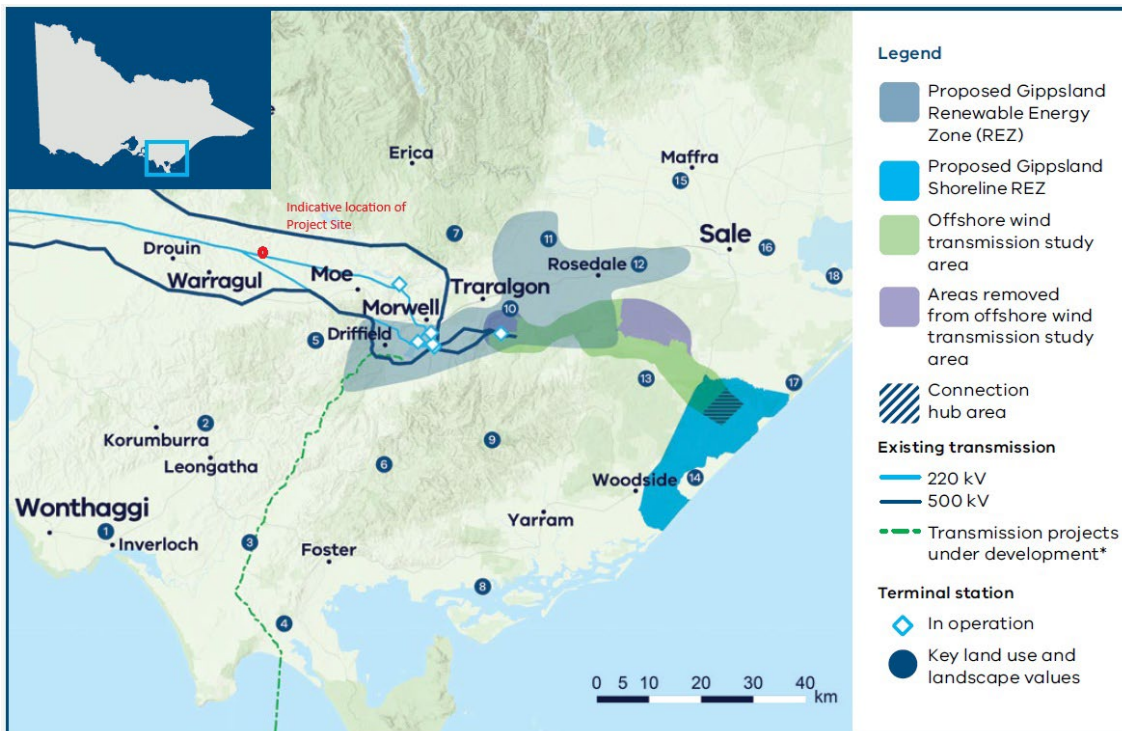


Figure 2.4 Indicative Location of Project Site Relative to Proposed REZs and Associated Transmission Network

(Source: Figure 17, VTP (VicGrid, 2025a))

2.2.4 Regional Infrastructure

The Project Site is located approximately 7.5 km north of the Princes Freeway which intersects with Darnum-Shady Creek Road at Darnum. The Princes Freeway is part of Victoria's Principal Road Network and Principal Road Freight Network. Running parallel to the Princes Freeway approximately 7.5 km south of the Project Site is also a rail corridor that forms part of Victoria's Principal Rail Freight Network and also supports V/Line passenger rail services to Bairnsdale.

The Latrobe Valley coalfields and coal-fired power stations, which have traditionally supplied the majority of Victoria's electricity needs, are located approximately 30 km east of the Project Site. Further to the east is the offshore component of the Gippsland Basin, which has been Victoria's main source of oil and gas since the 1960s. As a result, various major energy supply infrastructure connecting these energy supplies to Melbourne is located within proximity to the Project Site. In addition to the 220 kV overhead transmission line that crosses the southern part of the Project Site, this includes:

- Longford to Dandenong Gas Pipeline (Pipeline Licence PL75) located approximately 1.2 km north
- 220 kV overhead transmission line (Hazelwood Power Station to Rowville Terminal Station) located approximately 1.2 km south
- Longford to Hastings Oil Pipeline (Pipeline Licence PL35) located approximately 4.1 km south
- 500 kV overhead transmission line (Hazelwood Terminal Station to South Morang Terminal Station) located approximately 4.6 km north

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- 500 kV overhead transmission line (Hazelwood Terminal Station to Cranbourne Terminal Station) located approximately 7 km south.

The indicative location of the Project Site relative to the existing 220 kV and 500 kV transmission network in South East Victoria is shown in **Figure 2.5**.

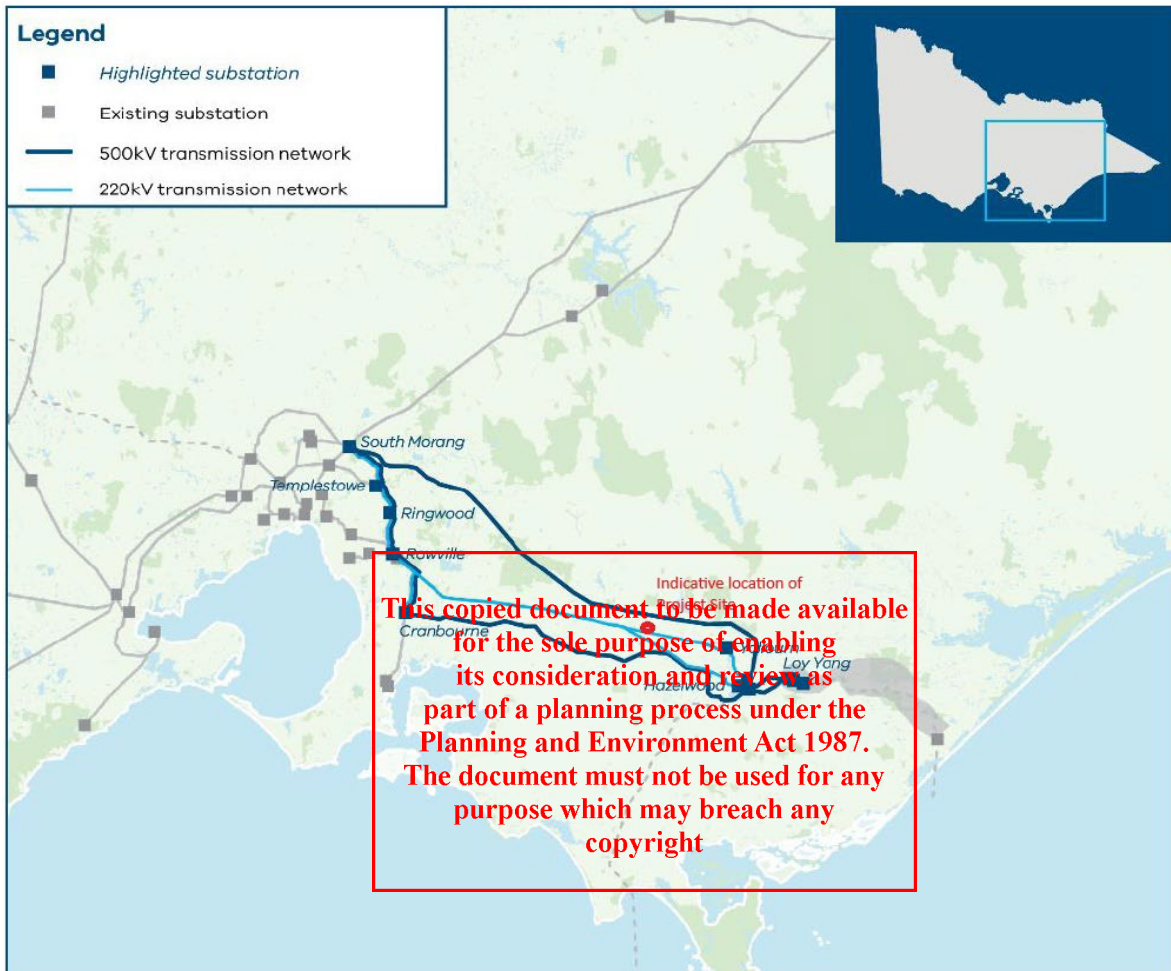


Figure 2.5 Indicative Location of Project Site Relative to existing South East Victoria Transmission Network

(Source: Figure C-4, Appendix C, VTP (VicGrid, 2025a))

2.3 Site Selection and Suitability

The Project Site is located along an existing 220 kV transmission line that, along with multiple other existing 220 kV and 500 kV transmission lines, links VicGrid's proposed Gippsland REZ, Gippsland Shoreline REZ and Gippsland Declared Offshore Wind Area to the major demand centre of metropolitan Melbourne and broader NEM (see **Figure 2.6**). The Gippsland REZ and Gippsland Declared Offshore Area are identified by the Victorian Government and Australian Government as areas with significant potential for renewable energy generation, particularly wind. According to VicGrid's 2025 VTP, the Gippsland REZ and Gippsland Declared Offshore Area are modelled to contribute up to 1.1 GW and 9.0 GW respectively, accounting for between 43.5% and 75% of Victoria's total renewable energy generation by 2040 depending on the generation scenario (VicGrid, 2025a).

There is already substantial existing transmission infrastructure connecting the Gippsland region to metropolitan Melbourne and the broader NEM due to the region's long history and significant contribution to meeting Victoria's energy demands being home to the Latrobe Valley coal-fired power stations and the Gippsland Basin oil and gas resources. However, to facilitate integration of variable renewable energy into the NEM, system firming and strength services are required to most efficiently and effectively utilise the existing transmission network and minimise the need for major new transmission infrastructure to be developed.

The Project would therefore support the ongoing development of the Gippsland REZ and the planned future development of the Gippsland Declared Offshore Wind Area, providing greater capacity for renewable energy generation and distribution to the NEM, whilst maintaining grid stability.

The Applicant began investigating potential sites for a BESS development in the Baw Baw Shire LGA in 2024, given the proximity to the proposed REZs and the presence of existing transmission infrastructure. With the planned retirement of Yallourn coal-fired power station in 2028, there will be a number of underutilised transmission lines and a requirement for replacement energy sources and firming infrastructure. While the potential for development of a BESS in the Latrobe Valley was considered, land availability surrounding Yallourn power station, the two other remaining coal-fired power stations at Loy Yang and the closed Hazelwood power station, is largely held by the owners of these coal-fired power stations, which maintain expansive landholdings to provide buffers to the remaining coal mines.

Based on desktop analysis, the Project Site was considered suitable for the use and development of the Project as:

- It is in proximity to the existing 220 kV transmission line, allowing easy connection to the NEM and avoiding the need for construction of new transmission lines
- It is located in a zone (Farming Zone) that does not prohibit the proposed use (utility installation)
- Clearing of the site for agricultural uses has resulted in large areas which are of low biodiversity value (pasture) and which are generally flat, reducing the need for native vegetation removal and earthworks
- There are no major waterways or water bodies on the site
- There are no areas of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Sensitivity, no Heritage Overlays or known historical heritage places present.

The Project's design and location on the site have been chosen to avoid and/or minimise environmental impacts, while maintaining proximity to the existing transmission line and providing sufficient space for a potential future terminal station, as per the VicGrid requirements. Mitigations implemented through the design include:

- Maximising (where possible) the distance between the BESS and neighbouring dwellings to minimise noise impacts
- Addition of a noise wall around the BESS compound and Project substation transformer to minimise noise impacts
- Installation of additional and retention of existing landscape vegetation screening between neighbouring dwellings and the Project infrastructure to minimise visual impacts
- Locating the Project infrastructure in areas which have been cleared of native vegetation to avoid impacts to biodiversity where possible

- Providing sufficient setbacks between the BESS and associated electrical infrastructure, and areas of unmanaged and denser vegetation to reduce bushfire risk (i.e. minimum 20 m setback provided to treed vegetation, including scattered trees, existing shelterbelts to be retained, and proposed landscape screen plantings)
- Providing dual emergency access tracks and perimeter access road, fire water supplies and radiant heat barrier to protect the BESS in case of a fire in the surrounding environment
- Installation of stormwater treatment and retention to minimise impacts on water flows and downstream water quality.

Throughout the planning process, the Proponent has also consulted with the host landowner with regards to siting and design of the Project to minimise impacts to the amenity of the existing dwelling, where possible, and to enable the continuation of farming on site including avoiding impacts to essential farming infrastructure such as the cattle yard, large shed and associated silos.

The Applicant has undertaken community and stakeholder engagement to inform Project design and assessment. Feedback from this engagement identified a range of concerns, with the most frequently raised issues relating to noise impacts, visual amenity, and public safety, including bushfire. These matters are discussed in **Section 7.0** and the Engagement Summary Report (**Appendix C**).

Further discussion on mitigation measures as recommended through technical assessments is contained in **Section 6.0**.

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Legend

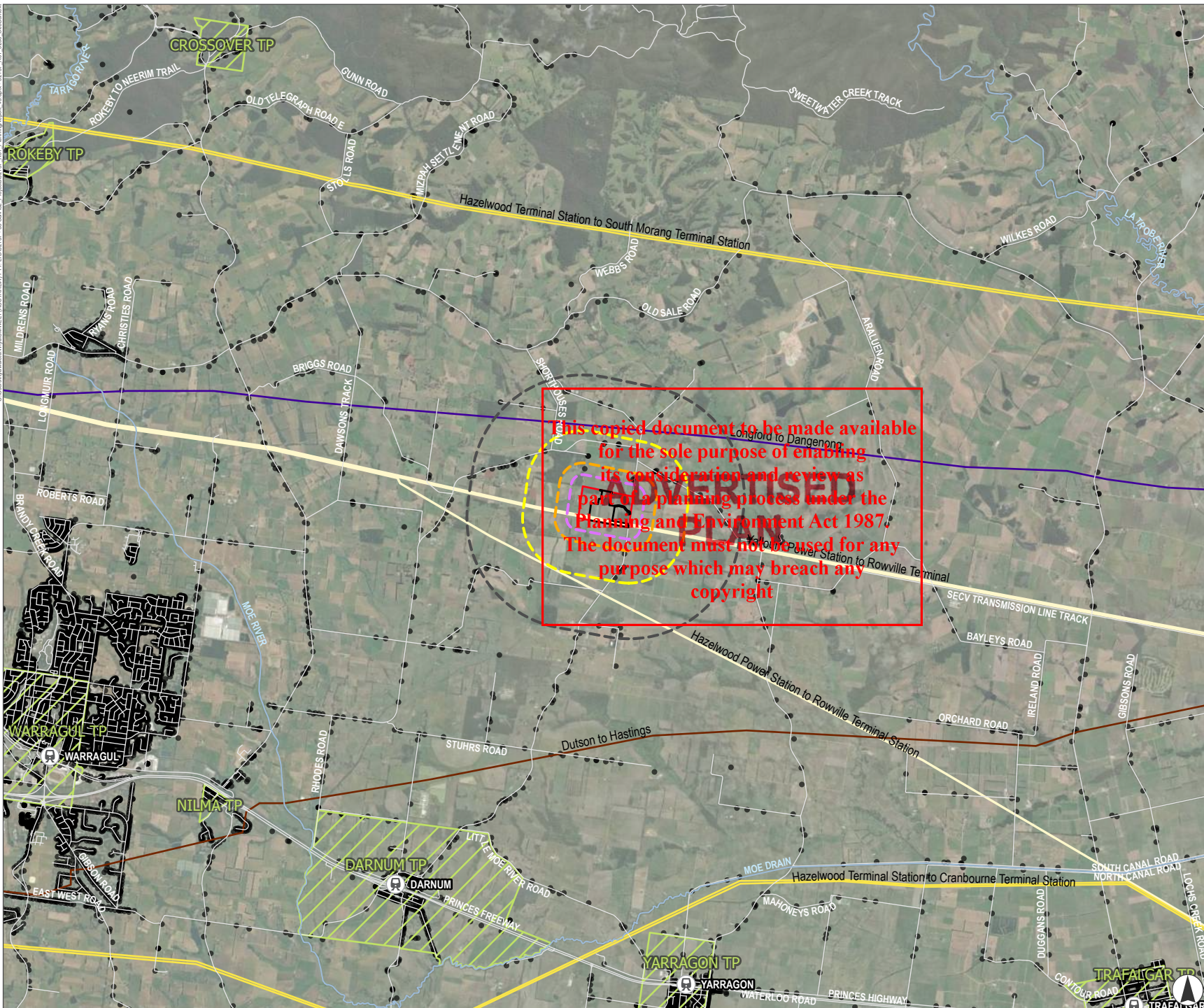
-  Project Site Area
-  Indicative Construction Envelope
-  Township
-  Dwellings
-  Train Station
-  Gas Pipeline
-  Oil pipeline
-  Road
-  Watercourse

Existing Transmission Lines

-  220 KV
-  500 KV

Zones of Visual Influence (ZVI)

-  210m
-  420m
-  1km
-  2km



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Response	Percentage
Good	22%
Not good	28%

Kilometres

Scale 1:95,000 at A4
GDA2020 MGA Zone 55



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3.0 Project Description

The following sections provided a detailed description of the Project, including the key components summarised in the Project overview in **Section 1.1**.

