

Energy Assessment
PA2504144 & PA2504148

Nine Mile BESS Stages 1 & 2

 Officer Assessment



Department
of Transport
and Planning



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Executive Summary

Key Information	Details		
Application No:	PA2504144 & PA2504148		
Received:	29 December 2025		
Statutory Days:	69		
Applicant:	Pacific Green and Green Switch Energy c/- NGH		
Planning Scheme:	Golden Plains		
Land Address:	783 Cressy-Shelford Road, Barunah Park VIC 3229		
Proposal:	Two 250MW BESS facilities and associated infrastructure, grid connection infrastructure, and site access upgrades including required native vegetation removal.		
Permit preamble:	Use and development of a utility installation (Battery Energy Storage System), associated buildings and works, removal of native vegetation, and display of business identification signage.		
Development Value:	\$200 million		
Why is the Minister responsible?	<p>Under Clause 72.01-1, the Minister for Planning is the responsible authority for a planning permit application for the use or development of land associated with a:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Utility installation used to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Transmit or distribute electricity – Store electricity if the installed capacity is 1 megawatt or greater. – Application where clause 53.22 applies. 		
Why is a permit required?	Clause	Control	Permit Trigger
Zone:	Clause 35.07-1	Farming Zone (FZ)	Use of land for a utility installation
	Clause 35.07-4	Farming Zone (FZ)	Buildings and works associated with a section 2 use
Overlays:	Clause 44.04-1	Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO)	Buildings and works within the LSIO area
Particular Provisions:	Clause 52.05-2	Signs	Construct or put up for display a business identification sign
	Clause 52.17-1	Native vegetation	Remove, destroy or lop native vegetation, including dead native vegetation.



Key Information	Details
Cultural Heritage:	A CHMP was approved on 25 November 2025.
Referral Authorities:	AusNet – Determining WorkSafe – Determining Corangamite Catchment Management Authority - Recommending
Public Notice:	Notice of the application under section 52 of the Act was required. 3 submissions have been received as of 19 May 2026 . Submissions were received from the following agencies: Country Fire Authority (CFA) Golden Plains Shire Council Head, Transport for Victoria
Delegation:	Approval to determine under delegation received on 10 May 2026 .
Recommendation:	Issue two planning permits subject to conditions.

Process and Documentation

Planning Process

1. The key milestones in the application process were as follows:

Milestone	Date
Application lodgement	29 December 2025
Further information requested	22 January 2026
Further information received	25 March 2026
Section 50 amendment	N/A
Public notice (section 52)	31 March 2026 – 30 April 2026
Statutory Declaration received	7 May 2026
Section 57 amendment	N/A

Decision Documents

2. The subject of this report is the decision documents (as advertised with the applications and described below).

Decision Documents

PA2504144 - Stage 1 Documents:

- Nine Mile BESS Concept Plans dated 14 November 2025
- Nine Mile Energy Park – Stage 1 Planning Report dated March 2026
- Title documents produced 21 November 2025
- Agricultural Assessment Report by Meridian Agriculture dated 19 September 2025
- Community and Stakeholder Engagement Summary by NGH dated November 2025
- Environmental Noise Assessment by Resonate dated 15 December 2025
- Noise Assessment Addendum by Resonate dated 9 February 2026
- Ecological Assessment by NGH dated December 2025
- Risk Management Plan by NGH dated November 2025
- Surface Water Assessment by Cumulus Engineering dated November 2025
- Traffic Impact Assessment by Impact dated 27 February 2026
- Visual Impact Assessment by GbLA dated 20 November 2025

PA2504148 - Stage 2 Documents

- Nine Mile BESS Concept Plans dated 14 November 2025
- Nine Mile Energy Park – Stage 1 Planning Report dated March 2026
- Title documents produced 21 November 2025
- Agricultural Assessment Report by Meridian Agriculture dated 19 September 2025
- Community and Stakeholder Engagement Summary by NGH dated November 2025
- Environmental Noise Assessment by Resonate dated 15 December 2025
- Noise Assessment Addendum by Resonate dated 9 February 2026
- Ecological Assessment by NGH dated December 2025



Decision Documents

- Risk Management Plan by NGH dated November 2025
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- Traffic Impact Assessment by Impact dated 27 February 2026
- Visual Impact Assessment by GbLA dated 20 November 2025



Proposal

3. The application proposes the use and development of **two** 250megawatt (MW) battery energy storage systems, and associated infrastructure, native vegetation removal, and display of business identification signage.
4. Both BESS are proposed to connect to the Cressy Terminal Station on adjacent land to the north by underground transmission.
5. The project can be summarised as follows:
 - **PA2504144 - Stage 1:**
 - 250MW/500MWh BESS
 - 152 x battery containers
 - 76 x inverter skids
 - 4 x auxiliary kiosk transformers
 - Substation HV transformer
 - 500/33kV on-site substation and new power transformer
 - High voltage underground cabling (500kV)
 - Connection infrastructure and extension works at Cressy Terminal Station
 - Associated civil and structural works including access
 - 2 x 567kL fire water tanks
 - Switchgear, control room, warehouse, and operations and maintenance facilities
 - Detention basin
 - Perimeter and stockproof fencing
 - Landscaping
 - **PA2504148 - Stage 2:**
 - 250MW/1000MWh BESS
 - 288 x battery containers
 - 36 x inverter skids
 - 8 x auxiliary kiosk transformers
 - Auxiliary MV transformer
 - Substation HV transformer
 - 500/33kV on-site substation and new power transformer
 - High voltage underground cabling (500kV)
 - Connection infrastructure and extension works at Cressy Terminal Station
 - Associated civil and structural works including access
 - 2 x 567kL fire water tanks
 - Switchgear, control room, warehouse, and operations and maintenance facilities
 - Detention basin
 - Perimeter and stockproof fencing
 - Landscaping
 - Construction of both stages will be supported by a concrete batching plant to be constructed on site for exclusive use by the two stages
6. The applicant has provided the following concept plans and images of the proposal:

