



Planning Permit Application Report

Tramway Road BESS

Monash Way, Hazelwood North, Victoria

For Eku Energy

6 May 2025

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Document Details

Tramway Road BESS

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Document history

Revision	Date	Description	Author	Approved
1	16/12/24	Planning Application Report	AC, DM, GC	RW
2	06/05/2025	Updated Planning Application Report	DMM	RW

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We celebrate the physical and spiritual connections between Indigenous people and place expressed through the Birrarung Wilam (Common Ground) art project on the banks of Melbourne's Yarra River.

Acknowledgement of Country

Cogency acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land on which we meet, work and write, the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung peoples of the Kulin nation, and their connections to land, sea, and community. We pay our respect to their Elders past and present and emerging.

Cogency also extends that respect and acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Hazelwood North, the Gunaikurnai people. We recognise and respect their cultural heritage, beliefs and continuing connection with the land and waterways. We also recognise the resilience, strength, and pride of the Gunaikurnai and First Nations communities and acknowledge that Sovereignty was never ceded.

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Executive Summary

Eku Energy Pty Ltd (the Proponent) has engaged Cogency Australia Pty Ltd (Cogency), a planning and engagement firm, to prepare the enclosed planning permit application package to be lodged with the Minister for Planning (the Responsible Authority) for permit approval.

This planning report supports an application for use and development of land for Utility installation ('land used to transmit, distribute or store power'), known as the Tramway Road Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) (the Proposal), located in Hazelwood North, Victoria. The Tramway Road BESS is a 300MW / 1200MWh BESS using Lithium F(iron) Phosphate (LFP) cells.

The use as 'Utilities' is a Section 2 (permit required) use within the site's Farming Zone – Schedule 1 (FZ1) and within the Special Use Zone – Schedule 1 (SUZ1) land to the north. The purpose of this planning permit application package is to provide the Responsible Authority and referral authorities with comprehensive detail of the Proposal. This includes detail on the Proponent and project team, design features, potential impacts and mitigations, and compliance with relevant Acts, regulations, plans, land use controls and guidelines, contained primarily within the Latrobe Planning Scheme (Planning Scheme).

The Proposal is predominantly located at Monash Way, Hazelwood North, 3840, with the proposed transmission route extending into two properties to the north to reach the Hazelwood Terminal Station. The Proposal will require the development of approximately 8.6 hectares of the ~20 hectare landholding. Refer to Figure 1 for an overview of the site boundaries. Access to the site is proposed via Tramway Road and Monash Way, and the Proposal will be connected to the National Energy Market (NEM) via a 500 kV overhead transmission line to AusNet's Hazelwood Terminal Station. At this stage, two options are being considered for the grid connection route which have been considered in this application.

The Proposal requires ancillary infrastructure (switching station and associated electrical infrastructure and transmission connection to existing Hazelwood Terminal Station), and ancillary infrastructure and works, such as new access points and internal tracks, native vegetation removal, security fencing, drainage, earthworks and landscaping.

This application will be lodged through the Development Facilitation Program (DFP) process. The Proposal and planning permit triggers are summarised in Table 1.

This site is ideally suited to a BESS and associated infrastructure development, due to the proximity to existing electrical infrastructure, relatively flat topography, minimal existing vegetation and proximity to nearby dwellings.

Eku Energy is committed to community involvement and has undertaken comprehensive community and stakeholder engagement, including a mailout of letters and a fact sheet to the local community, door knocking to 45 surrounding dwellings and a Community Information Session. The project team has engaged with DTP and other key stakeholders including the Gunaikurnai Land and Water Aboriginal Corporation. These stakeholders along with Latrobe City Council, the West Gippsland CMA and the CFA will continue to be engaged with during post-lodgement. The design concept has and will continue to evolve in response to technical assessments, community and stakeholder feedback.

Based on technical impact assessments, the Proposal is not expected to generate any unreasonable or significant environmental or community impacts. The Proposal will provide critical electricity grid services, significant regional economic benefit, and a major contribution to Victoria's energy storage targets.

Table 1 – Application Summary

Site	
Municipality	Latrobe City Council
BESS Site	
Address	Monash Way, Hazelwood North, 3840 675 Monash Way, Hazelwood North, 3840

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	Tramway Road road reserve
Title Description	Lot 2 on PS 700402C Lot 1 on LP 123958 Lot 19A~A on PP 2749 Tramway Road road reserve
Area	Approximately 8.6 hectares (within a ~20 hectare landholding)
Restrictions on title	A s173 Agreement (AJ401891A) - does not allow the property to be further subdivided. This proposal does not propose subdivision and therefore the s173 Agreement does not have any affect. Easements - one easement traverses the BESS Site (E-4) which is a water supply easement in favour of Latrobe Valley Water and Sewerage Board.

Grid Connection Land

Address	600 Tramway Road, Hazelwood North 3840 530 Tramway Road, Hazelwood North 3840 Monash Way, Hazelwood North, 3840
Title Description	Lot 1 on PS 700402 Lot 2G~A on PP 2749 Lot 2069 on PP2749
Area	Approximately 900m transmission line (within a ~140 hectare landholding)
Restrictions on title	A s173 Agreement (AJ401891A) INDIGENOUS LAND USE AGREEMENT MI299854L 06/08/2016 - NATIVE TITLE DETERMINATION VID6007/1998

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Planning Scheme	Latrobe Planning Scheme
Responsible Authority	Minister for Planning (Clause 72.01-1)
Zones	35.07 Farming Zone – Schedule 1 (FZ1) 37.01 Special Use Zone – Schedule 1 (SUZ1)
Overlays	42.01 Environmental Significance Overlay – Schedule 1 (ESO1) 44.06 Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO) 44.07 State Resource Overlay – Schedule 1 (SRO1)
Relevant Particular Provisions	52.05 Signs 52.06 Car Parking 52.17 Native Vegetation 52.29 Land Adjacent to the Principal Road Network 53.22 Significant Economic Development
Permit triggers	35.07-1 – Section 2 Use of land for a Utility Installation 35.07-4 – To construct or carry out buildings or works associated with a Section 2 Use 37.01-4 – To construct a building or construct or carry out works 52.05-14 – To develop land for a business identification sign 52.17-1 – To remove, destroy or lop native vegetation, including dead native vegetation 52.29-2 – To create or alter access to a road in a Transport Zone 2 (TRZ2) Car parking is to be provided to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority (Clause 52.06-6)
Permit exemptions	N/A
Notice and Review	53.22-4 – Application is exempt from the decision requirements of section 64(1), (2) and (3) and the review rights of section 82(1) of the <i>Planning and Environment Act 1987</i> .

Referral requirements

66.02-2 – Secretary to the Department of Environment, Land and Water and Planning (as constituted under Part 2 of the *Conservation, Forests and Lands Act 1987*)
 66.02-4 – Electricity transmission authority
 66.02-7 – Victorian WorkCover Authority
 66.03 – Head, Transport for Victoria
 66.04 – Secretary to the Department administering the *Minerals Resources (Sustainable Development) Act 1990*

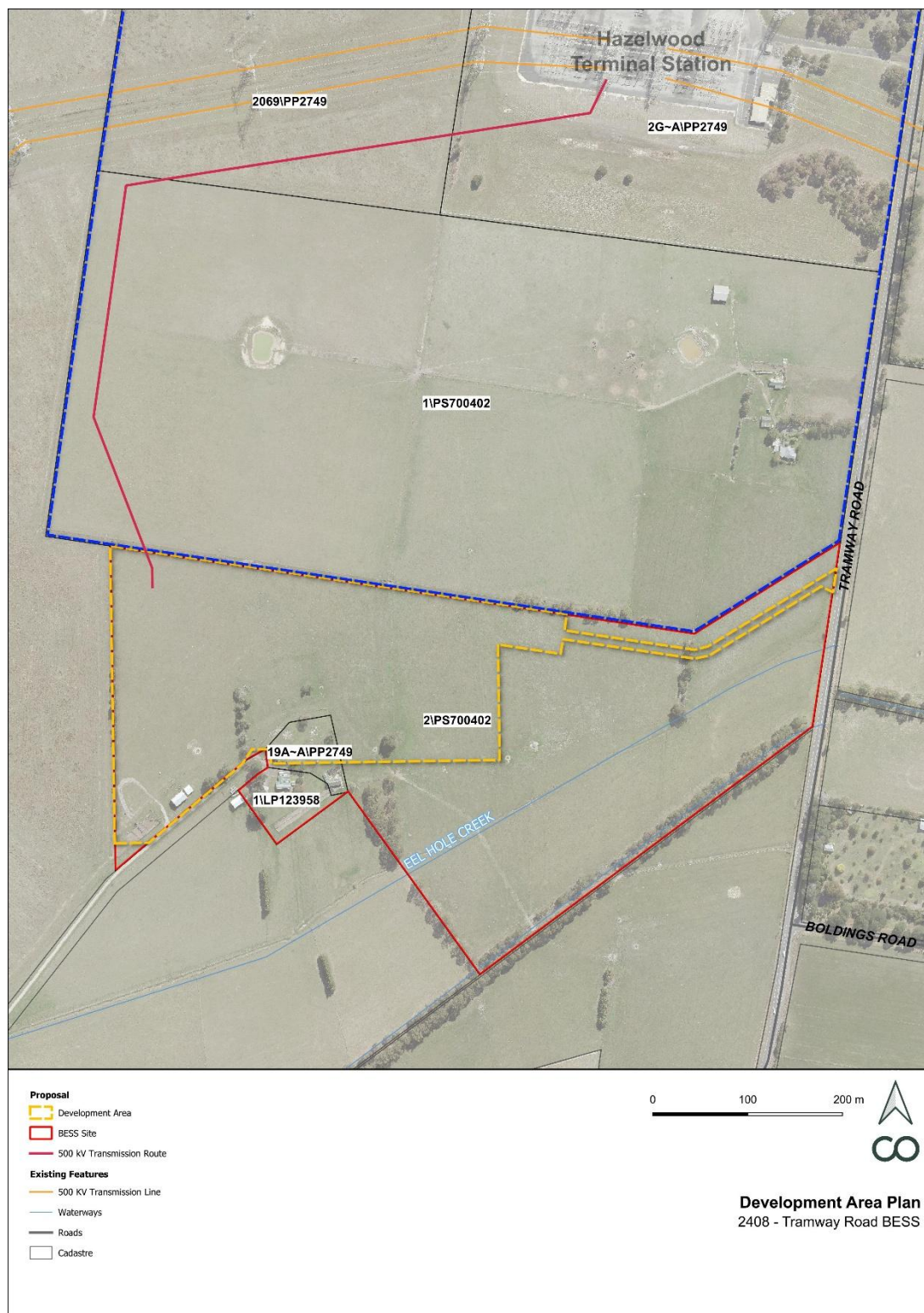


Figure 1 – Project Site and Boundaries Overview

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Glossary

Abbreviation	Meaning
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
AEMO	Australian Energy Market Operator
BESS	Battery Energy Storage System
CEC	Clean Energy Council
EPA	Environmental Protection Authority
EPBC	Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation
IAP2	International Association for Public Participation
LGA	Local Government Area
kV	kilovolt
MER	Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting
MW	Megawatt
NEM	National Energy Market (NEM)
O&M	Operations and Management
REZ	Renewable Energy Zone
Strategy	Community and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy

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1. Introduction

Cogency Australia Pty Ltd (Cogency), on behalf of Eku Energy Project (Australia) Pty Ltd (Eku Energy) (the 'Proponent'), has prepared this report to accompany a planning permit application for a utility-scale Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and ancillary infrastructure at Monash Way, Hazelwood North (the 'site'), hereby referred to as the Tramway Road BESS (the 'Proposal').

The Proposal is considered to have strong alignment with the stated purposes of the applicable zones and overlays, as well as key State, Regional and Local policies within the Latrobe Planning Scheme (the Planning Scheme) and implements a range of Federal and Victorian policy objectives in relation to renewable energy, storage, and emissions reduction.

This report outlines the Proposal, details the site and locality, and provides a detailed planning assessment of the Proposal against the Planning Scheme and relevant policy.

1.1 Proposal Summary

The Tramway Road BESS has a proposed capacity of 300MW / 1200 MWh, connected to the existing AusNet managed Hazelwood Terminal Station. The BESS will cover an area of approximately 8.6 hectares and include:

- BESS compounds
- Switching station and associated electrical infrastructure
- 500 kV Transmission connection to the existing Hazelwood Terminal Station
- Auxiliary Power supplies
- Protection and control equipment
- Operations and maintenance building
- Access points and internal tracks
- Water storage systems and fire-fighting infrastructure
- Security fencing and monitoring systems
- Earthworks
- Stormwater detention
- Landscaping / screening

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Refer to Figure 2 for the concept layout of the Proposal.

Once operational, the Tramway Road BESS will provide critical support for existing and proposed renewable energy projects within the Gippsland Renewable Energy Zone (GREZ).

The Proposal is predominantly located within the Farming Zone – Schedule 1 (FZ1) but includes grid connection works to the existing Hazelwood Terminal Station within the Special Use Zone – Schedule 1 (SUZ1). The planning permit triggers are:

- **Clause 35.07-1** – Use of land for a utility installation
- **Clause 35.07-4** – Buildings and works associated with a Section 2 Use
- **Clause 37.01-4** – Buildings and works
- **Clause 52.05-14** – Development of a business identification sign
- **Clause 52.17-1** – Removal of native vegetation
- **Clause 52.29-2** – Land adjacent to the Principal Road Network (to create or alter access to a road in a Transport Zone 2 (TR22))

In addition, car parking must be provided to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority in accordance with **Clause 52.06-6**.

The Proponent has undertaken a comprehensive community and stakeholder engagement program, appropriately informing nearby residents and the wider Hazelwood North community of the project. Consistent and clear information has been provided to stakeholders and community outlining the details of the Proposal and any potential impacts. Future ongoing engagement will continue post-lodgement. The project team has engaged with DTP and other key stakeholders including the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation (GLaWAC). These stakeholders along with Latrobe City Council, the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority (CMA) and the Country Fire Authority (CFA) will continue to be engaged with during the post-lodgement phase. The design concept has and will continue to evolve in response to technical assessments, community and stakeholder feedback.

The strategic advantages of the location and site include:

- Proximity to existing high voltage electrical infrastructure and the national grid at the Hazelwood Terminal Station
- Relatively flat topography
- Distance to nearby dwellings
- Lack of vegetation on site
- Close to employment centres and major roads

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The Tramway Road BESS will provide a number of substantial benefits, including:

- Making use of land adjacent to existing electrical infrastructure
- Providing energy storage to support renewable energy generation and system reliability
- Contracting for local contractors during construction and operation
- Benefit sharing framework to support the local community

The planning permit application is supported by the following technical reports:

- Biodiversity Assessment, prepared by Ecolink Consulting Pty Ltd
- Desktop Cultural Heritage Assessment, prepared by GML Heritage Victoria Pty Ltd
- Transport Assessment, prepared by One Mile Grid
- Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, prepared by Peter Haack Consulting
- Noise Impact Assessment, prepared by SLR Consulting Pty Ltd
- Hazard and Risk Assessment, prepared by Fire Risk Consultants Pty Ltd
- Hydrology Assessment, prepared by DCE
- Agriculture Assessment, prepared by Ag-Challenge

Based on technical impact assessments, the Proposal is not expected to generate any unreasonable or significant environmental or community impacts.

1.2 Traditional Owners

Prior to European Settlement, Hazelwood North was stewarded by the Gunaikurnai people. GLaWAC is the Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP) representing the Gunaikurnai people.

1.3 The Proponent

Eku Energy (the Proponent) is a global energy storage development specialist who develop, build and operate energy storage systems with a key focus in Australia, Japan and the United Kingdom. Owned by two

global financial powerhouses, a Macquarie Asset Management (MAM) managed fund and British Columbia Investment (BCI) Management Corporation, Eku Energy was established to meet the growing need for utility-scale battery storage worldwide, and exclusively focus on BESS technologies and their applications.

Their mission centres around developing and managing advanced energy storage systems that enhance grid stability, integrate renewable resources, and provide reliable, clean energy to communities. With a commitment to excellence and sustainability, the Proponent leverages cutting-edge technology and industry expertise to deliver projects that not only meet but exceed environmental and performance standards.

The Proponent currently has three other projects in Australia, including the operational Hazelwood BESS and the Rangebank BESS in Cranbourne, Victoria and Williamsdale BESS in the Australian Capital Territory under construction.

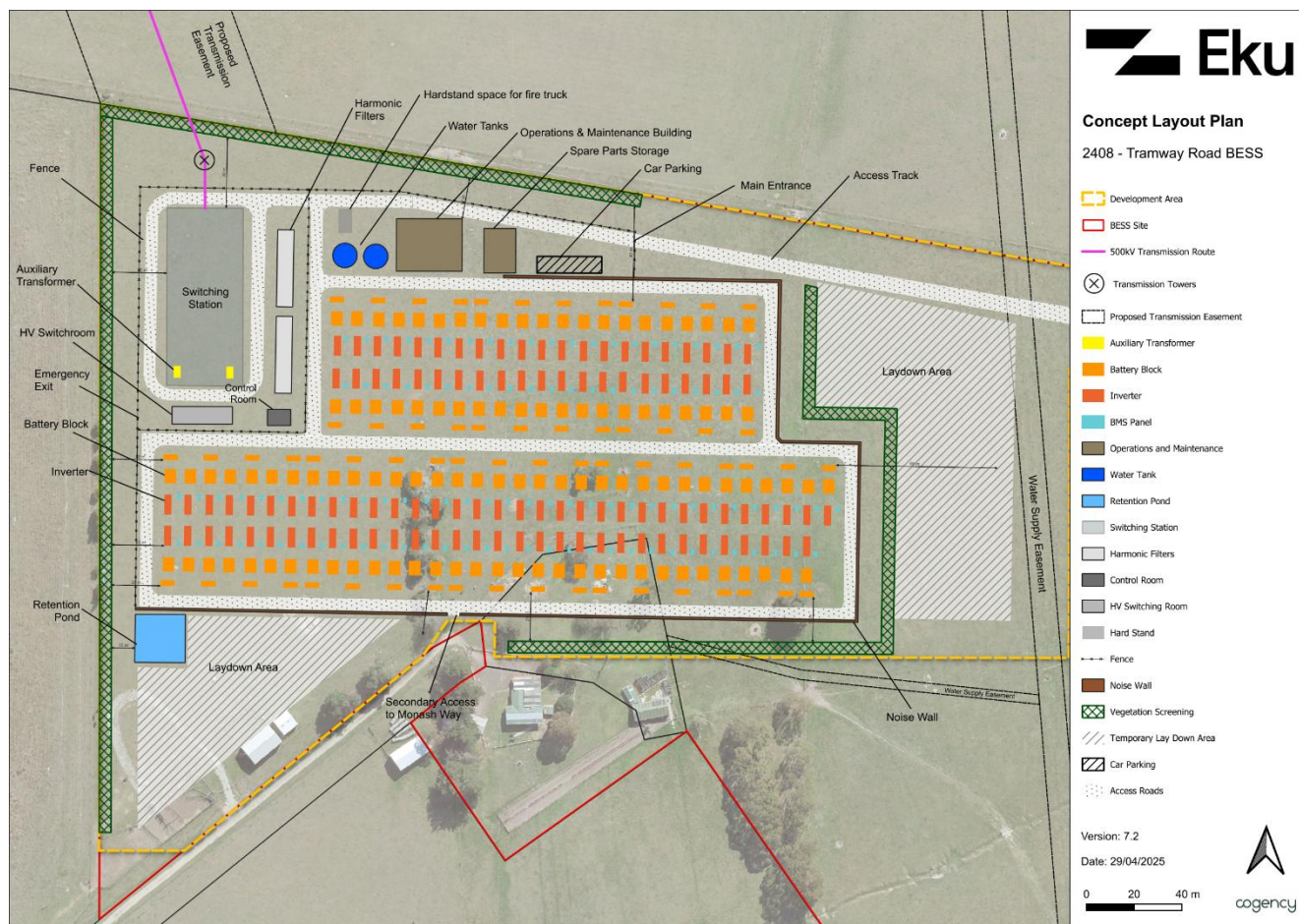


Figure 2 – Tramway Road BESS Concept Layout

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2. Site Context and Analysis

This chapter provides an overview of the site context and analysis.

2.1 Site Context

The site is addressed Monash Way, Hazelwood North and is part of a larger 20-hectare agricultural land holding, approximately 6 kilometres south of Morwell and 2km north of Churchill. The site is in the Latrobe City Local Government Area (LGA) and is part of the broader Latrobe Valley Region of eastern Victoria.

