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32137 Darnum Battery Energy Storage System

Engagement Summary Report

Final

April 2026

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SAMSUNG C&T REA

32137_Darnum Battery Energy Storage System

Engagement Summary Report

Final

Prepared by
Umwelt (Australia) Pty Limited

On behalf of
Samsung C&T Australia (SREA)

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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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Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Meaning
BESS	Battery Energy Storage System
CFA	Country Fire Authority
CHMP	Cultural Heritage Management Plan
CSEP	Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan
FAQ	Frequently Asked Questions
GLaWAC	Gurnaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation
IAP2	International Association for Public Participation
ICN	Industry Capability Network
JMP	Joint Management Plan
LGA	Local Government Area
MW	Megawatt
MWh	Megawatt hour
NEM	National Electricity Market
PBC	Prescribed Body Corporate
PIS	Project Information Sheet
RAP	Registered Aboriginal Party
RSA	Recognition and Settlement Agreement
SAL	Suburb and Locality
SIA	Social Impact Assessment
SREA	Samsung C&T Renewable Energy Australia
TOLMB	Traditional Owner Land Management Board

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Contents

Abbreviations

1.0	Introduction	1
1.1	Project Overview	1
1.2	Site Location and Context	2
1.3	The Proponent	2
2.0	Engagement Objectives and Principles	3
2.1	Engagement Commitments	3
2.2	Engagement Objectives and Purpose	3
2.3	Engagement Principles	4
3.0	Methodology	6
3.1	Stakeholder Identification	6
3.2	Engagement phase	8
3.3	Engagement Activities at the Planning Stage	8
3.4	Ongoing engagement	14
3.4.1	Planning Application and Assessment	14
3.4.2	Post Approval	14
4.0	Local Context	15
4.1	Social Baseline Summary	15
4.2	First Nations Context	17
5.0	Key Findings	19
5.1	Key impacts identified through engagement	19
5.2	Key actions undertaken to date to address concerns	22
5.3	Community Benefits	22
6.0	Reporting and Evaluation	24
7.0	Conclusion	25
8.0	References	26

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Figures

Figure 2.1	IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum	4
Figure 2.2	Engagement Principles	5
Figure 3.1	Identified Stakeholders	7
Figure 3.2	Distribution area for second Project Information Sheet	11
Figure 5.1	Frequency of Key Impacts Raised During Engagement with Individuals and During Key Stakeholder Interviews	21

Tables

Table 3.1	Engagement Activities Undertaken for Darnum BESS	9
Table 3.2	Regulatory and Referral Agency Engagement	12
Table 4.1	Community Capitals Summary	15
Table 5.1	Key Social Impacts	20

Appendices

Appendix A Stakeholder Engagement Materials

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1.0 Introduction

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 Renewable Energy Australia (SREA) (the Applicant) is proposing the development of the Darnum Battery Energy Storage System (the Project) at 875 Darnum Shady-Creek Road, Shady Creek, Victoria (the Project Site). The Project would involve the construction, operation and decommissioning of a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) with a delivery capacity of up to approximately 200 Megawatts (MW) / 800 MWh (4 hr).

This Engagement Summary Report has been prepared as part of the Planning Permit Application for the Project which will be assessed by the Minister for Planning as the responsible authority.

This report aims to provide an overview of the Project stakeholder and community engagement that has occurred and will continue to occur in the planning and development of the Project.

Engagement activities outlined in this report have been undertaken in part to inform the development of a Social Impact Assessment, as required under VicGrid's (2025) Draft Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines for Renewable Energy and Transmission Projects. As such, aspects of the engagement design and outcomes analysis are designed using a Social Impact Assessment framework, which means that concerns, questions and opportunities raised by community members are framed according to SIA categories. This social impact framing is further outlined in **Section 5.0**.

1.1 Project Overview

The Project would comprise the following key components:

- A 200 MW / 800 MWh BESS compound, including 196 battery modules, 49 x 6.36 MVA step-up transformers and associated cabling.
- An onsite 33/220 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 including asset protection zones, along with approximately 1.5 ha for ancillary infrastructure external to the main infrastructure compounds.

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 periods of low demand, and releasing during periods of high demand.

Construction is expected to commence in 2027 and take up to 18 months to complete. For planning purposes, an indicative construction envelope of up to 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 utilised however this represents a maximum potential impact area which has been applied to technical assessments.

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.

1.2 Site Location and Context

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. The Project Site comprises a single parcel of privately owned freehold land having a total area of approximately 51.2 ha and is located in the Baw Baw Shire Local Government Area (LGA).

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 part 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) into which the Project would connect, runs across the southern part of the Project Site within an easement held by AusNet.

1.3 The Proponent

SREA is a fully owned subsidiary of Samsung C&T Corporation that entered into the Australian renewable energy market in 2022. The company is committed to deploying sustainable energy resources with a vision to create value globally and has solar and storage project interests across New South Wales, Victoria, and Queensland. Over the past two decades, the Energy Division of Samsung has completed several renewable projects worldwide, including one of the world's largest wind and solar power clusters in Ontario, continuously delivering solutions that enable customers to fully leverage renewable resources.

2.0 Engagement Objectives and Principles

2.1 Engagement Commitments

Samsung Renewable Energy Australia (SREA) is developing solar and battery energy storage projects designed to support Australia's transition to clean, reliable power. SREA recognise and respect landowners' relationship with the land on which the project is hosted and its surroundings.

SREA is committed to working with local communities from the earliest stages—listening to concerns, sharing clear information, and adapting project design and plans in response to feedback wherever possible. SREA believes projects should deliver lasting local value, not just energy and are focused on sharing benefits of the project in a meaningful and transparent way - working with neighbours, councils, and First Nations partners to co-design benefits that reflect local priorities.

2.2 Engagement Objectives and Purpose

The approach to stakeholder engagement adopted for the Project is informed by the Victorian Government's Community Engagement and Benefit Sharing in Renewable Energy Development in Victoria Guide (2021) and VicGrid's Draft Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines for Renewable Energy and Transmission Projects (2025). Both documents set out expectations for how project developers should engage with landholders, neighbours, nearby communities and Traditional Owners. They further outline the intended outcomes of meaningful engagement, which include enhanced knowledge sharing, collaborative and informed decision-making, co-designed mitigation of negative social impacts, and enhancement of benefits and opportunities.

VicGrid's guideline outlines a comprehensive approach to community engagement that promotes early, meaningful, and sustained community engagement and serves three important functions:

1. It allows people to be involved in decisions that affect their lives and environment.
2. It facilitates deeper understanding of issues and transparency regarding decisions required to be made for the Project.
3. It improves the quality of decisions made for the Project and facilitates a better project design.

Therefore, the engagement objectives of the Project include:

- To ensure that the local community and broader community understand the Project and how it will affect them.
- To understand community expectations, needs and values.
- To provide opportunities for the community and stakeholder to have genuine involvement in the Project planning and assessment process and inform Project design and development.
- To identify social impacts associated with the Project (both positive and negative) and strategies to avoid or mitigate negative impacts and enhance positive impacts.
- To collaborate with local stakeholders on local benefit sharing strategies to ensure they are co-designed, targeted, and appropriate to the Project's operating context.

- To identify appropriate engagement preferences moving forward.

2.3 Engagement Principles

The engagement at each stage of the Project is guided by the International Association for Public Participation's (IAP2) Core Values and Public Participation Spectrum.

IAP2's Public Participation Spectrum (as per **Figure 2.1**) is designed to assist with the selection of the level of participation that defines the public's role in any community engagement program. The Spectrum describes differing levels of participation depending on the goals, timeframes, resources and levels of concern in the decision to be made. The Spectrum also sets out the promise being made to the public at each participation level.

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

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Figure 2.1 IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum

Source: (IAP2, 2019).

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IAP2 recognises the following key guiding principles for the planning and delivery of community engagement activities. Actions and decisions should be:

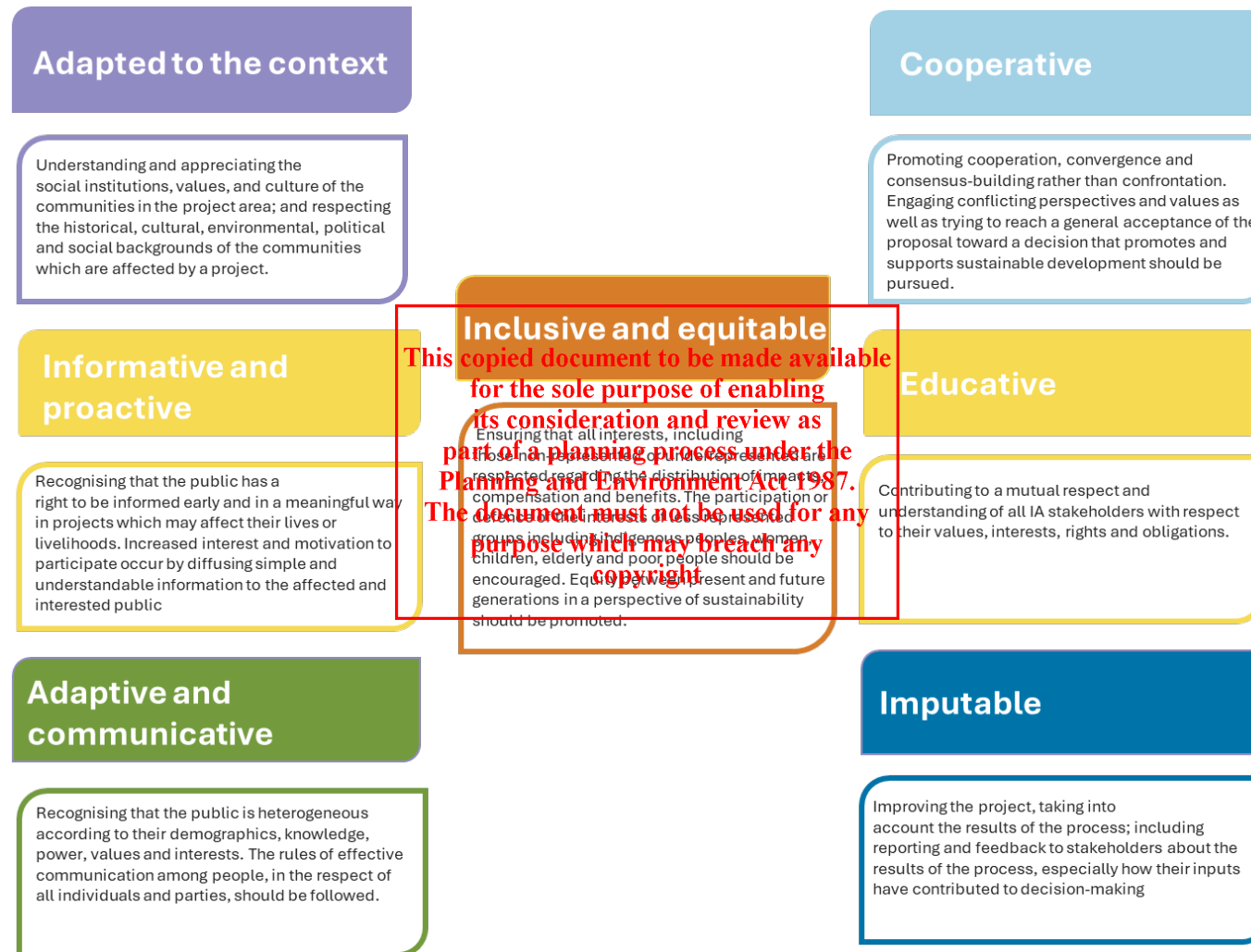


Figure 2.2 Engagement Principles

Source: IAIA, 2006

3.0 Methodology

3.1 Stakeholder Identification

Comprehensive stakeholder and community engagement involves the participation and collaboration of people that may have an interest in, or those that are affected by, a project. Utilising Burdge (2004) as guidance, stakeholders may be affected groups or individuals that:

- live, work, or recreate near the Project
- have an interest in the proposed action or change
- use or value a resource associated with the Project
- are affected by the Project e.g., may be required to relocate because of the Project.