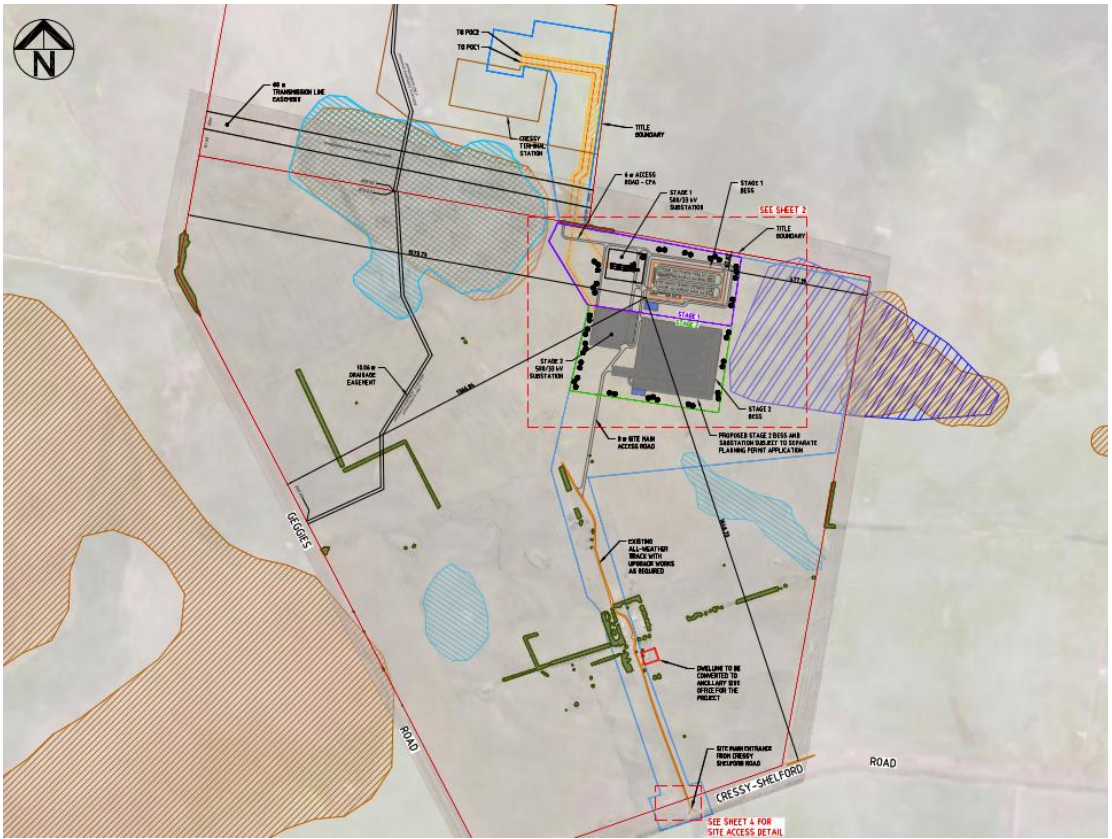


Figure 1: Proposed site plan – Stages 1 and 2. Source: Stage 1 Development plans.

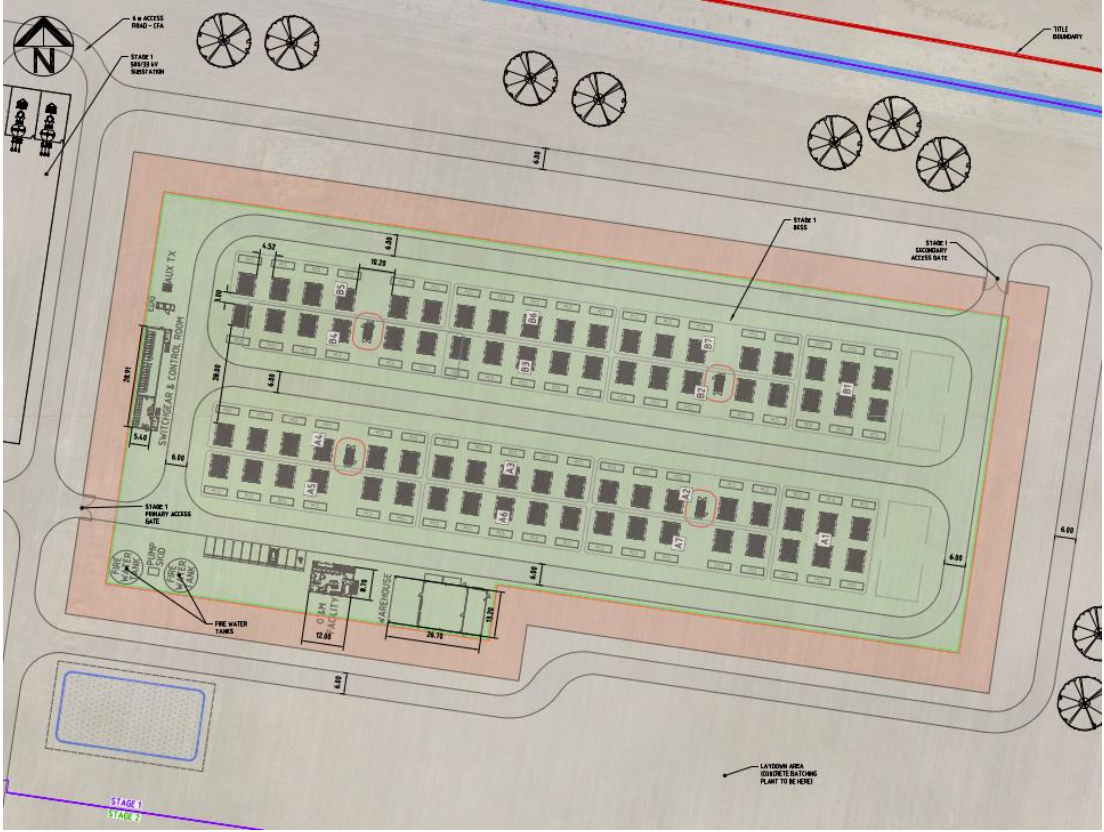


Figure 2: Proposed Stage 1 site plan detail. Source: Stage 1 Development plans.