The site is currently used for grazing activities and has been previously cleared for agricultural purposes. The land is zoned FZ1 under the Latrobe Planning Scheme and is adjacent to the operational Jeeralang Power Station and Hazelwood Terminal Station to the north and agricultural grazing land to the west, south, and east. Tramway Road runs parallel to the site's eastern boundary, and Eel Hole Creek runs east-west across the site. The northern boundary of the Churchill township is located approximately 570 metres to the south.

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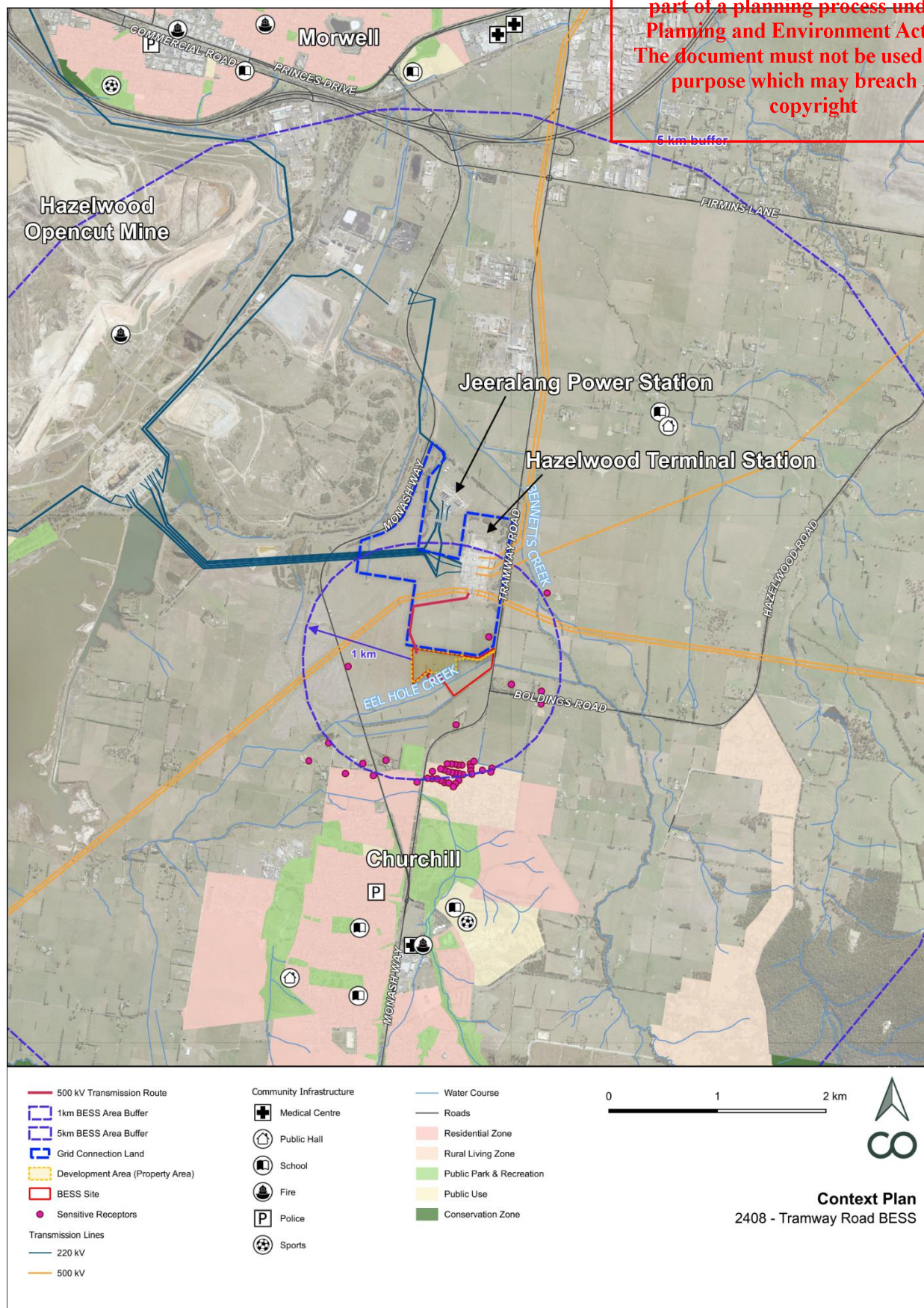


Figure 3 – Site context

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2.1.1 Gippsland Renewable Energy Zone

The site is within the Gippsland Renewable Energy Zone (REZ), a region within the wider proposed Victorian REZ development plan as prescribed by the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO). GREZ (see Figure 4) is a planned infrastructure corridor to deliver new transmission infrastructure that will support the connection of new renewable generation and storage projects to the system. This is particularly important for Gippsland given the transitioning generation fleet away from coal-fired generation towards solar, wind and energy storage resources.

In 2022, State Government identified an 85km corridor across Gippsland to develop new transmission infrastructure, connecting locally produced renewable energy to the grid. The development of Renewable Energy Zones (REZs) across the state is a key initiative in Victoria's energy transformation. REZs are areas of abundant renewable energy resources such as solar and wind, the full development of which can ensure the timely and cost-effective delivery of secure and clean energy for Victoria. The Gippsland REZ will provide up to 2100MW of anticipatory network capacity for future renewable energy generation projects.

VicGrid is the responsible entity for planning and delivering the Gippsland REZ.

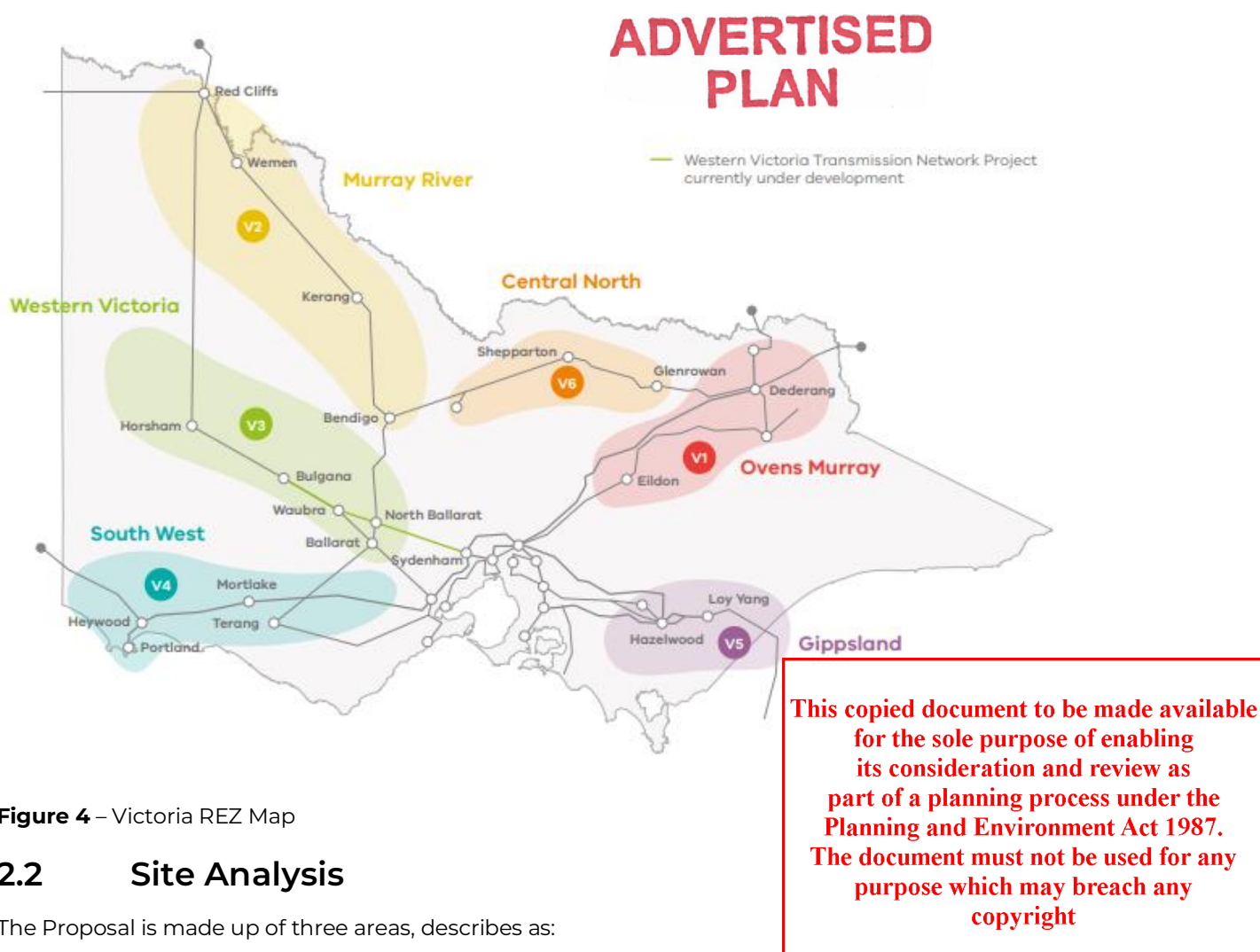


Figure 4 – Victoria REZ Map

2.2 Site Analysis

The Proposal is made up of three areas, describes as:

- BESS Site: land within the site where the BESS is predominantly proposed, this is in the north-western corner of the 20-hectare landholding
- Access Land: land within the site used for access, this is the land required to connect the BESS with Tramway Road and Monash Way

- **Grid Connection Land:** land within the site used for Grid Connection, this is the land required for the transmission line connecting to the existing Hazelwood Terminal Station

Certificates of Title for the parcels included within the site are provided at Appendix A

The following sub-sections provide an overview of the topographical features, infrastructure and land uses applicable to the site and surrounds.

2.2.1 Topographical Features

The site and the surrounding area is a flat to slightly undulating landscape comprised of open pasture or cropping land partly visually compartmentalised by rows of trees and tall shrubs along roadways and paddock boundaries.

The site is mostly cleared, but has a band of dense, primarily native species, canopy vegetation to approximately 10 metres to 15 metres, in height along most of its southern boundary. This vegetation is located both inside and outside of the site.

The site is located in the broader valley of the Latrobe River and its tributaries, including the Morwell River which is located approximately 7.6km to the west.

The topography of the valley floor is mostly flat to slightly undulating, with the open pit of the Morwell Mine forming an artificial crater within the landscape, approximately 3.4km to the north northwest of the subject site. Elevation ranges from approximately 25m Australian Height Datum (AHD) along the waterways and deeper drainage lines, to approximately 105m AHD.

The elevation of the site ranges from approximately 95m AHD at its most southerly extent, to approximately 106m AHD on the central northern boundary, resulting in north to south falling slope. Eel Hole Creek runs roughly parallel to, and approximately 100m inside of the southeastern boundary of the site.

2.2.2 Existing Infrastructure

2.2.2.1 Energy and Transmission

The site is not currently serviced by transmission infrastructure. The AusNet managed 500kV / 220kV Hazelwood Terminal Station is located approximately 550 metres north of the site and is connected to the Jeeralang Terminal Station and a number of 500 kV and 220 kV transmission lines.

The area is also home to a number of proposed and approved renewable energy projects, including:

- **Marinus Link:** Marinus Link is a proposed undersea and underground electricity and data interconnector between Tasmania and Victoria. Marinus Link is proposed to connect into the Hazelwood Terminal Station from the property immediately north of the BESS Site, where the Marinus Link Converter Station is proposed. The Proposal's transmission connection runs through this property.
- **Wooreen BESS:** Wooreen BESS is a proposed four-hour utility-scale battery of 350 MW capacity, which is scheduled to be in operation before the end of 2026. Wooreen BESS is located approximately 1.5 kilometres north of the Proposal.
- **Bennetts Creek BESS:** Located in Hazelwood North the Bennetts Creek BESS has a footprint of approximately 2.3 hectares and a planned output of 100 MW / 200 MWh. The Bennetts Creek BESS is located approximately 3.3 kilometres north of the Proposal.
- **Latrobe Valley BESS:** The Latrobe Valley BESS, with a capacity of 100 MW, is located beside the existing Morwell Terminal Station on Monash Way, just south of the Princes Freeway. The Latrobe Valley BESS is located approximately 3.4 kilometres north of the Proposal.
- **Hazelwood BESS:** The Hazelwood Battery Energy Storage System is a 150 MW/150 MWh utility-scale project located in Victoria's Latrobe Valley. The Hazelwood Battery Energy Storage System is located approximately 3.6 kilometres north west of the Proposal.

- **Hazelwood North Solar Farm:** The Hazelwood North Solar Farm is an approximately 450 MW photovoltaic solar energy facility with a BESS of approximately 1800 MWh capacity, a substation, and associated infrastructure. The Hazelwood North Solar Farm is located approximately 7.5 kilometres north east of the Proposal.

2.2.2.2 Easements

The site is subject to a number of easements, which have been summarised at Table 2.

Table 2 – Easements

Property	Parcel	Easement	Relevance to Proposal
Monash Way, Hazelwood North (BESS Site)	2/PS700402C	E-1; E-2; E-8 – for Electricity Supply in favour of lots on LP117930	N/A – the easement is located south of the BESS site and has no interaction with the Proposal
		E-2; E-3; E-4; E-9 – for Water Supply in favour of lots on LP117930	
		E-2; E-4; E-9 – for Water Supply in favour of Latrobe Valley Water and Sewerage Board	
		E-5; E-8; E-9 – for Drainage in favour of lots on LP117930	
		E-4 – for Water Supply in favour of Latrobe Valley Water and Sewerage Board	The transmission line and access track may cross the easement, Latrobe Valley Water and Sewerage Board will be consulted regarding interaction with the Easement
Monash Way, Hazelwood North, 3840 (BESS Site)	19A~A/PP2749	N/A – no easements	N/A
675 Monash Way, Hazelwood North, 3840 (BESS Site)	1\LP123958	N/A – no easements	N/A
Monash Way, Hazelwood North, 3840 (Grid Connection Land)	2069\PP2749	Electricity Transmission and Distribution: E-1, E-6, E-8, E-10, E-11 Gas: E-2, E-7, E-9, E-10 Sewage: E-3, E-8, E-9 Water: E-4, E-6, E-10 Drainage: E-5, E-11	N/A – the Proposal will only affect the south-eastern corner of the parcel and will not affect any easements.
600 Tramway Road, Hazelwood North 3840 (Grid Connection Land)	1/PS700402	E-6 – for Water Supply in favour of Latrobe Valley Water and Sewerage Board	The Proposal will not cross the easement on this parcel.
		E-7 – for Electricity Supply in favour of the State Electricity Commission of Victoria	The Proposal will not cross the easement on this parcel.
530 Tramway Road, Hazelwood North 3840 (Grid Connection Land)	2G~A/PP2749	N/A – no easements	N/A

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2.2.2.3 Transport and Access

The site is currently accessed via a public road which connects to Monash Way. The eastern boundary of the site abuts Tramway Road but no existing access to Tramway Road exists.

Monash Way connects the site to the Princes Freeway, connecting it to the broader Latrobe Valley and Victoria.

2.2.3 Surrounding Land Uses

Land uses surrounding the site generally comprises grazing land within the FZ1. Further north, energy generation is an extensive use within the area including for the Hazelwood Terminal Station, Jeeralang Terminal Station, Jeeralang Power Station, Hazelwood Cooling Pond, Morwell Open Cut Mine and high voltage transmission lines.

Other land uses within 3 kilometres of the site include:

- Forestry plantations (~600 metres west)
- Hazelwood South Reserve (~700 metres south)
- Mathieson Park (~1.4 kilometres south)
- An industrial estate (~1.8 kilometres southwest)
- An industrial estate (~2.5 kilometres north)
- Hazelwood North Primary School (~3 kilometres northwest)
- Hazelwood North Reserve (~2.8 kilometres northwest).

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2.2.3.1 Nearby Dwellings

There are a number of dwellings and potential sensitive receptors in proximity of the Proposal including:

- Dwelling at 675 Monash Way, Hazelwood North 3840 – this property is within the site and will be subsumed as part of the Proposal and used as a site compound for the duration of construction and operation
- Dwelling at 600 Tramway Road, Hazelwood North 3840 – this property is directly north of the site within the Marinus Link property, it is understood that this dwelling is to be subsumed as part of the Marinus Link project.
- Dwelling at 633 Monash Way, Hazelwood North 3840, approximately 560 metres west of the Proposal
- Dwelling at 700 Tramway Road, Hazelwood North 3840, approximately 600 metres south of the Proposal
- Dwelling at 15 Boldings Road, Hazelwood North 3840, approximately 600 metres east of the Proposal
- Dwelling at 711 Monash Way, Churchill 3842, approximately 900 metres south of the Proposal
- Dwelling at 45 Boldings Road, Hazelwood North 3840, approximately 970 metres east of the Proposal
- Dwelling at 40 Boldings Road, Hazelwood North 3840, approximately one kilometre east of the Proposal
- Dwelling at 545 Tramway Road, Hazelwood North 3840, approximately one kilometre north east of the Proposal
- The township of Churchill, approximately 940 metres south of the Proposal.

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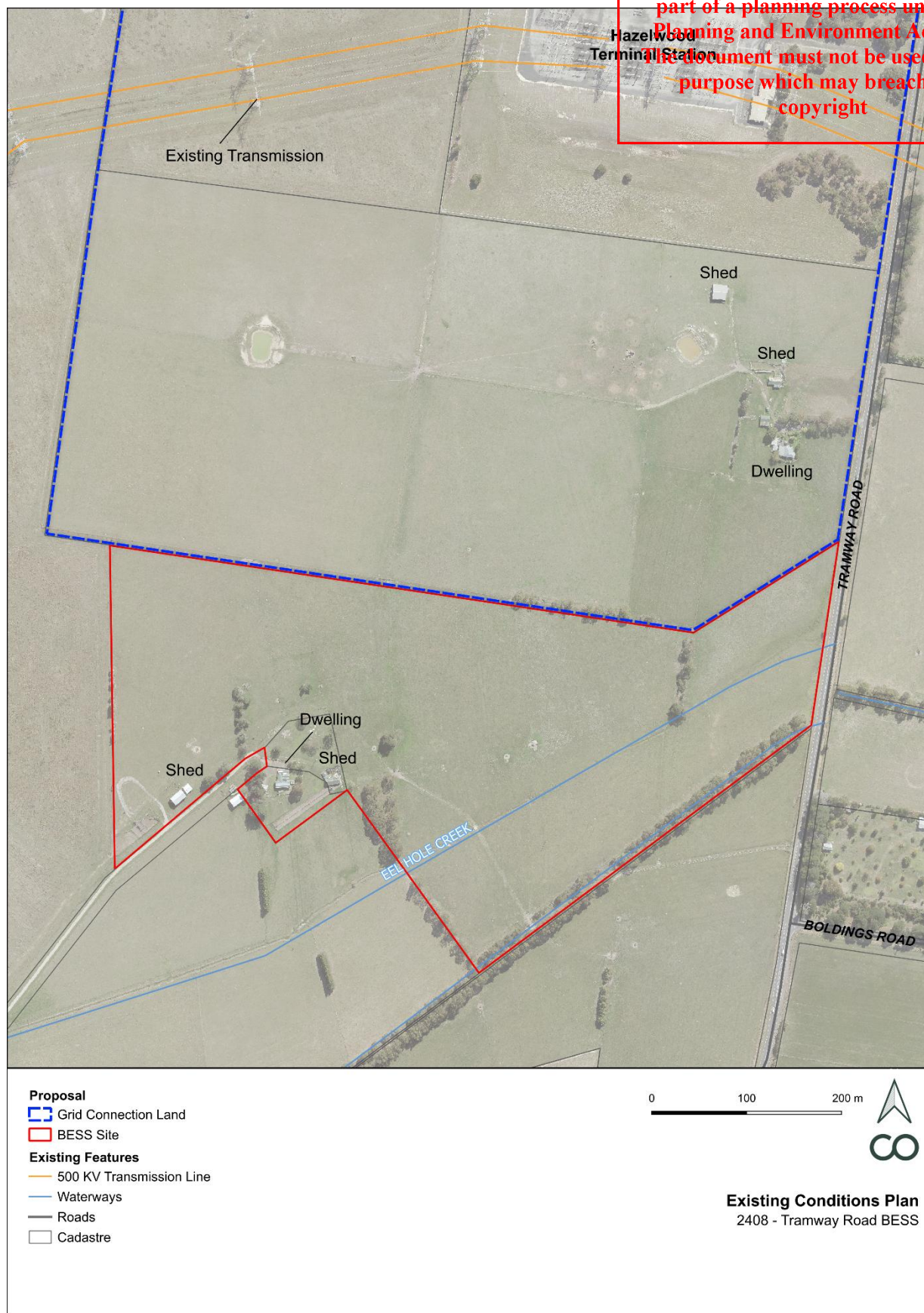


Figure 5 – Existing Site Conditions

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Figure 6 - Aerial Site Image

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3. The Proposal

This chapter outlines the details of the proposed BESS as well as the Proposal justification and benefits.