Figure 3.1 identifies key stakeholders relevant to the Project. Many of these stakeholders will continue to be engaged across the lifecycle of the Project, from the planning stage, through construction and into operation.

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Key Stakeholder Groups



Figure 3.1 Identified Stakeholders

Source: Umwelt, 2026

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3.2 Engagement phase

A Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan (CSEP) has been developed for the Darnum Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) Project and identifies engagement activities to be undertaken across the planning assessment phase to inform the Planning Permit Application.

The engagement was structured to give ample time for interested parties to be consulted, informed, and feedback to be sought for consideration in the design and assessments prior to the submission of the Planning Application. With this phase complete, the activities and summary of outcomes are presented in **Section 3.3**.

The CSEP will be updated throughout the lifecycle of the project. The next phases include engagement during the planning application public notice and regulator assessment phase (upcoming) and post approval during secondary consents (if the Project is approved). Further details of these phases are outlined in **Section 3.4**.

3.3 Engagement Activities at the Planning Stage

Consultation activities undertaken to inform the Planning Permit Application have focused on:

- Ensuring the local and broader community clearly understand the Project and its potential impacts.
- Gaining insight into community expectations, needs, and values.
- Providing meaningful opportunities for community members and stakeholders to actively participate in Project planning and assessment.
- Identifying both positive and negative social impacts associated with the Project and developing strategies to mitigate adverse impacts while enhancing benefits.
- Collaborating with local stakeholders to co-design benefit-sharing strategies that are targeted, inclusive, and aligned with the Project's operating context.
- Determining preferred engagement approaches for ongoing communication and involvement.

Table 3.1 provides a description of the engagement activities undertaken for this Project and an overview of the number of stakeholders contacted and engaged. The table and this assessment consider all engagement undertaken between August to December 2025. Project engagement undertaken after this period has not been considered in this assessment but has included providing stakeholders an update on the timing of a PPA submission.

Appendix A includes examples of the engagement materials, including the Project information sheet, Frequently Asked Questions document and Survey instrument.

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Table 3.1 Engagement Activities Undertaken for Darnum BESS

Mechanism	Targeted Stakeholder Group	Description/Purpose	Timing	Number of Stakeholders Contacted	Number of Stakeholders Engaged
Project website	All stakeholder groups	- Inform stakeholders about key project details and access to additional information. - Provide updates and stakeholder participation options.	The website was live on the 28/7/2025.	N/A	N/A
Project Information Sheets (PIS)	All stakeholder groups	- PIS #1: Provide an overview of the Project and the assessment process. - Distributed to proximal neighbours within 1.5 km of the Project boundary - PIS #2: Provide information about the Project, the assessment process and how the community can be involved (including invitation to Community Drop-in Session). - Distributed to the local community (defined in Figure 2.2) as well as via interview questions and the Project website.	- PIS #1: via Australia Post registered mail on 4/8/2025. - PIS #2: dispatched via a courier on 7/11/2025.	- PIS #1: 42 - PIS #2 301 postal addresses contacted	N/A
Project email and phone	All stakeholder groups	Correspond with community members collect feedback and answer questions.	August-ongoing, accessible via the Project Website and provided on Project collateral.	N/A	47 email inquiries 25 phone calls¹
Proximal neighbor notification letters	Proximal neighbours	- Proximal Neighbour Letter #1: Introduce the project and arrange personal meetings to discuss potential concerns or questions. - Proximal Neighbour Letter #2: Invite neighbours to December proximal neighbour meeting. - Proximal Neighbour Letter #3: Notify neighbours of the changed meeting time (amended at the request of neighbours).	- Letter #1: via Australia Post registered mail on 4/8/2025. - Letter #2: via Australia Post registered mail on 4/11/2025. - Letter #3: via email 17/11/2025.	42	42
Door knocking	Proximal Landholders	- Introduce the Project and the project team, share a preliminary Project design layout, record feedback and answer any initial questions from proximal neighbours. - Undertaken within 1.5 km radius of Project site following PIS distribution.	13/8/2025 14/8/2025	20	7
Proximal neighbour meetings	Proximal Landholders	- Meeting #1 and #2: Held with 14 neighbours (combined) following the first notification letter to discuss concerns / questions. - Meeting #3: Held with 6 near neighbours to respond to technical questions from the proximal neighbour group. - Meeting #4: Present findings from technical assessments, identify proposed mitigations and solicit feedback. - Included a presentation by SREA, the Noise Specialist and the Fire Specialist undertaking the technical assessments - Information was targeted to proximal neighbour interests; however, the session was also attended by broader community members. - Open discussion, with many neighbours and community members asking questions and expressing their views and concerns about the Project.	- All meetings held at the Shady Creek Public Hall - Meeting #1: 13/8/2025 - Meeting #2: 14/8/2025 - Meeting #3: 29/8/2025 - Meeting #4: 2/12/2025	42	- Meeting #1 and #2: 14 (combined) - Meeting #3: 6 - Meeting #4: 100-200 (approx.) including local and broader community members²
Project Information Booklet	All stakeholder groups	- Provide high level summaries of the draft technical assessment findings. Shared via: - Proximal neighbour meetings - Community drop-in session - Project website	December 2025	N/A	Approx. 100 distributed across neighbour meetings and community drop-in session
Community information drop-in session	All stakeholder groups	- Enable community members to speak with SREA and Umwelt representatives, view Project information via display posters, discuss technical assessment outcomes and provide feedback. - Details distributed via PIS #2 and Project website.	3/12/2025: 3-6pm at Shady Creek Public Hall	301 postal addresses	Approximately 60 people

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¹ Email and phone enquiries are from 23 people in total

² Although the meeting was intended for proximal neighbors, a large number of people from the local and broader community also attended. Umwelt counted approximately 100 attendees, however in media and political reports approximately 200 were said to have attended.

Mechanism	Targeted Stakeholder Group	Description/Purpose	Timing	Number of Stakeholders Contacted	Number of Stakeholders Engaged
Project updates via email	All stakeholder groups	- Update email #1: Respond to high interest in / concern for noise impacts, outlining noise assessment process, noise regulations and limits for a farming zone. - Update email #2: Provide summary of community engagement undertaken to date and how feedback was being considered, address key concerns / benefits and respond to Frequently Asked Questions regarding noise, water and fire impacts. - Updated email #3: sent to attendees of near neighbour meeting to summarise key concerns, outline technical assessments and share presentation slides. - Updated email #4: sent to attendees of community information drop-in session³ to summarise key concerns and outline technical assessments.	- Updated email #1: 28/8/2025 - Update email #2: 14/10/2025 - Update email #3: 18/12/2025 - Update email #4: 18/12/2025	39	Project Mail list: 39
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)	All stakeholder groups	- Address questions relating to the proponent, project details, the engagement process, project planning and assessment and BESS technology. - FAQ document was available on the Project website and shared with stakeholders and community members. - An updated FAQ was developed in response to questions raised at the Baw Baw Sustainability Group information session on BESS technology.	- Available August- December 2025 - Updated 7/11/2025	Available to all on the website	N/A
Key stakeholder Interviews	- First Nation Stakeholders - Local government - Community & Special Interest Groups - Environmental Groups - Emergency Service Providers - Education and Training Providers - Accommodation Providers - Health Service Providers - Local businesses and industry	- Semi-structured interviews conducted either in person or by telephone and video call. Interviewees were provided with background Project information, with discussions directed by an interview guide addressing the following topics: - Local community needs and values. - Potential Project impacts. - Mitigation and enhancement measures to reduce impacts and enhance community benefits.	August- December	16	8 meetings in total, one each with: - Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation (GLaWAC) - Baw Baw Shire Council - Latrobe Catchment Landcare Group - Baw Baw Sustainability Network - West Gippsland Seedbank - Industry Capability Network (ICN) - Regional Development Victoria - TAFE Gippsland
Personal meetings / briefings	- Local government - State Government Agencies - Emergency Service Providers - Proximal neighbours - Local community - Broader community	- Provide key stakeholders and community members information about the Project and updates at key milestones. - Personal meetings were set up at the request of individuals to answer specific questions about the Project and the assessment process, including with technical specialists.	August-December		1 Baw Baw Shire councillor briefing 3 meetings with (combined) 9 near neighbours/local community members
Online community survey	- Proximal neighbours - Local community - Broader community	- Identify key community values / needs, sentiments toward the Project, potential impacts and opportunities, suggestions regarding mitigation measures and ongoing engagement preferences. - Hosted via SurveyMonkey - Publicised via PIS and Project website.	August-December	Available to add via website	22 responses received.

Source: Umwelt (2025)

³ Email was sent to those who completed the sign up sheet and consented to be contacted.

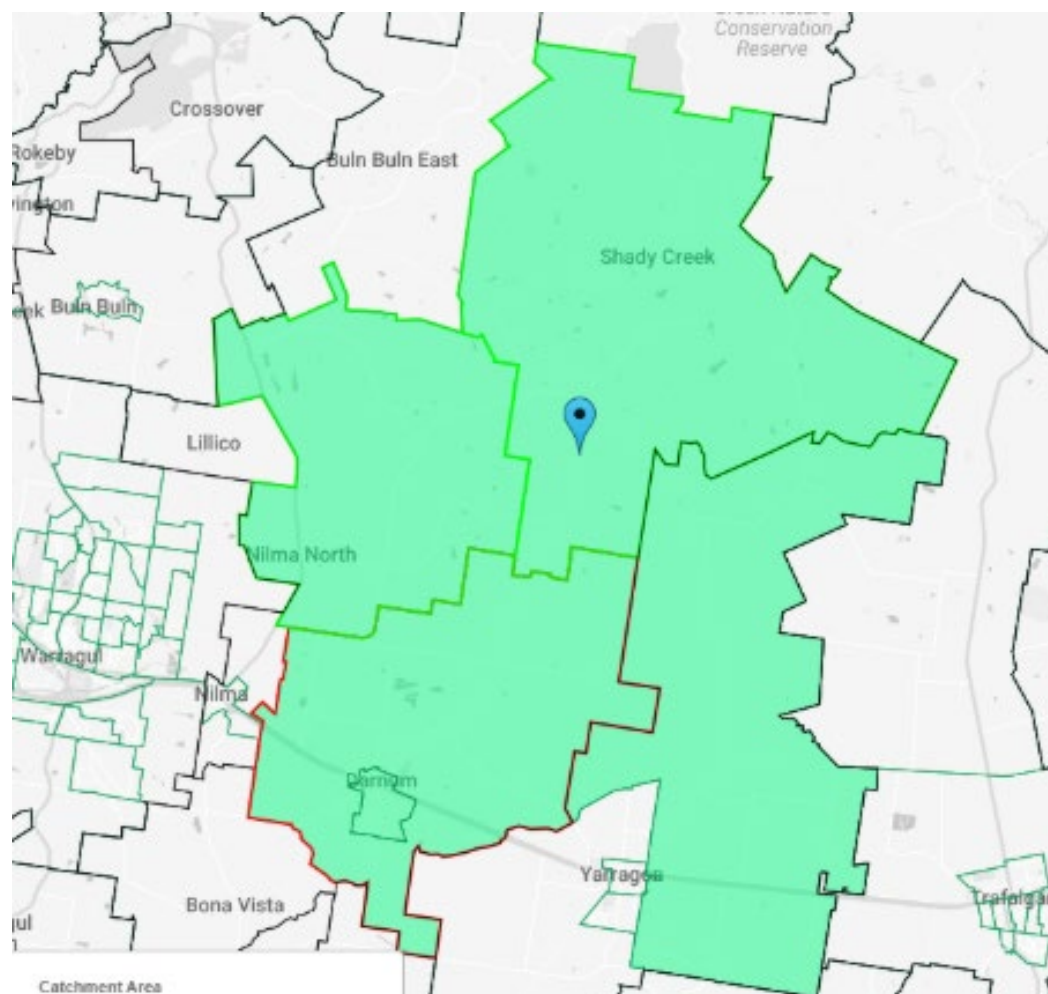


Figure 3.2 Distribution area for second Project Information Sheet

Source: Umwelt 2025

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Table 3.1 Regulatory and Referral Agency Engagement