Subject Site and Surrounds

Site Description

7. The site is located at 783 Cressy-Shelford Road, Barunah Park, approximately 10 km east of Cressy in the Golden Plains local government area.
8. The existing site comprises of cropping paddocks with associated internal farm tracks and fencing. There are also several small bodies of water and some established trees and vegetation primarily in the southern and western areas of the site (outside the proposed project area). The northern lot (connection lot) is used for Cressy Terminal Station (utility installation). The site is mostly cleared of vegetation.
9. The existing site is utilised for **agricultural purposes**.
10. The site is bound by roads **Cressy-Shelford Rd** to the south and **Geggies Rd** to the west, with a total size of **360 ha** on the BESS Host lot and **100 ha** on the Connection lot.
11. The site is formally described as comprising the following land parcels:
 - Lot 123\PP3410 – BESS Host lot
 - Lot 1 PS843530 – Connection lot
12. There are several easements, restrictions or reserves on the site, as follows:
 - Lot 123\PP3410 – BESS Host Lot
 - E1 (Drainage easement) – this easement is not affected by the proposal
 - Lot 1 PS843530 – Connection Lot
 - E-1 & E-2: Water supply and drainage – these easements are not affected by the proposal
 - E-2 & E-3: Transmission of electricity – **E-3 is crossed by the proposed connection infrastructure**
 - E-4: Water supply and drainage – this easement is not affected by the proposal
 - E-5: Transmission of electricity (overhead powerlines) – this easement is not affected by the proposal
13. The land is within the Farming Zone and includes three areas controlled by Schedule 2 to the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay. See Figure 5.
14. The site is relatively flat sloping downhill from east to west across the site.
15. Existing access to the BESS Host lot is off Cressy-Shelford Road on the southern boundary of the site. Access to the Connection lot from Geggies Road to the west of the parcel. Both roads are council managed.
16. The site is wholly within the Golden Plains Shire Council local government area however Cressy-Shelford Road is the boundary to Colac Otway Shire Council local government area to the south.

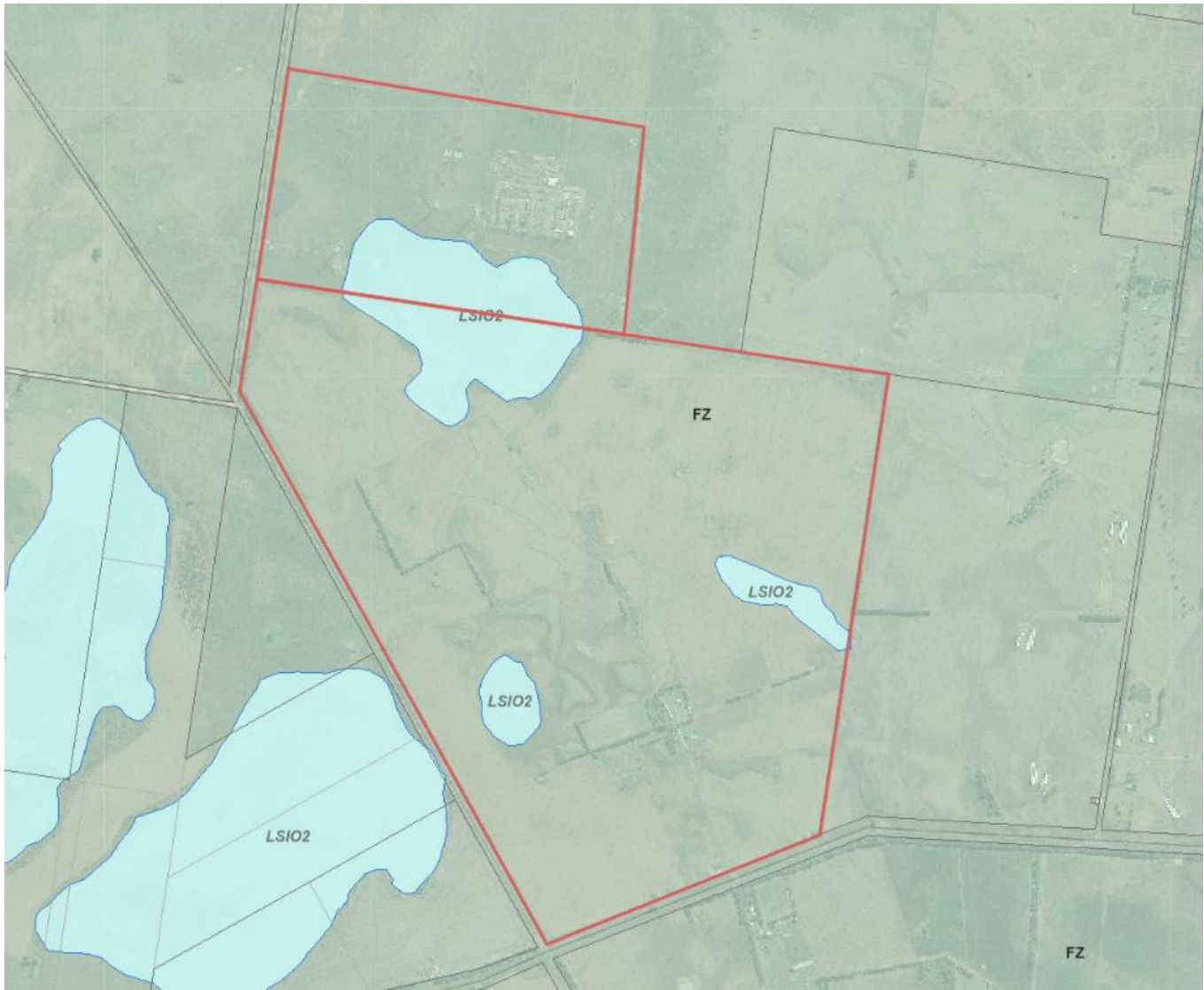


Figure 5: Zone and overlay map. Source: Stage 1 Development plans.

Site Surrounds

17. The land surrounding the site on all sides is rural in character and agricultural in use. The surrounding area also includes farm dwellings and rural buildings.
18. Transmission lines associated with the Cressy Terminal station extend east-west from the project area.
19. The site is surrounded to the north, east, and west by the approved Golden Plains Wind Farm.
20. There are several batteries/energy facilities etc existing, approved or proposed in the surrounding area, as illustrated in **Figure 6**.