3.1 Overview

The Tramway Road BESS Proposal includes the following key components:

- BESS compounds with a total capacity of 300MW / 1200 MWh
- Switching station and associated electrical infrastructure
- Transmission connection infrastructure (likely aboveground, to connect the BESS to the existing Hazelwood Terminal Station)
- Auxiliary Power supplies
- Protection and control equipment
- Operations and maintenance building
- Access points and internal tracks
- Water storage systems and fire-fighting infrastructure
- Security fencing and monitoring systems
- Earthworks
- Stormwater detention
- Landscaping / screening

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Refer to Figure 2 for the concept layout of the proposal and to Figure 7 for an artist's impression of the proposal (note: this illustrates the Option B connection route). Application Plans are also provided at Appendix B.

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Figure 7 - Proposed BESS and Associated Infrastructure

3.2 Battery Storage

The Proponent uses Lithium F(iron) Phosphate (LFP) cells, these are durable and have an extensive lifespan, LFP battery cells have a broader thermal operating range and release less energy during thermal runaway than other battery technologies. This means they have a lower risk of overheating or catching fire due to their unique safety features. Figure 8 presents diagrams of the LFP cell, Battery Module and Rack.

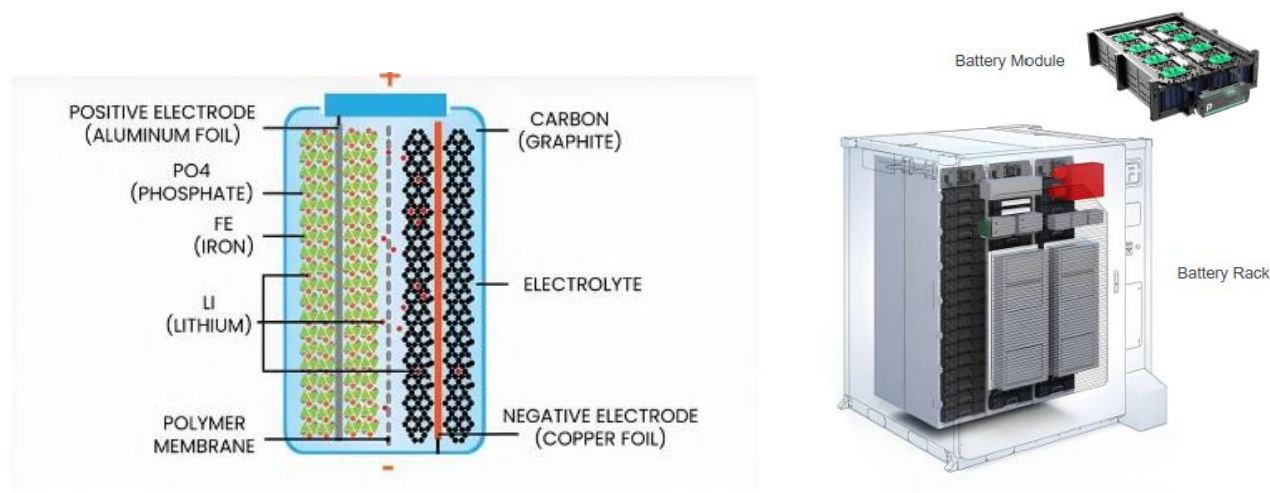


Figure 8 – LFP cells, Battery Module and Rack diagram

The Proposal includes 228 battery units arranged in two sections with the inverters located in between the battery rows. The battery enclosures house multiple racks of modules and contains monitoring and communications equipment, a cooling system, and a fire detection and suppression system. The modularity of the batteries allow for ease of construction and maintenance.

The Proposal includes a managed firebreak of 10 metres surrounding all battery units, switching station and associated infrastructure.

Outside the firebreak, a 5 metre wide area is provided for native vegetation screening along the north-western, western, southern and south-eastern sections of the Proposal. This will be planted with vegetation native to the Hazelwood North area and will be managed by the proponent until the vegetation is self sufficient.

3.3 Associated Infrastructure

The Proposal includes an on-site switching station (Figure 9) which will allow the electricity from each BESS unit to be transported to the national grid at 500kV. The switching station will also include a switch room at the southern edge (Figure 10), a control room and harmonic filters to the south-west.

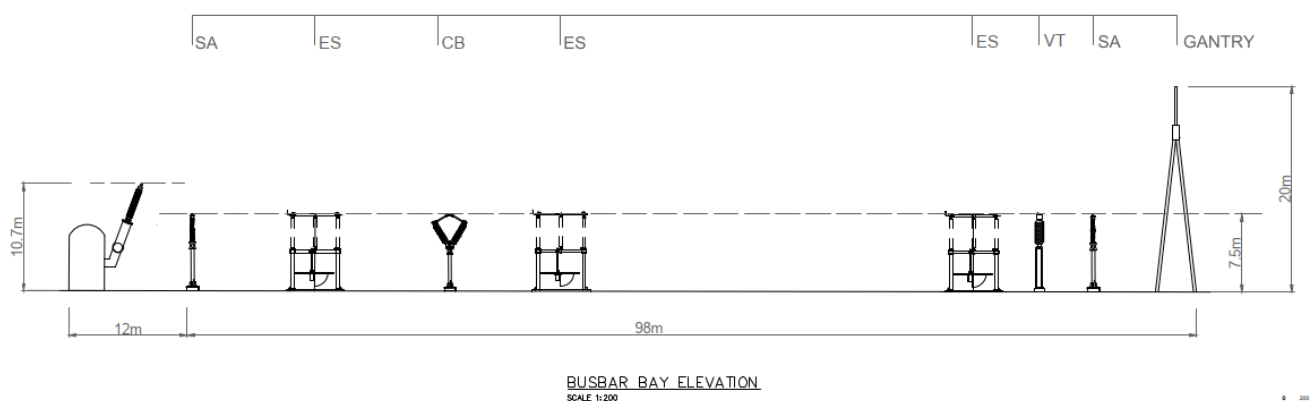


Figure 9 - On-site switching station elevation

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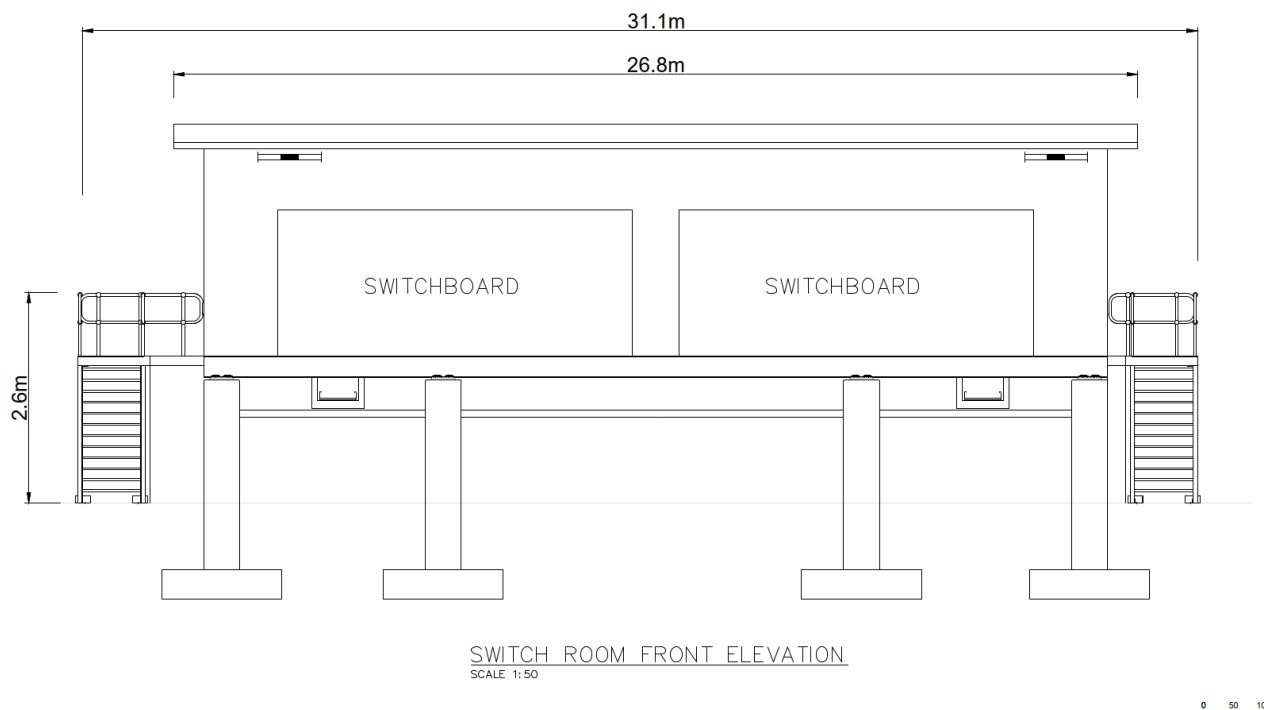


Figure 10 - Switch Room Elevation

In addition to the on-site switching station, there will be an operation and maintenance building and water tanks located adjacent to the entrance to the site.

3.4 Grid Connection

The Proposal includes two options for an approximately 500 metre connection to the National Energy Market (NEM) at the Hazelwood Terminal Station. The connection would be a 500 kV overhead transmission line (Figure 11) from the Proposal switching station to the southern section of the existing terminal station.

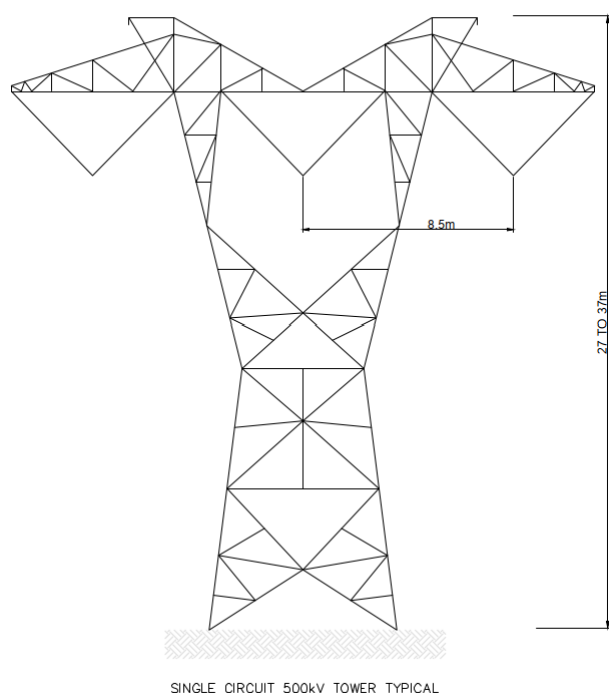
The line will be located strategically to minimise impact to native vegetation on the site, and to minimise disruption at the terminal station.

Electrical works within the terminal station will also be required where the proposed transmission line enters the terminal station.

The transmission line runs directly into the property to the north, along its southern and then western boundaries before diverting in a north-east direction into the southern section of the Hazelwood Terminal Station.

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Figure 11 - Transmission Tower Elevation

3.5 Access

Access within the site is provided by 4 metre wide access tracks surrounding all battery units and associated infrastructure. These tracks are designed to accommodate both construction and operational traffic on site, including access for fire trucks in accordance with CFA guidelines (Section 4.2 of the *Design Guidelines and Model Requirements: Renewable Energy Facilities*, Country Fire Authority (CFA), August 2023).

Primary access to the site will be through a 15 metre wide crossover to Tramway Road. The crossover has been located in an area that minimises the need for native vegetation removal. The width of this crossover has been driven by traffic engineering advice and will accommodate turning circles for trucks.

Secondary access to the site will be provided by the existing access track to Monash Way.

Onsite parking for operations and maintenance workers is located near the entrance to the BESS, adjacent to the proposed Operations & Maintenance building and the water tanks.

3.6 Employment

An important aspect of the Proposal is the creation of employment, both during construction and operation.

The development of the Tramway Road BESS, representing at least a \$400m investment, is expected to create approximately 150 jobs for the construction stage of the project. These jobs will be both local and international, comprising jobs in the fields of manufacturing, electrical, civil engineering, roadworks, cabling, construction, fencing, and construction.

Beyond construction, there are expected to be around 5 FTE's intermittently at the site the site for the lifetime of the project.¹ These jobs will be responsible for operations and maintenance of the facility, including

¹ Construction and ongoing employment numbers have been calculated from similar projects across Australia. Exact employment numbers will be confirmed closer to construction.

reporting, safety, monitoring, and upkeep of the facility. The proponent is committed to procuring locally to the extent possible, drawing from the skills in the Latrobe Valley or wider Gippsland region.

The project 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.

The construction and maintenance of the Tramway Road BESS will include upskilling local workers and utilising local contractors and suppliers where possible. This will grow Victoria's ability to build and operate battery storage, securing the future competitiveness of other projects in the local energy sector.

3.7 Construction, Operation and Decommissioning

Construction

Construction will be a key period of the Proposal's development and is expected to include the following elements:

- Construction traffic for transporting all components to the site
- The use of concrete, reinforcement, pavement and surfacing material sourced locally from quarries and supplies (where feasible)
- Earthworks to achieve level platforms which will support the construction compound, control buildings and site offices, battery unit containers, and inverters/transformers
- Installation of the BESS units and connection of all electrical infrastructure

The majority of the BESS and collector station components will be delivered to the site in a pre-fabricated state, delivered to the site on semi-trailers and/or flatbed trucks. This process greatly reduces the amount of construction work and time required on site, as well as mitigating impacts to the surrounding road network and nearby residences.

A detailed Construction and Environmental Management Plan will be prepared in accordance with any conditions of a planning permit.

Operation

The operation of the proposal will involve charging and discharging of the housed battery units, monitoring and maintenance of the batteries, inverters, switching station, internal cabling as well as general site maintenance and general security monitoring. Ongoing activities will include remote operation and monitoring of equipment as well as ongoing preventative maintenance which will involve annual planned system maintenance and battery cell replacement at the end of their warranted life of 20 years.

Decommissioning

At the end of the Proposal's anticipated operational lifespan, (approximately 30 years), and assuming the facility is not upgraded or expanded, the BESS elements and site would be decommissioned according to best practice at the time. Contours and topography of the site would be restored as far as practical during the decommission phase, if this were to occur. Reprofiting works across the development areas would be subject to discussions with the landowners, and operators of the transmission infrastructure.

Upon commencement of decommissioning, all infrastructure would be removed, with key elements including:

- Removal of all aboveground BESS and switchyard site infrastructure, including perimeter fencing, site offices and maintenance buildings
- As far as practicable, the removal of concrete foundations, with rehabilitation of the land suitable for resumption of agricultural use, or other uses as agreed with the landowner(s)

- Internal cabling and transmission connection would also be removed, although some below ground infrastructure may be left in place subject to agreement with the landowner(s)

Other project elements, such as vegetation planting and flood retarding basin will be maintained on site.

3.8 Project Justification

3.8.1 Site Suitability

The site conditions are conducive to a BESS, and benefits from a location within the GREZ (V5) (refer to Figure 4). The site is deemed as suitable for the use and development of a BESS for the following reasons:

- Relatively flat topographic conditions
- Reasonable distance from sensitive receptors (nearest sensitive dwelling approximately 500 metres away)
- Close to a grid connection point at the Hazelwood Terminal Station
- Co-located with other energy infrastructure
- Close to main roads and transport
- Not located within a declared irrigation district or state significant watercourse
- Not characterised as having State significant landscape values or State significant agricultural land
- Minimal existing native vegetation within the site.

3.8.2 Why Battery Energy Storage?

There are a number of reasons for developing a BESS in Victoria.

Battery energy storage is essential to ensuring Australia's electricity grid is prepared for the phase out of traditional coal fired power stations in the coming decades. The variability of renewable energy sources mean that there is a need for storage within the grid to supply power during periods of low generation.

Further, the continued popularity of domestic rooftop solar is leading to an oversupply of generation in the middle of the day during sunny periods, offering the opportunity to store power during this time, and release it in the early evening when solar is not generating.

Battery storage technology has advanced to a point where it is cheaper and more efficient compared to other energy storage solutions such as pumped hydro.

Another important aspect of the Tramway Road BESS is its role in grid stabilisation in a location which is considered the backbone of Victoria's grid. Battery energy storage systems are able to stabilise the grid through the ability to rapidly increase or decrease output, by providing 'ancillary services' such as frequency and voltage support.

In supporting the introduction of more renewable energy generation, the Tramway Road BESS will assist with Victoria's renewable energy transition, and support the legislated Victorian Renewable Energy Target of 65% by 2030 and 95% by 2035 and Victorian energy storage targets of at least 2.6 GW by 2030 and 6.3 GW by 2035.

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4. Community and Stakeholder Engagement

This chapter outlines the engagement principles, details of the engagement activities and the materials provided to the stakeholders and community.

For full details, please refer to Appendix C Communication Materials and Appendix L Consultation Summary Report.

4.1 Objectives

The community and stakeholder engagement strategy developed for the Proposal is in accordance with DTP's *Community Engagement and Benefit Sharing in Renewable Energy Development: A Guide for Renewable Energy Developers* (updated 2021), the Clean Energy Council's *Best Practice Charter for Renewable Energy Projects* (2018), and the *International Association for Public Participation's (IAP2) Public Participation Spectrum* (2018).

The Proponent acknowledges that active and early engagement with the community and other relevant stakeholders is a crucial part of the planning process, as it helps to foster greater understanding of and support for the Proposal, and to improve the design and development outcomes through the exchange of knowledge and information.

The Proponent is committed to delivering best practice engagement, with the overarching objective of ensuring that the identified community and stakeholder groups are proactively and meaningfully informed, consulted and involved, and that the benefits of the project are genuinely felt by the local community.

The engagement objectives are to:

1. Build strong connections with the host landowner, neighbours, local industry and the wider Churchill and Hazelwood North communities to gather support for the Proposal during the planning process.
2. Promote the Proposal's benefits by establishing clear and consistent messaging to manage misinformation about the Proposal, and by ensuring people can access information, provide feedback, and stay informed.
3. Develop a thorough understanding of the local aspirations and concerns which relate to the Proposal and work with them to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes.
4. Deliver a robust engagement program that informs, consults, and involves stakeholders (as appropriate) throughout the Proposal's lifecycle, and sets clear expectations, to build trust in the processes and understanding of the technology.
5. Keep an up-to-date record providing evidence of all engagement activities undertaken throughout the process and to establish a comprehensive database of stakeholders for the life of the Proposal.










4.2 Principles

The *Best Practice Charter for Renewable Energy Projects* (2018), developed by the Clean Energy Council, outlines a voluntary set of commitments for those engaged in the development of clean energy projects. These commitments serve to clearly communicate the standards that proponents of renewable energy projects will need to uphold. The following nine principles of engagement will define engagement on the Tramway Road BESS during all phases of the project, including design, planning, construction, operation and decommissioning.

Beyond the statutory requirements of the Project, the Proponent is committed to ensuring sensitive and respectful engagement with the First Nations communities. The Proponent's approach to engagement with Traditional Owners is based on principles adopted from *First Nations Clean Energy Network's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Best Practices Principles for Clean Energy Projects* (2022).

Table 3 presents the engagement principals for the Proposal.