3.1 BESS Compound

The fenced BESS compound not including the Asset Protection Zone (APZ) would have a total area of approximately 1.9 ha (i.e. 105.6 m x 183.5 m) and would include:

- 196 Tesla Megapack 3 units, measuring 8.55 m x 2.1 m x 2.8 m
- 49 x 6.36 MVA step-up transformers
- Cabling, underground cable pits and conduits.

The Tesla Megapack 3 units utilise lithium iron phosphate cells, arranged in rows of 18/20 cells with the inverter in between rows. Multiple units will be held together in a Megablock enclosure with multiple racks of modules, as well as monitoring and communications equipment, a cooling system, and a fire detection system. Examples of the Tesla Megapack BESS layout and internal configuration of the modules are provided in **Figure 3.1** and **Figure 3.2** respectively.

The BESS is expected to have up to one cycle of charging and discharging per day, however the actual frequency of charge / discharge cycles would depend on market conditions in the NEM.

The BESS compound will be surrounded by a 6 m high noise wall, installed inside the perimeter security fence.

A minimum 4 m wide perimeter road (currently proposed to be 6 m wide) designed to accommodate emergency vehicles as per the CFA Guidelines would be provided around the BESS facility as shown on the concept layout plan (see **Figure 1.2**).



Figure 3.1 Example of the Tesla Megapack BESS Layout



Figure 3.2 Example of Battery Module and Inverter

3.2 Project Substation and Switchyard

In addition to the BESS, the Project includes an onsite substation and switchyard which would allow connection to the NEM. The Project substation and switchyard would be located within a fenced compound located to the south of the BESS compound and north of the existing 220 kV transmission line. The Project substation and switchyard compound has a total area of approximately 2.3 ha (i.e. 210.5 m x 108.1 m), not including the APZ.

Key electrical infrastructure within the Project substation and switchyard include:

- Two switchgear / control rooms with a height of approximately 5 m
- One 240 MVA high voltage main power transformer with a height of approximately 6 m
- Harmonic filter (if required)
- Overhead line gantry structures of up to 24 m height
- High voltage switchgear including busbars, conductors, circuit breakers, and disconnectors, with a height of approximately 6 m
- Associated cabling and communications infrastructure.

The grid connection infrastructure includes two steel monopoles located within the AusNet easement to facilitate connection between the project's on-site gantry and the existing 220 kV transmission line.

Lightning protection would be provided as per the requirements of Australian Standard AS 2067: Substations and high voltage installations exceeding 1 kV AC to prevent lightning strikes impacting transformers. A 15 m high lightning protection mast is currently proposed as part of the Project's concept design.

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3.3 Ancillary Infrastructure and Works

3.3.1 Temporary Construction Compound, Laydown and Parking

A temporary compound (site office and amenities), laydown and parking area would be required to support construction of the Project. The location of this area is indicative and subject to confirmation by the construction contractor, once appointed. It is envisaged that construction of the Project would utilise the existing disturbance area for permanent infrastructure where ever possible through detailed construction planning, and where additional area is required, an area west of the proposed substation and switchyard compound would be utilised (between the retained shelterbelts). Laydown requirements are limited, as most bulk equipment deliveries would be unloaded into place rather than into designated laydown areas. The staff amenities would be designed to cater for the peak number construction staff.

The following site selection criteria would be applied to the construction compound, laydown and parking area:

- Relatively level land
- No requirement to remove any native vegetation beyond that otherwise being undertaken for the Project
- No impact on any heritage items (Indigenous or non-Indigenous)
- Not unreasonably affect the land use of adjacent properties
- No requirement to undertake any significant ground disturbing works. The area of disturbance would be limited as far as practicable
- Greater than 200 m from a residential dwelling
- Greater than 50 m of a watercourse.

The construction compound, laydown and parking area along with all other construction-related activities, would fall within the Indicative Construction Envelope shown in **Figure 3.3**.

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FIGURE 3.3
Indicative Construction Footprint

- Legend**
- Project Site Area
 - Indicative Construction Envelope
 - Roads
 - Watercourse
 - Existing Transmission Lines
 - Parcel

0 50 100
Metres

Scale 1:5,000 at A4
GDA2020 MGA Zone 55



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3.3.2 Operations and Maintenance Facilities

While the Project would largely be operated remotely and without the need for dedicated onsite staff, an Operation and Maintenance (O&M) Building is proposed to be located in the north-eastern part of the Project substation compound adjacent to the main site access road entry points. The O&M Building would provide office facilities, storage and amenities.

3.3.3 Site Access and Parking

The Project would have two access points from Darnum-Shady Creek Road. The northern, primary access point would utilise the existing access to the host dwelling and would veer to the north around the large farm shed to meet the perimeter road at the southern end of the BESS compound. This access would be approximately 430 m in length and would require some modification of the existing crossover to accommodate construction vehicles, in particular any over-sized over-mass (OSOM) vehicles, which would be required to deliver components for the BESS and Project substation.

A secondary access point is proposed near the southern boundary within the existing AusNet easement and would function primarily as an emergency access. The final alignment, design, construction and required clearances for this access would be confirmed in consultation with AusNet. Consultation to date indicates that access within the easement is acceptable, subject to compliance with AusNet's requirements.

A minimum of four car parking spaces is proposed within the Project substation area for operations and maintenance staff, and visitors.

Further details on the site access, including assessment of the suitability of sightlines and swept paths, are included in the Traffic Impact Assessment (Appendix D) and Section 6.7 of this report.

3.3.4 Earthworks and Drainage

The BESS facility and associated Project substation and switchyard would need to be located on engineered hardstands, necessitating earthworks (site preparation and some cut/fill). The BESS, Project substation and switchyard compounds have an approximate 3–5% fall east to west. An earthworks model would be developed as part of the detailed design, which would seek to balance earthworks and effectively manage stormwater runoff to maintain pre-development conditions.

To inform the planning permit application, a conceptual stormwater management strategy has been developed that includes:

- Perimeter diversion drains (where required) to divert stormwater runoff from the external catchments around the proposed infrastructure compounds.
- Culvert crossings (where required) to manage runoff from the external catchments under the internal access roads.
- Grading of the proposed infrastructure compounds and sizing of drainage systems to provide sufficient flood immunity for the proposed BESS, substation and switchyard from overland flows.
- Catch drains, stormwater pits and pipes to capture stormwater runoff from within the proposed infrastructure compounds, including providing for separation of clean and potentially contaminated flows.

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- A bioretention and detention basin located west of the BESS compound to fulfill the following stormwater management objectives:
 - Provide retention volume to retain peak flows to those experienced in the pre-development condition
 - Provide stormwater volume reduction, limiting volume to that experienced in the pre-development condition
 - Provide a way to isolate surface runoff from the proposed infrastructure compounds to protect downstream waterways in an environmental incident, including sizing of the basin to capture firefighting water runoff as per CFA Guidelines.

For stormwater generated in areas where there is low risk of contamination, grassed swale drains would be utilised to promote physical screening of mobilised sediments and infiltration of stormwater into soils, in conjunction with the bioretention basin.

In areas where there is a higher risk of contamination (e.g. transformers), bunding would be installed to capture potential spills or leaks of oil and other pollutants. Stormwater treatment devices would be provided for these areas to remove oil, grease, hydrocarbons and sediments prior to discharge or off-site disposal.

The bioretention and detention basin would be constructed to the west of the BESS compound. This retention basin would provide for the capture of contaminated firefighting water runoff, which would then be tested and disposed of at an approved off-site facility in accordance with advice from EPA Victoria.

Refer to the SWA in **Appendix I** for further information on the surface water management strategy for the Project. The exact dimensions and requirements for stormwater infrastructure would be confirmed in consultation with CFA as part of detailed design and permit condition consent requirements.

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3.3.5 Fire Services Infrastructure

In accordance with the CFA Guidelines, the following infrastructure would be provided as outlined in the FRMP (see **Appendix G**):

- Two access points to the BESS compound (including an emergency access) and internal access roads designed for appropriate widths and load limits for emergency (firefighting) vehicles (including full perimeter access to the BESS facility).
- Fire hydrant system that complies with Australian Standard AS2419.1: Fire hydrant installations, and booster assembly and pumps that enable appropriate pressures at the fire hydrant.
- Firefighting (static) water supply – minimum 432,000 L in tanks made of concrete or steel and located at the primary access to the BESS compound and more than 10 m from any infrastructure.
- Bioretention and detention basin to contain contaminated firefighting water – minimum capacity of 432,000 L.
- Radiant heat barrier made of a non-combustible material separating the closest forest vegetation from the BESS facility – minimum 2.5 m height recommended, around the north-west corner of the BESS compound, integrated with the noise wall.
- A 10 m wide perimeter firebreak / asset protection zone around the Project infrastructure.

3.3.6 Noise Walls

A 6 m high noise wall is proposed around the BESS compound and the main transformer infrastructure within the Project substation. Refer to the ENA in **Appendix E** for further details on the noise wall requirements.

The noise wall around the BESS compound would incorporate two vehicular access gates in the south-east and north-west corners of the compound. These gates would provide access onto the perimeter road around the BESS units, which is proposed to be located inside the noise wall, and would be suitable for use by operations and maintenance, and emergency (firefighting) vehicles.

Parts of the noise wall around the north-west of the BESS compound would be designed to integrate radiant heat barrier requirements as set out in the FRMP (see **Appendix G**).

The Project may also incorporate a localised acoustic barrier in the vicinity of the host landowner dwelling, subject to detailed design, to achieve compliance with operational noise limits.

3.3.7 Landscape Screening

Two areas of landscape screen planting are proposed for the Project, including:

- A 10 m x 100 m strip of landscape screen planting proposed east of the Project substation and switchyard compound as an extension of an existing shelterbelt of mature Monterey Cypress.
- A 10 m x 220 m strip of landscape screen planting proposed along the northern Project Site boundary north of the BESS compound. This strip would include supplementary planting (if required) within an existing area of revegetation utilising a mix of native species undertaken by the host landowner to achieve landscape screening objectives.

The three shelterbelts of planted mature trees (Monterey Cypress) within the central parts of the Project Site would also be retained for screening purposes during construction and operation of the Project. A 20 m setback would be maintained between the proposed infrastructure and treed vegetation, including the proposed landscape planting areas and retained shelterbelts.

The landscape design would continue to be refined through detailed design should the Project be approved, including further consideration of outcomes from neighbour consultation and assessment.

Refer to the LVIA in **Appendix F** for further details on landscape screening requirements.

3.3.8 Lighting, Fencing and Signage

A 2.5 m high security fence would be constructed around the perimeter of the BESS compound and the perimeter of the Project substation and switchyard.

Maintenance lighting would be installed for occasional night work including emergency operations. However, the BESS compound, Project substation and switchyard would normally be unlit, apart from low-level motion-sensored security lighting. All lighting would be designed, maintained and operated in accordance with Australian Standard AS 4282: Control of Obtrusive Effects of Outdoor Lighting.

While detailed signage plans are yet to be designed, it is anticipated that any street facing signage would be limited. During operations, this would include a business identification sign installed at the main site entry. Internal signage would also be required for compliance with various safety standards.

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3.4 Construction

The construction of the Project will occur over a period of up to 18 months and will be undertaken in several overlapping stages. Broadly this will include:

- Civil and enabling works such as clearing of vegetation, earthworks, trenching and delivery and establishment of temporary facilities.
- Site establishment activities such as construction of site access and internal roads, demarcation of construction areas and no-go zones, artefact survey and/or salvage (if required), overhead line safety marking and geotechnical surveys.
- Structural, mechanical and electrical works to construct the foundation of the BESS compound, Project substation and switchyard, delivery and installation of BESS and electrical components, construction of ancillary elements (e.g. O&M facilities, water management, fire systems and signage), installation of the cabling to the 220 kV transmission line and installation of permanent fencing, security systems and landscaping.
- Testing and commissioning of all components prior to operations.

An indicative schedule for construction is provided below.

Construction stage	Month																	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Site establishment																		
Civil and enabling works																		
Structural, mechanical and electrical works																		
Commissioning																		
Demobilisation																		
Contingency																		

The construction workforce is estimated to peak at 80 FTE, who would largely be sourced from the Gippsland region. During this time, it is estimated that increases in traffic volume would include 64 light vehicle movements to the site and 50 heavy vehicles per day, along with approximately four OSOM movements (HV transformer x 1, modular buildings x 3).

Environmental and social impacts associated with the construction of the Project are discussed further in **Section 6.0** and would be managed through the implementation of a CEMP, in accordance with the conditions of a future planning permit.

3.5 Operation

The Project would operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week and would be largely operated remotely. The operations workforce is expected to be 2-3 FTE, who would undertake monitoring and maintenance of the BESS, Project substation and general site as required. Site maintenance would include landscaping, maintenance of access roads and asset protection zones, and repair and replacement of Project components such as battery cells as required. On occasion, additional specialist technical maintenance staff may be required on site to assist with events such as unplanned equipment failure.

Routine maintenance would occur during standard working hours. Outside of emergencies or major asset inspection or maintenance programs, after-hours work (including Sundays and Public Holidays) would be minimal.

Operation, monitoring and maintenance of the switchyard constructed to facilitate Project connection to the existing 220 kV overhead transmission line would be the responsibility of the Declared Transmission Service Operator (DTSO).

3.6 Decommissioning

The Project components have an estimated lifespan of 25 years. At the end of the asset's lifespan, the following options would be assessed for viability:

- Replace and repower the BESS facilities with existing or 'best practice' technologies available at the time; or
- Decommission the Project and remove the Project components and associated infrastructure in accordance with a decommissioning and rehabilitation plan that is to be developed 5 years prior to the end of the Project component lifespan.

In accordance with any planning permit conditions, the Proponent (or a future owner/operator of the site) would fund and execute the decommissioning and rehabilitation plan. Project components would be reused and recycled where possible.

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4.0 Legislation, Policy and Guidelines

This section outlines the key legislation, policy and guidelines relevant to the Project, identifies approval requirements under applicable planning, environmental and heritage legislation, and briefly assesses the Project's alignment with relevant objectives and actions of each policy or guideline.

4.1 Legislation

The following section summarises an assessment of the Project against relevant Commonwealth and State legislation.

Table 4.1 Summary Assessment of Legislation of Relevance to the Project

Legislation	Project relevance / alignment
Commonwealth	
Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act)	The EPBC Act provides the legal framework to protect and manage impacts to matters of national environmental significance (MNES), which include world heritage properties; national heritage places; wetlands of international importance (Ramsar); listed threatened species and communities; listed migratory species; Commonwealth marine areas; the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park; and the protection, conservation and enhancement of the environment. This project is, and will be, made available for the development of enabling its consideration and review as part of a planning process under the Planning and Environment Act 1987. The document must not be used for any purpose which may breach any copyright. Relevance: Any project that is likely to have a significant impact on MNES, must be referred to the Federal Minister for Environment via the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCCEW) for a decision on whether the project is a 'controlled action' requiring assessment and approval under the EPBC Act. The Ecological Assessment concludes that the Project is not likely to have a significant impact on any MNES (see Appendix D). Notwithstanding this conclusion, an EPBC Act referral is proposed in 2026 to confirm the Project's regulatory status and provide certainty regarding Commonwealth approval requirements.
Climate Change Act 2022	The <i>Climate Change Act 2022</i> aims, amongst other things, to advance an effective and progressive response to climate change drawing on the best available scientific knowledge; and to set out Australia's greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets. Current legislated targets at section 10(2) of the Act aim to reduce Australia's net greenhouse gas emissions to 43% below 2005 levels by 2030; and to net zero by 2050. Relevance: The Project supports Australia's greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets by assisting with better integration of renewable energy into the NEM, through provision of system strength services to the transmission networks in the area, security of supply and safeguarding the energy network. This will help replace fossil fuel-based energy generation and contribute to grid decarbonisation.