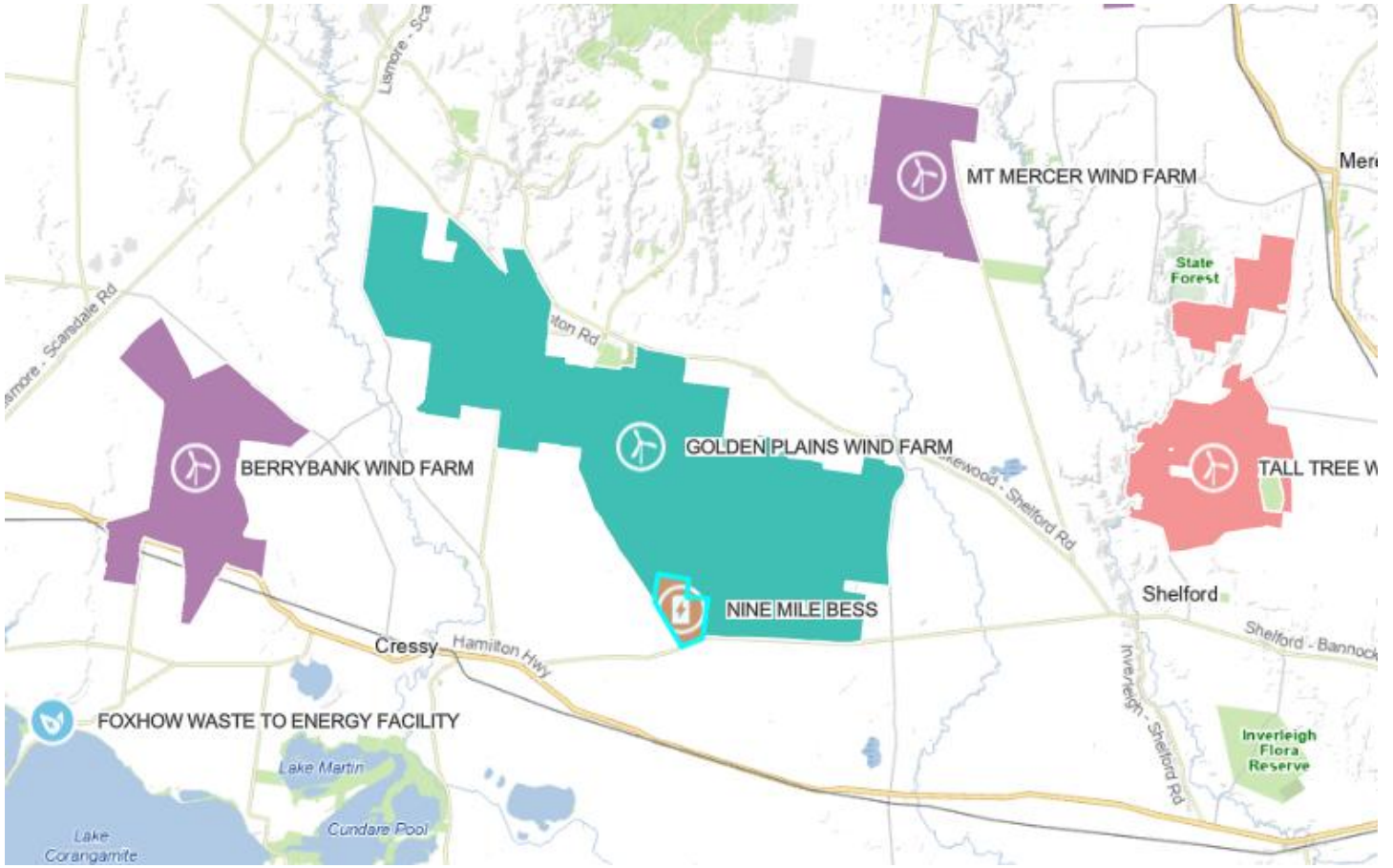


Figure 6: Surrounding renewable energy facilities. Source: – Department of Transport and Planning.

Nine Mile BESS Stages 1 & 2

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Referrals

21. The application was referred to the following authorities under section 55 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (PE Act), as summarised below:

Organisation	Referral Type	Provision/ Clause	Response Date	Response	DTP Assessment
The relevant electricity transmission authority (AusNet)	Determining	Clause 66.02-4 – 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.	16 March 2026	No objection subject to conditions including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Further details regarding the underground connection to Cressy Terminal Station– Restrictions to access track design, development practice, and material storage/stockpiling within the easement– Submission of all future works within the easement to AusNet for approval.	These conditions have been included in the recommendation.
Corangamite Catchment Management Authority	Recommending	Clause 66.03 – An application under the overlay (LSIO) outside the waterway management district of Melbourne Water Corporation.	12 March 2026	No objection subject to conditions including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Drainage infrastructure around the fill pads and access tracks– Raising the fill pad 300mm above the 1% AEP SSP5 2030	These conditions have been included in the recommendation.

Organisation	Referral Type	Provision/ Clause	Response Date	Response	DTP Assessment
WorkSafe	Determining	<p>Clause 66.02-7 – To use land for an industry, utility or warehouse if any of the following apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A fire protection quantity is exceeded under the Dangerous Goods (Storage and Handling) Regulations 2022. 	26 May 2025	<p>No objection subject to conditions including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Risk Management Plan must be updated once the site design and battery supplier has been finalised to confirm the requirements of the <i>CFA Guidelines</i> are met and to the satisfaction of the CFA's Dangerous Goods Unit, prior to BESS arrival on site. - The applicant must undertake a Fire Management Plan and Emergency Response Plan in line with the <i>CFA Guidelines</i>, conducted by a suitably competent person and to the satisfaction of the CFA's Dangerous Goods Unit, prior to commissioning and operation. 	These conditions have been included in the recommendation.

Public Notice

22. Notice for both applications was made in parallel and subject to the same notice requirements.

23. In accordance with section 52 of the PE Act, public notice of the application was given between **31 March 2026** and **30 April 2026**.

24. Public notice of the applications was posted in both Ballarat and Geelong community newspapers and letters were mailed to owners and occupiers within 1km of the project site.

25. More specifically notice was given in the following manner:

Section of PE Act	Notice to be given to:
52(1)(a)	Owners and occupiers of adjoining land.
52(1)(b)	Golden Plains Shire Council
52(1)(d)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Owners and occupiers within 1km of the project area - Head, Transport for Victoria - Country Fire Authority - Eastern Marr Aboriginal Corporation - EnergySafe Victoria - Corangamite Catchment Management Authority - VicGrid

26. **3** submissions (**0** objections) have been received at the time of writing this report.

Objections

27. No objections were received for either application.

Submissions

28. 0 submissions of community/local support were received.