Table 3 – Engagement Principles

<p>Mutual benefit and respect</p> <p>Deliver shared outcomes of mutual benefit in an equitable way for the local host community, landowners, and developer. Provide a space for genuine dialogue where people can participate in respectful discussions that help to identify mutually agreeable solutions. Proactive, well-planned, and regular engagement is effective in achieving mutual understanding and openness.</p> 	<p>Relationship-building</p> <p>Build genuine local relationships, networks and links to key local leaders or organisations, by enabling many avenues for interaction and involvement, and allowing key stakeholders to become project advocates and feedback loops. Help the local community to identify positively with the project and integrate it into their sense of community and place.</p> 	<p>Authenticity</p> <p>Have a strong, authentic, and local presence in the local community by providing dedicated staff who are reliably and readily available as the community's trusted 'translator' of technical knowledge, to explain information to the community and stakeholders in a simple yet effective way and to address any misinformation</p> 
<p>Ongoing engagement</p> <p>Provide diverse and ongoing opportunities for engagement throughout the lifecycle of the project. Monitor and evaluate the community engagement, benefit sharing and social impact management programs to identify areas for improvement and/or modification.</p> 	<p>Responsiveness</p> <p>Listen and respond to community needs and concerns in a comprehensive and timely manner. Maintain a record of the key issues raised and/or complaints received to date and how they were resolved.</p> 	<p>Social feasibility</p> <p>Understand, minimise, and offset the risk of negative social impacts across a project's lifecycle by taking into consideration the many social factors, and using appropriate social analysis tools and integrating them, alongside the technical and economic factors, into the proposed development.</p> 
<p>Inclusiveness</p> <p>Identify a wide range of different stakeholders across the local and regional communities and ensure that the channels and methods of engagement are tailored to the needs of each stakeholder group so that they are engaged with appropriately and effectively.</p> 	<p>Transparency, trust, and accountability</p> <p>Commit to an ongoing process of monitoring, evaluating, and disclosing information about the project's activities and impacts. Adhere to promises and commitments, to help develop legitimacy and credibility – and ultimately trust – within the community. Provide transparency about the process and how decisions are made.</p> 	<p>Fairness</p> <p>Ensure that consultation is two-way and that opportunities exist for local community members and other stakeholders to participate, with access to balanced information, and having their ideas justly considered, responded to, and incorporated where possible.</p> 

4.3 Engagement Activities

As part of the early design and planning phase of the project, the project team undertook several engagement activities prior to the planning submission in accordance with the engagement strategy. These activities are described below, with further detail supplied in the attached Engagement Summary Report.

4.3.1 Community Engagement

4.3.1.1 Website Development

A website was developed and launched on 28 October 2024 to provide a single source of information for stakeholders and the local community, to provide updates as the Proposal progresses, and to provide an opportunity to contact the project team with any enquiries. The website can be accessed at <https://ekuenergy.com/tramwayroad>.

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4.3.1.2 Letter of Introduction and Fact Sheet

On 30 October 2024, a letter of introduction and a fact sheet were mailed to 70 properties within 1.2 kilometres of the site, introducing the Proposal and informing residents of planned engagement activities. This included information regarding neighbourhood door knocks and the upcoming community drop-in session.

4.3.1.3 Door knock

A community door knock was held on 7 November 2024 to reach out to those living closest to the Proposal and introduce the proposed Tramway Road BESS, explain BESS technology and the need for it, while offering to answer any questions or address immediate concerns. The Cogency engagement team door knocked 36 dwellings within a 1.2 km radius of the proposed BESS, with calling cards left for residents who were not available on the day. Figure 12 shows the Door Knock Plan.

The key topics raised during the door knock are as follows:

- Questions about how the BESS would interact with the Liberal-National Coalition's proposed nuclear power plant at Loy Yang, if developed.
- Many residents in the subdivision to the south-west of the site were largely unconcerned about noise or viewpoints being negatively impacted.

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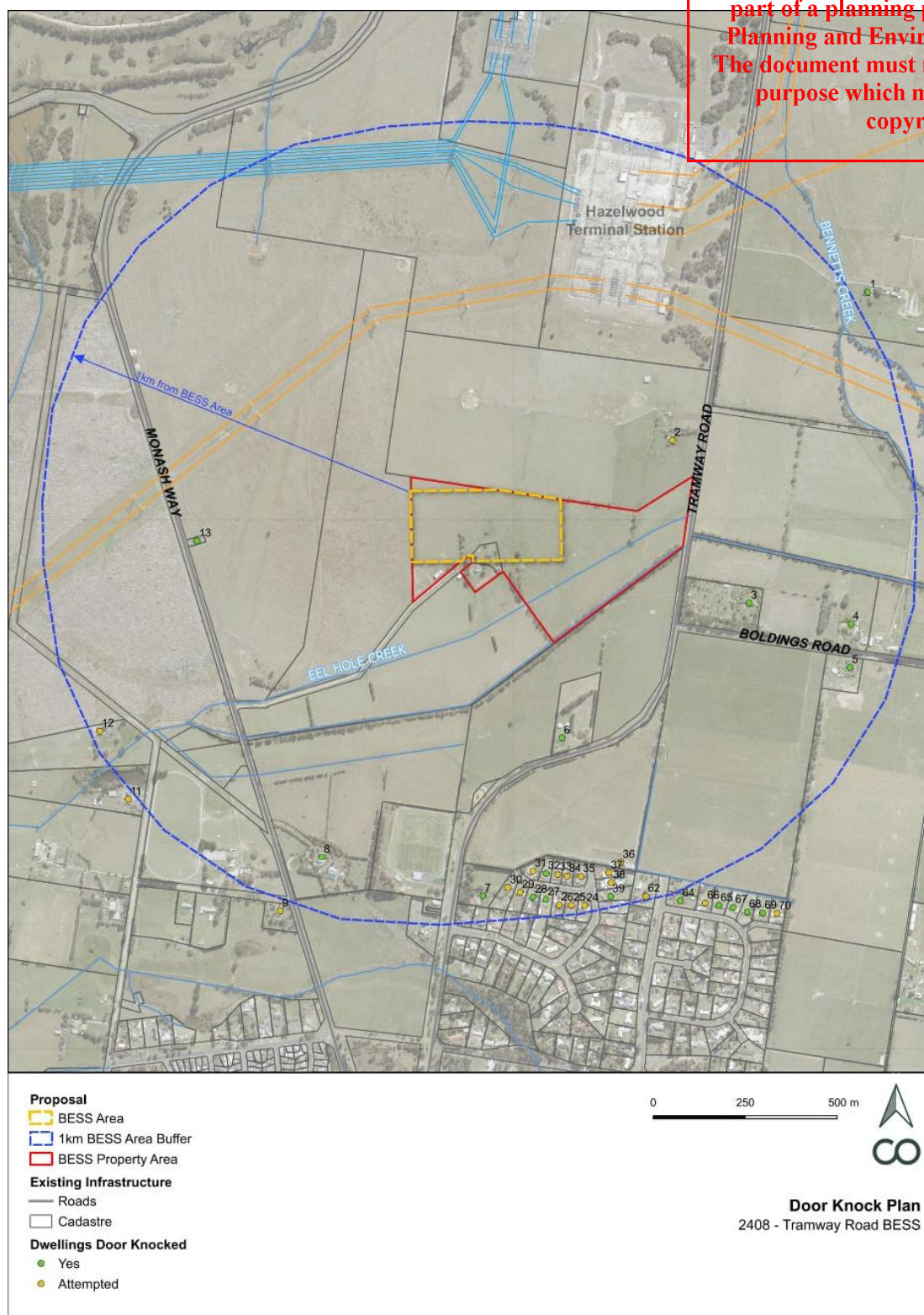


Figure 12 – Door Knock Plan

4.3.1.4 Community Drop-In Session

A Community Drop-In Session was held on Tuesday 19 November 2024 at the Churchill Public Hall from 2-6pm (see Figure 13 below). The purpose of the session was to give the local community and other stakeholders an opportunity to meet the project team, learn more about the project and to ask questions in person. The drop-in session was hosted by Eku Energy and Cogency and included members of the project

team. Information included fact sheets, a site plan, multiple A1 boards (including 'What is a BESS', 'About Eku Energy', 'Project Details', and 'Community Benefit Sharing', and an Artist Impression of the BESS (refer to Figure 13).

The Community Drop-In Session was advertised in the local newspaper (Latrobe Valley Express) on 6 November and 13 November 2024. Email invitations, including the project fact sheet, were also sent to the following people/organisations:

- Latrobe City Council
- GLaWAC
- Churchill & District Community Association (CDCA)
- Gippsland Climate Change Network (GCCN)

The above organisation were invited to distribute the community information day email around their networks.

Some of the topics raised by the community and discussed with the project team were:

- Fire management questions,
- A number of ideas for benefit sharing,
- Potential for use of green concrete during construction,
- Construction timetable.

A valuable outcome of the drop-in session was a brainstorming activity that generated several ideas for benefit sharing within the local community, including the potential sponsorship of the Churchill market, where residents can come to find out more about the Proposal and receive updates on the development process.

Attendees were encouraged to provide contact information to receive updates from the project team. Those who provided a contact email address were sent a thank you email on 4 December 2024, encouraging further feedback and queries to be directed to the project team.



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Figure 13 – Community Information Day

4.3.1.5 Local media Coverage

WIN News Gippsland attended the aforementioned Community Drop-In Session on 19 November 2024, produced a two-minute segment for the evening news bulletin² on the same day informing the wider Gippsland community of the Proposal.

A 30-minute radio interview between an Eku Energy representative and community radio station Gippsland FM was held on 30 November 2024 to increase awareness of the Proposal within the wider Latrobe Valley local community.

4.3.2 Stakeholder Engagement

4.3.2.1 Department of Transport and Planning

A pre-application meeting was held on 7 October 2024 with the DTP Renewables Team, headed by Michael Juttner, and the Tramway Road BESS project team. The meeting sought advice on the planning process and key engagement expectations that would support the Planning Application lodgement. The meeting broadly discussed the following aspects of the Proposal:

- Location of the BESS and relevant planning controls,
- Nearby existing and proposed BESS projects and energy infrastructure projects such as Marinus Link,
- Noise and fire risk requirements and mitigation measures,
- Bushfire mitigation measures and their importance,
- Community and stakeholder engagement, including feedback from prior BESS applications in proximity to the site,
- Planning application lodgement.

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4.3.2.2 Latrobe City Council

A pre-application meeting was held on 2 December 2024 with Latrobe City Council Planning Team and the Tramway Road BESS project team to introduce and seek feedback on the project. Broadly the Council gave in-principle support of the Proposal, with discussions focusing on the following aspects:

- Hydrology,
- Vegetation removal,
- Community engagement activities undertaken to date,
- Use of neighbouring property to the west of the site, confirming use will continue as grazing land and will not return to plantation.

4.3.2.3 GLaWAC

The GLaWAC are the Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP) for the Hazelwood North area. A notice of intent to complete a Cultural Heritage Management Plan was sent to GLaWAC and Latrobe City Council by the Cultural Heritage consultants engaged for this Proposal (GML Heritage) on 9 September 2024.

An inception meeting was additionally held with GLaWAC on 14 October 2024. The aim of the meeting was to inform the Gunaikurnai representatives of the project and to discuss the CHMP, as well as to give the RAP an opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback.

Broadly, the following was discussed in the meeting:

- The project and approaches taken by GML Heritage,

² Evening news bulletin: https://app.mediaportal.com/isentia/#/report-view/?id=261696_e161a4cc-a85b-5ed2-8703-ed6bab8c398e&key=MjAzODc1XzlwMjQzMTEtMTIUMDk6Mjg6MDVa

- Presentation of the desktop assessment findings, identifying moderate potential for subsurface stone artefact distributions to be present in the southern portion of the activity area,
- Agreement that a joint standard and complex assessment to be undertaken,
- Details on potential transmission routes,
- Details on first stage of complex testing.

4.3.3 Consultation Materials

A variety of different communication materials were distributed to stakeholders and the community throughout the engagement process. These include fact sheets, posters, a newspaper advertisement and a webpage within the Eku Energy website.

Copies of these communications materials are provided in Appendix C.

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5. Legislation, Policy and Guidelines Context

This chapter outlines the legislation, policy and guidelines relevant to the Proposal.

5.1 Policy and strategic summary and alignment

Table 4 outlines the federal, state, regional and local policies, legislation and plans that are relevant to the Proposal and provides a brief assessment of the Proposal's alignment with the relevant objectives and actions of each policy and/or strategy.

Table 4 – Legislation, Policy and Guidelines Alignment

Legislation / Policy	Relevant Objectives & Actions	Proposal Alignment
Commonwealth		
Paris Climate Agreement 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change Maintain global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and pursue efforts to limit temperature increase to 1.5°C Achieve net zero emissions by 2050, and inscribe low emissions technology stretch goals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Proposal will contribute to Australia's commitment to the Paris Climate Agreement by allowing more renewable energy projects to connect to the NEM and is in line with recent Federal announcements regarding a long-term emissions reduction strategy.
Climate Change Act 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advance Australia's response to climate change Promote accountability in governance and policy making in regard to climate change Achieve Australia's greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets, per s 10 of the Act, at least 43% below 2005 levels by 2030, and net zero by 2050. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Proposal supports Australia's greenhouse gas reduction targets by storing and distributing new renewable energy that can contribute to the replacement of fossil fuel-based energy This Proposal will also help reduce reliance on fossil fuels by enhancing the reliability and stability of renewables, contributing to grid decarbonisation The Proposal will also provide construction and maintenance jobs for the local and wider community, helping develop a new employment industry centred on green infrastructure
Australian Renewable Energy Target Scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce greenhouse gas emissions in electricity sector Encourage generation of electricity from sustainable and renewable sources Investment in new renewable energy projects until the target of 33,000 gigawatt-hours of renewable electricity generation is met and sustained until 2030. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Proposal supports Australia's renewable energy targets by seeking to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through the storage and distribution of electricity through renewable sources.
AEMO Integrated System Plan 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide essential support for Australia's energy transition Triple grid-scale variable renewable energy by 2030, and increase it six-fold by 2050 Almost quadruple firming capacity to support variable renewable energy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Proposal will contribute to grid stability and management The Proposal will help improve firming capacity for the NEM as it transitions to variable renewable energy sources.
Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensures that development proposals do not significantly impact Matters of National Environmental Significance (MNES) Ensures that development avoids or mitigates impacts on biodiversity, particularly on listed species or ecological communities To protect threatened species and ecological communities To promote ecologically sustainable development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An assessment of the Proposal against MNES has been undertaken as part of a Biodiversity Assessment (refer to Section 7.1 and Appendix D) No significant impacts to MNES are expected and a referral is not warranted.

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Legislation / Policy	Relevant Objectives & Actions	Proposed Alignment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To enhance Australia's capacity to address environmental challenges. 	
State		
Climate Change Act 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To set a long-term greenhouse gas emissions reduction target. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Proposal will directly contribute to the State's stated greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets by supporting the production and dispersion of renewably generated electricity
Renewable Energy (Jobs and Investment) Act 2017 & Victorian Renewable Energy Target (VRET)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To increase the proportion of Victoria's electricity generated by the means of large scale facilities that utilise renewable energy sources To contribute to achieving the renewable energy targets, and energy storage targets To support the development of projects and initiatives to encourage investment, employment and technology development in Victoria in relation to renewable electricity generation, and energy storage To contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in Victoria and to achieve associated environmental and social benefits To promote the transition of Victoria to a clean energy economy To contribute to the security of electricity supply in Victoria. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposed BESS will be key to achieving Victoria's ambitious energy storage targets of at least 2.6 GW by 2030. The battery storage capacity of the Proposal supports the Victorian Government's goals of providing reliable, affordable and clean energy The Proposal will also contribute to Victoria's renewable energy targets by allowing more renewable energy generators to connect to the grid.
Victoria's Climate Change Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transition the state to a clean energy future, promote the creation of clean energy jobs and strengthen the energy system Invest in innovative technologies Reduce greenhouse gas emissions levels by 28-33% from 2005 levels by 2025 and 45-50% by 2030. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Proposal will help support the State's transition to a clean energy future by providing critical storage and dispersion of nearby renewably generated electricity The Proposal will contribute to the State's emissions reduction targets by allowing a greater mix of renewable energy in the electricity grid and storing energy that would otherwise be generated through fossil fuel sources The Proposal will utilise the latest LFP cell battery technology which is constantly adapting and innovating to meet best practice standards
Environment Effects Act 1978	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a project is expected to have significant environmental effects, an Environment Effects Statement may be required to be prepared and submitted to the Minister for assessment of the environmental effects of the works If a project is determined to be public works, the proponent must cause an Environmental Effects Statement to be prepared and submitted to the Minister for assessment of the environmental effects of the works. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An assessment of the Proposal against ecological values has been undertaken as part of a Biodiversity Assessment (refer to Chapter 7.1 and Appendix D) No significant impacts to ecological values are expected and an Environment Effects Statement is not warranted.
Planning and Environment Act 1987 (P&E Act)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To establish a framework for planning the use, development and protection of land in Victoria Provides legal weight to instruments under the P&E Act, including the Victorian Planning Provisions, planning schemes (such as the Latrobe Planning Scheme), regulations and Ministerial directions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Proposal is in accordance with the general objectives for planning and land use within Victoria It has been selected for its strategic location, in close proximity to existing electrical infrastructure and renewable energy facilities Planning approval from the Minister for Planning is being sought as part of this application. A detailed assessment against the relevant provisions of the Latrobe Planning Scheme has been provided at Chapter 6.

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Legislation / Policy	Relevant Objectives & Actions	Proposed Alignment
Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To recognise, protect and conserve Aboriginal cultural heritage in Victoria in ways that are based on respect for Aboriginal knowledge and cultural and traditional practices To promote the management of Aboriginal cultural heritage as an integral part of land and natural resource management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Proposal is located on the traditional land of the Gunaikurnai people and the CLWAC is the RAP for the land A Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) is being prepared for the Proposal
Heritage Act 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To protect and conserve the cultural heritage of the State To create offences and other enforcement measures to protect and conserve cultural heritage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Proposal is generally consistent with the objectives of the Act as it would not disturb any places of European heritage.
Environment Protection Act 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) powers and tools to prevent and minimise the risks of harm to human health and the environment from pollution and waste Provides the EPA with the ability to pursue stronger sanctions and penalties to hold environmental offenders to account. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Proposal is consistent with the purposes of the EP Act Assessments are being undertaken to understand how the Proposal may impact the natural environment and health of the surrounding community and mitigation measures will be implemented should impacts be considered unacceptable (refer to Chapter 7).
Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988 (FFG Act)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To prevent taxa and communities of flora and fauna from becoming threatened and to recover threatened taxa and communities so their conservation status improves To identify and mitigate the impacts of potentially threatening processes to address the important underlying causes of biodiversity decline. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Proposal is consistent with the purposes of the FFG Act in that it does not impact on threatened species or communities The planning application is accompanied by a Biodiversity Assessment (refer to Chapter 7.1 and Appendix D) which addresses the requirements in the FFG Act.
Road Management Act 2004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To establish a system for the management of safe and efficient public roads that best meet the needs and priorities of State and local communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The planning application is accompanied by a Transport Assessment (refer to Chapter 7.3 and Appendix F), which outlines the proposed strategies for road management. The proposal is consistent with the road management principles outlined in the <i>Road Management Act 2004</i>.
Water Act 1989	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide for the integrated management of waterways in Victoria To promote the orderly, equitable and efficient use of water resources in Victoria. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The planning application is accompanied by a Hydrology Assessment (refer to Chapter 7.7 and Appendix J), which outlines how the Proposal will interact with water resources. A works on waterways permit may be required from the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority (CMA) for any works that interact with Eel Hole Creek.
Dangerous Goods Act 1985	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To promote the safety of persons and property in relation to the manufacture, storage, transport, transfer, sale and use of dangerous goods To ensure that adequate protections are taken against certain fires, explosions, leakages and spillages of dangerous goods To ensure that information relating to dangerous goods is provided by occupiers and owners of premises to the relevant authorities To allocate responsibilities to occupiers and owners of premises to ensure that the health and safety of workers and the general public is protected. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The planning application is accompanied by a Fire Hazard and Risk Assessment (refer to Chapter 0 and Appendix I), which assesses the hazard associated with the Proposal The Proponent has extensive experience in the development of grid-scale battery storage systems that commonly utilise LFP cell technology and are familiar with the associated dangerous goods and hazards handling processes in the respective states and territories they have worked in Elements of the Proposal classified as Dangerous Goods will be listed within the site's Dangerous Goods register. Maintenance programs will be enacted to ensure all elements containing Dangerous Goods will be maintained in accordance with manufacturer specifications and relevant Australian Standards.