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Legislation	Project relevance / alignment
State	
Planning and Environment Act 1987 (P&E Act)	The P&E Act establishes the legal framework to regulate the use and development of land in Victoria, including procedures for preparing and amending planning schemes, obtaining planning permits, settling disputes, enforcing compliance with planning schemes, and other administrative procedures. Land use and development must have regard to the objectives of planning in Victoria as set out in section 4 of the P&E Act, which are: • To provide for the fair, orderly, economic and sustainable use and development of land. • To provide for the protection of natural and man-made resources and the maintenance of ecological processes and genetic diversity. • To secure a pleasant, efficient and safe working, living and recreational environment for all Victorians and visitors to Victoria. • To conserve and enhance those buildings, areas or other places which are of scientific, aesthetic, architectural or historical interest, or otherwise of special cultural value. • To protect public utilities and other assets and enable the orderly provision and coordination of public utilities and other facilities for the benefit of the community. • To facilitate development in accordance with the objectives set out in the points above. • To facilitate the provision of affordable housing in Victoria. • To balance the present and future interests of all Victorians. Each municipality in Victoria has its own planning scheme to guide and manage land use and development to help achieve the objectives of planning established by the P&E Act. Relevance: The Proponent is seeking a planning permit for the Project under section 47 of the P&E Act. The Project is subject to the provisions of the Baw Baw Planning Scheme (the Planning Scheme). Section 5.0 summarises the planning policy and provisions applicable to the planning permit application for the Project under the Planning Scheme and includes an assessment of the Project against the relevant planning policy and provisions. The Project is consistent with the objectives of the P&E Act in that: • The Project represents an orderly and efficient use of land, providing essential energy storage infrastructure that supports a reliable and resilient electricity system, while maintaining compatibility with surrounding rural land uses. • Environmental impacts have been assessed and appropriately managed, with impacts on biodiversity, water, landscape, amenity and noise minimised through siting, design and mitigation measures, consistent with the protection of ecological processes and environmental values. • Potential impacts on nearby sensitive uses, including noise, traffic and bushfire risk, have been evaluated and are capable of being managed to acceptable levels through design controls and management plans, ensuring a safe and orderly environment.

Legislation	Project relevance / alignment
Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006	• The Project will not adversely affect buildings of aesthetic, cultural or historical significance, and is located within an extensively modified landscape context. • The Project supports the orderly provision of public utility infrastructure by enabling energy storage capacity that facilitates renewable energy integration and efficient use of existing transmission networks. • The Project facilitates development consistent with State and local planning policy objectives, including support for renewable energy and energy transition outcomes. • By contributing to long-term energy security and emissions reduction while managing local impacts, the Project balances the interests of current and future generations of Victorians.
Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994 (CaLP Act)	The <i>Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006</i> provides the statutory framework for the protection and management of Aboriginal cultural heritage in Victoria, with the Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018 prescribing when a Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) is required. Relevance: Under the Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018, the Project involves a high impact activity under Regulation 46(1)(a)(b)(xxx) – Land used to generate electricity. However, the Activity Area is not in an area of Cultural Heritage Sensitivity as defined under the Regulations, and therefore a mandatory CHMP is not triggered. Nevertheless, the Proponent has chosen to prepare a Voluntary CHMP in consultation with, and for evaluation and approval by the GLaWAC as the RAP for the Activity Area. Relevance: Under section 20 of the CaLP Act, Project works are required to take reasonable steps to avoid causing or contributing to land degradation at host or neighbouring properties and to ensure the risk of spreading noxious weeds and pest animals is suitably managed. The following noxious weeds listed under the CaLP Act were recorded during ecological investigations for the Project (see Appendix D): • Blackberry (<i>Rubus fruticosus</i> spp. agg.) – Regionally Controlled Weed. • Spear Thistle (<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>) – Regionally Controlled Weed. A weed and pest management plan will be prepared for the Project to appropriately manage and control noxious weeds and pest animals. This requirement will be addressed through the Project's CEMP.

Legislation	Project relevance / alignment
Climate Change Act 2017	The Project may require a permit under the CaLP Act to remove soil if it is likely to contain a noxious weed. Discussion with the authority will be undertaken to determine requirements. The <i>Climate Change Act 2017</i> provides a legislative framework to manage climate change risks; set targets for greenhouse gas emission reductions for Victoria; and drive strategic responses to climate change and the consideration of climate change in government decision making, including through development of a Climate Change Strategy every 5 years. The Climate Change Act legislates a long-term emissions reduction target of net zero emissions by 2045, and 5 yearly interim targets which are 45–50% below 2005 levels by 2030 and 75–80% below 2005 levels by 2035. Relevance: The Project supports Victoria’s greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets by assisting with better integration of renewable energy into the NEM, helping to replace fossil fuel-based energy generation and contribute to grid decarbonisation.
Dangerous Goods Act 1985	The <i>Dangerous Goods Act 1985</i> aims, among other things: • To promote the safety of persons and property in relation to the manufacture, storage, transport, transfer, sale and use of dangerous goods. • To ensure that adequate protections are taken against certain fires, explosions, leakages and spillages of dangerous goods. • To ensure that information relating to dangerous goods is provided by occupiers and owners of premises to the relevant authorities. • To allocate responsibilities to occupiers and owners of premises to ensure that the health and safety of workers and the general public is protected. • To provide for licensing of persons required by the regulations to hold a licence in relation to dangerous goods. Relevance: Elements of the Project are classified as Dangerous Goods (i.e. lithium-ion batteries, transformer oil). The Proponent has extensive experience in the development of grid-scale BESS that commonly utilise lithium-ion technology and are familiar with the associated dangerous goods and hazards handling processes regulated by this Act and associated Australian Dangerous Goods Code. A PHA has been undertaken to assess the hazards associated with the Project, including consideration of the quantity and type (i.e. hazardous nature) of Dangerous Goods stored and used (see Appendix H). Potential hazard scenarios were identified and evaluated, with the analysis of potential incidents identifying no observed off-site impacts. Recommendations made as a result of the analysis will be implemented through the detailed design development, CEMP and Operations Environmental Management Plan (OEMP) documentation, which are expected to require endorsement via secondary consents as part of the planning permit, if granted. Approval will be sought under this Act if required.

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Legislation	Project relevance / alignment
Environment Effects Act 1978 (EE Act)	The EE Act provides for the assessment of actions capable of having a significant effect on the environment. A project is required to be referred to the Victorian Minister for Planning for a decision on whether an Environment Effects Statement (EES) is required, if the project triggers one individual or at least two combination referral criteria specified in the Ministerial guidelines for assessment of environmental effects under the <i>Environment Effects Act 1978</i> (DTP 2023). The assessment process under the EE Act is not an approval process itself, rather it enables statutory decision-makers to make decisions about whether a project with potentially significant environmental effects should proceed. If an EES is required, statutory approval decisions (e.g. planning permit, FFG Act permit) are put on hold until the EES process is complete. Relevance: An Ecological Assessment has been undertaken for the Project and has determined that the Project does not trigger any of the biodiversity related referral criteria given the small and localised nature of the impacts (see Appendix D). Further, no other referral criteria are triggered by the Project.
Environment Protection Act 2017 (EP Act)	The EP Act sets out the legislative framework for protecting human health and the environment from pollution and waste in Victoria. The EP Act establishes 13 duties to protect human health and the environment, including the General Environmental Duty (GED) which requires anyone involved in an activity that poses a risk of harm to human health or the environment from pollution or waste, to minimise those risks so far as reasonably practicable. The EP Act also includes a permissions scheme for activities that present a significant risk to human health and the environment. The EP Act is supported by the Environment Protection Regulations 2021 (EP Regulations), which amongst other things, set out requirements for noise emissions. The EP Act also provides for the Environment Reference Standard, which identifies the environmental values that Victorians want to maintain and sets out indicators and objectives for each of these values to inform decision making. Relevance: Technical assessments have been undertaken for the Project to identify and assess potential risks to human health and the environment, and to describe the mitigation measures required to manage these risks in line with Proponent's GED under the EP Act. Recommended mitigation measures will be implemented through the detailed design development, CEMP and OEMP documentation, which are expected to require endorsement via secondary consents as part of the planning permit, if granted. The ENA (see Appendix E) confirms that predicted operational noise levels comply with applicable limits at all non-host NSAs, while exceedances at the host NSA remain below relevant enHealth health-based thresholds and can be managed through mitigation measures.
Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988 (FFG Act)	The FFG Act provides a framework for biodiversity conservation in Victoria, including providing for the listing of threatened species and communities of flora and fauna, as well as threatening processes. Some non-threatened flora species are also listed as protected under the FFG Act.

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Legislation	Project relevance / alignment
	A permit to take is required to remove protected flora, including listed threatened and non-threatened flora, from public land. Under the FFG Act, public authorities have a duty of care to consider potential biodiversity impacts when exercising their functions, including giving proper attention to the objectives of the FFG Act. Relevance: The Ecological Assessment (see Appendix D) has confirmed that no removal of threatened or protected flora species listed under the FFG Act will occur for the Project and therefore no permit to take is required.
Heritage Act 2017	The <i>Heritage Act 2017</i> aims to, among other things, ‘provide for the protection and conservation of the cultural heritage of the State’. The Heritage Act protects all categories of cultural heritage relating to the non-Aboriginal settlement of Victoria including shipwrecks, buildings, structures, objects and archaeological sites. There are two categories of listing under the Heritage Act: • VHR for state significant places and objects • VHI for archaeological sites. Under the Heritage Act, a permit is required from Heritage Victoria to interfere with a heritage place or object listed on the VHR. Similarly, consent is required from Heritage Victoria to interfere with a site listed on the VHI or an ‘archaeological site’ as defined in the Heritage Act whether listed on the VHI or not. Relevance: The Project will not impact on any heritage places listed in the VHR or VHI. Although not anticipated, the Project’s GEMP will include an unexpected finds protocol to manage any historic heritage if encountered during construction of the Project.
Renewable Energy (Jobs and Investment) Act 2017	The objectives of the <i>Renewable Energy (Jobs and Investment) Act 2017</i> are to increase the use of renewable energy sources within Victoria. This legislation sets targets for renewable energy generation and energy storage, including targets for the State to achieve: • 95% of electricity generated using renewable energy sources by 2035 • energy storage facilities with a combined capacity to store and dispatch at least 6.3 GW of electricity at any time by 2035. The Act establishes mechanisms, such as the Victorian Renewable Energy Target scheme, to encourage investment, promote renewable energy generation, and support the growth of renewable energy industries in Victoria. Relevance: The Project is consistent with the objectives of this Act as development of the Project would play an important role in achieving Victoria’s legislated renewable energy generation and energy storage targets. No approvals are required for the Project under the <i>Renewable Energy (Jobs and Investment) Act 2017</i>.
Road Management Act 2004 (RM Act)	The RM Act establishes the statutory framework for management of the Victorian road network. Under the RM Act, the Head, Transport for Victoria is the coordinating road authority for declared arterial roads and freeways, while municipal councils are the coordinating road authorities for municipal roads within their municipal districts.

Legislation	Project relevance / alignment
	The coordinating road authority for non-arterial State roads varies and can be prescribed by legislation but, in certain circumstances, may be a Crown land manager such as DEECA or Parks Victoria. Under section 63 (1) of the RM Act, a person must not conduct any work in, on, under, or over a road without the written consent of the coordinating road authority. Relevance: The Project involves works within the Darnum-Shady Creek Road reserve, requiring written consent from Baw Baw Shire Council as the coordinating road authority under section 63 of the RM Act. Construction traffic and access upgrades will temporarily affect the local road network; therefore, a Traffic Management Plan (TMP) will be prepared as a post-approval condition to manage safety, heavy vehicle movements and road protection in consultation with the relevant authorities.
Water Act 1989	The <i>Water Act 1989</i> establishes the legal framework for managing Victoria's water resources to promote the orderly, equitable and efficient use of water resources, and to ensure that water resources are conserved and properly managed for sustainable use for the benefit of present and future Victorians. Under section 51 of the Water Act, a licence is required from the relevant water authority to take and use water, including surface and groundwater. A licence from the relevant water authority is also required under section 67 of the Water Act to construct works associated with the take and use of water (e.g. a bore, dam). Works not associated with take and use of water that occur in, on, under or above a designated waterway or land as defined under section 188 or 188A, may require a works on waterways permit from the relevant CMA under a by-law established under the Water Act. Relevance: The Project does not involve the take and use of water and therefore does not require a licence under section 51 or section 67 of the Water Act. The Project does not involve any works in, on, under or above a designated waterway, and therefore does not require a works on waterways permit.
Wildlife Act 1975	The <i>Wildlife Act 1975</i> establishes procedures to protect and conserve Victoria's wildlife. All fauna species indigenous to Victoria are listed as protected under the Wildlife Act, except for pest animals declared under the CaLP Act or wildlife declared to be unprotected wildlife. It is an offence under the Wildlife Act to kill, take, control or harm wildlife or damage, disturb or destroy wildlife habitat unless authorised under the Act or associated Wildlife Regulations 2024. Approval to damage, disturb or destroy wildlife habitat is not required under this Act, where authorised under another Act (e.g., permit to remove native vegetation under the P&E Act). Relevance: A suitably qualified wildlife handler holding a current management authorisation under the Wildlife Act would be engaged by the Project should any wildlife encountered during construction require salvage and relocation. This requirement will be addressed through the Project's CEMP.

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4.2 Policy and Guidelines

The following section summarises an assessment of the Project against relevant policy and guidelines.

Table 4.2 Summary Assessment of Policy and Guidelines of Relevance to the Project

Policy / guideline objectives	Project relevance / alignment
State	
Victoria's Climate Change Strategy (DELWP, 2021)	
Victoria's Climate Change Strategy (DELWP, 2021) provides a roadmap to net-zero emissions and a climate resilient Victoria by 2050. The Strategy references the legislated targets from the <i>Renewable Energy (Jobs and Investment) Act 2017</i> and is a one of the key outcomes of the <i>Climate Action Act 2017</i>. The strategy sets out the current responses to climate change and next steps to support communities and businesses to make the changes needed to reduce the impacts of climate change and continue to support the growth of the economy. The strategy is underpinned by a five-point plan which includes an approach to supporting a clean energy economy, including through actions to support transformation of the electricity system with renewable energy, which will play a key role in achieving net-zero emissions. The strategy identifies that legislated Victorian Renewable Energy Targets will stimulate new investments in large-scale wind projects and create employment opportunities primarily located in regional Victoria. This will also create flow-on benefits for supply chains, related services, and local community. Both the employment opportunity and flow-on benefits will assist in expanding the skills of the clean energy workforce and encourage uptake of new energy technologies. The strategy is referenced in Clause 13.01 (Climate Change Impacts) – Policy guidelines and Clause 19.01-2S (Renewable Energy) – Policy documents of the Planning Scheme.	The Project directly supports Victoria's Climate Change Strategy by contributing to the State's legislated renewable energy and emissions-reduction targets through the delivery of large-scale energy storage. By helping meet Victoria's commitment to 2.6 GW of storage by 2030 and 6.3 GW by 2035, the Project strengthens grid reliability, enables greater renewable energy uptake, and advances the transition to a clean, resilient electricity system. Aligned with the Strategy's focus on clean-energy workforce growth, the Project will generate approximately 80 full-time equivalent (FTE) construction jobs and 2-3 FTE ongoing operational roles, supporting regional employment, building local clean-energy skills, and contributing to the development of Victoria's future-ready energy workforce.