29. 3 submissions were received from government agencies and authorities (who were not referral authorities under section 55 of the PE Act), as summarised below:

Submitter	Date received	Summary of submission	DTP Officer Response
Country Fire Authority (CFA)	27 April 2026	No objection subject to conditions including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Amended plans to show compliance with CFA conditions - Preparation and endorsement of a Risk Management Plan - Preparation and endorsement of an Emergency Plan 	Conditions proposed by CFA are considered appropriate to manage the fire risks of the project. Conditions have been included in the proposed permits.

Submitter	Date received	Summary of submission	DTP Officer Response
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implementation of all fire protection measures prior to use commencing 	
Golden Plains Shire Council (GPSC)	27 April 2026	<p>Submission included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The use of Cressy-Shelford Road and Geggies Road for heavy vehicle access will be dependent on NHVR permit assessment at the time of application. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Council preference to was to encourage heavy vehicles to use the western approach to the site to minimise impact on local roads and community. Consideration of a back up route was allowed based upon preferred not being possible - It's understood that road intersection upgrade at Hamilton Hwy would be required to allow right turn. This is a consideration for the Department of Transport. - Any vehicle crossing/access upgrade shall be in accordance with IDM SD265, including sealing the pavement and drainage works as required. - Provide vehicle turn around point within the site. All egress and ingress movements shall be forward direction. - Provide CMP and EMP to include the following, but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Wholistic haulage route, o Dilapidation report of the existing road condition along Cressy-Shelford Road and Geggies Road, o For any works or traffic management treatment on Council's road, a 	<p>Comments received from GPSC can be incorporated into existing standard conditions including transport and Construction/Operations Environment Management Plan conditions.</p> <p>Confirmation of these details will be required before the commencement of any development including early works.</p> <p>Approvals required outside the <i>Planning and Environment Act 1987</i> will be noted in the permit.</p>

Submitter	Date received	Summary of submission	DTP Officer Response
		<p>Memorandum of Authorisation permit is required from Council.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Any damage to the road reserve/nature strip and any council assets shall be reinstated, to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority. - A works within a road reserve permit must be obtained from the Responsible Authority prior to the carrying out of any works within the road reserve. 	
Head, Transport for Victoria (HTfV)	9 April 2026	No objection	<p>No conditions proposed by HTfV.</p> <p>Transport considerations are discussed in the assessment section below.</p>

Assessment

Key Considerations

30. The planning scheme contains policies and controls that guide the assessment of **utility installations**. These are found in the state and local planning policies, the relevant zone and overlays, and other relevant provisions. The assessment below addresses the relevant sections of the planning scheme while having regard to the matters which must be considered in accordance with Section 60 of the PE Act.
31. The following are deemed the key considerations in assessing the acceptability of the proposal:
- Strategic policy context and planning controls
 - Whether the proposal responds to the vision and strategic directions of the Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) and the Planning Policy Framework (PPF)
 - Suitability of the land use in the FZ, and impacts on agricultural land
 - Suitability of the proposal against the relevant overlays and particular provisions
 - Biodiversity and native vegetation impacts
 - Flooding and water quality
 - Bushfire risk and emergency management
 - Vehicle access, road and traffic considerations
 - Amenity impacts in terms of noise, light spill, visual impact and glint and glare
 - Acceptability of the proposed business identification sign

Permit Triggers

32. A planning permit for the project is triggered by the following clauses of the **Golden Plains** Planning Scheme (the scheme):

Clause	Permit Trigger
35.07-1	Use of the land for a utility installation (section 2)
35.07-4	Development associated with a section 2 use
44.04-2	Buildings and works in the LSIO
52.05-2	Construct or put up for display a business identification sign
52.17-1	To remove, destroy, or lop native vegetation, including native vegetation

Strategic Direction and Policy Context

33. Overall, the Purpose and Vision for Victoria (Clause 01), Municipal Planning Strategy (Clause 02) and the Planning Policy Framework (PPF) of the **Golden Plains** Planning Scheme encourage the facilitation of renewable energy and storage projects, on balance with the protection of the environment and agricultural land. In particular, Clause 01.01 (Purposes of this Planning Scheme) identifies that a key purpose of the scheme is “to support responses to climate change”.

34. The project is supported by *Plan for Victoria (2025)*, which seeks to ensure that 'Regional Victorian communities will attract and benefit from investment in renewable energy – wind, solar and battery storage – projects'.

35. Additionally, *Victoria's Renewable Energy Action Plan, 2018* and *Victoria's Climate Change Strategy, 2021* both outline the importance of battery storage projects in Victoria's renewable energy transition.

Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS)

36. An assessment against the relevant objectives and strategies of the Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) of the scheme is provided in the table below:

Clause	Description	Assessment
02.01	Context	The proposal responds to the local context and vision through siting in proximity to existing electricity generation and transmission infrastructure. This minimises the impact of the proposal on the environmental, cultural and scenic values listed in 2.01 and is in alignment with land-use management principles highlighted in 2.02.
02.02	Vision	
02.03	Strategic Directions	<p>The proposal responds to Clause 2.02-2 by minimising the impacts to native flora and fauna on the site. This has been achieved by locating the facility in a cleared area that seeks to avoid and minimise native vegetation removal. It is also noted that the existing landscape values in the immediate area have been previously affected by the nearby transmission infrastructure and wind energy facility. Given this existing context and the siting does not present a substantial visual impact.</p> <p>The proposal responds to Clause 2.03-3 by incorporating fire safety and environmental management measures including fire breaks, and on-site fire water retention and fire-fighting infrastructure in compliance with CFA guidance. Together these measures ensure climate resilience and mitigate bushfire risk.</p> <p>The proposal responds to Clause 2.03-4 by appropriately siting the project in proximity to existing energy infrastructure, minimising fragmentation of existing agricultural land.</p> <p>The proposal responds to Clause 2.03-7 by providing additional employment opportunities in the region at a facility supporting the renewable energy transition. The project is expected to generate 80-90 jobs during the construction period and 1-2 FTE ongoing jobs.</p>
02.04	Strategic Framework Plans	The project area is with the G21 Regional Plan. Discussion of project compatibility with G21 strategic directions is included in the PPF discussion below.