Stakeholder	Activity	Key details of engagement
DTP	A pre-lodgement meeting for the PPA was held with DTP (Department of Transport and Planning) on 9 February 2025.	- The project proposal and intended planning permit application via the Development Facilitation Program pathway (Minister of Planning determination) was outlined alongside the proposed approvals pathway, with a Voluntary Cultural Heritage Management Plan and EPBC Act Referral also in preparation. - Key technical assessments were presented covering noise, bushfire risk, landscape and visual impact, biodiversity, traffic, surface water, and preliminary hazard assessment. - Community engagement outcomes were summarised, including Information Sessions.
Baw Baw Shire Council	- A Project briefing was provided to the Baw Baw Shire Council's Manager of Planning and Acting Coordinator of Statutory Planning – Business Improvement was held on 13 August 2025 - A Councillor briefing was held on 3 December 2025 - Council was given a traffic information briefing in October 2025.	- An introduction to both the Project and to SREA was provided including details regarding the assessment pathway and community engagement anticipated and undertaken to date. - Recommendations from the meeting included a Councillor briefing to be facilitated by Baw Baw Shire Council staff. - An introduction to the Project and SREA was provided including background information on BESS Project. Key concerns raised throughout the meeting include: - Appropriateness of site location and potential land use conflict - Potential noise impacts - Potential health impacts - Validity of assessment processes - Project decommissioning - Community benefits and ongoing social responsibility - IMPACT engaged with Baw Baw Shire Council for initial commentary on the project. The feedback / items relating to traffic that council provided are as follows: - Strategy for site access - On-site parking for construction and post construction phases - Heavy vehicle traffic routes to and from the Princes Highway using Council's road network - Size, frequency and duration of construction traffic using Council's road network - Proposal / consideration of road upgrades - Pre / post construction road impact condition inspection/reports with conditions for maintenance and repair from construction traffic

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Stakeholder	Activity	Key details of engagement
		○ Breakdown of daily traffic demand generated by the site ○ Impacts to roadside vegetation as part of any road upgrades ○ Conflicts between the Yarragon North BESS and existing quarry trucks which utilise Darnum-Shady Creek Road on a daily basis ○ Council are currently undertaking the renewal of 1.8km section of road along Darnum-Shady Creek Road, south of Brookers Road. ● This Traffic Impact Assessment has been prepared to provide a response / information addressing each of these items
CFA	● A Project meeting with CFA as held on 7 October 2025.	● CFA were provided an overview of the Project and given opportunity to discuss the layout and design. The outcomes of this engagement has informed the preparation of the Risk Management Plan and will inform subsequent Fire Management and Emergency Management Plans.
West Gippsland Catchment Authority (WGCMA)	● A letter was requested to seek advice regarding existing flood data and flood risk	● GreenSmart Consulting requested that existing flood data and information related to the site be shared to inform the Surface Water Assessment. ● WGCMA provided advice in a letter dated 6 October 2025, noting the property is unlikely to be subject to riverine inundation during a 1% AEP flood event, and therefore WGCMA would be unlikely to object provided works are located at least 30 metres from the top of the bank of the waterway.
VicGrid	● A formal enquiry was lodged with VicGrid regarding the establishment of the Darnum BESS connection.	● The Applicant received an official response from VicGrid regarding the feasibility of the intended connection and Applicant's intent to construct a new BESS referred to as Darnum BESS. ● Regular meetings, email and phone correspondence between the Applicant and VicGrid have been undertaken through the development of the PPA, including connection process and general updates on the Project.
AusNet	● Regular meetings, email and phone correspondence between the Applicant and AusNet have been undertaken through the development of the PPA.	● Connection details to the 220kV line ● Use of AusNet easement for access ● General discussion of non-contestable work scopes AusNet confirmed that the Project would need to connect into the 220kV lines via two 33m monopoles. ● AusNet confirmed use of the easement for the Project in principle and noted that AusNet would be a referral party for the easement under the PPA.

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3.4 Ongoing engagement

3.4.1 Planning Application and Assessment

As the Project undergoes assessment for statutory approval, the project team will continue to engage with the neighbours, stakeholders and the broader community. This will likely include project updates and targeted meetings aligning with the period of public notice of the planning permit application. The project webpage will also continue to be updated.

Once the planning permit application is formally submitted and authorised by DTP, it will be placed on public notice for a minimum of 14 business days during which the public can view the documents and provide submissions on the project. Once public notice has completed, the proponent has the opportunity to respond to submissions via DTP. This may also result in some direct engagement with stakeholders or the public regarding their submission to provide additional clarification or further information as required.

3.4.2 Post Approval

SREA remains committed to proactive, and meaningful engagement with the local community and stakeholders, as demonstrated since the start of the preliminary concept design phase.

If approved, engagement activities would continue throughout the construction, operation and decommissioning phases of the Project.

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4.0 Local Context

As noted in **Section 1.0**, aspects of this report have been prepared in alignment with a Social Impact Assessment, including the following social baseline summary. A social and economic baseline profile gathers knowledge from both primary and secondary data sources to increase understanding of the existing social environment in which a project is proposed, and of potentially affected communities. The baseline profile is the foundation of Social Impact Assessment, as it provides the basis from which social impacts associated with the Project may be predicted, assessed, monitored, and managed over time.

To better understand the existing social environment and to evaluate community resilience and adaptive capacity to project change, the social baseline profile has utilised the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (DFID, 1999), or community capitals framework. This approach draws on broad categories of community capitals as a fundamental basis to identify and further enhance community capacity and resilience (IAIA, 2015). This methodology has been further developed by Coakes and Sadler (2011) to reflect the following key capitals– human, social, natural, physical, economic, cultural, and political.

4.1 Social Baseline Summary

The Shady Creek Suburb and Locality (SAL) is home to 186 people, of which almost a third (31.1%) work in Dairy Cattle Farming or Beef Cattle Farming (specialised), reflecting the largely agricultural landscape and rural character of the area. The surrounding townships of Warragul, Drouin and Moe serve as local service centres for the rural population.

Table 4.1 identifies key takeaways that are relevant to the Project, as determined in the development of the social baseline profile and informed through community consultation. The community capitals summary presented below seeks to understand local challenges and opportunities, providing greater insight into community values.

Table 4.1 Community Capitals Summary

Capital	Key Takeaways
Human	- Baw Baw's population is projected to grow from 57,620 in 2021 to 79,130 in 2036, with a strong annual growth rate of 2.1%, placing it among the top five fastest-growing regional LGAs in Victoria. - The communities most immediately neighbouring the Project have small, relatively concentrated resident populations under 1,000 people. - The social locality has an older population than the State average (38), most notably in Nilma North where the median age is 49 years. - There is a higher proportion of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander residents across Baw Baw LGA than the State average, although the closest townships to the Project have very low or no Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander residents. - The proportion of individuals living with one or more long-term health condition is higher in Baw Baw (33.3%) than the Victorian average (27.4%). - The social locality recorded marginally higher rates of mental health conditions than the State average (8.8%), most notably across the Baw Baw LGA (11.1%) and in Shady Creek SAL (9.7%) more specifically.

Capital	Key Takeaways
	All of the communities of interest have a higher proportion of technicians and trade workers (15.9% to 17%) than the State average (12.6%) except Darnum (12.6%).
Social	- The social locality reported consistently higher rates of volunteerism, which may be indicative of a more connected and cohesive regional community. - The rate of residents in Baw Baw LGA living in the same address as 5 years ago in the social locality is broadly aligned with the State average, however rates are higher in communities closer to the Project. - Only 6.7% of households in Baw Baw LGA use a language other than English at home, indicating lower cultural and linguistic diversity compared with the State average (30.2%).
Economic	- Employment in construction is notably higher in Nilma North (14.5%), Baw Baw LGA (12.7%) and Darnum (12.6%), compared to the State average (9.4%). - The construction industry sector makes the greatest contribution to economic output in the Baw Baw LGA, at \$1.5B accounting for 19.55% of total output. - Employment in professional, scientific, and technical services is lower in the social locality compared to the State average. - As of December 2024, (SALM, 2024), Baw Baw's unemployment rate was 3.9%, lower than the State average of 4.3%. - Median weekly household income across the social locality is mixed. It is highest in Shady Creek (\$2,100), followed by Nilma North (\$1,762) and Darnum (\$1,744), all close to or above the State average of \$1,759. Baw Baw LGA (\$1,495) falls below the State average.
Physical	- Home ownership rates are higher in the social locality than the State average (68.3%), notably so in Darnum (89.8%), Nilma North (88.7%) and Shady Creek (84.1%). - Baw Baw LGA has a higher rate of GPs per 100,000 residents (123.7) than Victoria more broadly (99.1). - Comparably, Baw Baw LGA has a higher rate of registered nurses per 100,000 residents (977.8) than Victoria (1,290.0) although neighbouring Latrobe LGA has a considerably higher rate of 1,781.1. - The broader Gippsland region is well serviced with regard to physical health infrastructure.
Cultural	- The Gippsland region offers gourmet food experiences, wineries, distilleries and craft breweries, all year-round arts, cultural and sporting events such as the MotoGP, and coastal tourism and recreation (Regional Development Victoria, 2020). - The social locality demonstrates low levels of cultural diversity.
Natural	- Tourism opportunities in the Gippsland region are based on a wide range of significant nature-based experiences. - There are several Nature Conservation Reserves, State and Regional Parks within 50 km of the Project, including: - Sweetwater Creek Nature Conservation – approx. 19 km from the Project (Sweetwater Creek Nature Reserve, 2025). - Crossover Regional Park – approx. 17 km from the Project. - Bull Beef Creek Nature Conservation Reserve – approx. 37 km from the Project. - Moondarra State Park – approx. 45 km from the Project. - The Gippsland region has 28% of Victoria's land area for agricultural commodities, 27% of vegetable growing area and 25% of plantation timber estate. - The Gippsland region encompasses the largest area of public land in Victoria.

Capital	Key Takeaways
Political	- The Project aligns with Baw Baw Shire’s strategic objective of becoming a sustainable and thriving region through investment in renewable energy and future-ready infrastructure. - The community vision (Baw Baw Shire Council, 2021) behind the strategy emphasises a commitment to renewable energy and low emissions technology as part of protecting the environment. - Notably, Council initiatives have been concentrated on smaller scale local renewables projects, such as adding solar farms to Council assets and buildings. Baw Baw Shire Council has not indicated a strategic interest in large scale renewable development. - The Gunaikurnai Traditional Owners are represented by GLaWAC. The Gunaikurnai Traditional Owner Land Management Board (TOLMB) supports GLaWAC in partnering with government to transform land back into Country. TOLMB has a Joint Management Plan (JMP) for the ten parks and reserves granted under the Recognition and Settlement Agreement (RSA) between the GLaWAC and the Victorian Government (signed 22 October 2010). The current activity area does not fall within the boundary for the existing RSA. - At the State level, the Project is located in the Narracan electorate which is a safe Liberal seat represented by Wayne Farnham MP. Mr Farnham supports the renewable transition but advocates for it to occur in close consultation with regional communities. - Federally, the Project is located in the Monash electorate which has been represented by Liberal Mary Aldred since May 2025.

Source: Umwelt (2026)

4.2 First Nations Context

First Nations engagement is being facilitated through meaningful consultation under key guidelines and statutory development of a Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) with the Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP) under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* legislative framework and RAP guidelines. The RAP for the activity area is the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation (GLaWAC) and represents all Gunaikurnai people.

In 2008, GLaWAC was appointed as the Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP) responsible for cultural heritage responsible for the governance of cultural heritage values and authority for approving CHMPs under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* (Vic).

Gunaikurnai territory comprises approximately 1.33 million hectares in Gippsland – extending from west Gippsland near Warragul, east to the Snowy River, and north to the Great Dividing Range, and including 200 metres of offshore sea. Baw Baw has a rich and diverse cultural heritage, with a significant number of registered sites reflecting its Aboriginal history and natural features.