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Policy / guideline objectives	Project relevance / alignment
Victoria's Renewable Energy Action Plan (DELWP, 2017) Victoria's Renewable Energy Action Plan (DELWP, 2017) represents the action being taken to encourage investment in the energy sector and ensure Victorians continue to benefit from a renewable, affordable, and reliable energy system into the future. The action plan sets out the long-term renewable energy policy agenda and pathway. It connects a suite of initiatives that will drive investment and action in renewable energy including moving to a clean energy supply by increasing renewable energy generation as a key pillar of the state's approach to emissions reduction.	The Project is consistent with the Victorian Renewable Energy Action Plan, which outlines priority actions to support Victoria's transition to a renewable, affordable and reliable energy system. A key priority focuses on enabling energy storage solutions that integrate with renewable generation, recognising their role in strengthening system reliability and supporting the state's broader energy transformation. Delivering a utility-scale BESS connected to the National Electricity Market (NEM), the Project supports Victoria's renewable energy transition by enhancing system strength, improving network resilience, and enabling greater penetration of renewable energy consistent with the Action Plan's objectives.
2025 Victorian Transmission Plan (VicGrid, 2025a) The Victorian Transmission Plan (VTP) (VicGrid, 2025a) sets out a long-term strategic vision for Victoria's electricity transmission network, focusing on enabling the transition to renewable energy and delivering a reliable, efficient and secure power system. The 2025 VTP identifies key infrastructure upgrades and new transmission corridors required to connect renewable energy zones (REZs) to the grid and ensure the smooth integration of new generation capacity. The 2025 VTP is referenced in Clause 19.01-1S (Energy supply) – Policy documents and Clause 19.01-2S (Renewable Energy) – Policy documents of the Planning Scheme.	The Project aligns with the Victorian Transmission Plan by utilising its strategic vision and location adjacent to the existing 220 kV Yallourn–Rowville transmission line, enabling an efficient and cost-effective grid connection consistent with Victoria's coordinated transmission planning objectives. By delivering a utility-scale BESS within an established transmission corridor and subject to a Grid Impact Assessment, the Project supports the VTP's goals of strengthening system reliability, facilitating greater renewable energy integration, and contributing to the least-impact, coordinated development of Victoria's future electricity network.
Victorian Access Regime – Draft Grid Impact Assessment Guidelines (VicGrid, 2025b) The Victorian Access Regime is a set of requirements that renewable generation and storage projects must meet to gain access and connect to Victoria's transmission network. The new access arrangements aim to improve coordination of new projects and transmission network development, remove barriers to connecting to the network, give investors certainty they can supply energy to the market, and set clear expectations about community engagement and benefits.	The Project will be subject to the Grid Impact Assessment (GIA) pathway as it is located outside a declared REZ. Through this process, it will demonstrate that it does not adversely affect REZ generation or the performance of the shared transmission network. Its location beside the existing 220 kV Yallourn–Rowville line enables a low-impact connection using established infrastructure, and the Project will meet all access regime requirements,

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Policy / guideline objectives	Project relevance / alignment
Each Victorian renewable energy zone will have access limits. These limits will set a maximum cap on how much space on the transmission network is available to new renewable energy projects within the zone. Projects will need to apply for access. Projects outside renewable energy zones will need to pass a new test – called the Grid Impact Assessment. The Draft Grid Impact Assessment Guidelines (VicGrid, 2025b) set details of the assessment that will apply to projects outside renewable energy zones, including the criteria and the application process.	including engagement with landholders, communities and Traditional Owners, and the delivery of social and economic benefits.
Victorian Access Regime – Draft Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines for Renewable Energy and Transmission Projects (VicGrid, 2025c)	
The Draft Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines for Renewable Energy and Transmission Projects (VicGrid, 2025c) set expectations for how renewable energy and transmission project developers will be expected to engage with and deliver social value and economic benefits to landholders, Traditional Owners and communities. They include 48 expectations that project developers will need to meet as a minimum.	Engagement for the Project has been designed and implemented in alignment with the intent of the Draft Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines (VicGrid, 2025c), through early, transparent and ongoing engagement with landholders, Traditional Owners, neighbours, community members and key stakeholders. Engagement outcomes have informed Project design and mitigation measures, and the Project is committed to continued implementation of the Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan, alongside development of a Social Value and Economic Benefits Plan and a Local Participation Plan as the Project progresses.
Design Guidelines and Model Requirements: Renewable Energy Facilities (CFA, 2025)	
The Design Guidelines and Model Requirements for Renewable Energy Facilities, Version 4.4, June 2025 (CFA, 2025) (CFA Guidelines) provide standard considerations for measures for fire safety, risk and emergency management in designing, constructing and operating new renewable energy facilities, and upgrading existing facilities. The CFA Guidelines are designed to reduce the potential of occurrence and consequences of fire at renewable energy facilities through risk-based design, inform fire and risk management processes for all phases of a facility’s lifespan through the preparation of Risk Management Plans and Fire Management Plans, and support operators in preparing Emergency Management Plans that effectively consider fire risk. The CFA Guidelines apply to BESS facilities and are therefore applicable to the Project.	A FRMP has been prepared in accordance with the CFA Guidelines (2025) and confirms that the Project can meet relevant fire safety and bushfire risk requirements. Fire risk is addressed through a combination of inherent BESS safety systems, non-combustible surfaces, vegetation separation distances, compliant emergency access arrangements and an on-site firefighting water supply. A Fire Management Plan and Emergency Management Plan will be prepared and implemented in accordance with permit conditions, in consultation with the CFA, prior to the commencement of operation.

Policy / guideline objectives	Project relevance / alignment
The CFA Guidelines provide a framework for consultation with the CFA to establish their recommendations for the purposes of addressing Clause 13.02 (Bushfire) of the Planning Scheme.	
Protecting Victoria's Environment – Biodiversity 2037 (DELWP, 2017) Protecting Victoria's Environment – Biodiversity 2037 (DELWP, 2017) sets out the Victorian Government's plan to stop the decline of native plants, animals and improve the natural environment. The plan presents a long-term vision for Victoria's biodiversity supported by two overarching goals: Victorians value nature, and Victoria's natural environment is healthy. Community participation, collaboration, and an improved alignment across all relevant stakeholders are promoted in the plan, to restore biodiversity and strengthen the economy. The plan sets out state-wide and contributing targets that are to be achieved by 2037, to meet both goals. The contributing targets are to be reviewed and updated every five years. Priorities for action are also established in the plan to support the government with aligning to its specific priorities and investments within a broader national context. The plan is referenced in Clause 12.01-1S (Biodiversity) – Policy documents of the Planning Scheme.	The Project is located primarily on land that has been historically cleared for agriculture and avoids areas of higher biodiversity value, including remnant Lowland Forest vegetation along the eastern site boundary. The Ecological Assessment (see Appendix D) identifies indirect biodiversity impacts as minor, localised and temporary during construction, with no ongoing impacts anticipated during operation. The Project's impacts are low and consistent with the objectives of Protecting Victoria's Environment – Biodiversity 2037 and Clause 12.01-1S (Biodiversity).
Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation (DEECA, 2025) The Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation (DEECA 2025) (Native Vegetation Guidelines) set out and describe the application of Victoria's state-wide policy in relation to assessing and compensating for the removal of native vegetation, including the assessment of impacts from removing native vegetation on biodiversity and other values, and how offsets are calculated and established to compensate for the loss in biodiversity value from the removal of native vegetation. These guidelines are incorporated into all planning schemes in Victoria and are referenced in Clause 12.01 (Biodiversity) – Policy documents and set out decision guidelines for the purpose of Clause 52.17 (Native vegetation) of the Planning Scheme.	The Project has been designed to avoid and minimise impacts on native vegetation in accordance with the Native Vegetation Guidelines, with development primarily located on historically cleared land of low biodiversity value. Higher-value vegetation, including Lowland Forest along the eastern site boundary, has been largely avoided. Removal is restricted to 0.671 ha of Lowland Forest (EVC 16), comprising 0.148 ha of native vegetation patches (including four large patch trees) and 0.522 ha of scattered trees (nine trees, eight large), with no removal of hollow-bearing trees or threatened species or communities. Any unavoidable removal will be addressed in accordance with Clause 52.17, informed by the Ecological Assessment (see Appendix D) and offset requirements under the Native Vegetation Guidelines.

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Policy / guideline objectives	Project relevance / alignment
Regional	
Gippsland Regional Plan (2020–2025)	
The Gippsland Regional Plan (2020–2025) provides a strategic framework to guide sustainable economic growth, community wellbeing, and environmental stewardship across the Gippsland region. The Plan focuses on supporting a strong and diversified economy, fostering innovation and investment in emerging industries, and promoting regional resilience through sustainable use of natural resources and infrastructure development. A key priority of the Plan is to position Gippsland as a leader in the transition to a low-carbon economy by supporting renewable energy generation, storage, and associated infrastructure.	The Project is consistent with the purpose of the Plan by contributing to Gippsland’s clean energy transition and supporting regional economic development. By providing battery energy storage capacity and connecting to the NEM, the Project would enhance energy reliability, enable greater integration of renewable energy and attract investment in regional energy infrastructure. This supports the Plan’s objectives of advancing sustainable industries, creating skilled employment opportunities and strengthening Gippsland’s role in Victoria’s renewable energy future.
Gippsland Bushfire Management Strategy (2020)	
The Gippsland Bushfire Management Strategy (2020) outlines the regional approach to reducing bushfire risk and improving community safety across Gippsland. The Strategy aims to balance environmental, social, and economic values while minimising the potential impacts of bushfire on people, property, and critical infrastructure. It supports integrated land and emergency management, strategic fuel management, and planning that ensures new developments consider bushfire risk and resilience.	The Project is consistent with the purpose of the Strategy as it incorporates appropriate bushfire risk considerations into its design, siting, and management. Through the implementation of bushfire prevention and response measures, such as asset protection zones, access for emergency services, and adherence to relevant planning and safety standards, the Project supports regional resilience objectives. By doing so, it contributes to the Strategy’s goal of maintaining community safety and protecting essential infrastructure within the Gippsland region.
Gippsland Regional Climate Change Adaptation Strategy	
The Gippsland Regional Climate Change Adaptation Strategy provides a framework for building the region’s resilience to the impacts of climate change. It focuses on supporting communities, industries, and ecosystems to adapt to changing environmental conditions such as increased temperatures, bushfire risk, and extreme weather events. The Strategy emphasises collaboration between government, industry, and the community to implement adaptation actions that enhance sustainability, protect natural assets, and support a low-carbon and climate-resilient economy.	The Project aligns with the purpose of the Strategy by directly supporting Gippsland’s transition to a low-carbon and climate-resilient future. By providing battery energy storage capacity and connecting to the NEM, the Project facilitates greater integration of renewable energy, contributing to emissions reduction and energy system reliability. Additionally, the Project will be designed and managed to account for climate-related risks such as bushfire and extreme weather, consistent with the Strategy’s objectives of proactive adaptation and regional resilience.

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Policy / guideline objectives	Project relevance / alignment
West Gippsland Regional Catchment Strategy (2021–2027) The West Gippsland Regional Catchment Strategy (2021–2027) sets out the long-term vision and priorities for the sustainable management of land, water, and biodiversity across the West Gippsland region. The Strategy aims to protect and enhance the health of catchments, waterways, and ecosystems while supporting sustainable agriculture, resilient communities, and a changing climate. It promotes integrated catchment management through collaboration between land managers, community groups, industry, and government to achieve environmental, social, and economic benefits.	The Project is consistent with the purpose of the Strategy as it supports sustainable regional development while incorporating measures to protect local land and water catchment values. The Project will be designed and managed to minimise potential impacts on soil, water quality, and biodiversity, aligning with the Strategy’s goals of maintaining healthy catchments and ecosystems. By contributing to the renewable energy transition, the Project also supports the Strategy’s broader objective of building climate resilience and promoting environmentally responsible land use within the West Gippsland region.
Local	
Baw Baw Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2022–2023 The Baw Baw Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2022–2023 sets out the Shire’s approach to protecting the environment and addressing climate change. It focuses on reducing greenhouse gas emissions, improving energy efficiency, increasing the use of renewable energy, and supporting climate adaptation and biodiversity protection. The Strategy aims to embed sustainability across Council operations and encourage community and business action towards a low-carbon future.	The Project supports this Strategy by facilitating renewable energy integration, improving grid stability, and helping reduce emissions from non-renewable energy sources. The Project aligns with the Shire’s goals to advance clean energy initiatives and build a more sustainable, climate-resilient community.
Baw Baw Shire Council Economic Development and Visitor Economy Strategy (2022–2025)	
The Baw Baw Shire Council Economic Development and Visitor Economy Strategy (2022–2025) aims to strengthen and diversify the local economy while supporting sustainable growth and community wellbeing. It focuses on attracting investment, creating local jobs, fostering innovation, and improving infrastructure to support key industries such as agriculture, manufacturing, renewable energy, and tourism. The Strategy also highlights the importance of sustainable development and future-ready industries in building economic resilience.	The Project aligns with this Strategy by supporting investment in renewable energy infrastructure and contributing to the Shire’s growing clean energy sector. The Project promotes local economic development, innovation, and sustainability, consistent with the Strategy’s vision for a resilient and forward-looking regional economy.

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Policy / guideline objectives	Project relevance / alignment
Baw Baw Economic Land Use Strategy 2023 The Baw Baw Economic Land Use Strategy 2023 provides a framework to guide land use planning and development that supports sustainable economic growth across the Shire. It identifies suitable areas for industrial, commercial, and employment-generating uses while balancing the protection of agricultural land and environmental values. The Strategy promotes efficient use of infrastructure, investment in renewable energy and emerging industries, and development that contributes to long-term regional resilience and prosperity.	The Project aligns with this Strategy by supporting investment in renewable energy infrastructure and making efficient use of appropriately zoned land (Farming Zone). The Project contributes to a more resilient and sustainable local economy, consistent with the Strategy's objectives to encourage innovative, future-focused industries within Baw Baw Shire.

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5.0 Planning Assessment

The following section provides an assessment of the Project against the relevant provisions of the applicable Planning Scheme.

5.1 Planning Context

The Project is proposed to be developed within the Baw Baw Shire LGA and is therefore subject to the Baw Baw Planning Scheme (the Planning Scheme).

The Planning Scheme applies the following zones and overlays to the Indicative Construction Envelope:

- Farming Zone (FZ)
- Development Contributions Plan Overlay – Schedule 1 (DCPO1)
- Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO).

The location of zones and overlays applying to the Project Site and surrounds is shown in **Figure 5.1** and **Figure 5.2**.

The Project, comprising of the BESS, on-site substation and associated infrastructure, is defined as a ‘Utility installation’ under **Clause 73.03** (Land Use Terms) of the Planning Scheme (see **Table 5.1**).

Other key definitions relevant to the Proposed Use and development of land for the Project are also provided in **Table 5.1**.

Table 5.1 Key Use and Development Definitions Relevant to the Project

Term	Definition
Utility installation	Land used: a) for telecommunications; b) to transmit or distribute gas or oil; c) to transmit, distribute or store power; d) to collect, treat, transmit, store, or distribute water; or e) to collect, treat, or dispose of storm or flood water, sewage, or sullage. It includes any associated flow measurement device or a structure to gauge waterway flow.
Earthworks	Land forming, laser grading, levee banks, raised access roads and tracks, building pads, storage embankments, channel banks and drain banks and associated structures.
Native vegetation	Plants that are indigenous to Victoria, including trees, shrubs, herbs, and grasses.
Business identification sign	A sign that provides business identification information about a business or industry on the land where it is displayed. The information may include the name of the business or building, the street number of the business premises, the nature of the business, a business logo or other business identification information.

The following planning permit triggers apply to the Project under the Planning Scheme:

- **Clause 35.07-1** – Use of land for a utility installation (Section 2 use) in FZ
- **Clause 35.07-4** – To construct or carry out building or works for a Section 2 use (utility installation) in FZ
- **Clause 35.07-4** – To carry out earthworks identified in Schedule 1 to Clause 35.07 (earthworks which change the rate of flow or the discharge point of water across a property boundary) in FZ
- **Clause 52.05-14** – Display of business identification signage in Category 4 area (Farming Zone)
- **Clause 52.17-1** – To remove, destroy or lop native vegetation, including dead native vegetation.

Further discussion of permit triggers and assessment against the relevant decision guidelines is provided in the following sections.

5.2 Municipal Planning Strategy

The Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) is provided at **Clause 02** of the Planning Scheme and sets out the context, vision and strategic directions for the Baw Baw Shire. **Table 5.2** summarises an assessment of the clauses that are most relevant to this Project.

Table 5.2 Assessment against Municipal Planning Strategy

Clause	Relevant strategic directions	Assessment
Clause 02.03-2 Environmental and landscape values	• Protect the Shire's natural attributes including its tall Ash forests, alpine herb fields, reserves and parks and its native animal species. • Protect the attractive rural landscape of Baw Baw of forested mountains, cleared hills and river flats.	The Project will not impact on any tall Ash forests. Alpine herb fields, public lands and avoids impacts to native animal species. The Ecological Impact Assessment (Appendix D) found that impacts to native fauna have been avoided and minimised through project siting, with development concentrated in existing improved pasture and key habitat features, including hollow-bearing trees and aquatic habitats, retained. Photomontages (see Appendix F) prepared from representative publicly accessible viewpoints demonstrate that the Project would generally be filtered or screened by existing vegetation and topography, with visible project elements limited and not visually dominant.
Clause 02.03-3 Natural resource management	• Protect and develop the Shire's resources relating to dairying, horticulture, grazing, timber production, tourism and high quality water.	The Project footprint is approximately 7 ha within the 51.2 ha Project Site and is designed and managed to ensure neighbouring properties can continue their existing rural activities without unreasonable interference.
Clause 02.03-5 Economic development	• Facilitate a strong economy and employment base by building on Baw Baw's natural strengths.	The Project will generate approximately 80 FTE construction roles and 2-3 ongoing FTE operational positions in the clean energy sector, supporting job creation, economic

Clause	Relevant strategic directions	Assessment
	- Facilitate diversification of the economy into new and innovative sectors. - Protect high quality agricultural land and its productive capacity.	growth and industry diversification within Baw Baw Shire. These employment opportunities contribute to the region's participation in Victoria's expanding clean-energy workforce, consistent with the State's climate and energy transition goals. The Project is co-located with existing 220 kV transmission infrastructure, enabling efficient delivery of critical energy storage services while avoiding unnecessary expansion of new energy transmission corridors. By utilising an established transmission easement, the Project minimises undue fragmentation of agricultural land, supporting continued agricultural productivity in the surrounding area.
Clause 02.03-6 Transport and infrastructure	- Encourage improved infrastructure and services to support economic growth. - Discourage development that does not demonstrate appropriate on-site wastewater disposal.	The Project supports improved infrastructure by delivering an 800 MWh BESS connected to the existing 220 kV transmission network, making efficient use of established infrastructure without the need for new transmission corridors. Wastewater will be appropriately managed, with temporary construction-stage facilities provided by the contractor in accordance with local requirements, and minimal operational wastewater managed through an appropriate on-site system if required, consistent with Clause 02.03-6.