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Legislation / Policy	Relevant Objectives & Actions	Proposed Alignment
Design Guidelines and Model Requirements: Renewable Energy Facilities 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides standard considerations and measures in relation to fire safety, risk and emergency management to be considered when designed and operating new renewable energy facilities Provides design guidelines for battery facilities in bushfire prone areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The planning application is accompanied by a Fire Hazard and Risk Assessment (refer to Chapter 0 and Appendix I), which assesses the Proposal against the guidelines The CFA will be consulted during the design, construction and operation phases.
Regional		
Gippsland Regional Growth Plan 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides an integrated planning framework to direct and manage sustainable growth across the region Acknowledges energy production as one of Gippsland's major industries, noting that the region produces around 90% of Victoria's electricity Acknowledges that opportunities exist to develop renewable energy resources as part of a long-term strategy to maintain Gippsland as Victoria's energy hub. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Proposal will help support Gippsland to remain as Victoria's energy hub.
Gippsland Regional Plan 2020-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides a strategic vision for improving the economic, social, cultural and environmental outcomes for the Gippsland Region and the community A 'renewable and clean energy sector' is an identified opportunity for the region, including battery storage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Proposal supports the vision for the Gippsland Region, contributing towards the renewable and clean energy sector.
Gippsland Regional Economic Development Strategy 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lays out the medium to long term strategic directions for driving economic growth and development across the region Identifies that the region is in transition away from a reliance on coal-fired power towards a renewed focus on strengthening areas of existing specialisation, including new energy A key strategic direction of the strategy is to pursue opportunities from energy industry transition, including in clean and renewable energy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Proposal contributes to the strategic direction of the strategy.
Gippsland's Clean Energy Future: Through Investment and Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highlights opportunities for investment and sets out the support that the region requires to realise a clean energy future Identifies stabilising the energy supply as a key requirement for the region, including the provision of battery storage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Proposal is located in proximity to the existing and future energy infrastructure of the Latrobe Valley The Proposal will contribute to providing a secure and reliable energy supply.
Latrobe Valley Draft Preliminary Land Use Vision 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides a preliminary land use vision for land use and development in the Latrobe Valley, as the region undergoes significant change Provides a long term land use planning outlook for rehabilitating the landscape of the Latrobe mine region Acknowledges that the Latrobe Valley and Gippsland are providing new renewable energy with expanded capacity through solar and wind energy investment that 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Proposal is located in proximity to the existing and future energy infrastructure of the Latrobe Valley The Proposal will contribute to the economic spine between Morwell and Churchill The Proposal is not conducive to intensive agricultural uses, but as identified in the Agriculture Assessment (refer to Chapter 7.8 and Appendix K) the site is not considered to be high quality agricultural land.

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Legislation / Policy	Relevant Objectives & Actions	Proposal Alignment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> can benefit from established transmission systems Identifies land in proximity to Tramway Road, including the site, as being part of a potential economic spine and intensive agriculture area. 	
Local		
Council Plan 2021-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Endeavours for Latrobe to be a smart, creative, healthy, sustainable and healthy community Strategies include working towards net zero energy emissions through the delivery of new energy initiatives, efficiencies and offsets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Proposal will contribute to Latrobe's goal of net zero energy emissions
Rural Land Use Strategy 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seeks to protect and promote economic, environmental and landscape values associated with rural demand while responding to competing demands and legacy issues Identifies that the site is productive agricultural land but 'Class 4' agricultural class/capability suggesting poor capability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Proposal is located in proximity to the existing and future energy infrastructure of the Latrobe Valley, reducing fragmentation of agricultural land The Proposal is not proposed on land with high agricultural capability (refer to Chapter 7.8 and Appendix K).

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6. Planning Assessment

This Chapter presents the relevant provisions of the Planning Scheme and where appropriate provides assessment directly against them.

6.1 Municipal Planning Strategy

The Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) is provided at Clause 02 of the Planning Scheme and provides the context, vision and strategic directions of Latrobe City Council. Relevant Clauses include:

- Clause 02.01 – Context – This clause provides an overview of the current social, economic and environmental context of the municipality
- Clause 02.02 – Vision – This clause sets out the vision for the municipality in line with the Council Plan
- Clause 02.03 – Strategic Directions – This clause provides the strategic direction for the municipality in line with strategic framework plans at Clause 02.04.

Table 5 sets out the strategic direction sub-clauses and provisions relevant to the Proposal and an assessment against them.

Table 5 – Relevant Strategic Directions and Assessment

Sub-clause	Relevant Provision	Assessment
Clause 02.03-3 Environmental risks and amenity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Planning for bushfire seeks to reduce bushfire risk through various bushfire protection measures. 	The Proposal has been considerate to the <i>Design Guidelines and Model Requirements: Renewable Energy Facilities</i> (CFA, 2023) and is supported by a Fire Hazard and Risk Assessment (refer to Chapter 0 and Appendix I).
Clause 02.03-4 Natural resource management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Planning for agriculture seeks to retain large lots and discourage the establishment of sensitive or non-agricultural related land uses on high quality agricultural land to retain its productive viability ▪ Planning for agriculture seeks to facilitate non-agricultural related use and development that respect settlement patterns, landscape, amenity and environmental values and adjacent land uses in highly fragmented rural areas ▪ Planning for water seeks to encourage the improvement of water quality and environmental values of waterways 	The Proposal has been sited is located in proximity to the existing and future energy infrastructure of the Latrobe Valley, reducing fragmentation of agricultural land. The Proposal is not proposed on land with high agricultural capability (refer to Chapter 7.8 and Appendix K).
Clause 02.03-7 Economic development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Planning for economic growth seeks to enable the community to prosper from the transition to a low carbon future by supporting the diversification of employment opportunities ▪ Planning for economic growth seeks to encourage alternative energy industries, including renewable energy in locations with convenient access to existing energy distribution infrastructure. 	The Proposal would align with the MPS, particularly the ability for the Proposal to support Latrobe's transition to a low carbon future.

6.2 Planning Policy Framework

The Planning Policy Framework (PPF) sets out the State, regional and local objectives and strategies that guide land use and development within the municipality.

Table 6 sets out the relevant PPF Clause objectives and strategies and provides an assessment against them.

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Table 6 – Relevant PPF Objectives, Strategies and Assessment

ClauseObjectives and Strategies		Assessment
Clause 12 – Environmental and Landscape Values		Planning and Environment Act 1987. The document must not be used for any purpose which may breach any copyright
Clause 12.01-1S Protection of biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ensure that the impacts of land use and development on Victoria's biodiversity take cumulative impacts and habitat fragmentation into consideration	<p>The Proposal has been located on a site largely void of significant ecological values. A Biodiversity Assessment has been prepared (refer to Section 7.1 and Appendix D) to inform the design development and assessment of the Proposal with consideration of ecological values.</p> <p>The creation of access to Tramway Road will likely require impact to native vegetation, however this impact has been minimised as far as practicable.</p> <p>The Proposal includes some interaction with Eel Hole Creek, and a Hydrology Assessment has been prepared refer to Chapter 7.7 and Appendix J) to inform the design development and assessment of the Proposal with consideration of the values of the waterway.</p>
Clause 12.01-1L Protection of biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Protect habitats that contain indigenous flora and fauna, particularly where those species are threatenedRetain native vegetation on roadsides, waterways and public and private land to facilitate healthy habitats to improve biodiversity	
Clause 12.01-2S Native vegetation management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ensure that there is no net loss to biodiversity as a result of the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation	
Clause 12.03-1S River and riparian corridors, waterways, lakes, wetlands and billabongs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Protect the environmental, cultural, landscape values of all waterway systems as significant economic, environmental and cultural assetsSensitively design and site development to maintain and enhance the waterway system and the surrounding landscape setting, environmental assets, and ecological and hydrological systems	
Clause 13 – Environmental Risks and Amenity		
Clause 13.02-1S Bushfire planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Identify bushfire hazard and undertake appropriate risk assessment by applying the best available science to identify vegetation, topographic and climatic conditions that create a bushfire hazardConsulting with emergency management agencies and the relevant fire authority early in the process to receive their recommendations and implement appropriate bushfire protection measures	<p>The Proposal has been sited within proximity to existing energy generation and transmission infrastructure to avoid land use compatibility issues as far as practicable.</p> <p>This application is supported by a number of technical assessments, including the consideration of Fire Hazard and Risk, Hydrology, Noise and Landscape and Visual (refer to Chapter 7). These assessments have and will be used to inform design and development to avoid and minimise environmental and amenity risks and impacts.</p>
Clause 13.03-1S Floodplain management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Avoid intensifying the impact of flooding through inappropriately located use and development	
Clause 13.05-1S Noise Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ensure that development is not prejudiced and community amenity and human health is not adversely impacted by noise emissions.Minimise the impact on human health from noise exposure to occupants of sensitive land uses (residential use, child care centre, school, education centre, residential aged care centre or hospital) near noise emission sources through suitable building siting and design (including orientation and internal layout), urban design and land use separation techniques as appropriate to the land use functions and character of the area.	
Clause 13.07-1S Land use compatibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ensure that use or development of land is compatible with adjoining and nearby land usesAvoid or otherwise minimise adverse off-site impacts from commercial, industrial and other uses through land use separation, siting, building design and operational measures.	
Clause 14 – Natural Resource Management		
Clause 14.01-1S Protection of agricultural land	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Avoid permanent removal of productive agricultural land from the state's agricultural base without consideration of the economic importance of the land for the agricultural production and processing sectors.	<p>The Proposal comprises the use of agricultural land (FZ1) that is a designated brown coal resource (SRO1).</p> <p>An Agriculture Assessment has been prepared (refer to Chapter 7.8 and Appendix K) confirming the site is not</p>
Clause 14.01-1L Protection of agricultural land	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Discourage non-agricultural uses from locating or developing in a manner that will inhibit the expansion of farming uses.	

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Clause	Objectives and Strategies	
Clause 14.03-1S Resource exploration and extraction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide for the long-term protection of natural resources in Victoria Develop and maintain buffers around mining and extractive industry activities Protect the brown coal resource in Central Gippsland by ensuring that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes in use and development of land overlying coal resources, as generally defined in Framework for the Future (Minister for Industry, Technology and Resources and Minister for Planning and Environment, 1987) and the Land Over Coal and Buffer Area Study (Ministry for Planning and Environment, 1988), do not compromise the winning or processing of coal Use and development within the buffer areas are compatible with use and development adjacent to these areas. 	<p>The Proposal would not compromise the future exploration and extraction of the coal resources in the area. The BESS components can be removed following decommissioning without adverse impacts on natural resources.</p> <p>Furthermore, the Proposal supports the role and function of the coal buffers between urban zones and coal resource areas, as it discourages 'incompatible use and development within buffer areas' which includes residential, rural living, commercial and industrial uses.</p>
Clause 14.03-1R Resource exploration and extraction – Gippsland Coal Resource	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage land uses that do not impede coal development in the protected coal resource areas Provide for use and development in coal resource areas that do not compromise the existing and future use of the coal resource Discourage non-coal related land use or development in coal resource areas that would be costly or difficult to remove Discourage the encroachment of incompatible use or development on coal resource areas 	
Clause 14.03-1L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage Categories B and C areas to be used for agricultural uses 	

Clause 15 – Built Environment and Heritage

Clause 15.01-6S Design for rural areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that the siting, scale and appearance of development protects and enhances rural character Protect the visual amenity of valued rural landscapes and character areas along township approaches and sensitive tourist routes by ensuring new development is sympathetically located Site and design development to minimise visual impacts on surrounding natural scenery and landscape features including ridgelines, hill tops, waterways, lakes and wetlands. 	<p>The site is located in proximity to existing and future energy generation and transmission infrastructure which already represent significant non-natural elements in the landscape.</p> <p>A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment has been prepared (refer to Chapter 7.4 and Appendix G) to further assess this impact.</p> <p>A CHMP is being prepared for the Proposal.</p>
Clause 15.03-2S Aboriginal cultural heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide for the protection and conservation of pre-contact and post-contact Aboriginal cultural heritage places Ensure that permit approvals align with the recommendations of any relevant CHMP approved under the <i>Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006</i> 	

Clause 17 – Economic Development

Clause 17.01-1S Diversified economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect and strengthen existing and planned employment areas and plan for new employment areas Facilitate growth in a range of employment sectors based on the emerging and existing strengths of each region. 	<p>The Proposal would help to facilitate growth in a new and innovative employment sector, thereby supporting rural economies to grow and diversify.</p>
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Clause 19 – Infrastructure

Clause 19.01-1S Energy supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the development of energy generation, storage, transmission, and distribution infrastructure to transition to a low-carbon economy Develop appropriate infrastructure to meet community demand for energy services Ensure energy generation, storage, transmission and distribution infrastructure and projects are resilient to the impacts of climate change Support energy infrastructure projects in locations that minimise land use conflicts and that take advantage of existing resources and infrastructure networks Facilitate energy infrastructure projects that help diversify local economies and improve sustainability and social outcomes. 	<p>The Proposal directly supports the Clause by providing storage to assist in the transition to a low carbon economy. It would also facilitate energy infrastructure development in an appropriate location. It would take advantage of existing infrastructure, provide benefits to industry and the community, support the transition to a low-carbon economy with renewable energy and greenhouse emission reductions, help diversify the local economy and improve</p>
Clause 19.01-2S Renewable energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate renewable energy development in appropriate locations 	

Clause	Objectives and Strategies
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the economic, social and environmental benefits to the broader community of renewable energy generation while also considering the need to minimise the effects of a proposal on the local community and environment.

6.3 Zones and Overlays

6.3.1 This chapter provides an assessment of the Proposal against the relevant zone and overlay provisions. Clause 35.07 Farming Zone – Schedule 1 (FZ1)

The site is located within the Farming Zone – Schedule 1 (FZ1) under the Latrobe Planning Scheme, refer to Figure 14.

The purpose of the Farming Zone is:

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

Clause 73.03 (Land Use Terms) of the Planning Scheme defines 'utility installation' as 'land used to transmit, distribute or store power'. As a result, the most appropriate definition of the Proposal is a 'utility installation'.

Pursuant to Clause 35.07-1 (Table of uses), 'utility installation' is a Section 2 – Permit required use.

Pursuant to Clause 35.07-4 (Buildings and works), a permit is required to construct or carry out buildings or works associated with a Section 2 use.

Permit triggers under Clause 35.07-4 (Buildings and works) also apply to:

- A building which is within 5 metres of a boundary

Minimum setback of 100 metres from a dwelling not in the same ownership (from Option A transmission line) Clause 35.07-6 (Decision guidelines) sets out the guidelines for the Responsible Authority to consider before deciding on an application, these have been set out and responded to in Table 7.

Clause 35.07-7 (Signs) sets out that the Farming Zone is Category 4.

Table 7 – Farming Zone Decision Guidelines and Assessment

Decision Guideline	Assessment
<p>General issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework. Any Regional Catchment Strategy and associated plan applying to the land. The capability of the land to accommodate the proposed use or development, including the disposal of effluent. How the use or development relates to sustainable land management. Whether the site is suitable for the use or development and whether the proposal is compatible with adjoining and nearby land uses. How the use and development makes use of existing infrastructure and services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Proposal is appropriately located on land that is capable of accommodating the proposed use of a utility installation. The site is particularly suitable for the proposed use given the proximity to existing infrastructure, lack of sensitive receptors, and lack of significant native vegetation.
Agricultural issues and the impacts from non-agricultural uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Proposal would result in the net loss of approximately 9 ha of

Decision Guideline	Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whether the use or development will support and enhance agricultural production. Whether the use or development will adversely affect soil quality or permanently remove land from agricultural production. The potential for the use or development to limit the operation and expansion of adjoining and nearby agricultural uses. The capacity of the site to sustain the agricultural use. The agricultural qualities of the land, such as soil quality, access to water and access to rural infrastructure. Any integrated land management plan prepared for the site. Whether Rural worker accommodation is necessary having regard to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The nature and scale of the agricultural use. The accessibility to residential areas and existing accommodation, and the remoteness of the location. The duration of the use of the land for Rural worker accommodation. 	<p>agricultural land. Given the low agricultural potential of the land and the relatively small footprint of development, this loss of agricultural land is considered to be acceptable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Proposal would not limit the operations of adjoining and nearby properties.
<p>Environmental issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The impact of the proposal on the natural physical features and resources of the area, in particular on soil and water quality. The impact of the use or development on the flora and fauna on the site and its surrounds. The need to protect and enhance the biodiversity of the area, including the retention of vegetation and faunal habitat and the need to revegetate land including riparian buffers along waterways, gullies, ridgelines, property boundaries and saline discharge and recharge area. The location of on-site effluent disposal areas to minimise the impact of nutrient loads on waterways and native vegetation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accompanying this application is a Flora and Fauna Impact Assessment (Chapter 7.1). This assessment concluded that the site does not contain significant biodiversity values. The proposal will not cause significant detriment to the onsite or nearby natural environment.
<p>Design and siting issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The need to locate buildings in one area to avoid any adverse impacts on surrounding agricultural uses and to minimise the loss of productive agricultural land. The impact of the siting, design, height, bulk, colours and materials to be used, on the natural environment, major roads, vistas and water features and the measures to be undertaken to minimise any adverse impacts. The impact on the character and appearance of the area or features of architectural, historic or scientific significance or of natural scenic beauty or importance. The location and design of existing and proposed infrastructure including roads, gas, water, drainage, telecommunications and sewerage facilities. Whether the use and development will require traffic management measures. The need to locate and design buildings used for accommodation to avoid or reduce noise and shadow flicker impacts from the operation of a wind energy facility if it is located within one kilometre from the nearest title boundary of land subject to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A permit for a wind energy facility; or An application for a permit for a wind energy facility; or An incorporated document approving a wind energy facility; or A proposed wind energy facility for which an action has been taken under section 8(1), 8(2), 8(3) or 8(4) of the Environment Effects Act 1978. The need to locate and design buildings used for accommodation to avoid or reduce the impact from vehicular traffic, noise, blasting, dust and vibration from an existing or proposed extractive industry operation if it is located within 500 metres from the nearest title boundary of land on which a work authority has been applied for or granted under the <i>Mineral Resources (Sustainable Development) Act 1990</i>. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposal has been designed and sited to occupy the smallest footprint, minimising the loss of agricultural land, and located adjacent to an existing terminal station. The materials and finishes of the proposed BESS would not present a significant additional visual impact to the existing landscape. In addition, proposed screening vegetation would reduce the visual impact. More details can be found in the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Chapter 7.4). The proposal takes advantage of existing infrastructure, being adjacent to the Hazelwood Terminal Station and existing road infrastructure.

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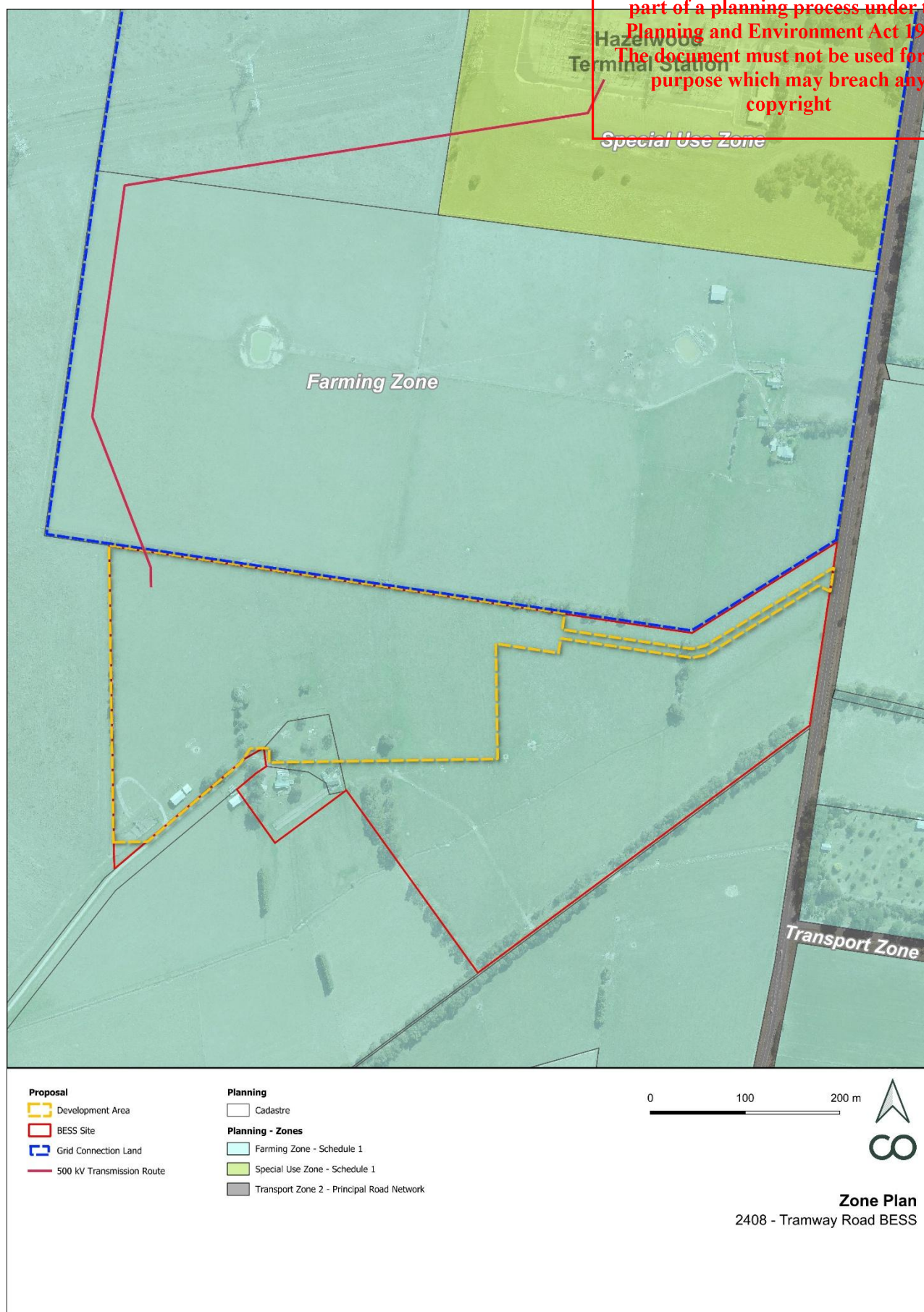


Figure 14 – Zone Map

6.3.2 Clause 37.01 Special Use Zone – Schedule 1 (SUZ1)

Part of the Proposal, comprising the grid connection land at the existing Hazelwood Terminal Station is located within the Special Use Zone – Schedule 1 (SUZ1) under the Latrobe Planning Scheme, refer to Figure 14.