Under the Aboriginal Lands Act, the return of Lake Tyres became a powerful symbol of survival and cultural renewal for the Gunaikurnai and other Aboriginal communities, paving the way for ongoing efforts to strengthen community cohesion and cultural heritage across Victoria. The Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation (GLaWAC) now manages cultural heritage responsibilities and advocates for early and meaningful engagement in projects on Country. The following key documents outlines GLaWAC vision and guidelines for engagement, which has informed the development and implementation of the Project engagement strategy and CHMP:

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- Pathways to Partnerships: Gunaikurnai and Major Projects Framework (GLaWAC, 2024) which outlines a structured approach for developers and governments to engage respectfully and collaboratively. It emphasises a five-step progression: show respect, build trust, align on shared values, form meaningful partnerships, and finalise best-practice agreements that deliver lasting benefits for all involved.
- Renewable Energy Strategy (2025); although the full strategy has not been publicly released, the objectives align with the broader Whole-of-Country Plan and include: ensuring Gunaikurnai community members have access to information about the energy transition and supporting informed decisions and community guidance for GLaWAC's involvement in renewable energy-related matters.
- Gunaikurnai Whole-of-Country Plan (2015) which outlines Gunaikurnai aspirations for their Country and outlines shared goals for cultural, environmental, economic, and societal well-being.

The project is currently developing its engagement and CHMP scope together with GLaWAC.

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5.0 Key Findings

This section provides a summary of the key concerns, opportunities, mitigation and enhancement measures identified through engagement activities for the Project. Stakeholder engagement outcomes have been collated and analysed using a social impact coding framework. This is to inform the development of a Social Impact Assessment which, as noted in **Section 1.0**, will be considered as part of the Project's VicGrid Access application should the Planning Permit be approved.

5.1 Key impacts identified through engagement

A number of key impacts, both positive and negative, were identified during community engagement activities. **Table 5.1** outlines the most significant social impacts raised during individual and group meetings with proximal neighbours and local and broader community members. **Figure 5.1** summarises the frequency of social impacts identified by individuals and during key stakeholder interviews.

When considering the negative impacts of the Project, stakeholders most frequently raised the potential for impacts related to social amenity due to noise, visual amenity, sense of place from land use change, perceived industrialisation of the landscape and reduced public safety due to fire risk. These were also the most significant impacts raised by near neighbours and the community in group meetings.

Although less cited, when considering the positive impacts of the Project, stakeholders most frequently raised increased energy security during peak times, improved sustainability outcomes through the facilitation of renewable energy usage and opportunities for enhanced community and economic development.

Table 5.1 uses the SIA framing to capture the concerns identified with the proposed Project.

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Table 5.1 Key Social Impacts

KSI raised during group meetings with proximal neighbours and local and broader community members.

Near Neighbour and Community Group Meeting	Summary of Key Social Impacts
Proximal Neighbour Project Briefings 13/08/2025	• Loss of social amenity due to operational noise • Loss of sense of place from changes in land use and industrialisation of the landscape • Visual amenity related to Project infrastructure • Social amenity from construction activities • Uncertainty regarding insurance premiums and coverage for adjacent and nearby properties
Proximal Neighbour Project Briefings 14/08/2025	• Anxiety and concerns about land and property devaluation • Loss of agricultural productivity due to cumulative land use changes • Concerns about ground and surface water contamination from Project infrastructure and/or operations • Reduced public safety due to bushfire risk
Community Project Briefing (online) 29/08/2025	• Reduced public safety due to remote operation and constrained site access • Inequitable distribution of Project impacts and benefits • Distress and anxiety about the Project and associated uncertainties such as Project development, community influence and future Project impacts. • Impact on environmental values important to the community
Community Information Drop-In Session 3/12/2025	• Intergenerational equity concerns related to decommissioning of Project infrastructure and land rehabilitation • Dissatisfaction with the community engagement process • Perceived inability to effectively participate in and contribute to Project planning and decision-making processes • Reduced public safety and increased delays resulting from Project construction traffic.

Source: Umwelt (2026)

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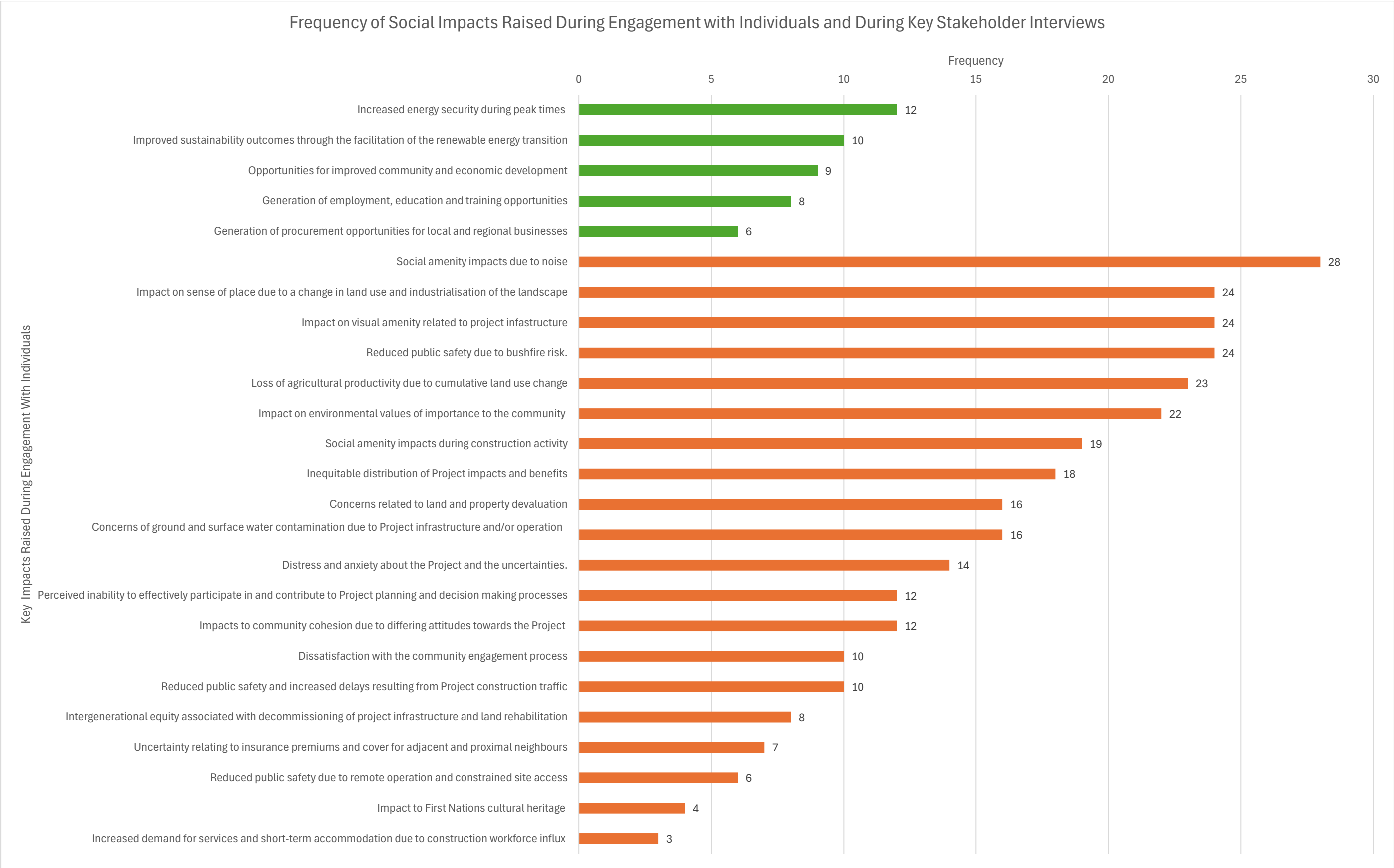


Figure 5.1 Frequency of Key Impacts Raised During Engagement with Individuals and During Key Stakeholder Interviews

Source: (Umwelt, 2025); n=36

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5.2 Key actions undertaken to date to address concerns

Outcomes of the engagement activities has informed relevant technical studies and has been considered in project design and planning. The Project has been developed to reduce environmental impacts, reduce amenity impacts to neighbours and respond to safety concerns through appropriate setbacks (for fire risk) and an additional access track and entrance to the site.

Key avoidance and mitigation measures embedded into the Project design include:

- Maximising the distance between the BESS and neighbouring dwellings to minimise operational noise impacts (siting of the project closer to the host landowner)
- Addition of a noise wall around the BESS to minimise noise impacts
- Installation of landscape screening between neighbouring dwellings and the Project infrastructure to minimise visual impacts. Ongoing consultation with neighbours is proposed about landscape screening details should the project be approved and will typically be a subject of the planning permit conditions
- Locating the Project infrastructure in areas which have been historically cleared of native vegetation to avoid impacts to biodiversity
- Providing 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 and fire water supplies to protect the BESS in case of a fire in the surrounding environment
- Installation of stormwater treatment and detention infrastructure to minimise impacts on water flows and downstream water quality
- Selection of reputable BESS supplier with extensive experience in Australia and the use of lithium-iron phosphate (LFP) batteries which are engineered for long-term safety and reliability.

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5.3 Community Benefits

The Project will provide dispatchable energy storage, supporting Victoria's energy storage targets, and local existing and future energy generation projects and energy-intensive users. The Proposal will play an important role in growing the renewable energy generation and storage industry in Victoria. As the state's energy supply transitions to renewable energy, more demand for storage will be created.

To meet the requirements outlined in the Draft Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines for Renewable Energy and Transmission Projects (VicGrid, 2025), the Project will be required to develop a Social Value and Economic Benefits Plan and a Local Participation Plan.

The Social Value and Economic Benefits Plan will outline a program of initiatives and supporting local economic development. Initiatives may include investments in local infrastructure, community projects, community capacity building, community benefit funds or collaborative projects.

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The value of the Social Value and Economic Benefits Plan SREA intends to commit to the Project will align with recommendations of the Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines for Renewable Energy and Transmission Projects document which is expected to be finalised later in 2026.

The Local Participation Plan will ensure the Project delivers social value and economic benefits, growing the economic capacity of the communities where a project is located, particularly through local industry participation and workforce development.

While the community benefits are not yet finalised for the Project, SREA have commenced conversations with the community to determine the types of initiatives the community would like to be considered. At this stage SREA intend to establish a community reference group to oversee the distribution of the community benefit fund, which may contain representatives from the local community, Council, SREA, GLaWAC and the wider community.

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6.0 Reporting and Evaluation

A stakeholder database has been established for the Project, which records interactions and related information throughout the Project's planning and assessment phase. Data is collected for each engagement activity, including in-person meetings, phone calls, emails and online meetings, recording information including:

- Stakeholders contact details.
- Activity details (including stakeholder engaged, attendees, time, place, mechanism used).
- Level of impact or interest in the Project.
- Summary of key outcomes, including key issues/impacts (positive and negative), potential strategies to address/enhance impacts.
- Preferences for future engagement.

The CSEP further outlines the monitoring and evaluation of engagement for the Project.

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7.0 Conclusion

This report reflects the engagement conducted for the Darnum BESS Project throughout the planning phase up to submission of the PPA. SREA is committed to ongoing community and stakeholder engagement throughout the duration of the Project, should it be approved, to inform Project development, implementation and impact mitigation throughout Project phases. This engagement will be guided by the CSEP as well as the outcomes and recommendations of the Social Impact Assessment.

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Appendix A

Stakeholder Engagement Materials

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SAMSUNG C&T
RENEWABLE ENERGY AUSTRALIA

Darnum

BATTERY ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEM

PROJECT INFORMATION SHEET #2

NOVEMBER 2025

The Project

Samsung C&T Renewable Energy Australia Pty Ltd (SREA) is proposing to develop the Darnum Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) (the Project) which is located on Darnum Shady Creek Road within the Baw Baw Local Government Area, approximately 8 km north-east of Warragul in Victoria (Figure 1).

The Project would involve the construction, operation and decommissioning of a BESS with a 200 MW active power capacity and a 800 MWh battery storage capacity. The Project's built form features include the BESS compound including battery enclosures, power conversion systems and cabling, substation and ancillary infrastructure. The Project would connect to the National Electricity Market (NEM) via an existing AusNet's 220 kV transmission line that crosses the site parallel to the southern boundary.