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5.3 Planning Policy Framework

The Planning Policy Framework (PPF) sets out the objectives and strategies that guide land use and development within the municipality, and includes statewide, regional and local planning policies. **Table 5.3** summarises an assessment of the clauses that are most relevant to this Project.

Table 5.3 Assessment against Planning Policy Framework

Clause	Sub-clause	Relevant objectives	Assessment
Clause 12.01 Biodiversity	12.01-1S Protection of Biodiversity	To protect and enhance Victoria's biodiversity.	The Project is located within an agricultural landscape and has been designed to avoid higher-value biodiversity features, including Lowland Forest vegetation and associated fauna habitat along the eastern boundary of the site. Native vegetation removal is restricted to 0.671 ha of EVC 16, comprising 0.148 ha of native vegetation patches (including four large patch trees) and 0.522 ha of scattered trees (nine trees, eight large). Any unavoidable removal will be addressed in accordance with Clause 52.17.
	12.01-1L Protection of Baw Baw's biodiversity	Encourage protection of habitat for native fauna with an emphasis on threatened species, habitats and communities. Encourage and facilitate the development of biolinks or wildlife corridors across the Shire. Encourage establishment of native vegetation for new and emerging environmental markets.	The Project avoids higher-value biodiversity areas and retains key habitat features, including higher-quality native vegetation, hollow-bearing trees and waterways. The Ecological Impact Assessment (Appendix D) found that habitat connectivity would be maintained, key fauna movement pathways would be retained and no significant impacts to threatened species are expected. The site layout and broader landscape context ensure vegetation within the Project Site retains existing levels of connection to adjacent habitat, maintaining existing landscape-scale connectivity and avoiding fragmentation of fauna movement pathways. By utilising a previously cleared and modified site, the Project limits impacts on local biodiversity values and is consistent with the objectives of Clause 12.01-1L.

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Clause	Sub-clause	Relevant objectives	Assessment
	12.01-2S Native vegetation management	To ensure that there is no net loss to biodiversity as a result of the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation.	The Project has been designed in accordance with the avoid–minimise hierarchy, recognising that a limited amount of native vegetation removal is unavoidable to facilitate the construction and operation of the Project. Removal is restricted to 0.671 ha of EVC 16, comprising 0.148 ha of native vegetation patches (including four large patch trees) and 0.522 ha of scattered trees (nine trees, eight large), with no removal of hollow-bearing trees or threatened species or communities. All impacts will be managed in accordance with Clause 52.17, including the provision of biodiversity offsets (0.1620 General Habitat Units and 12 large trees), ensuring no net loss to biodiversity.
Clause 12.03 Waterbodies and wetlands	12.03-1S River and riparian corridors, waterways, lakes, wetlands and billabongs	To protect and enhance waterway systems including river and riparian corridors, waterways, lakes, wetlands and billabongs.	The Project has been designed to protect waterway systems by avoiding direct impacts to waterways, wetlands and riparian corridors, and retaining existing drainage features with appropriate setbacks, including a minimum 30 m buffer to the on-site designated waterway. Surface water risks associated with construction and operation have been assessed and will be managed through clean-flow diversion, erosion and sediment controls, and a stormwater management system incorporating treatment, detention and controlled discharge. Subject to confirmation through detailed hydrologic and hydraulic design, these measures will maintain existing drainage patterns, avoid adverse downstream impacts and protect the environmental values of receiving waterways, consistent with Clause 12.03-1S.
Clause 12.05 Significant environments and landscapes	12.05-2S Landscapes	To protect and enhance significant landscapes and open spaces that contribute to character, identity and sustainable environments.	The Project is not located within any land subject to a Significant Landscape Overlay (SLO), nor any recognised significant landscapes or publicly accessible scenic areas. The LVIA (Appendix F) identifies the surrounding area as a modified rural landscape, characterised by agricultural land uses, established shelterbelts and existing transmission infrastructure. The LVIA concludes that visual impacts from publicly accessible viewpoints along local roads are assessed as Nil, Negligible or Low, with no viewpoints experiencing greater than a Low visual impact, reflecting distance, limited viewer numbers, existing vegetation and local topography.

Clause	Sub-clause	Relevant objectives	Assessment
			As a result, the Project will not detract from significant landscapes or landscape character and is consistent with the objectives of Clause 12.05-2S.
Clause 13.01 Climate change impacts	13.01-1S Natural hazards and climate change	To minimise the impacts of natural hazards and adapt to the impacts of climate change through risk-based planning.	Flood and bushfire risks have been assessed and addressed through a risk-based planning approach. The site is subject to low flood risk, with stormwater designed to maintain pre-development flow paths and avoid adverse off-site impacts. Bushfire risk can be managed through compliant siting, design and operational measures consistent with CFA Guidelines, including defendable space, compliant emergency access, on-site firefighting water supply and radiant heat protection to BESS infrastructure. The Project also supports climate change mitigation by enabling renewable energy integration and improving electricity system reliability. The Project is therefore consistent with Clause 13.01-1S.
Clause 13.02 Bushfire	13.02-1S Bushfire planning	To strengthen the resilience of settlements and communities to bushfire through risk-based planning that prioritises the protection of human life.	Bushfire risk has been assessed through a FRMP (Appendix G), which identifies site-specific risks and demonstrates how these are addressed through a risk-based approach to site layout, access, and emergency response. Key measures include the provision of defendable space, compliant emergency access, on-site firefighting water supply, and systems to manage contaminated firefighting runoff. Collectively, these measures prioritise the protection of human life and ensure the Project appropriately responds to bushfire risk, consistent with Clause 13.02-1S.
Clause 13.05 Noise	13.05-1S Noise management	To assist the management of noise effects on sensitive land uses.	An ENA (Appendix E) undertaken in accordance with the Noise Protocol concludes that, with a 6 m high acoustic noise barrier, operational noise is assessed as capable of complying with EPA limits at all non-host dwellings. A residual exceedance at the host landowner dwelling remains below enHealth evidence-based noise exposure guidelines and can be managed through site-specific mitigation if required. Construction noise will be temporary and managed through a CEMP.
Clause 13.06 Air quality	13.06-1S Air quality management	To assist the protection and improvement of air quality.	The Project is a BESS with no operational combustion processes or industrial emissions. Temporary dust generation may occur during construction and would be managed through standard mitigation measures in the CEMP.

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Clause	Sub-clause	Relevant objectives	Assessment
Clause 13.07 Amenity, human health, and safety	13.07-1S Land use compatibility	To protect community amenity, human health and safety while facilitating appropriate commercial, industrial, infrastructure or other uses with potential adverse off-site impacts.	Noise, bushfire and hazard risks are managed through the Project's siting, design and mitigation measures, including a 6 m perimeter noise barrier, defensible space, compliant emergency access and on-site firefighting water supply, with construction impacts managed through a CEMP. The PHA (Appendix H) confirms that the Project does not give rise to any credible hazard scenarios with unacceptable off-site consequences. The Project therefore protects community amenity, human health and safety in accordance with Clause 13.07-1S.
Clause 14.01 Agriculture	14.01-1S Protection of agricultural land	To protect the state's agricultural base by preserving productive farmland.	The Project is located on land used for agricultural purposes and has been designed to minimise the loss of productive farmland. The Development Footprint is limited to approximately 7 ha within a 51.2ha landholding, enabling the ongoing agricultural use of the balance of the site. Existing agricultural infrastructure, including the dwelling, shed and cattle yard, will be retained. The Project therefore represents an efficient use of agricultural land, consistent with the objective of protecting Victoria's agricultural base.
	14.01-2L-02 Agricultural soil protection	To avoid agricultural land being prejudiced by removal, degradation of soils.	The Project's Development Footprint is limited to approximately 7 ha of the 51.2 ha site, minimising soil disturbance. Earthworks and construction activities would be managed through a CEMP incorporating erosion and sediment controls to minimise erosion, sediment mobilisation and soil degradation during construction. Project design and management measures specifically address potential risks associated with spills, fire-fighting water, and contaminated runoff. Areas of the Project associated with a higher risk of contamination, including battery and substation infrastructure, incorporate sealed surfaces, controlled drainage and on-site containment measures designed to retain potential spills and fire-water runoff in accordance with relevant EPA Victoria requirements. The surface water management system includes detention infrastructure with isolation capability, allowing site runoff and fire-water to be retained on site in the event of an emergency incident. Any retained water would be managed, treated and disposed of in accordance with relevant EPA Victoria requirements.

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Clause	Sub-clause	Relevant objectives	Assessment
			With these measures in place, the Project is not expected to result in adverse impacts to surrounding agricultural land uses, soils, groundwater or downstream receiving environments
Clause 14.02 Water	14.02-1S Catchment planning and management	To assist the protection and restoration of catchments, waterways, estuaries, bays, water bodies, groundwater, and the marine environment.	The Project is designed to manage surface water in a way that maintains existing drainage patterns and pre-development peak flows, subject to detailed design. The SWA (Appendix I) identifies an unnamed ephemeral designated waterway on site, draining to downstream receiving environments including Shady Creek and the Moe River within the West Gippsland catchment. With the retention of existing drainage features, appropriate setbacks and implementation of recommended stormwater management measures, the Project is not expected to result in adverse impacts to downstream watercourses or catchment values and is consistent with the objective of Clause 14.02-1S.
	14.02-2S Water quality	To protect water quality.	The SWA (Appendix I) concludes that construction and operational water quality risks can be appropriately managed through the implementation of erosion and sediment controls, spill management measures, and stormwater treatment, detention and controlled discharge. Water quality outcomes have been assessed against the Environment Reference Standard (ERS) adopted for the Project, and the proposed measures are designed to achieve compliance with these standards. Subject to implementing these measures, the Project is not expected to adversely affect receiving water quality and is consistent with the objective of Clause 14.02-2S.
Clause 15.01 Built environment	15.01-6S Design for rural areas	To ensure development respects valued areas of rural character.	Photomontages from representative public viewpoints demonstrate that existing vegetation and topography would generally filter or screen views of the Project. Consistent with the photomontage assessment, all publicly accessible viewpoints were assessed as having nil, negligible or low visual impacts. The Project is therefore consistent with the objective of Clause 15.01-6S.
	15.01-6L Design for Baw Baw's rural areas	Discourage buildings being located in visually prominent positions particularly on ridgelines and hilltops. Encourage buildings to visually blend into the landscape.	The Project is not located on a ridgeline and is sited within a modified agricultural landscape containing existing transmission infrastructure.

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Clause	Sub-clause	Relevant objectives	Assessment
		Minimise the height of buildings and encourage the use of non-reflective exterior materials in muted tones. Encourage preservation of view corridors from vantage points within urban areas and from Princes Highway.	The LVIA assessed visual impacts from publicly accessible viewpoints as nil, negligible or low, with photomontages demonstrating that the Project would generally be screened or filtered by existing vegetation and would not be a dominant element in the view. The proposed infrastructure will incorporate non-reflective materials and muted colours that are consistent with the surrounding landscape character, helping to reduce visual impacts.
Clause 17.01 Employment	17.01-1S Diversified economy	To strengthen and diversify the economy.	The Project supports economic diversification by delivering a utility-scale BESS that provides grid firming and storage services to the NEM, which is a growing sector of Victoria's energy economy. Construction is expected to generate a peak workforce of approximately 80 FTE, largely sourced from the Gippsland region, with 2–3 ongoing operational FTE. The Project represents a significant capital investment in the Baw Baw LGA and contributes to the broader transition away from coal-fired generation in the Latrobe Valley.
Clause 19.01 Energy	19.01-1S Energy Supply	To facilitate appropriate development of energy supply infrastructure.	The Project facilitates the development of energy supply infrastructure by providing 800+ MW of utility-scale battery storage. The BESS would store electricity during periods of low demand and discharge during periods of high demand, improving the stability and reliability of the grid. The Project's siting adjacent to an existing transmission line avoids the need for new transmission infrastructure and makes efficient use of existing network assets.
	19.01-2S Renewable Energy	To support the provision and use of renewable energy in a manner that ensures appropriate siting and design considerations are met.	The Project supports the provision and integration of renewable energy by delivering utility-scale battery storage that enhances grid stability and renewable energy utilisation within the NEM. Appropriate siting and design considerations have been addressed through a comprehensive suite of technical assessments covering noise, landscape and visual impact, biodiversity, surface water, traffic, bushfire and hazard risk. Mitigation measures are incorporated in the Project design, including non-reflective finishes, noise attenuation, landscape screening and setbacks from native vegetation, ensuring potential impacts are avoided or

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Clause	Sub-clause	Relevant objectives	Assessment
			minimised where practicable. On this basis, the Project supports renewable energy development in a manner consistent with the intent of the policy.

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5.4 Zones

5.4.1 Clause 35.07 – Farming Zone

The Project is located entirely within the Farming Zone, as shown in **Figure 5.1**, and is therefore subject to **Clause 35.07** (Farming Zone) of the Planning Scheme. Pursuant to **Clause 35.07**, the purpose of the Farming Zone is:

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

The Project has been designed to respond appropriately to the purposes of Clause 35.07 by minimising impacts on agricultural land while accommodating essential infrastructure. The permanent Development Footprint is approximately 7 ha within a broader rural landholding of approximately 51.2 ha, enabling agricultural activities to continue on the balance of the land.

The Project is confined to areas of improved pasture within an extensively modified agricultural landscape and will not interfere with surrounding farming operations or constrain the ongoing use of nearby land for agriculture. Temporary construction disturbance will be rehabilitated following completion of works, further limiting long-term impacts.

The Project is located adjacent to, and relies on, the existing 220 kV overhead transmission line (Yallourn Power Station to Rowville Terminal Station), representing an efficient and orderly use of land for essential energy infrastructure and avoiding the need for new transmission corridors through agricultural land. Having regard to these factors, the Project is compatible with the purposes of the Farming Zone under Clause 35.07.

Pursuant to **Clause 35.07-1** (Table of uses) of the Planning Scheme, a utility installation is considered a Section 2 use. Therefore, a permit is required to use the land for a utility installation.

Pursuant to **Clause 35.07-4** of the Planning Scheme, a permit is required to construct or carry out buildings or works associated with a use in Section 2. Therefore, a permit is also required for buildings and works.

The Project will also involve earthworks on land specified in Schedule 1 to **Clause 35.07** which could change the rate of flow or the discharge point of water across a property boundary. Therefore, a permit is also required for earthworks.

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5.4.2 Farming Zone Assessment

Table 5.4 summarises an assessment of the Project against the decision guidelines that are applicable to the Project under the Farming Zone.

Table 5.4 Assessment against Decision Guidelines – Farming Zone

Decision guidelines	Assessment
General issues	
The Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.	Refer to responses in Section 5.2 and Section 5.3 respectively.
Any Regional Catchment Strategy and associated plan applying to the land.	The site is located within the Latrobe Local Area of the West Gippsland Regional Catchment Strategy (RCS) 2021–2027, which seeks to protect waterway health, maintain natural drainage function and avoid adverse downstream catchment impacts within the Latrobe River system. The SWA (Appendix I) confirms that the Project avoids direct impacts to designated waterways, retains existing drainage features with appropriate setbacks, and incorporates a stormwater management strategy developed to maintain existing drainage patterns and pre-development flow conditions, and subject to detailed design. Water quality risks will be managed during operation by collecting and conveying runoff to appropriately designed treatment infrastructure to reduce pollutant loads before discharge, or by disposing of it off-site where required to comply with EPA requirements. During construction, earthworks would be managed through the CEMP to minimise erosion and soil degradation, and to prevent sediment mobilisation to downstream waterways. With these measures in place, the Project is not expected to adversely affect catchment values.
The capability of the land to accommodate the proposed use or development, including the disposal of effluent.	The site can accommodate the proposed use, given its size, existing low-intensity agricultural use, rural setting, and proximity to existing electricity infrastructure. The Development Footprint is limited in extent, enabling continued agricultural use of the balance of the land and avoiding constraints associated with flooding, waterways, biodiversity and sensitive receptors. Effluent generation will be minimal. Construction-stage wastewater will be managed through contractor-provided temporary systems installed in accordance with local requirements, and operational wastewater is expected to be negligible and managed through appropriate on-site systems.