Planning Policy Framework (PPF)

37. An assessment of the project against the relevant objectives and strategies of the Planning Policy Framework (PPF) is provided in the table below:



Clause	Description	Assessment
Clause 12 Environment and Landscape Values		
12.01-1S	Protection of biodiversity	<p>Clause 12 focuses on the protection of environmental and landscape values. Of particular relevance to this proposal, ecological systems, native vegetation, biodiversity, identified environments or landscapes, and water bodies and wetlands.</p> <p>Where possible, the project has avoided impacts to ecological values, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Siting the project in cleared agricultural land- Locating site access to minimise native vegetation removal <p>The proposal has also avoided impacts to existing wetlands through appropriate siting of the project and design measures to manage outflow of water from the project area.</p> <p>Refer to the biodiversity section of the report below for a more detailed discussion of these matters. Conditions of the recommendation will further minimise impacts to biodiversity values during construction.</p>
12.01-2S	Native vegetation management	
12.03-1S	Rivers and riparian corridors, waterways, lakes, wetlands and billabongs	
12.03-1L	Waterways and wetlands	
Clause 13 Environmental Risks and Amenity		
13.02-1S	Bushfire	<p>The facility has been developed in accordance with the CFA's Guidelines and Model Requirements for Renewable Energy Facilities (the CFA Guidelines) to appropriately respond to bushfire risk. Refer to the bushfire section of the report for additional information.</p>
13.03-1S	Floodplain management	<p>The application process included giving notice to the Corangamite CMA who did not object to the proposal subject to conditions that are included in the recommendation. Subject to these conditions, it is considered that the risk posed by the project in relation to flood hazards is appropriately avoided.</p>
13.03-1L	Golden Plains Flood Management	
13.05-1S	Noise management	<p>The project is predicted to achieve compliance with the relevant noise limits. Conditions of the recommendation will require the preparation of a final predictive noise assessment, measuring the impact of the final chosen BESS units.</p> <p>Refer to the noise section of the report below for additional information and assessment.</p>
13.07-1S	Land use compatibility	<p>As discussed further below in this assessment, the proposed use is considered acceptable with appropriate mitigation measures in place, on balance with the storage of renewable energy.</p>
Clause 14 Natural resource management		



Clause	Description	Assessment
14.01-1S	Protection of agricultural land	<p>These provisions seek to protect the state’s agricultural base by preserving productive farmland and facilitating diversified agricultural uses.</p> <p>The facility will provide supplementary income and increase the resilience of the land’s agricultural activities.</p> <p>The development will not unreasonably impact agricultural activities on surrounding land.</p>
Clause 15	Built Environment and Heritage	
15.03-2S	Aboriginal cultural heritage	<p>The proposed BESS meets the objectives of clause 15 through sensitive siting and development of the project. The project area has been designed to minimise impact to areas of cultural heritage sensitivity and a Cultural Heritage Management Plan has been completed and approved prior to submission of the application.</p>
Clause 17	Economic Development	
17.01-1S	Diversified economy	<p>The proposed BESS meets the objectives of clause 17 by creating jobs during the construction and operation of the facility, and by supporting the rural economy to grow and diversify without unreasonably affecting the existing agricultural use</p>
Clause 19	Infrastructure	
19.01-1S	Energy supply	<p>The proposal is consistent with clause 19 which supports the renewable energy led transition to a low-carbon economy with reduced greenhouse gas emissions. The proposed facility is estimated to store 500MW of electricity, meeting evening peak demand needs for approximately 170,000 homes.</p> <p>The proposed BESS will also assist in the delivery of power during peak times to the network to meet community demand for energy needs.</p>
19.01-2S	Renewable energy	


38. Overall, the proposal is consistent with the relevant planning policies within the MPS and PPF.

Zoning and Overlays

Farming Zone (FZ)

39. Clause 35.07 seeks to provide for the use of land for agricultural purposes and for non-agricultural uses that do not adversely affect the use of the land for agriculture, as well as encouraging the retention of productive agricultural land and promoting the retention of rural employment to support rural communities.

40. Additionally, clauses within 14.01 seek to protect the state’s agricultural base by preserving productive farmland and facilitating diversified agricultural uses.



41. Having regard to the relevant decision guidelines at clause 35.07-6, the proposed use and development is an appropriate outcome in the FGZ as follows:

- The proposal is sited on cleared agricultural land that has not been identified as holding strategic significance for agricultural purposes.
- The proposal will not fragment productive agricultural land and will not impinge on agricultural use on surrounding or nearby land.
- The project can be readily decommissioned in the future to allow for the site to be returned to agricultural use post-operation.
- The co-location of the BESS with nearby transmission infrastructure supports the efficient integration of energy infrastructure and avoids unnecessary land consumption elsewhere in the region.
- The proposed use and development of the site has considered potential fire hazards and incorporates the fire safety design recommendations in accordance with CFA guidelines, including fire breaks, site access and appropriate separation.
- The proposed design and layout of the BESS and ancillary infrastructure will be sufficiently setback from adjoining properties.

42. It is acknowledged that there will be a minor reduction in the extent of land available for agricultural production as a result of the footprint of the battery units, access tracks, and ancillary infrastructure. However, this will be a negligible impact on the agricultural function and potential of the land and its capacity to support viable agriculture and associated communities. Conditions of the recommendation will require the facility to be decommissioned at the end of its operational life.

Land subject to inundation Overlay – Schedule 2 (LSIO2)

43. The proposed underground transmission line is partially located within the LSIO2.

44. The purpose of the LSIO is to:


- *To identify flood prone land in a riverine or coastal area affected by the 1 in 100 (1 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability) year flood or any other area determined by the floodplain management authority.*
- *To ensure that development maintains the free passage and temporary storage of floodwaters, minimises flood damage, responds to the flood hazard and local drainage conditions and will not cause any significant rise in flood level or flow velocity.*
- *To minimise the potential flood risk to life, health and safety associated with development.*
- *To reflect a declaration under Division 4 of Part 10 of the Water Act, 1989.*
- *To protect water quality and waterways as natural resources by managing urban stormwater, protecting water supply catchment areas, and managing saline discharges to minimise the risks to the environmental quality of water and groundwater.*
- *To ensure that development maintains or improves river, marine, coastal and wetland health, waterway protection and floodplain health.*

45. Under the LSIO2, the application was required to be referred to Corangamite CMA as the relevant floodplain management authority. As noted in the referrals section above, Corangamite CMA provided conditions related to the design of the facility which will be included in the permit.