Subject to approval, construction is expected to commence in 2027 and take 12 to 18 months. The BESS is expected to have a 30 year life-span.

Once complete, the Project would provide essential energy storage capacity to help keep Victoria's electricity network stable and strengthen supply reliability as more renewable energy is integrated into the network.

About SREA

SREA began operations in Australia in 2022 and has solar and storage project interests across New South Wales, Victoria, and Queensland. SREA is a fully owned subsidiary of Samsung C&T Corporation. To meet the needs of clients aiming to diversify their energy mix amid stringent carbon emissions requirements, SREA strives to become a full spectrum player in the clean energy sector. The company is committed to deploying sustainable energy resources with a vision to create value globally. Over the past two decades, the Energy Division of Samsung has completed several renewable projects worldwide, including one of the world's largest wind and solar power cluster in Ontario, continuously delivering solutions that enable customers to fully leverage renewable resources.

What is a BESS?

A BESS is an energy storage system that uses a group of batteries to store electrical energy from a variety of sources. The system compensates for the intermittency of sources, providing backup power to address certain constraints such as weather conditions and lack of grid space. An example of what a BESS looks like is provided in Figure 2.

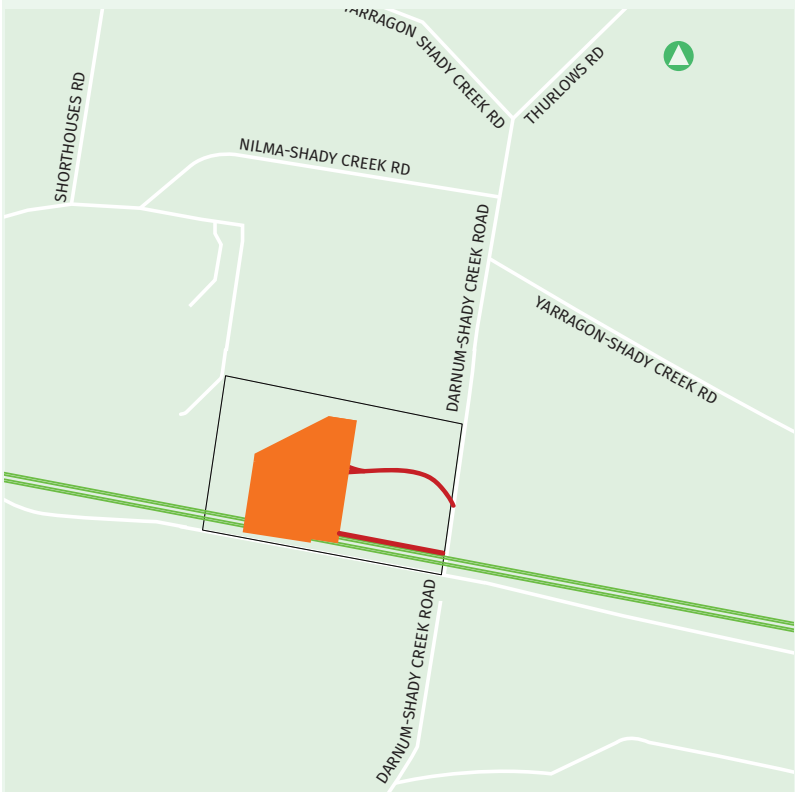


FIGURE 1 PROJECT LOCATION

LEGEND

- Site Boundary
- Project investigation area
- Road
- Transmission Power Line
- Potential access routes

DISCLAIMER: This map is a general representation and may not reflect precise details.



Getting Involved

SREA is committed to building strong local relationships with key stakeholders and communities as part of early project planning.

A community engagement program has commenced. This program has been designed to deliver authentic, open, responsive, respectful and detailed engagement with the community, council, government and all related stakeholders to this Project. If you would like to be involved in future consultation, please contact the Project team on the details below to register your interest.

We will be hosting a Community Drop-In session on

WEDNESDAY 3RD OF DECEMBER 2025

AT THE SHADY CREEK PUBLIC HALL,
150 Yarragon-Shady Creek Rd, Shady Creek VIC 3821.

Members of the public are welcome to drop in to chat to our team, **between 3 pm - 6pm**. The team will be available to hear community feedback, discuss technical assessments undertaken to date and answer questions.



In addition, if you would like to provide input via a survey, then please scan the QR code and record your views.

www.research.net/r/DarnumBESS

Contact Us

SAMSUNG C&T
RENEWABLE ENERGY AUSTRALIA

✉ darnumbess@samsung.com

🌐 www.darnumbess.com

☎ 1800 607 484



CARMEL DOWLING
(SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT TEAM)

✉ cdowling@umwelt.com.au
social-team@umwelt.com.au

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Project Benefits



ENHANCING GRID STABILITY AND AFFORDABILITY: the BESS will improve the stability of the electricity network by storing energy during periods of low demand, and dispatching energy during periods of peak demand.



SUPPORTING VICTORIA'S CLEAN ENERGY TRANSITION: the BESS storage capacity will help facilitate more renewable energy integration into the network.



CREATES JOBS: SREA is committed to prioritising local jobs. The Project will provide up to 80 full time equivalent (FTE) construction jobs at peak construction, and approximately 2-3 ongoing FTE roles during operation.



OPPORTUNITIES FOR LOCAL SKILLS DEVELOPMENT: SREA welcomes and encourages community input to inform the development of a community benefit program designed to foster positive outcomes and deliver value to the local area.



SOURCING LOCALLY: SREA is committed to sourcing materials and services from locally based suppliers. They will develop a Local Industry Engagement Plan, in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, to outline their commitment and how local businesses will be prioritised in all purchasing decisions.



BENEFIT SHARING: SREA are committed to a total benefit sharing value in line with the soon to be finalised Victorian Access Regime: Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines for Renewable Energy and Transmission Projects. SREA are seeking community feedback to shape benefit sharing opportunities that reflect local priorities. Some ideas that we have heard so far include energy rebates, funding towards local community groups and upgrades to local community spaces.

Assessment Process

The Project requires assessment through a Planning Permit Application (PPA) under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*. As advised within the Planning and Environmental Constraints Assessment (2024).

Umwelt Environmental and Social Consultants have been engaged by SREA to prepare the PPA, including a Social Impact Assessment (SIA) and a range of specialist assessments, including:



BUSHFIRE RISK ASSESSMENT



CULTURAL HERITAGE ASSESSMENT



ECOLOGY ASSESSMENT



LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL ASSESSMENT



NOISE ASSESSMENT



PRELIMINARY HAZARDS ASSESSMENT



SURFACE WATER ASSESSMENT



TRAFFIC IMPACT ASSESSMENT

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Why do we need BESS'?

They are crucial to the increased adoption of dispersed energy sources and infrastructure, reducing the risk of widespread power outages. BESS' serve as a crucial type of generator, alongside synchronous machines, for maintaining system strength during both normal operation and contingencies to ensure network security.

What are SREA doing to limit noise impacts?

When considering noise impacts, it is important to understand the context of how a BESS operates and that BESS typically emit noise only when charging / discharging to the grid (i.e. not continuously). BESS noise comes from the system's integrated HVAC (Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning) cooling and ventilation systems, along with inverters and transformers. These aspects manage battery temperature and convert electricity.

The noise impact assessment will reflect a worst-case scenario to meet applicable limits. Should the BESS receive a Planning Permit (the approval), the noise limit would be included by the decision-maker as a condition. The Permit conditions would also require SREA to provide an updated modelling of the noise levels (based on the final technology and design), and monitoring of the actual noise once constructed, to demonstrate compliance. We will continue to work with the community to minimise noise impacts.

What are SREA doing to manage the BESS fire risk?

SREA have engaged a fire risk specialist to review the project and prepare the management plans in accordance with the CFA Design Guidelines and Model Requirements for Renewable Energy Facilities (v4, 2023). SREA have and are engaging with CFA representatives as part of this fire risk assessment.

AUGUST 2025 ANNOUNCEMENT

- Project announced to adjacent neighbours, government and industry



WE ARE HERE

UNDERTAKING THE TECHNICAL STUDIES TO INFORM THE PLANNING PERMIT APPLICATION (PPA)

BROADER ENGAGEMENT WITH THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

Q1 2026

SUBMISSION OF THE PPA TO THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT AND PLANNING (DTP)



Q1 2026

DTP TO SEEK COMMENT FROM TO ANY REFERRAL AGENCIES (E.G. COUNTRY FIRE SERVICE)

Q1/2 2026

PUBLIC EXHIBITION FOR COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER COMMENT



Q2 2026

MINISTER OF PLANNING CONSIDERS SUBMISSIONS AND MAKES DECISION ON PPA

Q2 2026

THE MINISTER FOR PLANNING ISSUES A DECISION ABOUT THE PROPOSAL



What we have done to date:

Meetings held with Baw Baw Council, Country Fire Association, industry stakeholders and a sample of Community and Special Interest Groups.

Notice of Intent to submit a Cultural Heritage Management Plan has been submitted to Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation.

Community engagement undertaken to date has focused on engaging with adjacent and nearby neighbours, including project briefings/meetings and responding to inquiries via the dedicated Project phone line/email.

Technical assessment and site surveys have commenced for noise, traffic and transport, bushfire, landscape and visual, ecology, surface water, hazard and risk.

What we have heard so far:

SREA is committed to working with the community and key stakeholders to identify environmental and social impacts associated with the proposed Darnum BESS and to explore relevant strategies to mitigate negative impacts and enhance positive impacts.

The feedback we have received so far has provided valuable insight into the community's priorities and concerns.

What we have heard about the community and their priorities:



Strong sense of place and appreciation for the rural lifestyle.



Friendly and supportive community.



Strong agricultural foundation and pride in farming.



Appreciation for the beauty of the rural landscape and wildlife.

What we have heard community concerns are:



Disruption to amenity due to noise, visual impacts and light pollution.



Concern about livelihood impacts related to land and property devaluation.



Inappropriate site selection due to proximity to residents and use of agricultural land.



Concern with limited community consultation and lack of adequate response to questions asked by neighbours due to being in the early stages of the Project.



Fire hazard and public safety.

The specialist assessments will look into these concerns and where required will suggest necessary mitigation measures for consideration in the Project design and planning. SREA welcomes community suggestions on what these measures may look like.

FIGURE 2 EXAMPLE OF A BESS FACILITY



Darnum

BATTERY ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEM

FIGURE 2 EXAMPLE OF A BESS FACILITY

PROJECT INFORMATION SHEET

AUGUST 2025

The Project

Samsung C&T Renewable Energy Australia Pty Ltd (SREA) is proposing to develop the Darnum Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) (the Project) which is located on Darnum-Shady Creek Road within the Baw Baw Local Government Area, approximately 8 km north-east of Warragul in Victoria.

The Project would involve the construction, operation and decommissioning of a BESS with a 200 MW active power capacity and a 800 MWh battery storage capacity.

The Projects built form features include the BESS compound including battery enclosures, power conversion systems and cabling, substation and ancillary infrastructure. The Project would connect to the National Electricity Market (NEM) via an existing AusNet's 220 kV transmission line that crosses the site parallel to the southern boundary.

The Project investigation area (Figure 1) is currently under investigation. The development footprint would be smaller than the investigation area, confirmed following detailed design, environmental assessment and the competitive tender procurement process under the Planning and Environment Act 1987.

Subject to approval, construction is expected to commence in 2027 and take approximately 18 months. The BESS is expected to have a 30 year life-span.

Once complete, the Project would provide essential energy storage capacity to help keep Victoria's electricity network stable and strengthen supply reliability as more renewable energy is integrated into the network.

About SREA

SREA began operations in Australia in 2022 and has solar and storage project interests across New South Wales, Victoria, and Queensland. SREA is a fully owned subsidiary of Samsung C&T Corporation. To meet the needs of clients aiming to diversify their energy mix amid stringent carbon emissions requirements, SREA strives to become a full spectrum player in the clean energy sector. The company is committed to deploying sustainable energy resources with a vision to create value globally. Over the past two decades, the Energy Division of Samsung has completed several renewable projects worldwide, including one of the world's largest wind and solar power cluster in Ontario, continuously delivering solutions that enable customers to fully leverage renewable resources.