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Decision guidelines	Assessment
How the use or development relates to sustainable land management.	The Project incorporates a limited and consolidated footprint, minimises land disturbance, and provides for rehabilitation of all temporary construction areas. Accordingly, the Project represents a sustainable use of land consistent with orderly planning and long-term land management objectives.
Whether the site is suitable for the use or development and whether the proposal is compatible with adjoining and nearby land uses.	The site is suitable for a BESS because of its rural location, scale, and proximity to existing electricity infrastructure. The limited Development Footprint and assessed mitigation measures ensure surrounding agricultural land uses can continue without adverse impact. Accordingly, the Project is compatible with adjoining and nearby land uses.
How the use and development makes use of existing infrastructure and services.	The Project makes efficient use of existing infrastructure by connecting to established high-voltage electricity transmission networks within the Darnum area, where multiple major transmission lines already traverse the surrounding landscape. By utilising this existing electricity infrastructure, the Project avoids the need for new transmission corridors and limits additional linear infrastructure across rural land. The Project will utilise the existing road network, including access from Darnum-Shady Creek Road, minimising the need for additional transport infrastructure.
Agricultural issues and the impacts from non-agricultural uses	
Whether the use or development will support and enhance agricultural production.	The Project enables continued agricultural use of the majority of the landholding and provides income diversification opportunities that may support farm financial viability.
Whether the use or development will adversely affect soil quality or permanently remove land from agricultural production.	The Project will not adversely affect soil quality or permanently remove significant areas of land from agricultural production. The Development Footprint is limited and confined to improved pasture, allowing agricultural activities to continue on the balance of the landholding. Temporary construction disturbance will be rehabilitated following completion of works, ensuring no long-term impact on soil capability or agricultural use in these temporary construction areas.
The potential for the use or development to limit the operation and expansion of adjoining and nearby agricultural uses.	The Project will not limit the operation or expansion of adjoining and nearby agricultural uses, as it has a limited footprint, maintains appropriate separation from surrounding farmland, incorporates measures to avoid or minimise emissions to land, air or water (including lighting and noise) and enables agricultural activities to continue without restriction on neighbouring properties.

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Decision guidelines	Assessment
The capacity of the site to sustain the agricultural use.	The site retains the capacity to sustain ongoing agricultural use, as the Development Footprint is limited and agricultural activities can continue on the balance of the landholding. Existing farm infrastructure including sheds and cattle yards will be retained along with existing shelterbelts and farm dams.
The agricultural qualities of the land, such as soil quality, access to water and access to rural infrastructure.	The agricultural qualities of the land, including soil resources, access to water and connection to rural infrastructure, are typical of the surrounding FZ and support ongoing agricultural use. Potential impacts to soils and water resources during construction can be effectively managed through appropriate mitigation measures, with all temporary disturbance rehabilitated following completion of works. The limited permanent footprint of the Project will not prevent the continued use of agricultural land on the balance of the site, nor will it adversely affect access to or operation of existing rural infrastructure.
Any integrated land management plan prepared for the site	No integrated land management plan has been prepared for or applies to the site. Relevant land management matters are addressed through the Project design, the recommendations of the supporting assessments and the implementation of permit conditions and environmental management measures to manage potential impacts during construction and operation.
Whether Rural worker accommodation is necessary having regard to: - The nature and scale of the agricultural use. - The accessibility to residential areas and existing accommodation, and the remoteness of the location.	No rural worker accommodation is proposed as part of the Project.
The duration of the use of the land for Rural worker accommodation.	
Accommodation issues	
Whether the dwelling will result in the loss or fragmentation of productive agricultural land.	No dwelling, accommodation or rural worker accommodation is proposed as part of the Project. Accordingly, the Project will not result in the loss or fragmentation of productive agricultural land, nor introduce additional sensitive land uses within the Farming Zone
Whether the dwelling will be adversely affected by agricultural activities on adjacent and nearby land due to	No dwelling, accommodation or rural worker accommodation is proposed as part of the Project.

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Decision guidelines	Assessment
dust, noise, odour, use of chemicals and farm machinery, traffic and hours of operation.	
Whether the dwelling will adversely affect the operation and expansion of adjoining and nearby agricultural uses.	No dwelling, accommodation or rural worker accommodation is proposed as part of the Project.
The potential for the proposal to lead to a concentration or proliferation of dwellings in the area and the impact of this on the use of the land for agriculture.	No dwelling, accommodation or rural worker accommodation is proposed as part of the Project.
The potential for accommodation to be adversely affected by noise and shadow flicker impacts if it is located within one kilometre from the nearest title boundary of land subject to: • A permit for a wind energy facility; or • An application for a permit for a wind energy facility; or • An incorporated document approving a wind energy facility; or • A proposed wind energy facility for which an action has been taken under section 8(1), 8(2), 8(3) or 8(4) of the <i>Environment Effects Act 1978</i>.	Not Applicable This copied document to be made available for the sole purpose of enabling its consideration and review as part of a planning process under the Planning and Environment Act 1987. The document must not be used for any purpose which may breach any copyright ADVERTISED PLAN
The potential for accommodation to be adversely affected by vehicular traffic, noise, blasting, dust and vibration from an existing or proposed extractive industry operation if it is located within 500 m from the nearest title boundary of land on which a work authority has been applied for or granted under the <i>Mineral Resources (Sustainable Development) Act 1990</i> .	Not Applicable
Environmental issues	
The impact of the proposal on the natural physical features and resources of the area, in particular on soil and water quality.	The SWA (Appendix I) confirms that construction-related risks to soil and water quality are minor and can be effectively managed through standard erosion, sediment and spill controls implemented via the CEMP. Operational stormwater will be managed through diversion, treatment, detention and controlled discharge to maintain pre-development flow rates and

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Decision guidelines	Assessment
	water quality. No significant residual impacts to land or surface water resources or downstream watercourses are anticipated.
The impact of the use or development on the flora and fauna on the site and its surrounds.	The Ecological Assessment (Appendix D) confirms that the site is predominantly improved pasture with limited biodiversity values. Higher-value vegetation has been avoided, and native vegetation removal minimised, with indirect impacts expected to be minor, localised and temporary during construction, and no significant long-term impacts on flora, fauna or landscape connectivity anticipated during operation.
The need to protect and enhance the biodiversity of the area, including the retention of vegetation and faunal habitat and the need to revegetate land including riparian buffers along waterways, gullies, ridgelines, property boundaries and saline discharge and recharge area.	The Project has been designed to protect biodiversity through the avoidance of higher-value native vegetation and faunal habitat, as detailed in the Ecological Assessment (Appendix D). Native vegetation retention has been prioritised, by siting infrastructure and temporary works in previously disturbed land to minimise native vegetation removal. Temporary construction disturbance will be rehabilitated following completion of works, and appropriate buffers to waterways and drainage features will be maintained, ensuring no long-term adverse impacts on biodiversity values or landscape connectivity.
The location of on-site effluent disposal areas to minimise the impact of nutrient loads on waterways and native vegetation.	On-site effluent disposal areas will be appropriately located and designed to minimise nutrient impacts on waterways and native vegetation. Temporary construction-stage wastewater systems will be positioned away from drainage lines and retained vegetation, and operational wastewater generation will be minimal and managed through an appropriate on-site system if required. These measures ensure that nutrient loads are effectively managed and do not adversely affect waterway or biodiversity values.
Design and siting issues	
The need to locate buildings in one area to avoid any adverse impacts on surrounding agricultural uses and to minimise the loss of productive agricultural land.	Project buildings and infrastructure are consolidated within a defined 7 hectare area of permanent infrastructure on a 51.2 hectare rural landholding, minimising the extent of development and avoiding fragmentation of surrounding agricultural land. This consolidated siting enables agricultural activities to continue on the balance of the site and adjoining land, and limits the loss of productive agricultural land to the minimum necessary.
The impact of the siting, design, height, bulk, colours and materials to be used, on the natural environment, major roads, vistas and water features and the measures to be undertaken to minimise any adverse impacts.	The LVIA (Appendix F) confirms that the height, bulk and scale of the development will not appear as a dominant element when viewed from surrounding public roads and publicly accessible viewpoints as demonstrated by the photomontages. Existing shelterbelts, roadside vegetation and local topography provide effective visual screening, with landscape planting recommended to enhance screening over time.

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Decision guidelines	Assessment
	On this basis, the LVIA concludes that no landscape or visual impacts have been identified that would preclude the Project.
The impact on the character and appearance of the area or features of architectural, historic or scientific significance or of natural scenic beauty or importance.	The LVIA (Appendix F) identifies the site within a rural landscape characterised by agricultural land uses, rural roads, farm buildings, shelterbelts and existing high-voltage transmission infrastructure, including the Yallourn–Rowville 220 kV, Hazelwood–Rowville 220 kV and Hazelwood–South Morang 500 kV transmission lines. The assessment found that publicly accessible viewpoints would experience visual impacts ranging from Nil to Low, with no viewpoint assessed as having a visual impact greater than Low. Photomontages prepared for VP1 and VP2 demonstrate that, where visible, the Project would be viewed in the context of existing transmission infrastructure and would not form a dominant element in the view. The LVIA did not identify any significant landscapes, scenic reserves, or planning overlays relevant to landscape and visual considerations within the study area.
The location and design of existing and proposed infrastructure including roads, gas, water, drainage, telecommunications and sewerage facilities.	Existing infrastructure servicing the site includes the Darnum–Shady Creek Road, a Council-managed sealed local road providing access to the Princes Highway and the regional road network. The Project will utilise this existing road network and established electricity transmission infrastructure, avoiding the need for new access roads or transmission corridors. Drainage and wastewater will be managed through on-site systems designed to maintain existing drainage patterns, with minimal operational demand. In this context, the location and design of infrastructure are appropriate and compatible with the surrounding rural environment.
Whether the use and development will require traffic management measures.	Traffic management measures will be required during the construction phase to manage temporary increases in construction and haulage traffic. A detailed TMP will be prepared prior to commencement to confirm traffic arrangements, mitigation measures and responsibilities for road management, in consultation with Baw Baw Shire Council and the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP). Operational traffic volumes will be minimal and will not require ongoing traffic management measures.
The need to locate and design buildings used for accommodation to avoid or reduce noise and shadow flicker impacts from the operation of a wind energy facility if it is located within one kilometre from the nearest title boundary of land subject to: • A permit for a wind energy facility; or	No dwelling, accommodation, or rural worker accommodation is proposed as part of the Project.

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Decision guidelines	Assessment
• An application for a permit for a wind energy facility; or • An incorporated document approving a wind energy facility; or • A proposed wind energy facility for which an action has been taken under section 8(1), 8(2), 8(3) or 8(4) of the <i>Environment Effects Act 1978</i>.	
The need to locate and design buildings used for accommodation to avoid or reduce the impact from vehicular traffic, noise, blasting, dust and vibration from an existing or proposed extractive industry operation if it is located within 500 m from the nearest title boundary of land on which a work authority has been applied for or granted under the <i>Mineral Resources (Sustainable Development) Act 1990</i>.	No dwelling, accommodation, or rural worker accommodation is proposed as part of the Project.

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5.5 Overlays

5.5.1 Clause 44.06 – Bushfire Management Overlay

The eastern and north-western portions of the Project Site are located in the Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO) as shown in **Figure 5.2**. The purpose of the BMO is:

- To implement the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.
- To ensure that the development of land prioritises the protection of human life and strengthens community resilience to bushfire.
- To identify areas where the bushfire hazard warrants bushfire protection measures to be implemented.
- To ensure development is only permitted where the risk to life and property from bushfire can be reduced to an acceptable level.

Pursuant to **Clause 44.06-2** (Permit requirement) of the Planning Scheme, no permit is required for buildings or works for a utility installation under the BMO.

Although a permit is not required for the Project in the BMO, a FRMP (including a Fire Safety Study) has been prepared for the Project in accordance with the CFA Guidelines (see **Appendix G**).

5.5.2 Clause 45.06 – Development Contributions Plan Overlay – Schedule 1

The entirety of the Project Site is located in the DCPO as shown in **Figure 5.2**.

The purpose of the DCPO is:

- To implement the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.
- To identify areas which require the preparation of a development contributions plan for the purpose of levying contributions for the provision of works, services and facilities before development can commence.

DCPO1 relates to the Baw Baw Shire Development Contributions Plan, which applies to all land within the boundaries of the 63 areas designated in Baw Baw Shire Development Contributions Plan (December 2023), and provides for different amounts of levy to be payable in specified areas.

There are no permit triggers for the Project under **Clause 45.06** (Development Contributions Plan Overlay). Further, given that the Project does not increase the number of dwellings on a site for residential land or increase commercial or industrial floor area, and after consultation with Council, no contribution is payable under the Baw Baw Shire Development Contributions Plan (December 2023).

5.6 Particular Provisions

Particular provisions are planning controls that apply only to certain uses and development or to particular aspects of certain uses and development. The particular provisions of the Planning Scheme

considered relevant to the Project are listed in **Table 5.5** along with a summary of applicable permit triggers and an assessment of the Project's consistency with each clause.

Table 5.5 Assessment against Relevant Particular Provisions

Particular provision	Planning permit requirements	Assessment
Clause 52.05 (Signs)	The Project is located in a Category 4 area, which includes the Farming Zone as stated in Clause 35.07-7 (Sign). Pursuant to Clause 52.05-14 (Category 4 – Sensitive areas), a permit is required for a business identification sign. The total display area must not exceed 3 sqm.	A business identification sign will be installed at the main site entry to identify the BESS operator's branding, name of the site and site address. The display area of the sign will not exceed 3 m ² and will be designed with due consideration to the decision guidelines of Clause 52.05-8 and to the satisfaction of the responsible authority. Details of the proposed sign will be confirmed during detailed design and shown on the amended development plans expected to require endorsement by the responsible authority as part of the permit conditions.
Clause 52.06 (Car parking)	Pursuant to Clause 52.06-2 (Provision of car parking spaces), car parking must be provided to the satisfaction of the responsible authority. A permit is not required under this clause provided this requirement is met.	Allowance for four onsite car parking spaces is currently shown on the Project concept site layout plan for the Project (see Figure 1.2), which is considered adequate for the minimal onsite staffing requirements during operation (i.e. no more than 2-3 staff are expected to regularly visit the site). Car parking requirements will be confirmed through the Management Plan and shown on the amended development plans expected to require endorsement by the responsible authority as part of the permit conditions.
Clause 52.17 (Native vegetation)	Pursuant to Clause 52.17-1 (Permit requirement), a permit is required to remove, destroy or lop native vegetation, including dead native vegetation unless subject to an exemption in Clause 52.17-7 or in a schedule to the clause.	An Ecological Assessment (Appendix D) has been undertaken for the Project and identifies that approximately 0.671 ha of native vegetation would require removal, comprising a small area of patches and scattered trees associated primarily with site access works. The assessment confirms that the Project is subject to the detailed assessment pathway under the Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation and demonstrates that the applicable application requirements have been met. The removal results in a requirement for offsets totalling 0.1620 General Habitat Units, with a minimum strategic biodiversity score of 0.3378, including offsets for 12 large trees, to be secured in accordance with the Native Vegetation Guidelines and Clause 52.17 of the Planning Scheme.
Clause 53.22 (Significant economic development)	Pursuant to Clause 53.22-4 , an application under this clause is exempt from the decision requirements of section 64(1),	The Project meets the criteria for assessment under this clause being a utility installation used to store electricity and having an installed capacity of more than 1 MW.

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Particular provision	Planning permit requirements	Assessment
	(2) and (3) and the review rights of section 82(1) of the P&E Act.	

5.7 General Provisions

General provisions set out exemptions, decision guidelines, referral and notice provisions. **Table 5.6** summarises the referral and notice provisions under the Planning Scheme that apply to the Project.

Table 5.6 Assessment against General Provisions – Referral and Notice Requirements

Clause	Planning permit requirements	Referral authority
Clause 66.02-2 (Native vegetation)	The Secretary to the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (as constituted under Part 2 of the <i>Conservation, Forests and Lands Act 1987</i>) is a recommending referral authority for an application to remove, destroy or lop native vegetation in the Detailed Assessment Pathway as defined in the Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation (DEECA, 2025).	This application requires referral to DEECA (formerly DELWP) as the Project is subject to assessment via the Detailed Assessment Pathway under the Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation (DEECA, 2025) (see Appendix D).
Clause 66.02-4 (Major electricity line or easement)	The relevant electricity transmission authority is a determining referral authority for an application to construct a building or construct or carry out works on land within 60 m of a major electricity transmission line (220 kV or more) or an electricity transmission easement.	This application requires referral to the electricity transmission authority (i.e. AusNet) as the Project involves building and works within 60 m of the 220 kV transmission line easement across the Project Site. The Proponent continues to engage with AusNet in relation to connection requirements for the Project to connect to this existing transmission line.
Clause 66.02-7 (Industry, utility installation or warehouse)	Victorian WorkCover Authority is a determining referral authority for an application to use land for a utility installation if a fire protection quantity is exceeded under the Dangerous Goods (Storage and Handling) Regulations 2022.	This application requires referral to WorkSafe Victoria (formerly Victorian WorkCover Authority) as the Project exceeds the specified Dangerous Goods thresholds (see Appendix H).