The purpose of the Special Use Zone is to recognise or provide for the use and development of land for specific purposes as identified in the schedule to the zone. Schedule 1 to the Special Use Zone is for Brown Coal with the purpose:

- To provide for brown coal mining and associated uses
- To provide for electricity generation and associated uses
- To provide for interim and non-urban uses which protect brown coal resources and to discourage the use or development of land incompatible with future brown coal mining and industry

Pursuant to Section 1.0 (Table of uses) of Schedule 1 to Clause 37.01, 'utility installation' is a Section 1 – Permit not required use as the 'utility installation' is directly associated with the transmission of electricity. All of the land within the Special Use Zone is greater than 1000 metres from land in a residential zone, business zone or Public Acquisition Overlay. Therefore, all the Section 1 conditions within the Table of Uses are met.

Pursuant to Clause 37.01-4 (Buildings and works), a permit is required to construct a building or construct or carry out works.

Section 4.0 (Buildings and works) of Schedule 1 to Clause 37.01 sets out application requirements and decision guidelines which are outlined and assessed in Table 8.

Clause 37.01-5 (Signs) sets out that the Special Use Zone is Category 3.

Table 8 – Special Use Zone Schedule 1 Application Requirements, Decision Guidelines and Assessment

Application Requirement	Assessment
<p>Unless the circumstances do not require, an application to construct a building or construct or carry out works must be accompanied information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A plan drawn to scale which shows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The boundaries and dimensions of the site. – Adjoining roads. – Relevant ground levels. – The layout of existing and proposed buildings, and works.. – Driveways and vehicle parking and loading areas. – Proposed landscape areas. – External storage and waste treatment areas. ▪ Elevation drawings to scale which show the colour and materials of all buildings and works. ▪ Construction details of all drainage works, driveways and vehicle parking and loading areas. ▪ A landscape layout which includes the description of vegetation to be planted, the surfaces to be constructed, a site works specification and the method of preparing, draining, watering and maintaining the landscape area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Works within the Hazelwood Terminal Station site are to be determined at the discretion of Ausnet (the manager of the asset). ▪ Detailed plans and elevations will be provided once the grid connection arrangement has been finalised.
Decision Guideline	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Any natural or cultural values on or near the land. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The flora and fauna assessment (Chapter 7.1) and cultural heritage assessment (Chapter 7.2) have investigated the terminal station land. ▪ Impacts to natural or cultural values will be minimal.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Landscape treatment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Landscape treatments will be determined at the discretion of Ausnet.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Parking and site access, loading and service areas, outdoor storage, fencing, lighting and stormwater discharge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Parking and site access will be determined at the discretion of Ausnet.

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Application Requirement	Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The impact of the building and works on nearby existing or proposed brown coal mining and the sequential development of brown coal resources in the area, having regard to any comments or directions of referral authorities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Proposal will not impact existing brown coal mining or brown coal resources in the area.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The impact of the building and works on nearby existing or proposed brown coal mining or electricity generation and any nearby agricultural uses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Proposal will not impact nearby existing brown coal mining, electricity generation or any agricultural uses.

6.3.3 Clause 42.01 Environmental Significance Overlay – Schedule 1 (ESO1)

Part of the site is included within the Environmental Significance Overlay – Schedule 1 (ESO1) under the Latrobe Planning Scheme, refer to Figure 15.

The purpose of the Environmental Significance Overlay is:

- To identify areas where the development of land may be affected by environmental constraints.
- To ensure that development is compatible with identified environmental values.

ESO1 specifically applies an urban buffer and seeks to ensure that development in the Gippsland Coalfields Policy Area provides mutual protection of urban amenity, coal resource development, the continued social and economic productive use of land and is compatible within a buffer area including reservations and for services ancillary to a Brown Coal Open Cut outside the buffer area. In this instance the ESO1 is acting as a buffer from the Churchill township.

Pursuant to Clause 42.01-2 (Permit requirement), a permit is required to construct or carry out buildings or works and to remove, destroy or lop any vegetation, including dead vegetation.

No works or vegetation removal is proposed within the ESO1 area and therefore a permit is not required under this overlay.

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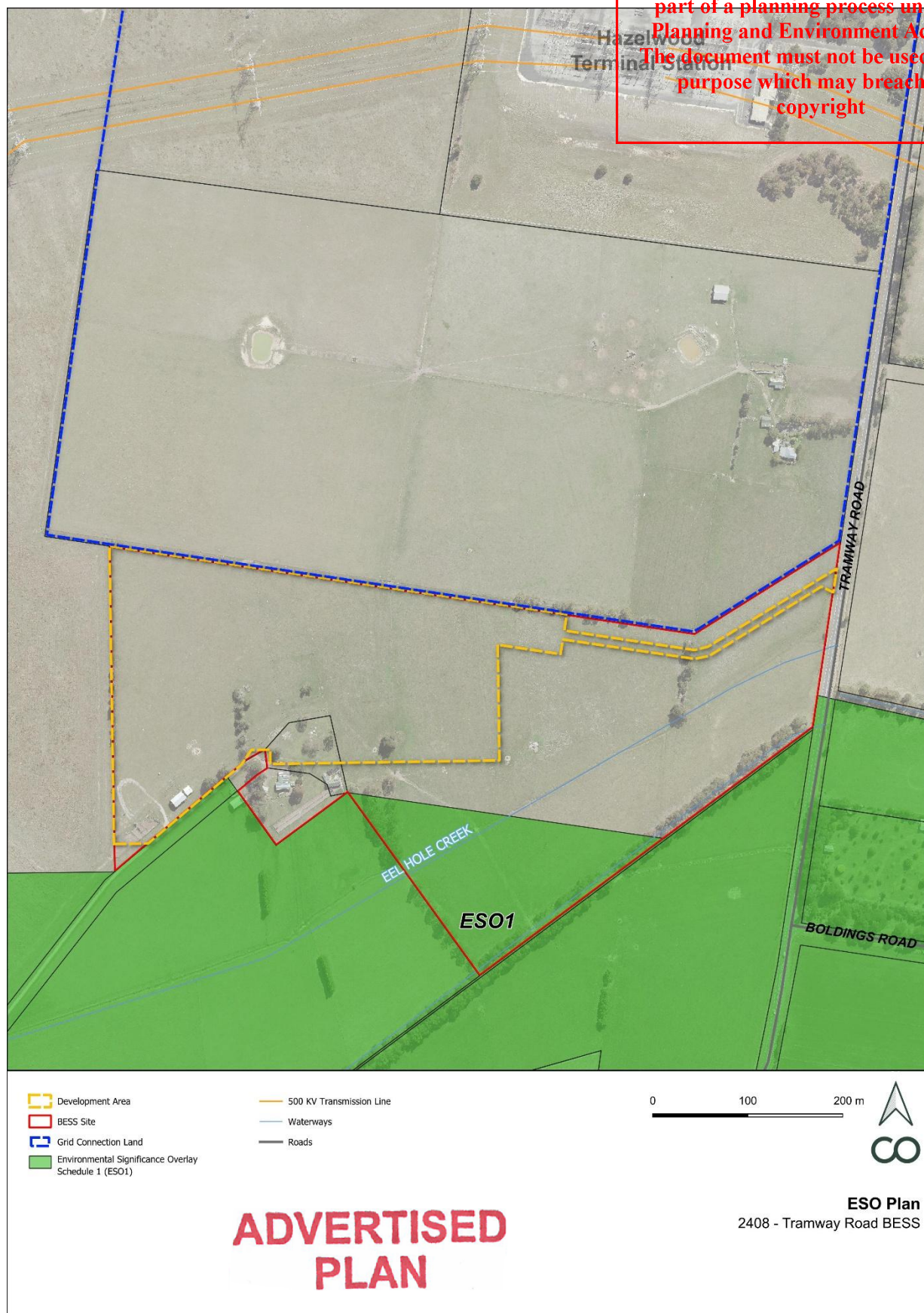


Figure 15 – Environmental Significance Overlay Map

6.3.4 Clause 44.06 Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO)

Part of the site is included within the Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO) under the Latrobe Planning Scheme, refer to Figure 16.

The purpose of the Bushfire Management Overlay is:

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

Pursuant to Clause 44.06-2 (Permit requirement), a permit is not required to construct a building or construct or carry out works associated with a 'utility installation'.

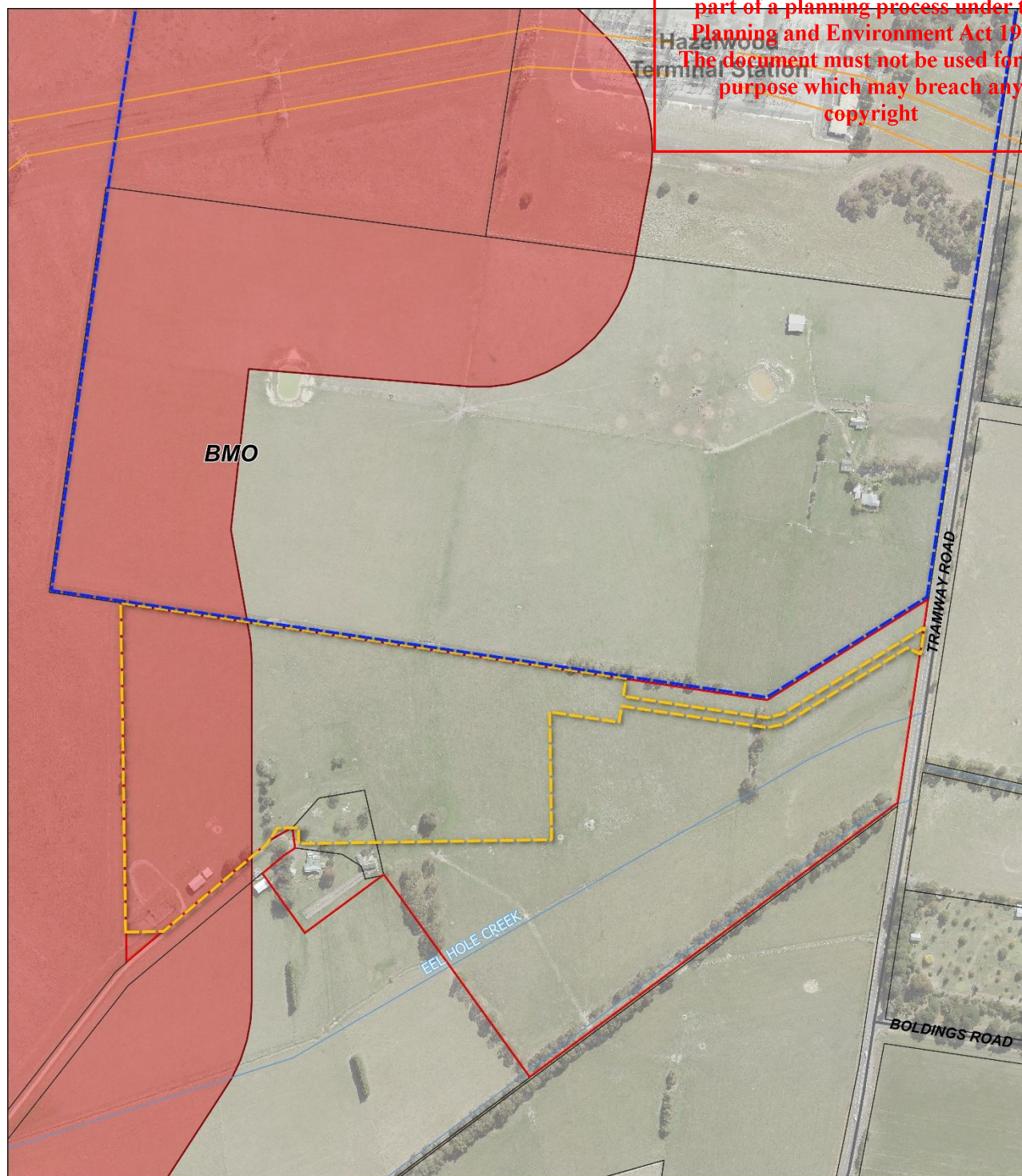
The site is also wholly located within the mapped 'Bushfire Prone Area'.

The layout of the Proposal must consider the *Design Guidelines and Model Requirements: Renewable Energy Facilities 2023* and feedback from the relevant emergency services authority (CFA). The planning application is accompanied by a Fire Hazard and Risk Assessment (refer to Chapter 0 and Appendix I), which assesses the Proposal against the guidelines.

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- Development Area
- BESS Site
- Grid Connection Land
- Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO)

- 500 KV Transmission Line
- Waterways
- Roads

0 100 200 m



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BMO Plan
2408 - Tramway Road BESS

Figure 16 – Bushfire Management Overlay Map

6.3.5 Clause 44.07 State Resource Overlay – Schedule 1 (SRO1)

The site is located within the State Resource Overlay – Schedule 1 (SRO1) under the Latrobe Planning Scheme, refer to Figure 17.

The purpose of the State Resource Overlay is to protect areas of mineral, stone and other resources, which have been identified as being of state significance, from use and development that would prejudice the current or future productive use of the resource.

SRO1 specifically applies to the Gippsland Brown Coalfields and states that in order to ensure the medium to long term extraction and use of the coal resource for power generation, building, works and subdivision of land over the resource should be of a type that will not inhibit, by way of community significance or cost of removal, the eventual productive use of that resource.

The overlay and schedule do not create permit requirements for this Proposal.

As the use and development of the land for a Utility Installation is not listed in the 6.0 of Schedule 1 to Clause 44.07, the Application requirements listed in Clause 44.07-5 do not apply.

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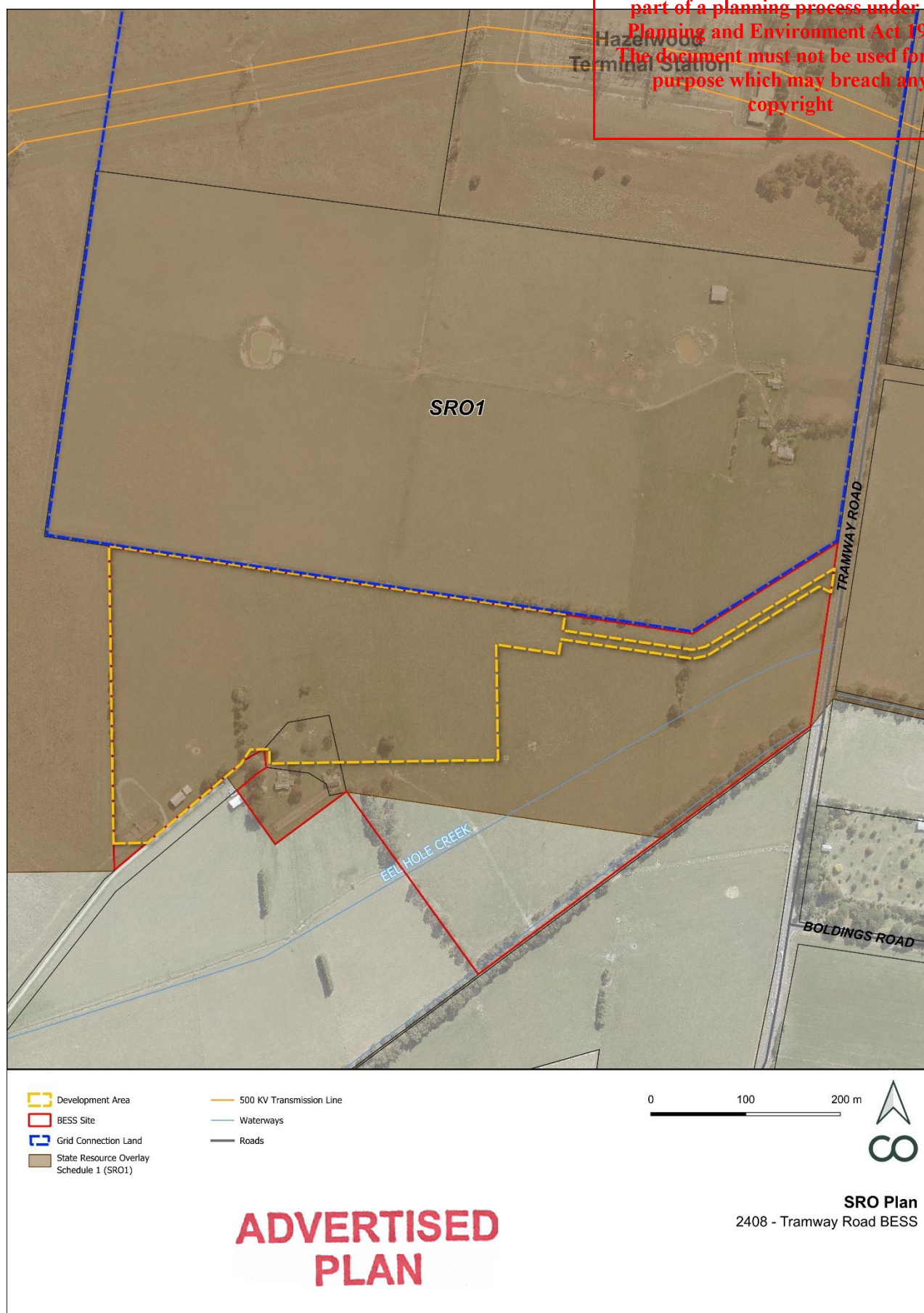


Figure 17 – State Resource Overlay Map

6.4 Particular Provisions

Particular provisions are planning controls that apply only to certain uses and development or to particular aspects of certain uses and development. The following Particular Provisions of the Latrobe Planning Scheme are considered relevant to the Project. Their purposes, permit triggers, application requirements, referrals, and decision guidelines are considered in Table 9 below.

Table 9 – Particular Provisions

Particular Provision	Planning Permit Requirements	Assessment
Clause 52.05 Signs	A planning permit is required for the development of land for a business identification sign within Category 4 – sensitive areas (Clause 52.05-14). The total display area to each premises must not exceed three square metres.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A small business identification sign is proposed to be placed at the entrance to the site. The sign would be no more than 3 sqm and would provide for appropriate identification of the facility and direction for workers and visitors. The details of the sign will be finalised in detailed design.
Clause 52.06 Car Parking	Car parking must be required to the satisfaction of the responsible authority (Clause 52.06-6).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Car parking for construction staff will be provided within a parking area adjacent the access point on Tramway Road. Given the large area of the overall site and the position of the BESS units in the western portion of the site, all car parking demands are expected to be comfortably accommodated on-site.
Clause 52.17 Native Vegetation	A planning permit is required to remove, destroy or lop native vegetation, including dead native vegetation (Clause 52.17-1). An application to remove, destroy or lop native vegetation must comply with the application requirements specified in the <i>Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation</i> (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, 2017).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Flora and Fauna Assessment has been undertaken which identifies where native vegetation is located within the site (Chapter 7.1). The amount of native vegetation removal is anticipated to be less than 0.5 ha.
Clause 52.29 Land Adjacent to the Principal Road Network	A planning permit is required to create or alter access to a road in a Transport Zone 2 (TRZ2) (Clause 52.29-2).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access is proposed to be created to Tramway Road in the north-east corner of the site. The proposed access will facilitate fully directional vehicle movements into and out of the site to Tramway Road. Based off the detailed Transport Impact Assessment (Chapter 7.3), it is recommended that the site access point to Tramway Road is designed in accordance with the design standards for basic right (BAR) and basic left (BAL) turn treatments within <i>Austroads Guide to Road Design Part 4A: Unsignalised and Signalised Intersections</i>. The existing driveway to the west of the site connecting to Monash Way is proposed to be retained to provide secondary/emergency access to the site. This access will not be altered.
Clause 53.22 Significant Economic Development	An application is exempt from the decision requirements of section 64(1), (2) and (3) and the review rights of section 82(1) of the P&E Act (Clause 53.22-4).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This application is made under Clause 53.22, exempting the application from the review rights of section 82(1).