What is a BESS?

A BESS is an energy storage system that uses a group of batteries to store electrical energy from a variety of sources. The system compensates for the intermittency of sources, providing backup power to address certain constraints such as weather conditions and lack of grid space. An example of what a BESS looks like is provided in Figure 2.

Project Benefits



ENHANCING GRID STABILITY AND AFFORDABILITY: the BESS will improve the stability of the electricity network by storing energy during periods of low demand, and dispatching energy during periods of peak demand.



SUPPORTING VICTORIA'S CLEAN ENERGY TRANSITION: the BESS storage capacity will help facilitate more renewable energy integration into the network.



CREATES JOBS: Approximately 80 full time equivalent (FTE) construction jobs at peak construction, and up to 3 FTE operation roles.



COMMUNITY BENEFIT: SREA welcomes and encourages community input to inform the development of a community benefit program designed to foster positive outcomes and deliver value to the local area.



INCOME FOR LOCAL AREA: SREA will work with local service and product suppliers where possible to boost the local economy.

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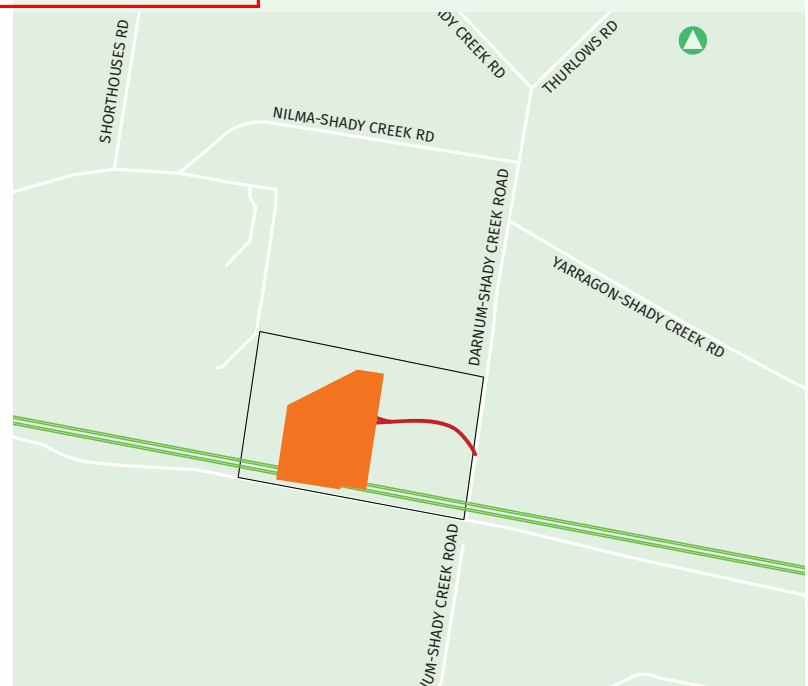


FIGURE 1 PROJECT LOCATION

LEGEND

- Site Boundary
- Project investigation area
- Road
- Transmission Power Line
- Potential access route

DISCLAIMER: This map is a general representation and may not reflect precise details.



Why do we need BESS'?

They are crucial to the increased adoption of dispersed energy sources and infrastructure, reducing the risk of widespread power outages. BESS' serve as a crucial type of generator, alongside synchronous machines, for maintaining system strength during both normal operation and contingencies to ensure network security.

Assessment Process

The Project requires assessment through a Planning Permit Application (PPA) under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*. As advised within the Planning and Environmental Constraints Assessment (2024).

Umwelt Environmental and Social Consultants have been engaged by SREA to prepare the PPA, including a Social Impact Assessment (SIA) and a range of specialist assessments, including:



BUSHFIRE RISK ASSESSMENT



LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL ASSESSMENT



SURFACE WATER ASSESSMENT



CULTURAL HERITAGE ASSESSMENT



NOISE ASSESSMENT



TRAFFIC IMPACT ASSESSMENT



ECOLOGY ASSESSMENT



PRELIMINARY HAZARDS ASSESSMENT

WE ARE HERE ANNOUNCEMENT

- Project announced to community, government and industry
- Commencement of community and stakeholder engagement



**Q3 2025
COMMENCEMENT OF
TECHNICAL STUDIES
TO INFORM THE
PLANNING PERMIT
APPLICATION (PPA)**

Q4 2025

**SUBMISSION
OF PPA TO
DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORT AND
PLANNING (DTP)**



**DTP TO SEEK
COMMENT FROM
TO ANY REFERRAL
AGENCIES (E.G.
COUNTRY FIRE
AUTHORITY)**

**PUBLIC EXHIBITION
FOR COMMUNITY
AND STAKEHOLDER
COMMENT**



**MINISTER OF
PLANNING
CONSIDERS
SUBMISSIONS AND
MAKES DECISION
ON PPA**

Q2 2026

**THE MINISTER FOR
PLANNING ISSUES
A DECISION ABOUT
THE PROPOSAL**



Getting Involved

SREA is committed to working with the community and key stakeholders to identify environmental and social impacts associated with the proposed Darnum BESS and to explore relevant strategies to mitigate negative impacts and enhance positive impacts. SREA will work to ensure that through the SIA, Planning Permit Application and the associated community engagement process, that community issues are well understood and are addressed, where possible, in Project design and planning.

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A community engagement program has commenced. This program has been designed to deliver authentic, open, responsive, respectful and detailed engagement with the community, council, government and all related stakeholders to this Project. If you would like to be involved in future consultation, please contact the Project team on the details below to register your interest.



In addition, if you would like to provide input via a survey, then please scan the QR code and record your views.

www.research.net/r/DarnumBESS

Contact Us

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**ADVERTISED
PLAN**

Darnum

BATTERY ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEM

EXAMPLE OF A BESS FACILITY

MARCH 2026

Proponent ADVERTISED PLAN

Who is SREA?

SREA is a fully owned subsidiary of Samsung C&T Corporation. To meet the needs of clients aiming to diversify their energy mix amid stringent carbon emissions requirements, SREA strives to become a full spectrum player in the clean energy sector. The company is committed to deploying sustainable energy resources with a vision to create value globally. Over the past two decades, the Energy Division of Samsung has completed several renewable projects worldwide including one of the world's largest wind and solar power clusters in Ontario, continuously delivering solutions that enable customers to fully leverage renewable resources.

Where is SREA based?

SREA began operations in Australia in 2022 and has solar and storage project interests across New South Wales, Victoria, and Queensland.

Project Details

Where is the Project?

The Project is located on Darnum-Shady Creek Road, Shady Creek within the Baw Baw Local Government Area, approximately 8 km north-east of Warragul in Victoria.

What is the Darnum BESS?

The Project would involve the construction, operation and decommissioning of a BESS with a 200 MW active power capacity and a 800 MWh battery storage capacity. The Projects built form features include the BESS compound including battery enclosures, power conversion systems and cabling, substation and ancillary infrastructure. The BESS technology will be Lithium-iron phosphate. These batteries are specifically engineered for long-term safety and reliability.

How will the Project connect to the grid?

The Project will connect to the National Electricity Market (NEM) via the substation proposed as a part of the Project. This would connect with AusNet's 220 kV transmission line that crosses the site parallel to the southern boundary.

What does a BESS look like?

BESSs are containerised, modular systems that are configured based on specific site and capacity requirements. BESS technology is continuously evolving, with BESS components becoming increasingly more efficient and compact in size.

What will happen when the Project is no longer used?

At the end of the BESS' operational life, a decision may be made to extended the operational years of the Project, subject to the replacement and/or refurbishment of components and market conditions. If the decision is taken not to extend, the BESS would be decommissioned. Infrastructure would be removed and the development footprint returned to its original state, in consultation with the associated landowner. Impacts associated with the decommissioning process would not exceed the intensity associated with construction.

How many people will the Project employ?

The Project is likely to require an estimated 80 full time equivalent (FTE) construction jobs at peak construction, and up to 2-3 FTE operational roles for routine inspections and maintenance. SREA will seek to maximise local employment during both construction and operation.



Construction jobs



Operational roles

Why was this site selected, and why outside of the Gippsland Renewable Energy Zone?

We understand that community are asking why the Project is proposed outside a Renewable Energy Zone (REZ), rather than within one. While REZ areas are designated for large-scale transmission upgrades and are ideal for concentrated energy development, energy generation and storage are still required outside these zones to support a balanced and resilient energy network. BESS facilities are required to help integrate renewable energy, improve grid stability and contribute to the state transition to renewable energy.

The site was selected following careful consideration of planning, environmental, grid and commercial criteria. The site was selected for the following reasons:



Sufficient levels of available capacity on the grid transmission system



Suitable planning context



Low potential impacts to biodiversity and heritage



Site is not classified as Strategic Agricultural Land (SAL)



Small development footprint



Proximity to the existing AusNet's 220 kV transmission line that crosses the site parallel to the southern boundary



Low land use conflict

Will the Project take up agricultural land?

A key consideration in determining the Project site was land classification. Whilst the site supports agricultural production (low-intensity stock grazing), the site is not classified as Strategic Agricultural Land (SAL). The Project is not expected to adversely impact on surrounding agricultural uses or significantly reduce the availability of land for primary production in the region.

Where will the construction workers live?

SREA will seek to maximise local employment during both construction and operation. As a part of the assessment process, SREA will work with key stakeholders to investigate the existing capacity of local accommodation providers to house a drive-in-drive-out workforce should it be required.

How long will it take to construct?

Construction of the Project is anticipated to between 12-18 months.

How long will the Project be operational?

The operational life of the Project is expected to be 25 years.

When is construction expected to start?

The construction start date is dependent on a variety of factors, including development approval, selecting a construction company, and receiving grid connection approvals and completion of the Financial Close process. Currently construction is estimated to commence in 2027.

What is the proposed transport route?

The Project site will be accessed via Darnum-Shady Creek Road, and the M1 with BESS components expected to come from Port of Geelong or Port of Melbourne.

What kind of jobs will the Project create during construction?

Employment opportunities will range from skilled to manual labour including relating to civil works, mechanical installation works, electrical works, landscaping and transportation.

Project Need and Benefits

What is a Battery Energy Storage System?

A BESS is an energy storage system that uses a group of batteries to store electrical energy from a variety of sources, including solar. The system compensates for the intermittency of sources, providing backup power to address certain constraints such as weather conditions and lack of grid space.

Why do we need BESS?

They are crucial to the increased adoption of dispersed energy sources and infrastructure, reducing the risk of widespread power outages. BESS' serve as a crucial type of generator, alongside synchronous machines, for maintaining system strength during both normal operation and contingencies to ensure network security.



Enhancing grid stability and affordability: the BESS will improve the stability of the electricity network by storing energy during periods of low demand, and dispatching energy during periods of peak demand.



Supporting Victoria's Clean Energy Transition: the BESS storage capacity will help facilitate more renewable energy integration into the network.

Are there any opportunities to tender for construction opportunities?

Using qualified local contractors is a key element for SREA who will work with local service and product suppliers to boost the local economy. If approved, a local industry engagement plan is proposed to be developed for the Project which describes the approach to providing opportunities for local businesses and workers. This will include initiatives in relation to employing local workers, procuring from local enterprise and workforce training. The plan will be developed in consultation with Regional Development Victoria before engaging local industry.

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How will the Project benefit the community?

SREA is committed to building local relationships with key stakeholders and communities as part of their early project planning and understands the importance of facilitating local participation and community input. SREA is consulting with a range of stakeholders to understand community issues and achieve positive local and regional community outcomes/benefits.



Sourcing locally: SREA is committed to sourcing materials and services from locally based suppliers. They will develop a Local Industry Engagement Plan, in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, to outline their commitment and how local businesses will be prioritised in all purchasing decisions.



Benefit sharing: SREA are committed to a total benefit sharing value in line with the soon to be finalised Victorian Access Regime: Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines for Renewable Energy and Transmission Projects. SREA are seeking community feedback to shape benefit sharing opportunities that reflect local priorities. Some ideas that we have heard so far include energy rebates, funding for local community groups and upgrades to local community spaces.