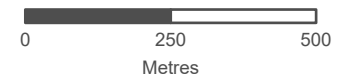
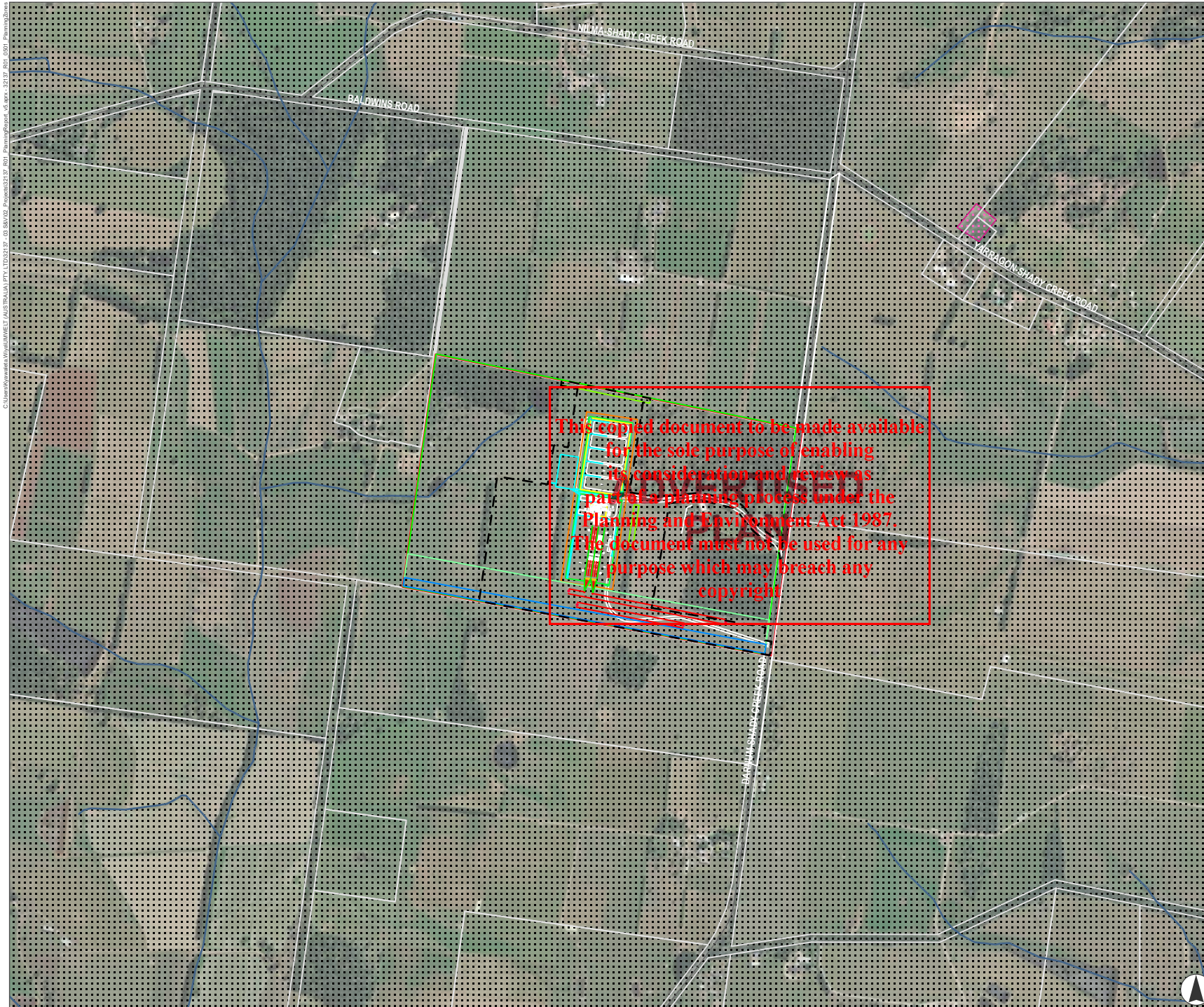
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FIGURE 5.1
Planning Zones

Legend

-  Project Site Area
-  Indicative Construction Envelope
-  Roads
-  Watercourse
-  Parcel
- Planning Zone**
-  FZ
-  PCRZ



Scale 1:13,000 at A4
GDA2020 MGA Zone 55



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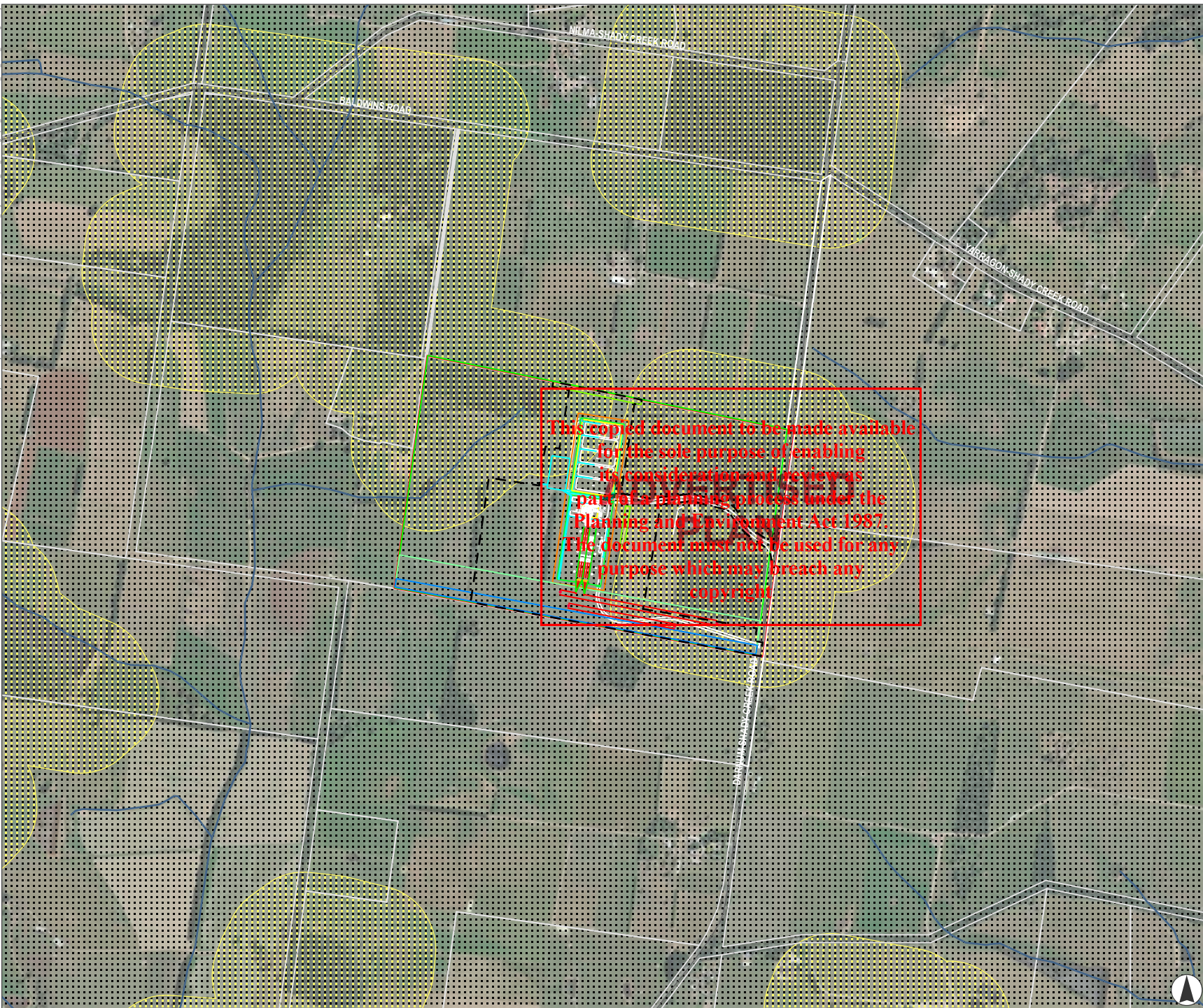
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Legend

-  Project Site Area
-  Indicative Construction Envelope
-  Roads
-  Watercourse
-  Parcel

Planning Overlay

-  DCPO1
-  BMO



Feature	Distance from Start (Metres)
First Waterfall	250
Second Waterfall	500

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6.0 Technical Assessment Key Findings and Recommendations

6.1 Biodiversity

An Ecological Assessment was prepared for the Project by Umwelt (see **Appendix D**).

6.1.1 Key Findings

The Project Site is predominantly improved pasture within an agricultural landscape characterised by historic clearing of native vegetation, with limited remnant native vegetation and habitat values. Project siting and layout have avoided higher-value native vegetation, including patches of Lowland Forest (EVC 16) and associated fauna habitat. Approximately 0.671 ha of native vegetation is proposed to be removed, primarily comprising scattered trees and small patch areas associated with site access works.

The Project is subject to the detailed assessment pathway under the Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation (DLECA, 2025). Indirect impacts to flora and fauna are expected to be minor, localised and temporary, largely confined to the construction phase, and capable of being effectively managed through construction mitigation measures detailed in the Ecological Impact Assessment.

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6.1.2 Mitigation and Recommendations

Mitigation measures focus on avoidance and minimisation of native vegetation removal through refinement of detailed design, including access alignments, and the protection and retention of higher-value vegetation and fauna habitat outside the Development Footprint. Construction mitigation measures will be implemented, including clearly defined construction boundaries and exclusion zones, pre-construction environmental inductions, fauna awareness procedures and contingency measures, controls to manage noise, dust and vibration, and weed hygiene and biosecurity measures. All temporarily disturbed areas will be rehabilitated following construction.

A conservative approach was used in the assessment of the access design to reflect the worst case. Opportunities to reduce clearance of native vegetation (particularly large canopy trees) will be investigated during detailed design of the access road including:

- Confirmation of the largest vehicle required to access site, potentially enabling reductions in access road width.
- Investigation of the use of the secondary (southern) access point (and associated easement) as the main access point (subject to ongoing discussions with AusNet). This would allow the northern access route (where most Project vegetation clearance is currently proposed) to serve as the secondary access for emergency vehicles. This in turn would enable reductions in width and adjustments in alignment of the northern access road to enable further avoidance of native vegetation.

- Consultation with an arborist to avoid and minimise impacts to canopy trees.

Biodiversity offsets totalling 0.1620 General Habitat Units, with a minimum strategic biodiversity score of 0.3378, including offsets for 12 large trees, will be secured in accordance with Clause 52.17 and the Native Vegetation Guidelines.

6.1.3 Conclusion

The Ecological Assessment confirms that the Project's impacts on flora and fauna are limited, acceptable and capable of being adequately managed through design, construction and operational measures. The Project has been sited within an agricultural landscape that has been substantially altered by historic clearing of native vegetation. Native vegetation removal has been minimised to the extent necessary for essential infrastructure, and indirect biodiversity impacts are assessed as minor and temporary. Construction-related impacts will be managed through the mitigation measures and residual biodiversity impacts will be appropriately offset in accordance with Clause 52.17.

The Project is not expected to have a significant impact on MNES, species or communities listed under the FFG Act, or the environment for the purposes of the EE Act. Accordingly, the Project applies the avoid and minimise principles to the extent practicable, with residual impacts appropriately offset in accordance with Clause 52.17.

6.2 Noise

An ENA was prepared for the Project by Resonate Consultants (**Appendix E**). The assessment was undertaken in accordance with the Environment Protection Regulations and Noise Protocol. Modelling considered worst-case operational scenarios for the full BESS development, including battery containers, medium-voltage transformers and the substation transformer operating on a 24-hour basis.

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Noise-sensitive areas (NSAs) were identified at surrounding dwellings located between approximately 160 m (host dwelling) and 1,900 m from the Project boundary. Applicable noise limits were established based on land use zoning and time-of-day criteria in accordance with the Noise Protocol.

6.2.1 Key Findings

The ENA assessed operational noise emissions from the proposed BESS, transformers and associated electrical infrastructure in accordance with the Environment Protection Regulations and Noise Protocol. The assessment identified that, without mitigation, predicted noise levels would exceed applicable noise limits at the host landowner dwelling (NSA R1) and at one neighbouring dwelling (NSA R3) under the assessed operating scenarios.

The assessment found that compliance with the applicable Noise Protocol limits can be achieved at all neighbouring dwellings (NSAs R2 to R21) through the proposed 6 m high acoustic noise wall surrounding the BESS compound and high-voltage substation transformer.

For the host landowner dwelling, the assessment demonstrates that compliance with the Noise Protocol can be achieved through additional mitigation, including a localised acoustic barrier.

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6.2.2 Mitigation and Recommendations

The ENA identifies a 6 m high acoustic noise wall surrounding the BESS compound and high-voltage substation transformer as the primary operational noise mitigation measure. The assessment demonstrates that this mitigation is capable of achieving compliance with the applicable Noise Protocol limits at all neighbouring dwellings.

For the host landowner dwelling, the assessment identifies a localised acoustic barrier as a mitigation measure capable of achieving compliance with the Noise Protocol. Alternative building attenuation measures, including upgraded glazing and alternative ventilation systems, are also identified and may be considered during detailed design and consultation with the host landowner.

The assessment adopted conservative modelling assumptions, including the use of Tesla Megapack 2 XL noise emission data in the absence of verified data for the proposed Tesla Megapack 3 technology. Mitigation requirements will be reviewed and confirmed during detailed design once final equipment selection and verified noise emission data become available.

6.2.3 Conclusion

The ENA concludes that operational noise impacts from the Project can be effectively managed through the incorporation of appropriate mitigation measures. The assessment found that compliance with the applicable Noise Protocol limits can be achieved at all neighbouring dwellings through the proposed 6 m high acoustic noise wall surrounding the BESS compound and high-voltage substation transformer.

For the host landowner dwelling, the assessment demonstrates that compliance with the Noise Protocol can be achieved through additional mitigation, including a localised acoustic barrier. Predicted noise levels at the host dwelling also remain below the enHealth evidence-based health thresholds.

Overall, the ENA concludes that operational noise impacts can be effectively managed and do not represent a constraint to the Project. The assessment is based on conservative modelling assumptions and demonstrates that compliance with the applicable Noise Protocol limits can be achieved through the proposed mitigation measures, with final mitigation requirements to be confirmed during detailed design.

6.3 Landscape and Visual

A LVIA was prepared for the Project by AELA (**Appendix F**). The LVIA assesses the potential landscape character and visual impacts of the Project from public and private viewpoints (where access is granted), having regard to the existing rural landscape context and surrounding land uses.

6.3.1 Key Findings

The LVIA identifies the Project Site within a rural landscape characterised by agricultural land uses, existing transmission infrastructure, roadside vegetation, shelterbelts and farm buildings. The site is not affected by any landscape-related planning overlays, including the Significant Landscape Overlay (SLO), Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO) or Vegetation Protection Overlay (VPO).

The assessment concludes that visual impacts from publicly accessible viewpoints would be limited, with existing vegetation, local topography and separation distances filtering or screening views of the Project. No publicly accessible viewpoints were assessed as experiencing greater than a Low visual impact, and the Project would generally not appear as a dominant feature when viewed from publicly accessible viewpoints. This is demonstrated by the photomontages included in the LVIA.

The LVIA also considered potential visual impacts on nearby dwellings, noting that any impacts would be primarily limited to the closest neighbouring properties.

A dwelling assessment was undertaken at a residential dwelling west of the Project Site. Existing vegetation would screen views of the proposed BESS modules and noise wall. The upper sections of the gantry and monopole structures associated with the 220 kV transmission line connection, together with the proposed lightning rods, will likely be visible above or through gaps in existing vegetation.

Existing vegetation within the property demonstrates the effectiveness of landscape screening, and additional planting of trees and taller-growing shrubs could further filter views of the proposed structures.

The Applicant is committed to ongoing consultation with neighbouring landowners.

6.3.2 Mitigation and Recommendations

The LVIA identifies a range of measures to minimise visual impacts and support the integration of the Project within the surrounding rural landscape. These measures prioritise the retention of existing vegetation where practicable, including roadside vegetation, shelterbelts and established planting that currently contributes to visual screening.

The LVIA proposes two areas of landscape screen planting to supplement existing vegetation and further assist in filtering views of the Project:

- An approximately 10 m by 100 m strip of landscape screen planting east of the Project substation and switchyard compound, extending an existing shelterbelt of mature Monterey Cypress.
- An approximately 10 m by 220 m strip of landscape screen planting along the northern Project Site boundary north of the BESS compound. This would involve supplementary planting, where required, within an existing revegetated area established by the host landowner to strengthen landscape screening outcomes.