6.5 General Provisions

The following General Provisions of the Planning Scheme is considered relevant to the Proposal, among other more general provisions. Broadly, General Provisions set out exemptions, decision guidelines, and referral and notice provisions.

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Table 10 – Referral requirements

General Provision	Referral Requirements	Assessment
Clause 66.02-2 Native vegetation	The Secretary to the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (as constituted under Part 2 of the <i>Conservation, Forests and Lands Act 1987</i>) is a recommending referral authority for an application to remove, destroy or lop native vegetation in the Detailed Assessment Pathway as defined in the <i>Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation</i> (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, 2017).	This application will be referred to the Secretary to the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning.
Clause 66.02-4 Major electricity line or easement	The electricity transmission authority is a determining referral authority for an application to construct a building or construct or carry out works on land within 60 metres of a major electricity transmission line (220 Kilovolts or more) or an electricity transmission easement.	This application will be referred to the electricity transmission authority. It is noted that Eku Energy has and continues to consult with AusNet (the electricity transmission authority) in relation to the proposed connection to the Hazelwood Terminal Station.
Clause 66.02-7 Industry, utility installation or warehouse	The Victorian WorkCover Authority is a determining referral authority to use land for a utility installation if the fire protection quantity is exceeded under the <i>Dangerous Goods (Storage and Handling) Regulation 2012</i> .	This application will be referred to the Victorian WorkCover Authority.
Clause 66.03 Referral of Permit Applications Under Other State Standard Provisions	The Head, Transport for Victoria is a determining referral authority for an application to create or alter access to a road declared as an arterial road.	This application will be referred to the Head, Transport for Victoria.
Section 1.0 of Schedule 1 to Clause 66.04 Referral of Permit Applications Under Local Provisions	The Secretary to the Department administering the <i>Minerals Resources (Sustainable Development) Act 1990</i> is a determining referral authority for an application within SUZ1.	This application will be referred to the Secretary to the Department administering the <i>Minerals Resources (Sustainable Development) Act 1990</i> .

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7. Technical impact assessment and mitigation measures

To inform the design and planning of this Proposal, a range of specialist technical assessments have been undertaken. These cover various topics and include contextual site assessments, describe potential impacts, and inform the design and measures required to avoid, minimise or mitigate those impacts. The site context and characteristics relevant to each technical assessment, as well as proposed impact mitigation measures, are summarised in the following sections of this chapter. The full technical reports are attached as appendices to this report.

7.1 Flora and Fauna

A Biodiversity Assessment was completed by Ecolink Consulting Pty Ltd, provided at Appendix D. The assessment was undertaken to determine the ecological constraints of the site and inform the design development process.

Broadly, the assessment found that the site consists of pastures of exotic grasses and environmental weeds. Where trees occur, they are generally located on swales in straight rows, with evidence of irrigation systems and tree guards. There are some patches of poor quality remnant understorey vegetation, largely consisting of indigenous tussock grass species, within the site. An extract of the Biodiversity Assessment results is provided at Chapter 7.1, highlighting that there is no native vegetation within the BESS Site. A minimal amount of native vegetation removal may be required to facilitate the access and grid connection for the Proposal.

The assessment found that the proposed works are unlikely to significantly impact any remnant threatened flora species, threatened ecological communities or threatened fauna species. Further surveys may be warranted for:

- Daisy Fleabane *Erigeron conyzoides* (FFG Act, Endangered) – if impacts to Tramway Road are anticipated
- Flinders Pygmy Perch *Nannoperca* sp. 1 (FFG Act, Vulnerable) – if the artificial drain south of Eel Hole Creek is proposed to be impacted

The Proposal will result in the loss of less than 0.5 hectares of native vegetation. Based on the extent of native vegetation, the lack of large trees and the location category, the proposal would not trigger an EPBC Act or EES referral.

7.1.1 Impact Mitigation

The Biodiversity Assessment recommends a number of avoidance and minimisation strategies including:

- Development design is considerate of the native vegetation and that the development (including roads and infrastructure) be sited away from the highest quality native vegetation where possible
- When considering the removal of vegetation, it is recommended on the basis of improved ecological outcome that the plantation trees within the study area are preferentially retained over exotic pasture
- Any retained trees, inclusive of their Tree Protection Zone, be avoided wherever safe and practicable as recommended in the arborist report
- Retained trees include protection of the Tree Protection Zone as per the Australian Standards for the Protection of Trees on Development Sites (Standards Australia 2009)
- Any tree pruning for the proposed development should be undertaken by a suitably qualified arborist, and should not exceed 30% of the overall tree canopy
- Engage a zoologist or wildlife handler salvage any wildlife from planted trees prior to their removal
- Vegetation which is to be retained is protected from construction activities, in accordance with a Construction Environment Management Plan

- Prepare a Construction Environment Management Plan, including:
 - Protection of retained scattered trees within the study (if any)
 - Using clean fill (if required)
 - Avoiding downstream and off-site impacts
 - Measures to minimise impacts associated with weed introduction and spread targeting noxious weeds such as:
 - African Box-thorn *Lycium ferocissimum*
 - Blackberry *Rubus fruticosus* spp. agg
 - Ragwort *Senecio jacobaea*
 - Spear Thistle *Cirsium vulgare*
 - Sweet Briar *Rosa rubiginosa*.
- Sediment, erosion and pollution control measures, in accordance with the EPA Guidelines (EPA Victoria 1991; EPA Victoria 1996), are incorporated in the Construction Environment Management Plan to avoid indirect impacts to downstream/downhill areas of greater ecological significance
- Secure appropriate offsets for any approved impacts to native vegetation.

7.2 Aboriginal Cultural Heritage

A CHMP is being prepared by GML Heritage Victoria Pty Ltd to support the development of the Proposal. Refer to Appendix E for the Desktop Cultural Heritage Assessment which has been prepared to support the development of the CHMP and this Planning Application.

The site includes an Area of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Sensitivity associated with Eel Hole Creek (refer to Figure 18). In accordance with section 7 of the Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018, a CHMP is required for an activity if all or part of the activity area is an area of cultural heritage sensitivity and all or part of the activity is a high impact activity. A 'utility installation' is defined as a high impact activity in accordance with section 46(1)(b) of the Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018.

Accordingly, a CHMP is required for this Proposal. GML Heritage has and will continue to work closely with GLaWAC to develop the CHMP.

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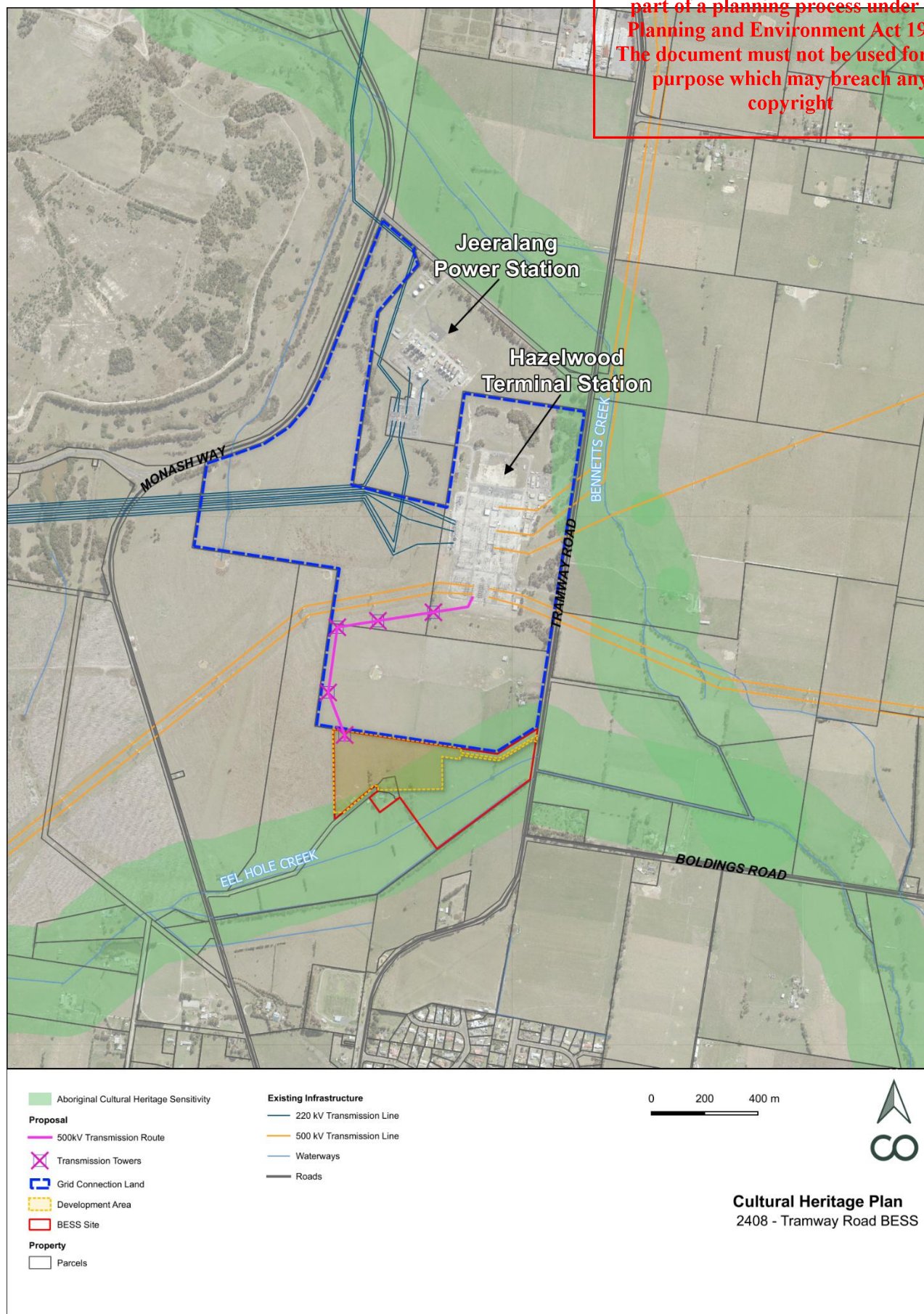


Figure 18 – Area of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Sensitivity Map

7.2.1 Impact Mitigation

The development of the CHMP will involve:

- A desktop assessment to determine the potential for Aboriginal cultural heritage to be present
- A standard assessment to identify any visible Aboriginal cultural heritage, establish the nature, extent and context of any Aboriginal cultural heritage, and assess the archaeological sensitivity of the landforms present
- A complex assessment (if required) to undertake subsurface testing if Aboriginal cultural heritage is expected subsurface
- Consultation with and approval from GLaWAC.

Once the assessments are complete, conditions and contingencies will be developed to manage impacts to Aboriginal cultural heritage within the site during the construction and operation of the BESS.

7.3 Transport

A Transport Impact Assessment has been prepared by One Mile Grid and is provided at Appendix F. The impact assessment outlines existing traffic conditions, proposed traffic generation and the impact of the Proposal on the road network.

The site will be primarily accessed via a new access point on Tramway Road, which is within a Transport Zone (TRZ2) and provides a single traffic lane in each direction and grassed verges on either side.

The traffic impact assessment concludes that during the peak construction phase, the level of traffic generated is not expected to have an impact on the operation of the surrounding road network. In addition, during operation the proposed BESS is not expected to generate any traffic impacts on the surrounding road network.

7.3.1 Impact Mitigation

The Transport Impact Assessment recommends the following traffic impact mitigation measures:

- A temporary speed limit reduction to 80 km/hr along Tramway Road during the 18-month construction period. This is to ensure compliance with sight distance requirements due to the existing crest along Tramway Road,
- Shoulder widening works be implemented on Tramway Road in the vicinity of the access point,
- Advanced warning signage along Tramway Road along approaches to the proposed access point during the construction period.

During the 6-month peak construction phase, provision will be made for staff to travel to the site via buses.

Further discussions will be undertaken with the Department of Transport to resolve any road upgrades needed to facilitate the project.

7.4 Landscape and Visual

A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has been prepared by Peter Haack Consulting and is provided at Appendix G. The LVIA has been prepared in consideration of:

- *Guidance for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment* (GLVIA), Third Edition, Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment (2013)
- *Guidance Note for Landscape and Visual Assessment*, Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (AILA) (2018)
- *Solar Energy Facilities Design and Development Guideline* (October 2022).

Key considerations for the LVIA include:

- The number and location of sensitive viewing locations
- The duration of the view – either static (generally long term > 1 hour) and mobile (generally short term continually moving and static for no longer than 5 minutes)
- The degree to which the proposed works would be visible
- The quality of the landscape setting
- The degree to which the Proposal contrasts or is compatible with the visual character of the setting – the visual modification level.

The LVIA identifies 15 sensitive viewpoints which are within two kilometres of the site. The viewpoints are along public roads and at dwellings. The LVIA provides an assessment for each of the viewpoints including the viewing distance, duration and frequency of view, visual use area, visual sensitivity, visual modification and visual impact. The LVIA also recommends proposed amelioration and the resulting residual impact should the amelioration be implemented.

Generally the sensitive viewpoints have been found to have negligible or low visual impacts as a result of the Proposal, only two have potential for high or moderate level of impact. Following proposed amelioration of screen planting, the residual impacts at these locations are expected to be low.

7.4.1 Impact Mitigation

A number of amelioration strategies are proposed, including:

- Project layout – maximising the distance from which the Proposal can be viewed and making effective use of existing vegetation
- Perimeter screen planning – establish screen planting where existing vegetation is lacking
- Material selection – use of non-reflective finishes and natural or neutral colours, as found in the landscape setting

7.5 Noise

A Noise Impact Assessment has been prepared by SLR Consulting Pty Ltd in April 2025. Refer to Appendix H for the Noise Impact Assessment.

Key considerations for the Noise Impact Assessment involved:

- Determining the existing noise environment of the project area through background noise monitoring,
- Modelling the expected noise emissions from the construction and operation of the proposed BESS,
- Assessing the expected noise impacts against the various requirements of the EPA,
- Consideration of cumulative noise impacts of existing and planned industry in the surrounding project area.

The assessment identified 15 sensitive receptors within 1.5 kilometres of the site, and concludes that:

- Operational compliance can be achieved at all times with the installation of a four to five metre noise wall along the northern, eastern and southern boundaries of the BESS site (refer to Figure 19).
- Cumulative noise is predicted to comply with noise limits at all receivers except R2, which indicates a potential marginal 2 dB exceedance of the night period limit. It is noted that this should be treated as a worst-case, conservative estimate, and that receiver R2 will be vacated for the future Marinus Link project, at which point it will cease to be a sensitive noise receptor.

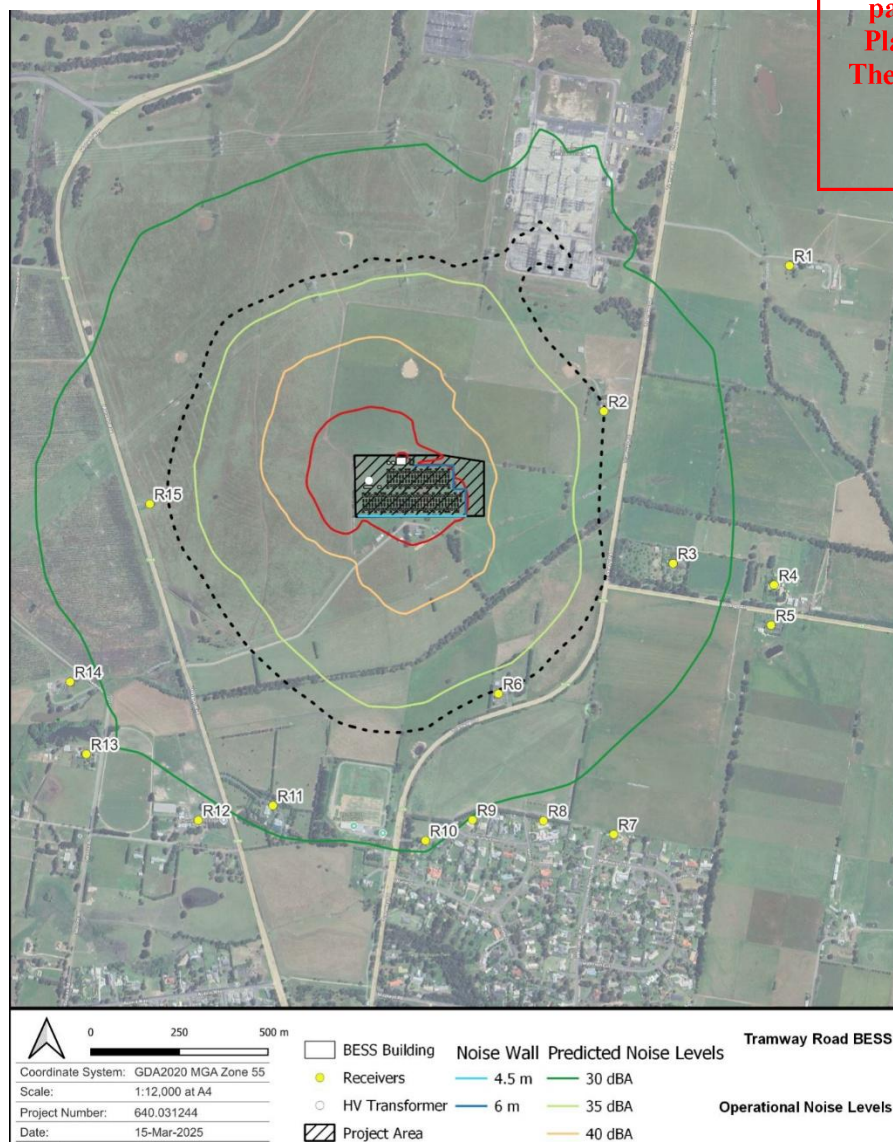


Figure 19 - Operational Noise Contours (SRL Consulting)

7.5.1 Impact Mitigation

Mitigation measures to reduce the noise impact on sensitive receptors involve the installation of a four to five metre noise wall along the northern, eastern and southern boundaries of the BESS site, which will achieve operational compliance at all times.

7.6 Fire Hazard and Risk

A Risk Management Plan (RMP) was prepared by Fire Risk Consultants in December 2024. Refer to Appendix I for the Fire Hazard and Risk Assessment.

The objective of the report was to identify primary fire risks associated with the implementation, function, and location of the Proposal, including the BESS units.

In particular, the scope of work was to:

- Provide a risk review consistent with fire risk assessment techniques for hazardous industry planning,
- Undertake a bushfire hazard assessment to understand potential bushfire scenarios,

- c) Ensure compliance with Country Fire Authority (CFA) requirements to address fire risk within renewable energy installations,
- d) Recommend mitigation measures if required.

The report concludes that the indicative design and layout of the Proposal meets the requirements of the CFA Guidelines and can adequately manage fire risk to an acceptable level. Once a BESS supplier has been selected, an updated RMP will be provided to confirm these conclusions prior to construction.

7.6.1 Impact Mitigation

As part of the RMP, Fire Risk Consultants recommend that the following requirements be implemented to satisfy the objectives of the relevant authorities:

- Access to the site to include full perimeter access to the BESS area, including appropriate widths and load limits from two separate access gates.
- Perimeter fire break of 22 metres to the west and south and 19 metres to the north and east around the BESS. 10 metre firebreaks around all other site infrastructure.
- If reticulated water cannot be accessed, provision of a static water supply (576,000 litres)
- Fire hydrant system that complies with AS2419.1, and booster assembly and pumps that enables appropriate pressures at the fire hydrant.
- Minimum fire water retention of 576,000 litres.
- Fire Management Plan as per the requirements of the CFA Guidelines.
- Emergency Management Plan as per the requirements of the CFA Guidelines.
- Emergency Information Book and Emergency Information Containers located at the Tramway Road entrance.

7.7 Hydrology

A Hydrology Impact Assessment was prepared by DCE and is provided at Appendix J. The assessment looked at the existing conditions of the site, as well as post-development hydrology, informing the design and demonstrating appropriate management.

The report addresses the impacts of on-site infiltration and surface water quality, including water quality in adjacent land and waterways and runoff management.

The assessment concludes that the site does not pond and that development will not have any negative impacts on surrounding areas. Stormwater quality treatment on-site can ensure that the development will not have adverse impacts on the existing flood levels and surrounding environment.

7.7.1 Impact Mitigation

The proposed grading of the site and methodology for managing internal and external stormwater has been developed to allow for stormwater quality treatment to be provided through green engineering methods, ensuring that stormwater is managed on site.