Managing Project Impacts

What design changes have been implemented to mitigate impacts?

The Project will be sited to reduce environmental impacts whilst minimising distance to connect to the existing transmission line. Key mitigation measures embedded into the Project design include:



Maximising the distance between the BESS and neighbouring dwellings to minimise noise impacts (siting of the project closer to the host landowner)



Addition of a noise wall around the BESS to minimise noise impacts



Installation of landscape 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.



Providing 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 and fire water supplies to protect the BESS in case of a fire in the surrounding environment



Installation of stormwater treatment and detention infrastructure to minimise impacts on water flows and downstream water quality



Selection of reputable BESS supplier with extensive experience in Australia and the use of lithium-iron phosphate (LFP) batteries which are engineered for long-term safety and reliability

Will there be noise impacts from the Project?

BESS noise is not continuous, rather it typically occurs when charging / discharging to the grid. A noise assessment has been undertaken to ensure that the Project will not exceed limits beyond the property boundary as set out in the *Environment Protection Act 2017* and the *Environment Protection Regulations*. In a Farming Zone, these limits are 45dB(A) during the day (Mon – Sat 7am-6pm), 39 dB(A) in the evening (Mon-Sat, 6pm to 10pm, Sun and PH 7am-10pm) and 34 dB(A) at night (10pm-7am any day). Should the BESS receive a Planning Permit to allow the development, the noise limit would be included as a condition of approval.

Can the noise impact livestock health?

While there is potential for adverse noise effects on livestock where the noise is either very loud (e.g. 90-110dB), sudden (such as low flying aircraft) or very unfamiliar, allowing no time for animals to acclimatise to it, there is no evidence that general noise from a permanent and reasonably constant source will cause adverse noise effects. As described above, the project will comply with the noise limits which are substantially lower (i.e. 45dB(A) in the daytime).

Will the BESS emit EMF? And can this impact human health?

Electromagnetic fields (EMFs) are a natural part of our environment. They are produced by anything that uses electricity (e.g. fridges & stoves) including larger infrastructure such as powerlines as well as the earth's atmosphere itself. According to the Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency (ARPANSA), we are exposed to low-frequency EMFs on a daily basis without risk to human health.

A BESS typically generates lower EMF levels than those produced by household appliances. At the edge of a BESS site, EMFs are indistinguishable from regular environmental levels. Extensive research by technical experts has found no known or documented health risks or electromagnetic radiation impacts linked to large battery installations.

The BESS will use proven technology that is safe, clean and compliant with all government health and safety standards.

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Will the battery catch fire?

There are minimal risks associated with the battery during normal operations due to the many safeguards used in the design of the battery facility and the safety features of the equipment.

The Project will use batteries that have passed the highest level of safety certification (UL 9540A) and are designed to be one of the safest battery storage products of its kind. In the unlikely scenario that a fire was to occur, this certification provides assurances that the fire event would be contained. What that means is, it would not spread to the whole site—only a very limited number of equipment cells would be impacted.

Control measures for fire proposed to be used include:



Battery container is rated IP66 to withstand high water pressure and is UL 9540A certified to ensure fires do not spread within the battery.



Monitoring system: each battery container has several monitoring systems to ensure 24/7 surveillance of issues, if one system fails, there are backup systems designed for robust management.



Separation distances: the battery has containment separation distances to reduce the risk of battery fire spread between battery units.



Bushfire Asset Protection Zones: in accordance with our bushfire expert recommendations, Asset Protection Zones will be incorporated. These ensure if a bushfire is in the local region, it has a low risk of reaching the battery.



Fire self-suppression system: in the event of a fire, no water is to be put on the battery. The units contain self-suppression systems to effectively burn out the fire from within as opposed to needing to be put out externally with water.

SREA have engaged a fire risk specialist and consulted with the CFA to inform the Project design and prepare management plans, in accordance with the CFA.*

Will a battery fire emit toxic fumes?

Fire events associated with a battery are extremely rare. The batteries being proposed have unit technology design that manages any unlikely event with limited environmental and community health impacts. As with any utility infrastructure throughout Victoria, any gases released in a battery fire would be similar to those of a typical structure fire: hydrogen, carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide and methane.

Any hazardous material kept on site during construction or operation will be stored to minimise the risk of hazardous material leaving the site. In the unlikely event of a fire, only trace amounts of acid gases are released.

These gases, such as hydrogen fluoride, come from burning plastics, not battery cells. The concentrations are small enough that they are quickly diluted upon contact with the air, meaning there is no negative impact to air quality in the surrounding area.

Will the Project generate light pollution?

Lighting for the Project would include modest amounts of lighting for security as well as for the safe movement of vehicles and pedestrians around the BESS equipment. This lighting potentially could be motion censored and any areas of “fixed” lighting are yet to be determined but would be designed to ensure light spill is minimised.

Will the Project impact water quality and availability?

The Project will not be using groundwater or surface water to manage the BESS. Construction activities will be the most water intensive aspect of the Project, while operational water demand is low and generally limited to facility maintenance.

BESS's are specifically designed to prevent chemical leaks and protect surrounding land and water. The lithium phosphate inside the battery is in a solid state. The electrolyte within the battery is coolant, which is contained within and is completely contained. Each unit has internal bunding (built-in containment) to capture and isolate any potential spills.

In the rare event of a fire, the BESS uses an advanced warning or fire detection system to shut down the BESS prior to ignition. As such, the CFA does not apply water to battery fires, again reducing the risk of contaminated runoff entering surrounding soil or waterways.

To safeguard the project further, in the event of potential contamination, the onsite stormwater basin can be used to collect any liquids for testing and management.

How will the social impacts of the Project on our community be identified and assessed?

SREA acknowledges that the project can create stress and uncertainty for neighbouring landholders and the wider community. A Social Impact Assessment (SIA) is being undertaken to identify and assess the potential social impacts associated with the Project, both positive and negative.

The Victorian Government is currently introducing new rules to manage how renewable energy projects gain access to the state's transmission network, known as the Victorian Access Regime. The new rules include expectations around how developers will engage with and deliver benefits to landholders, communities and Traditional Owners. As well as a social impact assessment, each Project will need to develop a social value and economic benefits program, local industry engagement plan, Traditional Owner engagement strategy and a monitoring, evaluation and reporting plan.

*CFA. (2023). Design Guidelines and Model Requirements: Renewable Energy Facilities v4. State of Victoria (Country Fire Authority)

Will there be any impacts on Aboriginal cultural heritage?

The project does not affect and will not impact any known Historical and Aboriginal cultural heritage. The project is currently completing a Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* together with the Registered Aboriginal Party for the region; Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation (GLaWAC). The CHMP ensures appropriate measures are in place to understand, protect and manage all cultural heritage aspects that may be encountered by the project.

Will there be any visual impact?

Inevitably, the installation of a BESS will have some effect on the current look of the landscape, though the BESS are unlikely to emit glare or reflection. A Visual Impact Assessment has been undertaken for the project and identified:



Existing roadside vegetation, plantations and topography would largely screen or filter views of the project from all public viewpoints assessed across the surrounding road network.



Where the project is visible from public roads, views would be brief and on low-use local roads only. There are no formal lookouts, tourist stops or recognised vantage points within the project area.



Visual impacts are expected to be primarily limited to a small number of dwellings in closest proximity to the project. Residential visual impact is always assessed at the highest level of sensitivity, recognising that people feel strongly about the view from their home and outdoor living spaces. The project is committed to working with nearby residents to reduce any visual impacts.



A 10m wide native landscaping buffer is proposed along the northern boundary of the project site, using locally appropriate species. If approved, a permit condition may require a landscaping plan to be reviewed and proposed landscaping to be expanded to provide additional screening for the nearest residential properties where needed.

Will the Project impact my property value?

Property value increases have been observed in some regions coinciding with the introduction of renewable energy projects* but overall, there is no clear indication that the development of energy infrastructure will have a direct negative impact on property values. Rather factors such as supply and demand, proximity to amenities, and location desirability play roles in property valuation.

However, as part of the SIA we will be undertaking a baseline assessment to establish existing market conditions and provide a comparison point for monitoring property values going forward should the Project be approved.

Will the Project impact neighbouring insurance premiums?

The Insurance Council of Australia (ICA) reports that insurers have not raised specific concerns with insurance premiums related to neighbouring clean energy infrastructure. At present, the ICA is unaware of any instances where insurers have been unable to provide coverage or have increased premiums due to the presence of renewable energy projects on adjacent properties.*

Planning / Assessment

How will the Project be assessed?

The Project requires assessment through a Planning Permit Application under the Baw Baw Planning Scheme. The Planning Permit Application will be submitted to the Victorian Department of Transport and Planning and assessed by the Minister for Planning, as the responsible authority for any permits which involve utility installations (any land use for the purposes of storing electricity with a capacity of 1 MW or more). The Planning Permit Application is supported by several specialist studies including assessments relating to visual impacts, traffic and transport, noise and vibration, biodiversity, surface water and groundwater, and hazard and risk.

What are the next steps in the planning process?

A Planning Permit Application submission is proposed for early 2026. This submission will include all required studies and assessments, as well as an engagement summary report, which provides an overview of the community feedback received about the Project to date. Following the PPA submission, the Victorian Department of Transport and Planning will begin reviewing the PPA to ensure the submission is complete. Typically, this includes requests for further information and can take several months depending on the requests.

When can I be involved in the planning process?

Submission of the application will then be followed by a public notice period which is nominated by the Victorian Department of Transport and Planning, during this time members of the public will be able to view the PPA (i.e. comprehensive assessments and plans) and submit a comment or objection. Submissions can be made any time prior to a decision being made and will be considered during the assessment process. SREA will also receive any submissions made during this process and may choose to make further changes and design refinements based on feedback received.

*Clean Energy Council. (2025). Clean Energy Australia. Clean Energy Council.

Engagement / Community

How can I have my say?

The engagement program for the Project includes consultation with a range of stakeholders. You can contact the team via the dedicated Project hotline and email:



darnumbess@samsung.com



1800 607 484

How is my feedback considered?

The feedback we have received from the community is being considered in Project planning and development, alongside relevant technical studies to inform the Planning Permit Application.

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FAQs

**SAMSUNG C&T
RENEWABLE ENERGY AUSTRALIA**

Darnum

BATTERY ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEM



Proponent

ADVERTISED PLAN

Who is SREA?

SREA is a fully owned subsidiary of Samsung C&T Corporation. To meet the needs of clients aiming to diversify their energy mix amid stringent carbon emissions requirements, SREA strives to become a full spectrum player in the clean energy sector. The company is committed to deploying sustainable energy resources with a vision to create value globally. Over the past two decades, the Energy Division of Samsung has completed several renewable projects worldwide, including one of the world's largest wind and solar power cluster in Ontario, continuously delivering solutions that enable customers to fully utilise renewable resources.

Where is SREA based?

SREA began operations in Australia in 2022 and has solar and storage project interests across New South Wales, Victoria, and Queensland.

Project Details

Where is the Project?

The Project is located on Darnum-Shady Creek Road, Shady Creek within the Baw Baw Local Government Area, approximately 8 km north-east of Warragul in Victoria.

What is the Darnum BESS?

The Project would involve the construction, operation and decommissioning of a BESS with a 200 MW active power capacity and a 800 MWh battery storage capacity. The Projects built form features include the BESS compound including battery enclosures, power conversion systems and cabling, substation and ancillary infrastructure.

Will the Project take up agricultural land?

A key consideration in determining the Project site was land classification. Whilst the site supports agricultural production, the site is not classified as Strategic Agricultural Land (SAL).

How will the Project connect to the grid?

The Project will connect to the National Electricity Market (NEM) via the substation proposed as a part of the Project. This would connect with AusNet's 220 kV transmission line that crosses the site parallel to the southern boundary.

What will happen when the Project is no longer used?