46. The application has been assessed against the relevant decision guidelines of the LSIO2 and as discussed further throughout the assessment, the design of the underground transmission line is considered acceptable on balance with the benefits of the provision of an energy storage facility.

Specific Controls Overlay (SCO2)

47. The Connection land is affected by a Specific Controls Overlay SCO2 which incorporates the Golden Plains Wind Farm Incorporated Documents (May 2022). This incorporated document facilitates the use and



development of the wider Golden Plains Wind Farm subject area for the purposes of the Golden Plains Wind Farm.

48. The incorporated document states *"this Incorporated Document does not restrict or otherwise affect any use or development of the Project Land or any part of it for any purpose that is lawful under the Planning Scheme, including any lawful pre-existing activities, other than the use or development of the Project Land for the purpose of the Project (the Golden Plains Wind Farm)"*.
49. As such, the SCO2 does not restrict or affect either BESS application.

Particular and General Provisions

Clause 52.05 (Signs)


50. A permit is required under clause 52.05-14 (Category 4 – Sensitive Areas) to construct and display business identification signage within the Farming Zone.
51. The proposal includes a non-illuminated, static business identification sign to be installed at the entrance to the site. The final design of the sign has not been provided; however, it will be of no more than 3 sqm and will provide for appropriate identification of the facility and direction for workers and visitors.
52. As described, the proposed sign is considered appropriate for a rural setting and will not adversely affect the character or amenity of the surrounding landscape. It is consistent with the purpose of Category 4 signage controls and responds appropriately to the sensitivity of the site and its surrounds.
53. Provision of detailed designs of the sign will be included as a condition of the permit.

Clause 52.06 (Car Parking)

54. Clause 52.06 (Car parking) seeks to ensure that an appropriate number of car parking spaces is provided for new uses.
55. Pursuant to clause 52.06-6, car parking must be provided for both facilities to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.
56. The proponent has outlined that a maximum of five workers will be employed on site per day during the operation of the two facilities.
57. A designated hardstand and carparking area has been provided in the northwestern corner the site (just south of the BESS). The car parking area is 35m x 22m in size and is capable of accommodating five standard car spaces, in accordance with the AS2890.1 and the diagram at Clause 52.06-9. Additionally, the internal 4m wide access roads will enable vehicles to park elsewhere onsite while undertaking maintenance activities. This is considered acceptable given the low carparking demand during operations.
- 58.

Clause 52.17 (Native Vegetation)

59. The application seeks the removal of up to 2.181 hectares (ha) of native vegetation, comprising:
- 0.572 ha of patch vegetation (including 11 large trees)
60. The strategic biodiversity value score of the native vegetation to be removed ranges between 0.120 and 1.00.
61. Pursuant to clause 52.17-1 of the Golden Plains Planning Scheme, a permit is required to remove, destroy or lop native vegetation.
62. The purpose of clause 52.17 is:
- To ensure that there is no net loss to biodiversity as a result of the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation. This is achieved by applying the following three step approach in accordance with the



Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, 2017) (the Guidelines):

1. Avoid the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation.
 2. Minimise impacts from the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation that cannot be avoided.
 3. Provide an offset to compensate for the biodiversity impact if a permit is granted to remove, destroy or lop native vegetation.
- To manage the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation to minimise land and water degradation.
63. The location of the proposed native vegetation to be removed can be found on in Figures 4.1 – 4.5 of the Flora and Fauna Assessment prepared by Biosis and dated 14 August 2024.
64. As the site is located with Location 2, and the application proposes the removal of 2.181 ha of native vegetation, the application falls under the Intermediate Assessment Pathway of the Guidelines, and as such does not require referral to DEECA.
65. The Flora and Fauna Assessment contains the avoid and minimise statement for the project. The design and development of the facility has avoided and minimised impacts to native vegetation by:
- Where possible, locating infrastructure and services in previously disturbed vegetation and farmland with scattered trees.
66. Refer to additional discussion of biodiversity matters further on in this assessment.

Clause 53.22 (Significant Economic Development)

67. Clause 53.22 seeks:


- To prioritise and facilitate the planning, assessment and delivery of projects that will make a significant contribution to Victoria's economy and provide substantial public benefit, including jobs for Victorians.
- To provide for the efficient and effective use of land and facilitate use and development with high quality urban design, architecture and landscape architecture.

68. This application is a Category 1 application at clause 53.22-1. As such it is exempt from the decision requirements of sections 64(1), (2) and (3), and the review rights of sections 82(1) of the Act.

Other Matters

Agricultural Impact

69. Clause 14.01-1S (Protection of agricultural land) seeks to protect the state's agricultural base by preserving productive farmland. Further, the purpose of the Farming Zone control on the site seeks to *ensure that non-agricultural uses... do not adversely affect the use of land for agriculture*.
70. The applications are supported by a combined agricultural assessment by Meridian which finds that the proposed BESS facilities would have no long-term detrimental effects on the productive capacity of the soil.
71. The report also finds that the site is not mentioned in any planning scheme as being of high agricultural value and the reduction in agricultural land resulting from construction of the BESS facilities would have no significant impact on the productivity of the region or the State.
72. The loss of agricultural land is not expected to have any significant impact on agricultural activity taking place on neighbouring properties.
73. Further, construction of the BESS facilities affects 56.5 hectares of arable land on the site, the remainder of arable land on the site will continue to be used for cropping.

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74. Appropriate decommissioning of the BESS facilities and associated infrastructure will ensure the return of the land to pre-development conditions. Conditions to this effect will be included in the permit. See Decommissioning below for further discussion.
75. DTP considers that the agricultural impacts of the site are acceptable.

Bushfire Risk

76. The subject site is located within a Bushfire Prone Area (BPA) and the surrounding area is predominantly used for renewable energy generation and agriculture.
77. Clause 13.02-1S (Bushfire Planning) requires all applications in a BPA/BMO to have consideration of bushfire risk, to strengthen the resilience of settlements and communities and prioritise the protection of human life.
78. A Risk Management Plan prepared by NGH supports the application.
79. The reports find that the proposal can satisfy fire protection requirements of relevant legislation, codes, and guidelines.
80. The CFA were notified of the application under Section 52 and provided a submission. The CFA did not object to the application subject to conditions being applied to the planning permit. These conditions include the completion of a Risk Management Plan, completion of an Emergency Plan, and that implementation of fire safety measures be completed before commissioning of the facility.
81. These conditions are appropriate to address bushfire concerns and it is recommended they be included on the permit.
82. Through the proposed mitigation measures and inclusion of CFA conditions, DTP is satisfied that the proposal adequately addresses bushfire issues.