The subject site will be graded to slope the south and southwest. Developed flows from the subject site will be conveyed via existing overland flow paths. Stormwater from the proposed project will be conveyed by vegetated swales with 1% annual exceedance probability (AEP) capacity around the western and eastern edge of the project site discharging into Eel Hole Creek.

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External flows from the north of the subject site will be conveyed and diverted around the proposed project site by the proposed swale and berm.

7.8 Agriculture

An Agricultural Impact Assessment was prepared by Ag-Challenge Consulting and is provided at Appendix K.

Assessment of the Proposal identifies the site as well suited to grazing use, with soils considered uniform across the site and classified as brown sodosols. The position of the Proposal on a gentle crest will enable the dispersion of storm runoff in multiple directions and across a wide area, minimising concentrated water flows.

The assessment concludes that the Proposal will have no perceived detrimental impacts on the use of residual, adjacent and nearby land for agricultural purposes, and determines that the impacts to the agricultural amenity of the region are not significant.

7.8.1 Impact Mitigation

To assist with future reclamation of the site, topsoil to a depth of fifty centimetres shall be separately removed and stockpiled during construction. After decommissioning of the Proposal, the stockpiled topsoil and additional soil ameliorants and fertiliser will be applied to the site.

No additional mitigation measures are recommended during construction or operation.

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8. Conclusion

As demonstrated within this Planning Report, the proposed Tramway Road BESS application, for use and development of land for a Utility installation, is an appropriate use and form of development for the site.

This 300MW/1200MWh BESS is a key energy infrastructure development for the Latrobe Valley and wider Gippsland region, providing critical electricity grid services, significant regional economic benefits, and a major contribution to Victoria's energy storage targets.

Approval of this planning permit application is considered appropriate for the following reasons:

- It provides significant dispatchable energy storage, supporting Victoria's energy storage targets, and local existing and future energy generation projects and energy-intensive users;
- It is strategically located adjacent to the Hazelwood Terminal Station and proposed Marinus Link Converter Station;
- The Proposal is located within a highly modified landscape character, currently used for agricultural grazing and existing electricity infrastructure, and is a sufficient distance from residential land;
- The design has been carefully developed to be highly responsive to site opportunities and constraints. It avoids the more sensitive areas of the site considering cultural heritage, biodiversity values, and low-lying areas of inundation around Eel Hole Creek;
- The Proposal has been sited at the north-western extent of the 20-hectare landholding to maximise the distance to nearby sensitive receptors;
- The Site has historically been cleared of native vegetation, and native vegetation removal has primarily been avoided and impacts to natural values minimised;
- Areas of elevated cultural heritage significance have been initially identified and disturbance minimised;
- Tramway Road provides direct heavy vehicle access to the highway network, without the need for construction traffic to pass through residential areas or necessitate road upgrades;
- The Proposal will provide significant local and regional economic benefits, including:
 - Direct investment of at least \$400 million, and local economic benefits through a proposed community benefit sharing scheme;
 - Creation of approximately 150 construction jobs and 5 ongoing operational jobs;
 - Prioritisation of local employment opportunities to the extent possible for construction, operation and maintenance, as well as supporting training and development of an emerging energy industry in Victoria's GREZ;
- It is highly consistent with the key planning provisions of the Latrobe Planning Scheme, including the FZ1 and SUZ1 and the relevant overlays;
- The Proposal strongly supports relevant state and local policy in relation to energy storage, emission reductions, infrastructure provision, and economic development within the Latrobe Valley;
- The Proposal is consistent with the TRZ2, parking provisions, and addresses fire safety requirements within the CFA Guidelines;
- The development is considered appropriate to the Site's surrounds and does not unreasonably impact the amenity of nearby residences. Noise modelling demonstrates the Project is capable of meeting Noise Protocol obligations upon operation. The components have been sited to minimise visual appearance to neighbours and a Landscape Concept Plan will further reduce visibility;
- Construction impacts are manageable and will be further detailed in the environmental and construction management plans.

The application is supported by a suite of technical investigations that provide detailed assessment and justification of the Proposal. Based on these technical assessments, the Proposal is not expected to generate

any unreasonable or significant environmental or community impacts. Lastly, the Proponent has undertaken a comprehensive community and stakeholder engagement program, appropriately informing nearby residents and the wider Hazelwood North and Churchill communities of the Proposal. Consistent and clear information has been provided to stakeholders and community members about the details of the Proposal, any potential impacts, and how to get involved.

The project team has engaged with DTP and other key stakeholders including GLaWAC Latrobe City Council, Gippsland Climate Change Network, Churchill & District Community Association, Latrobe Sustainability Group, West Gippsland CMA and the CFA. The local community and stakeholders will continue to be engaged with during the exhibition and assessment phases of the application, and through the post-permit, construction and operation phases. The design concept has and will continue to evolve in response to technical assessments, community and stakeholder feedback.

Considering the above reasons, it is requested that Minister for Planning grant approval for this planning permit application.

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Appendices

Appendix A	Certificates of Title
Appendix B	Application Plans
Appendix C	Communication Materials
Appendix D	Biodiversity Assessment
Appendix E	Cultural Heritage Assessment
Appendix F	Transport Impact Assessment
Appendix G	Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
Appendix H	Noise Impact Assessment
Appendix I	Fire Hazard and Risk Assessment
Appendix J	Hydrology Assessment
Appendix K	Agriculture Assessment
Appendix L	Consultation Summary Report

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Appendix A Certificates of Title

Please refer to Appendices A.1, A.2, A.3, A.4, A.5, and A.6.

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Appendix B Application Plans

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Appendix C Communication Materials

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Tramway Road BESS Proposal

cogency

30 October 2024

To Owner/Occupier,

RE: Tramway Road BESS – Letter of introduction

On behalf of our client team, we are writing to provide information on a proposal to develop the 'Tramway Road BESS' – a 300MW battery energy storage system (BESS) adjacent to Hazelwood Terminal Station. We also wish to notify you about upcoming door knocks and invite you to a community drop-in session to be hosted by the project team.

About the project

The proposed 'Tramway Road BESS' and associated infrastructure is adjacent to the Hazelwood Terminal Station at 675 Monash Way, Hazelwood North, approximately 6 kilometres south of Morwell and 2 kilometres north of Churchill. The project is being developed by Eku Energy, a specialist clean energy storage business, delivering over 16 gigawatt hours of battery energy storage across Australia. Tramway Road BESS will generate real and lasting social and economic benefits, including creating local job opportunities and providing reliable energy storage to support Victoria's energy transition. A map of the site area under investigation is included overleaf.

The Tramway Road BESS would occupy approximately 4-5 hectares of land in Hazelwood North and has been selected due to its location on non-productive agricultural land immediately adjacent to existing electrical infrastructure. It is also strategically positioned away from significant public viewpoints and sensitive receptors.

Following engagement with local stakeholders, a Planning Permit Application will be prepared and lodged with the Minister for Planning (Department of Transport and Planning [DTP]). The Minister will then assess the proposal and place the application on public notice, with comments invited in due course.

Community consultation

Our project team seeks to speak to any interested neighbours, residents and other groups to explain more about the proposal and receive feedback.

Door knocks – Thursday 7th November

We will be conducting door knocks of properties in proximity to the proposed BESS investigation area on Thursday 7th November between 8am-4pm. The purpose of these door knocks is to introduce ourselves and the proposal, and invite you to attend our next community engagement sessions.

If you are not home at the time of our visit, we will leave a calling card in your mailbox. Furthermore, if you would like to arrange a specific time for us to visit, please reach out to us (see contact details below).

Community Drop-in Session – Tuesday 19th November

In addition, as part of the early engagement prior to lodging a planning application, we are hosting a community drop-in session, which we cordially invite you to attend (details below):

Tramway Road BESS Community Information Drop-in Session	
Come by to learn more about the proposal and ask questions. No RSVP required – drop by anytime. Light refreshments provided.	
Date	Tuesday 19 November
Time	2:00pm-6:00pm
Location	Churchill Public Hall - 4 Marina Parade, Churchill

Following the above engagement activities, the preparation of the planning permit application will be finalised. Once lodged with DTP, the application will go on public notice and there will be an opportunity for the public and other authorities to make submissions for consideration by DTP. We encourage you to speak with our team should you wish to discuss the proposal and ask any questions you may have directly.

Phone: 0452 593 4298
Email: consultation@cogencyaustralia.com.au

Website: www.ekuenergy.com/tramwayroec

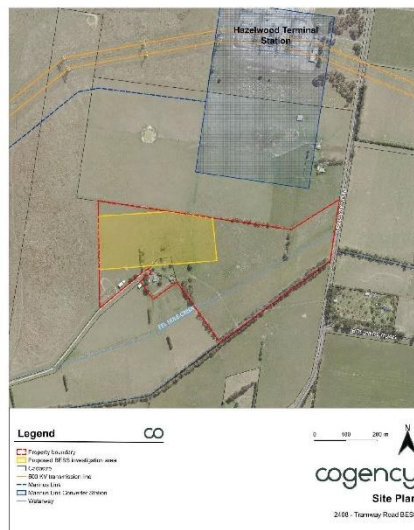
Tramway Road BESS Proposal

Should you have any questions or concerns about Tramway Road BESS, please do not hesitate to contact us via the details provided below.

Warm regards,

Rebecca Wardle

Rebecca Wardle
Co-Founder & Director
Cogency Australia



Phone: 0452 593 4298
Email: consultation@cogencyaustralia.com.au

Website: www.ekuenergy.com/tramwayroec

Tramway Road BESS Gippsland

Eku
INFORMATION SUMMARY #1



NOVEMBER 2024

Proposal

Eku Energy seeks to develop a battery energy storage system (BESS) on approximately 4-5 ha of land at 675 Monash Way, Hazelwood North.

Battery storage is a critical enabler of the energy transition, designed to store and release energy and provide support to stabilise Victoria's electricity grid.

The proposal includes a 300MW/1200MWh BESS, switching station, as well as associated connection infrastructure into the existing and directly adjacent 500kV / 220kV Hazelwood Terminal Substation.

The site was identified due to its location next to existing electrical infrastructure and on non-productive agricultural land. It is also strategically positioned away from significant public viewpoints and sensitive receptors.

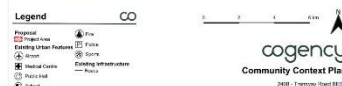
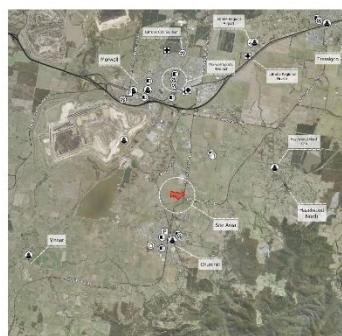
As part of the planning process, we are currently working on several assessments, including biodiversity, cultural heritage, visual, and noise, as well as a Fire Management Plan that will be written in collaboration with the Country Fire Authority.

Benefits



- Making use of land adjacent to existing electrical infrastructure
- Providing energy storage to support renewable energy generation and system reliability
- Contracting for local contractors during construction and operation
- Benefit sharing framework to support the local community

Eku Energy is a global battery storage business on a mission. We're working across the full project life cycle to develop, build, and manage energy storage assets with the aim of advancing the energy transition and facilitating the delivery of safe, secure, reliable clean energy.



Proposal overview

The project site is addressed 675 Monash Way, Hazelwood North and is part of a larger 34-hectare agricultural land holding approximately 6-kilometres south of Morwell and 2-kilometres north of the heart of Churchill.

The site is located within VicGrid's renewable energy zone study area. These areas are parts of Victoria that have the potential to host the new energy generation, storage and transmission infrastructure required to support Victoria's energy transition.

The site is currently used for grazing activities and has been previously cleared for agricultural purposes. The land is zoned Farming Zone (FZ1) under the Latrobe Planning Scheme and is immediately adjacent to the operational Jeeralang Power Station and Hazelwood Terminal Station to the north and agricultural grazing land to the west, south, and east. Tramway Road runs parallel to the site's eastern boundary, and Eel Hole Creek runs east-west across the site.

Safety

Eku Energy's absolute priority is creating a safe working environment. We proactively manage our construction and operations to achieve zero harm to people, assets and the communities in which we operate.

Community benefit sharing

Eku Energy aims to be a positive and proactive member of the local community and seeks to engage with community members to create positive, lasting impacts.

We are committed to ensuring our benefit sharing approach is collaborative, tailored, transparent and aligned to local needs and aspirations.

Eku Energy, with the support of our planning and engagement consultant - Cogency Australia - will engage with the Latrobe City Council, local residents, local stakeholders, and the Gunakurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation to discuss opportunities for benefit sharing.

Planning and consultation

Eku Energy seeks to meet with neighbours, local residents and interested groups to conduct early engagement to explain the proposal and receive feedback on the early concept design.

Prior to lodging a planning application, Eku Energy will host a community drop-in session and contact surrounding residents to discuss the proposal.

Cogency Australia has been engaged to lead the planning application and engagement program.



Cogency has been engaged by Eku Energy to undertake the planning, project management, environmental, and community engagement program for the proposal.

cogencyaustralia.com.au
www.ekuenergy.com/tramwayroad

Contact us

Rebecca Wardle
Co-Founder & Director
0452 593 428
consultation@cogencyaustralia.com.au

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YOU'RE INVITED

Tramway Road BESS proposal

Community Drop-in session

Drop in to learn more about Eku Energy's proposal for a 300MW/1200MWh battery energy storage system (BESS), switching station, and associated connection infrastructure, adjacent to the 500kV / 220kV Hazelwood Terminal Substation.

Come by to learn more about the proposal, view the plans and ask questions.

No RSVP required – drop by anytime. Light refreshments provided.

We look forward to meeting you.

Date: Tuesday 19 November 2024

Time: 2:00pm-6:00pm

Venue: Churchill Public Hall (4 Marina Pde)

Contact us

www.ekuenergy.com/tramwayroad
0452 593 428
consultation@cogencyaustralia.com.au

cogency

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Tramway Road BESS



Eku Energy seeks to develop a battery energy storage system (BESS) on approximately 4-5 hectares of land at 675 Monash Way, Hazelwood North.

Battery storage is a critical enabler of the energy transition, designed to store and release energy and provide support to stabilise Victoria's electricity grid.

The proposal includes a 300MW / 1200MWh BESS, switching station, as well as associated connection infrastructure into the existing and directly adjacent 500kV / 220kV Hazelwood Terminal Substation.

The site is located within VicGrid's renewable energy zone study area. These areas are parts of Victoria that have the potential to host the new energy generation, storage and transmission infrastructure required to support Victoria's energy transition.

Benefits

- ✓ Making use of land adjacent to existing electrical infrastructure
- ✓ Providing energy storage to support renewable energy generation and system reliability
- ✓ Contracting for local contractors during construction and operation
- ✓ Benefit sharing framework to support the local community

Design Considerations

As part of the planning process, we are currently working on several assessments to ensure the design and layout will minimise impact on the local community. This includes biodiversity, cultural heritage, visual, and noise assessments, as well as a Risk Management Plan that will be written in collaboration with the Country Fire Authority.



Location

The site at 675 Monash Way, Hazelwood North is adjacent to Hazelwood Power Station, and is part of a larger 34-hectare agricultural land holding approximately 6km south of Morwell and 2km north of Churchill.

The site was identified due to its location next to existing electrical infrastructure and on non-productive agricultural land. It is also strategically positioned away from significant public viewpoints and sensitive receptors.

The site is currently used for grazing activities, and the land is zoned Farming Zone (FZ1) under the Latrobe Planning Scheme.



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What is a BESS?

Tramway Road BESS



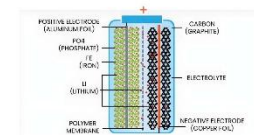
A Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) is a large-scale energy storage facility that stores and releases energy to the electricity grid.

A BESS comprises a number of "enclosures" or battery units (broadly resembling a shipping container), inverters, transformers and other electrical equipment. The site will also include access tracks, water tanks, site offices, amenities and screening.

Energy storage is essential in supporting the safe, secure and reliable operation of Australia's National Electricity Market. A BESS provides fast responding, dispatchable energy to the grid to ensure that electricity supply remains reliable and stable.

At times of excess supply in the grid, such as during the middle of a sunny day, the BESS will charge by importing electricity from the grid. During times of lower supply and higher demand, such as the early evening, the BESS will discharge, exporting electricity into and stabilising the grid. BESS is dispatchable and can help to balance the grid and support variable energy sources, including household rooftop solar. A BESS also provides a range of essential system services, such as frequency and voltage support which ensure the grid operates securely.

What kind of batteries do we use?



Eku Energy uses Lithium F(iron) Phosphate (LFP) cells in our battery energy systems. Durable and with an extensive lifespan, LFP battery cells have a broader thermal operating range and release less energy during thermal runaway than other battery technologies. This means they have a lower risk of overheating or catching fire due to their unique safety features.

BESS Benefits

- Provides additional dispatchable storage capacity for the National Electricity Market.
- Increases energy reliability to support the energy transition.
- Provides essential system services to ensure the grid remains secure.

Battery Enclosures

The enclosure houses multiple racks of modules and contains monitoring and communications equipment, a cooling system, and a fire detection and suppression system.



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Artist Impression

Tramway Road BESS

This image is for illustration purposes only



Aerial artist impression of Tramway Road BESS looking north towards the Hazelwood Terminal Station
Indicative impression and layout only (a detailed landscape & visual impact assessment and montages will be prepared for the planning application)

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Benefit Sharing

Tramway Road BESS

Eku

Eku Energy aims to be a positive and proactive member of the local community and seeks to engage with community members to create positive, lasting impacts.

Our Commitment

We take community engagement and benefit sharing seriously. We are committed to ensuring our approach is collaborative, tailored, transparent and aligned to local needs and aspirations.

Eku Energy, with the support of our planning and engagement consultant - Cogency Australia - will engage with the Latrobe City Council, local residents, local stakeholders, and the Gunaikurni Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation to discuss opportunities for benefit sharing.

Potential Funding Opportunities

Eku Energy welcome input from the local community on the design of a benefits sharing program. This includes understanding local values and understanding where there are opportunities to deliver direct community benefits.



Employment and Education
Initiatives that support educational or employment outcomes



Social Connectedness
Initiatives that support community connectedness, wellbeing and livability



Environmental
Initiatives that drive sustainability outcomes

TAILORED

Eku's benefit sharing programs will be tailored to address every community's unique needs and aspirations.

ALIGNED

Eku will ensure that community investment is aligned to local strategic documents and will continue this through proactive consultation during the lifecycle of the project.

TRANSPARENT

Eku will design and deliver for benefit sharing through a transparent process with each community.

COLLABORATIVE

Eku seeks to develop collaborative ongoing relationships with communities and become a supportive neighbour.

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Eku

Tramway Road BESS

Eku Energy is a global battery storage business on a mission.

We are working across the full project life cycle to develop, build, and manage energy storage assets with the aim of advancing the energy transition and facilitating the delivery of safe, secure, reliable clean energy.



Long-term partner



Specialist technology-enabled developer



Globally diverse player

Eku Energy is jointly owned by Macquarie Asset Management managed fund and British Columbia Investment Management Corporation (BCI).

With the backing of two global financial powerhouses, we are working to advance the clean energy transition.

MACQUARIE

BCI

Our Approach

Eku Energy is a specialist energy storage business established to meet the growing need for utility-scale battery storage worldwide. We bring deep technical knowledge and local market expertise to deliver battery storage solutions.

Our absolute priority is creating a safe working environment. We proactively manage our operations to achieve zero harm to our people, assets, and the communities in which we operate.

We have expertise developing BESS projects across Australia, including:

- ✓ Hazelwood BESS (VIC), operational
- ✓ Rangelbank BESS (Cranbourne, VIC), under construction
- ✓ Williamsdale BESS (ACT), under construction

Aerial illustration of Tramway Road BESS



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Appendix D Biodiversity Assessment

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Appendix E Cultural Heritage Assessment

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Appendix F Transport Impact Assessment

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Appendix G Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

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Appendix H Noise Impact Assessment

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Appendix I Fire Hazard and Risk Assessment

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Appendix J Hydrology Assessment

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Appendix K Agriculture Assessment

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Appendix L Consultation Summary Report

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Planning | Engagement | Strategy

Cogency provides planning, environmental assessment and stakeholder engagement services for the renewable energy, property, clean tech and circular economy sectors.

Our collaborative teams bring a uniquely nuanced understanding of planning processes and the technical aspects of renewable energy property, infrastructure and circular economy projects, which helps to build a strong rapport and trust with local community members and stakeholders.

Unlike many in-house engagement and planning teams that are managed separately, our planners work in collaboration with our engagement practitioners to ensure that stakeholder and community consultation is at the heart of the planning process and a critical tool for delivering positive outcomes for our clients.

www.cogencyaustralia.com.au