Landscape planting would be designed to reflect the local rural landscape character and would enhance screening effectiveness over time as planting matures.

The effectiveness of existing vegetation and proposed landscape screening would be further considered during detailed landscape design. Where required, supplementary planting may be incorporated to enhance screening outcomes, with the landscape design refined through detailed design and consultation with nearby landowners.

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6.3.3 Conclusion

Visual impacts from publicly accessible viewpoints are assessed as Nil, Negligible or Low, with no viewpoint assessed as experiencing greater than a Low visual impact. Photomontages indicate that, while the project would be visible from some locations, it would not be a dominant feature in the view.

The assessment found that visual impacts at the nearest neighbouring properties would be mitigated by existing vegetation, topography and separation distances. For the dwelling on Baldwins Road, the overall visual impact was assessed as Low. Overall, the LVIA concluded that there are no landscape or visual constraints that would preclude the development of the project on the site.

6.4 Fire Risk

A FRMP (including Fire Safety Study) was prepared for the Project by Fire Risk Consultants (**Appendix G**). The purpose of the FRMP is to assess fire risks associated with the Project and to demonstrate how those risks can be managed to an acceptable level through compliance with the CFA guidelines.

6.4.1 Key Findings

The FRMP identifies potential fire-related risks associated with the operation of a BESS, including electrical equipment faults, thermal runaway and fire within BESS modules, potential spread of fire to adjacent infrastructure, off-site fire impacts, impacts of external fires on the site, smoke and gas emissions, management of firefighting water runoff, and risks to site personnel and emergency responders.

The risk assessment identifies that, prior to mitigation, certain fire scenarios (including fire spread and off-site impacts) present elevated risk ratings. However, with the implementation of design measures and operational controls in accordance with CFA Guidelines, residual risks are generally reduced to moderate or lower levels, consistent with an acceptable level of risk.

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6.4.2 Mitigation and Recommendations

The Project incorporates multiple in-built fire safety features within the BESS modules, including continuous battery monitoring systems, fire, smoke and gas detection, ingress protection and remote emergency shutdown capability. The battery system and associated infrastructure will be designed and installed to comply with relevant Australian and international safety standards, including:

- UL 9540A – Test Method for Evaluating Thermal Runaway Fire Propagation in Battery Energy Storage Systems
- UL 9540 – Energy Storage Systems and Equipment
- NFPA 855 – Standard for the Installation of Stationary Energy Storage Systems.

Bushfire-specific risk controls, including defensible space, asset protection zones, compliant emergency access, on-site firefighting water supply and firewater containment, are addressed separately through the FRMP, prepared in accordance with CFA guidelines.

Subject to planning approval, the Applicant will also prepare and implement a Fire Management Plan and Emergency Management Plan in accordance with CFA requirements. These plans will detail fire

prevention measures, emergency preparedness and response procedures, coordination with emergency services, available firefighting resources, and contact protocols for relevant personnel.

6.4.3 Conclusion

The FRMP concludes that the design and layout of the Project are consistent with the CFA *Design Guidelines and Model Requirements for Renewable Energy Facilities* and the CFA *Guidelines for Fire Safety Studies for Battery Energy Storage Systems*. The FRMP identifies that fire risks associated with the Project can be acceptably managed through a combination of site layout, design measures, built-in safety systems and operational controls. The preparation and implementation of complementary management and emergency response plans would further support appropriate preparedness and response in the unlikely event of a fire.

The PHA (**Section 6.5**) further assesses potential fire and other hazards which may result from the Project and cause off-site impacts.

6.5 Preliminary Hazard Analysis

A PHA for the Project was prepared by Riskcon Engineering Pty Ltd (**Appendix H**).

The assessment was undertaken in accordance with HIPAP No. 4 and No. 6. A Level 1 hazard assessment was considered appropriate for the Project and involved a systematic identification of potential hazards, supported by consequence screening and targeted quantitative consideration of higher-risk scenarios where necessary. Potential hazards were assessed against HIPAP criteria for fire, explosion, toxicity, property damage and societal risk, with detailed analysis limited to those scenarios that could theoretically result in off-site impacts.

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6.5.1 Key Findings

The assessment identified potential hazards associated with lithium-ion battery faults (thermal runaway and fire), toxic gas dispersion, electrical equipment failure, transformer failures, and electromagnetic field (EMF) impacts. The analysis found that the use of lithium iron phosphate (LFP) battery chemistry, robust fire safety features, and separation distances reduce the likelihood of fire propagation or off-site impacts to a low level. Testing and industry experience indicate that thermal runaway in LFP batteries is unlikely to result in fire or explosion, and that toxic gas emissions would not reach harmful concentrations offsite. Transformer and electrical equipment hazards were found to be adequately managed through bunding, surge protection, and compliance with relevant standards. EMF levels were assessed as negligible at the site boundary due to rapid attenuation with distance.

6.5.2 Mitigation and Recommendations

The PHA identifies several design and management measures to ensure that risks remain acceptable, including the construction of BESS vent covers from non-combustible materials, the avoidance of vent placement directly above battery packs where practicable, and the installation of BESS units in accordance with UL 9540A-recommended separation distances. The Project is to incorporate manufacturer-specified fire detection, suppression and protection systems, with detailed design

confirmation undertaken prior to construction to ensure appropriate separation and clearances are achieved.

Additional risk management measures include compliance with relevant electrical and lightning protection standards, bunding of transformer oil, and the implementation of bushfire risk mitigation measures, with detailed assessment and management of bushfire risk addressed separately through the FRMP.

6.5.3 Conclusion

The PHA assessed potential hazards associated with the construction and operation of the Project in accordance with recognised hazardous industry risk assessment principles. Taking into account the inherent safety features of the Project, conservative design assumptions and the assumed implementation of appropriate design, layout and management measures, the PHA concludes that no credible hazard scenarios would result in unacceptable off-site consequences. Identified risks are of low likelihood and limited consequence, fall within acceptable risk criteria, and can be appropriately managed throughout construction and operation.

6.6 Surface Water

A SWA was prepared for the Project by GreenSmart Consulting (**Appendix I**). The assessment considered existing surface water conditions, site drainage characteristics and potential impacts associated with the construction and operation of the Project, with reference to relevant legislative and best-practice requirements.

6.6.1 Key Findings

The SWA identifies that the Project site is drained by an ephemeral drainage line (a designated waterway), which ultimately discharges to the Moe River via another unnamed waterway to the west of the Project Site. No permanent waterways or wetlands are located within the Development Footprint, and the site is not affected by mapped riverine flooding, including inundation associated with the 1% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) flood event.

Potential surface water risks during construction are associated with temporary increases in runoff, erosion and sediment mobilisation, and the potential for accidental spills from construction activities. During operation, potential risks relate to runoff from new impervious surfaces and localised changes to drainage patterns.

The assessment concludes that, with appropriate design and management measures in place, surface water impacts during both construction and operation are assessed as minor and manageable, and the Project is not expected to adversely affect downstream drainage systems or receiving environments.

6.6.2 Mitigation and Recommendations

Surface water impacts will be managed through a site-specific water management strategy for both construction and operation, as outlined in the SWA.

The Project's surface water management approach is based on:

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- Retention of existing drainage patterns and flow paths, including the on-site ephemeral drainage line, which will be retained with appropriate setbacks
- Diversion of external catchment flows around developed areas to prevent concentration of runoff and maintain pre-development drainage behaviour
- Minimisation of impervious surfaces where practicable within the Project layout.

Stormwater generated within the developed areas will be managed through:

- Collection and conveyance of runoff to appropriately designed treatment infrastructure
- On-site detention and controlled discharge to regulate runoff rates and maintain pre-development flow conditions at the point of discharge
- Stormwater quality treatment measures to reduce pollutant loads prior to discharge
- Separate management of runoff from higher-risk areas, including substation and transformer infrastructure, to prevent uncontrolled discharge to the surrounding environment.

Construction-related impacts are temporary and can be effectively managed through standard construction environmental controls implemented via a CEMP.

Ongoing inspection and maintenance of surface water and stormwater infrastructure will be undertaken to ensure the long term effectiveness of the system and protection of downstream receiving environments.

6.6.3 Conclusion

The SWA concludes that, with the implementation of the proposed design and management measures, the Project is not expected to result in adverse surface water impacts during either construction or operation. Construction-related impacts are temporary and can be effectively managed through standard construction environmental controls implemented via a CEMP.

Operational runoff can be controlled to maintain existing drainage behaviour and protect downstream receiving environments. The stormwater management strategy will be confirmed and refined through detailed design and supporting modelling prior to construction, including verification of discharge rates and treatment performance. Accordingly, surface water impacts are considered acceptable and appropriately addressed through the proposed design and management measures.

6.7 Traffic and Transport

A Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) was prepared for the Project by Impact Traffic Engineering (**Appendix J**). The assessment considers construction and operational traffic generation, site access arrangements and the capacity and safety of the surrounding road network in the context of the Project's rural location.

6.7.1 Key Findings

The Project will be accessed via Darnum–Shady Creek Road, a Council-managed sealed local road that connects to the Princes Highway and the wider regional road network. The existing road network is assessed as capable of accommodating the temporary increase in traffic associated with

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construction activities, including delivery of equipment, materials and workforce movements, without resulting in unacceptable impacts on traffic safety or road operation. During operation, traffic generation will be minimal and limited to infrequent operations and maintenance vehicle movements, with no material impact on the surrounding road network.

6.7.2 Mitigation and Recommendations

The TIA identifies that traffic management measures will be required during the construction phase to manage temporary construction-related traffic impacts. A Traffic Management Plan (TMP) will be prepared prior to the commencement of construction to confirm site access arrangements, construction traffic routes, heavy vehicle movement controls, road safety measures and responsibilities for monitoring and reinstatement of road conditions if required.

The TMP will be developed in consultation with Baw Baw Shire Council and DTP. No ongoing traffic management measures are required during operation due to the low level of traffic generation.

6.7.3 Conclusion

The Traffic Impact Assessment concludes that the existing road network can safely and efficiently accommodate the Project, with construction-related traffic impacts temporary and manageable through the implementation of a TMP. Operational traffic generation is minimal and limited to infrequent operations and maintenance activities. Accordingly, traffic and transport impacts are considered acceptable and appropriately addressed through the proposed design and management measures.

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7.0 Community and Stakeholder Engagement

The Applicant recognises that effective engagement is fundamental to delivering successful energy projects that also create social value and economic benefits for communities, landholders and Traditional Owners.

The approach to engagement adopted for the Project has been informed by the Victorian Government's Community Engagement and Benefit Sharing in Renewable Energy Development in Victoria Guide (DELWP, 2021) and VicGrid's Draft Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines for Renewable Energy and Transmission Projects (VicGrid, 2025c). Both documents set out expectations for how project developers should engage with the community, landholders, neighbours and Traditional Owners and the desired outcomes, which include enhanced knowledge sharing, informed decision making and increased collaboration and collective impact of social and economic benefit opportunities.

The following sections describe engagement undertaken to date, including outcomes and project responses, and future engagement proposed to be undertaken for the Project.

7.1 Summary of Engagement to Date

Engagement for the Project has been undertaken progressively from the early project development stage, with a focus on early notification, information sharing and opportunities for feedback. Engagement activities have been tailored to the level of potential impact, with more detailed and direct engagement undertaken with near neighbours and directly affected landholders.

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7.1.1 Near Neighbour Engagement

Near neighbour engagement has been undertaken with landholders located in proximity to the Project Site, including both host landowners and non-host neighbouring properties. Engagement activities have included direct correspondence, one-on-one meetings, phone conversations and the provision of Project information material.

Key matters raised through near neighbour engagement included potential impacts related to noise, visual amenity, traffic during construction, bushfire risk, land use compatibility and property values. These matters have informed the design and assessment of the Project, with responses including further technical investigations, clarification of mitigation measures and refinement of Project layout where practicable. Ongoing engagement with near neighbours is proposed as the Project progresses, particularly in relation to construction timing and management should the Project be approved.

7.1.2 Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder engagement has been undertaken with relevant government agencies, infrastructure providers and service authorities, including local government, transport authorities and environmental regulators. Engagement has focussed on identifying statutory requirements, managing potential impacts on infrastructure and services, and confirming assessment and approval pathways.

Agency feedback has been incorporated into Project planning and has informed technical investigations relating to traffic, noise, bushfire, surface water and environmental management. Engagement with RAPs has also commenced, with cultural heritage matters to be progressed in accordance with the Aboriginal Heritage Act and relevant protocols.

7.1.3 Community Engagement

Broader community engagement has been undertaken through information sharing activities, including the distribution of Project information, opportunities for community members to provide feedback and access to Project representatives for clarification and discussion.

Community feedback has reflected a range of views, including interest in the Project's role in supporting renewable energy and energy security, as well as concerns regarding amenity, traffic and construction impacts. Common themes raised by the community have been addressed through the preparation of technical assessments and the identification of mitigation measures, with feedback documented and responded to in the Engagement Summary Report.

7.2 Proposed Future Engagement

Engagement for the Project will continue as it progresses through the planning and delivery phases. Future engagement will include ongoing communication with near neighbours, stakeholders and relevant authorities, and the provision of timely information regarding construction timing and activities. Engagement processes will support clear communication, opportunities for feedback and responsive issue management throughout construction and operation.

Engagement with Traditional Owners will continue in accordance with statutory requirements, and through the preparation and implementation of a Voluntary Cultural Heritage Management Plan.

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8.0 Conclusion

The Project will provide electricity storage infrastructure that supports the operation of the Victorian electricity network, facilitates the integration of renewable energy generation and makes efficient use of existing transmission infrastructure.

The Project is located within a rural landscape characterised by historic clearing of native vegetation and is co-located with existing electricity transmission infrastructure, enabling efficient use of existing network assets while maintaining the potential for agricultural use across the majority of the Project Site.

Technical assessments addressing biodiversity, landscape and visual amenity, noise, bushfire risk, hazard and safety, surface water and traffic conclude that potential impacts can be appropriately avoided, minimised or managed through the proposed design, mitigation measures and operational controls. No assessment identifies impacts that would preclude the development or result in unacceptable effects on surrounding land uses, amenity, human health and safety, or the environment.

The assessments demonstrate that the Project can be accommodated on the site and is consistent with the planning policy framework. The Project therefore represents an orderly and sustainable use and development of land and is considered an acceptable planning outcome, subject to appropriate permit conditions.

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Appendix A

Development Plans

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Appendix B

Title Searches

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REGISTER SEARCH STATEMENT (Title Search) Transfer of Land Act 1958

Page 1 of 2

VOLUME 08699 FOLIO 066

Security no : 124134283669T
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LAND DESCRIPTION

Lot 2 on Plan of Subdivision 079375.
PARENT TITLE Volume 06769 Folio 796
Created by instrument LP079375 11/12/1967

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REGISTERED PROPRIETOR

Estate Fee Simple
Sole Proprietor
GEOFFREY WAYNE MITCHELL of 875 DARNUM-SHADY CREEK ROAD SHADY CREEK VIC 3821
AX469266V 20/11/2023

ENCUMBRANCES, CAVEATS AND NOTICES

MORTGAGE AX469267T 20/11/2023
WIN SECURITIES LTD

CAVEAT AY952769Q 13/03/2025
Caveator
SAMSUNG C&T RENEWABLE ENERGY AUSTRALIA PTY LTD ACN: 661046331
Grounds of Claim
AGREEMENT WITH THE FOLLOWING PARTIES AND DATE.
Parties
THE REGISTERED PROPRIETOR(S)
Date
11/02/2025
Estate or Interest
LEASEHOLD ESTATE
Prohibition
ABSOLUTELY
Lodged by
BAKER & MCKENZIE
Notices to
DIRECTOR of SUITE 8.04 LEVEL 8 227 ELIZABETH STREET SYDNEY NSW 2000

Any encumbrances created by Section 98 Transfer of Land Act 1958 or Section 24 Subdivision Act 1988 and any other encumbrances shown or entered on the plan or imaged folio set out under DIAGRAM LOCATION below.

DIAGRAM LOCATION

SEE TP194563D FOR FURTHER DETAILS AND BOUNDARIES

ACTIVITY IN THE LAST 125 DAYS

NIL

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-----END OF REGISTER SEARCH STATEMENT-----

Additional information: (not part of the Register Search Statement)

Street Address: 875 DARNUM-SHADY CREEK ROAD SHADY CREEK VIC 3821

REGISTER SEARCH STATEMENT (Title Search) Transfer of Land Act 1958

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Appendix C

Engagement Summary Report

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Appendix D

Ecological Assessment

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Appendix E

Environmental Noise Assessment

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Appendix F

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

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Appendix G

Fire Risk Management Plan

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Appendix H

Preliminary Hazard Analysis

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Appendix I

Surface Water Assessment

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Traffic Impact Assessment

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