At the end of the BESS' operational life, a decision may be made to extended the operational years of the Project, subject to the replacement and/or refurbishment of components and market conditions. If the decision is taken not to extend, the BESS would be decommissioned. Infrastructure would be removed and the development footprint returned to its original state, in consultation with the associated landowner. Impacts associated with the decommissioning process would not exceed the intensity associated with construction.

How many people will the Project employ?

The Project is likely to require an estimated 80 full time equivalent (FTE) construction jobs at peak construction, and up to 3 FTE operational roles for routine inspections and maintenance. SREA will seek to maximise local employment during both construction and operation.

What are the reasons for the site selection?

The site was selected following careful consideration of planning, environmental, community, grid and commercial criteria. The site was selected for the following reasons:

- Sufficient levels of available capacity on the grid distribution system
- Site is not classified as Strategic Agricultural Land (SAL)
- Proximity to a grid connection, with the existing AusNet's 220 kV transmission line that crosses the site parallel to the southern boundary
- Grid capacity of the AusNet's 220kV line for a BESS
- Suitable planning context
- Low potential impacts to biodiversity and heritage
- The relatively small development footprint
- Low land use conflict.

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Where will the construction workers live?

SREA will seek to maximise local employment during both construction and operation. As a part of the assessment process, SREA will work with key stakeholders to investigate the existing capacity of local accommodation providers to house a drive-in-drive-out workforce should it be required.

How long will it take to construct?

Construction of the Project is anticipated to take approximately 18 months.

How long will the Project be operational?

The operational life of the Project is expected to be 30 years.

When is construction expected to start?

The construction start date is dependent on a variety of factors, including development approval, selecting a construction company, and receiving grid connection approvals and completion of the Financial Close process. Currently construction is estimated to commence in 2027.

What is the proposed transport route?

Throughout the assessment process, SREA will define a preferred transportation route to and from the site. This route will be assessed in the Traffic and Transport Impact Assessment. The BESS components are expected to come from Port of Geelong or Port of Melbourne.

Are there any opportunities to tender for construction opportunities?

Using qualified local contractors is a key element for SREA who will work with local service and product suppliers to boost the local economy.

What kind of jobs will the Project create during construction?

Employment opportunities will range from skilled to manual labour including relating to civil works, mechanical installation works, electrical works, landscaping and transportation.

What kind of jobs will the Project create during operation?

Employment opportunities during operations will be limited to 3 full time equivalent (FTE) employees who will undertake routine inspections and maintenance of the BESS and associated infrastructure.

What design changes have been implemented to mitigate impacts?

The Project will be sited to avoid and / or minimise

environmental impacts whilst minimising distances to the existing transmission line. Key mitigation measures that will be embedded into the Project design include:

- Asset protection zone
- Separation distances
- Siting of Project infrastructure outside of existing easement
- Maximising distance away from sensitive receivers
- Site access point adjacent to host landowners site entrance that aims to avoid neighbouring dwellings.

Will the Project impact my property value?

Based on available information, there is no indication that the development of energy infrastructure will have a direct negative impact on property values. Rather factors such as supply and demand, proximity to amenities, and location desirability play roles in property valuation. However as part of the SIA we will be undertaking a baseline assessment. Property value increases have been observed in some regions coinciding with the introduction of renewable energy projects (Clean Energy Council, 2025).

Will the Project impact neighbouring insurance premiums?

Further, in relation to the potential for increased insurance premiums, the Insurance Council of Australia (ICA) reports that insurers do not have specific concerns related to neighbouring clean energy infrastructure. At present, the ICA is unaware of any instances where insurers have been unable to provide coverage or have increased premiums due to the presence of renewable energy projects on adjacent properties (Clean Energy Council, 2025).

Engagement / Community

How can I have my say?

The engagement program for the Project includes consultation with a range of stakeholders. You can provide feedback via the online community survey ([include survey link], which is also available on the project website. You can also contact the team via the dedicated Project hotline and email.

Why am I being contacted?

As part of the assessment process, a community engagement program has been prepared which includes consultation with interested parties, affected communities and local representative groups. A Social Impact Assessment (SIA) is also being undertaken to assess the potential social impacts associated with the Project to inform the preparation of the Planning Permit Application required for the Project.

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How is my feedback considered?

The feedback we receive from the community will be considered in Project planning and development, alongside relevant technical studies to inform the Planning Permit Application and the Social Impact Assessment (SIA).

What are the impacts of the Project, and how will I be affected?

Comprehensive assessments including social impact assessment, visual impact assessment, noise impact assessments, bush fire assessment and traffic impact assessments will be completed to identify the potential positive and negative impacts of the Project. The detailed design of the Project will be informed by these studies to ensure that negative impacts are mitigated as much as possible, and positive impacts are enhanced.

How will the Project benefit the community?

SREA is committed to building strong local relationships with key stakeholders and communities as part of their early project planning and understands the importance of facilitating local participation and community input to understand community issues and achieve positive local and regional community outcomes/benefits. Community engagement is a priority for us, ensuring the project creates meaningful economic and social benefits for all involved.

Why do we need BESS'?

They are crucial to the increased adoption of dispersed energy sources and infrastructure, reducing the risk of widespread power outages. BESS' serve as a crucial type of generator, alongside synchronous machines, for maintaining system strength during both normal operation and contingencies to ensure network security.

What materials are used in a BESS?

The BESS technology will be Lithium-iron phosphate.

What does a BESS look like?

BESS facilities are typically containerised, modular systems that can be configured based on specific site and capacity requirements. However, BESS technology is continuously evolving, with BESS components becoming increasingly more efficient and compact in size. If required, BESS facilities can be screened (by either vegetative or artificial means) to minimise any potential visual impacts.

What does MW and MWh mean?

MW means megawatts and is the measurement of the rated power capacity of a BESS, being the total possible instantaneous discharge capability starting from a fully charged state. MWh means megawatt-hours and is the measure of the storage duration of a BESS, being the amount of time energy can discharge at its power capacity before depleting its energy capacity. For example, a BESS with 100 MW of power capacity and 400 MWh of usable energy capacity will have a storage duration of four hours.

Planning / Assessment

How will the Project be assessed?

The Project requires assessment through a Planning Permit Application under the Baw Baw Planning Scheme. The Planning Permit Application will be assessed by the Minister for Planning, as the responsible authority for any permits which involve utility installations (any land use for the purposes of storing electricity with a capacity of 1 MW or more). The Planning Permit Application will be supported by several specialist studies including assessments relating to visual impacts, traffic and transport, air quality, noise and vibration, biodiversity, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal heritage, surface water and groundwater, and hazard and risk.

General BESS

What is a Battery Energy Storage System?

A BESS is an energy storage system that uses a group of batteries to store electrical energy from a variety of sources, including solar. The system compensates for the intermittency of sources, providing backup power to address certain constraints such as weather conditions and lack of grid space.



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Thank you for your interest in completing this survey about the proposed Darnum Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) Project. The survey should take around 5-10 minutes to complete.

Project Overview

Samsung C&T Renewable Energy Australia Pty Ltd (SREA) is proposing the development of the Darnum BESS Project. The Project would involve the construction, operation and decommissioning of a BESS with a 200 MW active power capacity and a 800 MWh battery storage capacity. The Project is located within the Baw Baw Local Government Area, approximately 8 km north-east of Warragul in Victoria on Darnum-Shady Creek Road, Shady Creek. The development footprint is currently indicative and would be finalised after detailed design and the competitive tender procurement process

The Projects built form features include the BESS compound including battery enclosures, power conversion systems and cabling, substation and ancillary infrastructure. AusNet's 220 kV transmission line crosses the site parallel to the southern boundary and the BESS will connect to the National Electricity Market (NEM) to this transmission line via the substation.

Construction is expected to commence in 2027 and take approximately 18 months. The BESS is expected to have a 30-year life-span.

Once complete, the project would provide essential energy storage capacity to help keep Victoria's electricity network stable and strengthen supply reliability as more renewable energy is integrated into the network.

Survey Purpose

SREA has engaged Umwelt, a social and environmental consultancy, to undertake a Social Impact Assessment (SIA) for the Project. As part of the SIA, we are seeking your feedback on the potential social impacts (positive and negative) that may occur because of the Project. Your responses will also help us to understand and develop appropriate management measures tailored to your concerns or experiences as Project planning progresses, as well as in identifying opportunities where the proposed Project can enhance local benefits.

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Privacy Statement

Umwelt is committed to protecting your privacy and complying with all applicable personal data protection laws and regulations. Information collected via this survey will be used to inform the SIA. All information and written data will be retained by Umwelt and will be reported in de-identified form in the SIA Report. The information you provide will be used to compile aggregated information for public reporting and no specific details on individuals or family groups will be reported publicly. Information recorded will not be used for any other purpose.

Involvement in this survey is voluntary, and you are not required to answer any questions that you do not feel comfortable doing so. Your name and any personal information that you choose to provide will be stored only for the purpose of analysis and to ensure feedback or future correspondence can be provided as required or preferred.

Should you wish to withdraw your feedback, this can be done at any time. Additionally, you can request a copy of outcomes of the engagement for your further validation and revision.

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Demographic Information

1. Which Local Government Area do you live in?

- ☐ Baw Baw LGA
- ☐ Latrobe LGA
- ☐ Other (please specify)

2. Which suburb / locality / town do you live ?

3. How long have you lived in the locality? (years)

4. What age group do you belong to?

- ☐ Under 18 years
- ☐ 18 - 34 years
- ☐ 35 - 55 years
- ☐ 55- 64 years
- ☐ 65+ years

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5. What do you identify as?

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Non-binary
- ☐ Prefer not to say

6. Do you identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander?

- ☐ Aboriginal
- ☐ Torres Strait Islander
- ☐ Both
- ☐ Neither
- ☐ Prefer not to say

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Community Values and Needs

7. How would you describe your community? What do you like most about living in the area?

8. Are there any natural features that are of importance to you in the local area? (please describe)

9. Are there any ways in which SREA could support or partner with the community to address local needs or create value in the community?

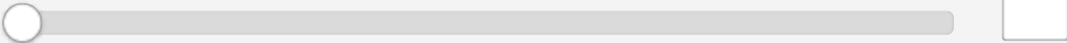
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Knowledge and Attitudes

10. On a scale of one (1) to ten (10), how accepting are you of renewable energy development in your area, where one (1) is a low level of and ten (10) is a high level of acceptance.

0 10



11. Why did you provide that rating?

12. Have you heard of, or are you aware of the proposed Darnum BESS Project?

☐ Yes

☐ No

13. On a scale of one (1) to ten (10) how would you rate your level of knowledge of the Darnum BESS Project, where one (1) is a low level of knowledge and ten (10) is a high level of knowledge.

0 10

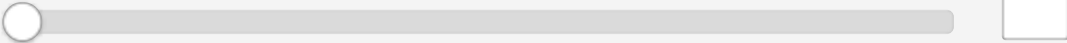


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14. Why did you provide that rating?

15. Based on your knowledge of the Project today, on a scale of one (1) to ten (10) how would you rate your level of acceptance of the proposed Darnum BESS, where one (1) is a low level of acceptance and ten (10) is a high level of acceptance.

0 10



16. Why did you provide that rating?

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Potential Positive and Negative Impacts

17. What do you see as some of the potential positive impacts of the Project?

18. Is there anything you would like SREA to do to enhance these positive impacts?

19. What do you see as some of the potential negative impacts of the Project?

20. Is there anything you would like SREA to do to address these potential negative impacts?

21. How certain are you in your views/opinions relating to the Project?

- ☐ Very uncertain
- ☐ Somewhat uncertain
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Somewhat certain
- ☐ Very certain

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Information Provision and Engagement

22. What additional information would you like to receive on the project and/or the assessment process?

23. Would you like to be kept up to date with Project information?

☐ Yes

☐ No

24. What are some of the better ways for SREA to provide you with information about the Project?

☐ Newsletter

☐ Community meeting

☐ Local newspaper

☐ Website

☐ Personal meeting

☐ Local radio

☐ Letters

☐ Open day

☐ Email

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25. Do you have anything else to add or any further questions

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26. Contact Details:

Full Name	
Phone Number	
Email	
Address	
Organisation (if applicable)	
Role (if applicable)	

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