Cultural Heritage

83. Clause 15.03-2S (Aboriginal cultural heritage) seeks to ensure the protection and conservation of places of Aboriginal cultural heritage significance. The proposed project area contains areas of cultural heritage. (see brown and dark blue hatched areas in figure 1).
84. As high-impact activity (as defined in the *Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018*) is proposed in an area of cultural heritage sensitivity, the applicant has prepared a cultural heritage management plan which was approved in November 2025.

Noise

85. Clause 13.05-1S (Noise management) requires the consideration of noise effects on sensitive land uses.
86. The proposed BESS facilities are not expected to generate any unreasonable noise impacts through construction or in operation.
87. The application is supported by an environmental noise assessment and a construction noise assessment, both prepared by Resonate consultants, which have been prepared in accordance with EPA publication 1826.4: *Noise limit and assessment protocol for the control of noise from commercial, industrial and trade premises and entertainment venues*.
88. The construction noise assessment finds that for both BESS facilities, construction activities are scheduled to occur during EPA Normal Working Hours and as such, there are no applicable noise limits. Despite the lack of noise limits, the report recommends that construction noise be minimised as far as possible.
89. The report finds that predicted worst-case noise levels are not expected to result in intrusive noise or vibration impacts for sensitive receivers.
90. 12 sensitive receivers were identified in the report with the furthest located approximately 4600m from the BESS boundary (Figure 7). The closest receiver (R1) is the on-site dwelling which is proposed to be decommissioned and repurposed as a site office for the BESS facilities. As such, the noise impacts on R1 are not considered in the report. Further, a condition will be included in the permit that the dwelling is decommissioned prior to commencement of the use.

91. The operational noise reports for both applications find that neither proposal will generate noise in excess of EPA prescribed limits at any time during operation of the BESS facilities.
92. The reports find that cumulative noise resulting from operation of Stage 1 and 2, and the Cressy Terminal station is not expected to result in noise levels in excess of EPA noise limits at any time. The nearest sensitive receiver (R2) will experience a maximum of 33 dB(A) which is within the 34 dB(A) limit prescribed by the EPA.
93. The report finds that the proposed BESS is predicted to comply with all relevant noise standards both during construction and operation. It finds there will be no unreasonable noise impacts under the Environmental Protection Regulations 2021.

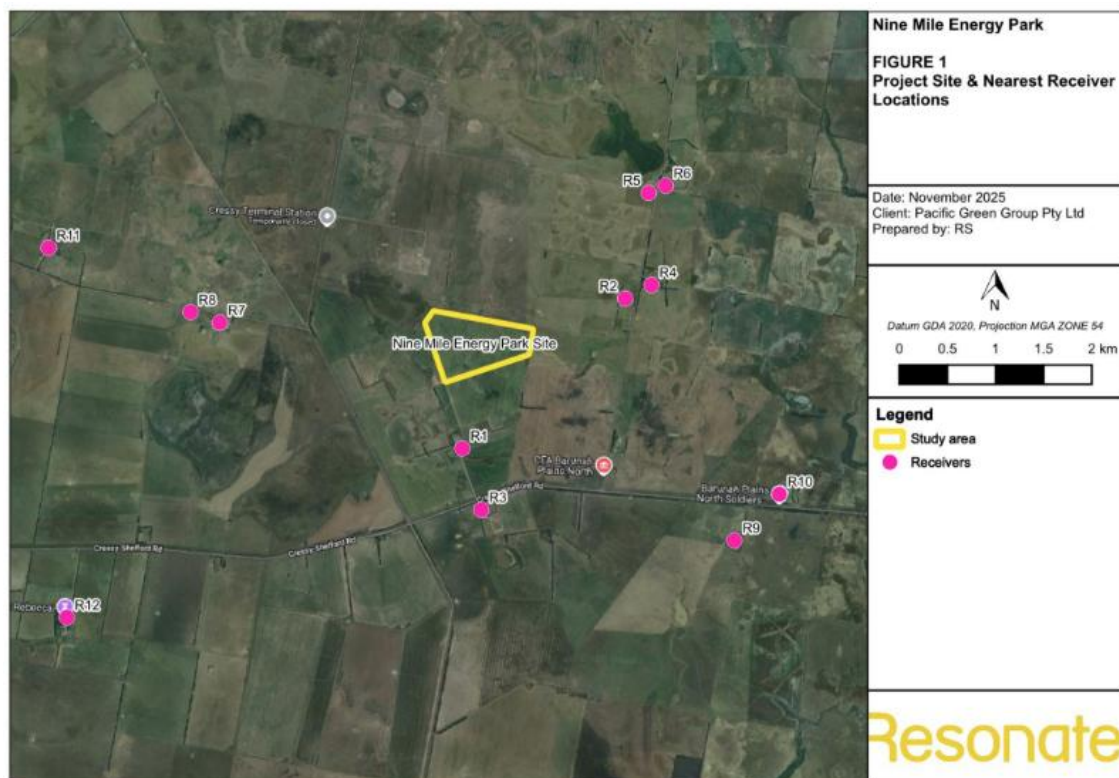


Figure 7: Identified sensitive receivers (Noise). Source: – Environmental Noise Assessment by Resonate.

Landscape and Visual Impact

94. The site is located within a rural area surrounded primarily by agricultural land, and existing energy generation and transmission infrastructure.
95. The proposal is supported by a Visual Impact Assessment by GbLA Landscape Architects dated 20 November 2025. Which finds that the visual impacts of the site are generally low and reduced further through strategic planting.
96. The assessment identifies six sensitive receptors within 4km of the proposal (see figure 8).
97. The report finds that four receptors are expected to experience low visual impacts while two will experience no visual impacts owing to the topography and existing vegetation in the area.
98. The assessment states that the proposed strategic planting will further reduce the visual impact of the proposals. This planting will be secured via condition on the permit.
99. DTP therefore considers the potential visual impacts to be reasonable, subject to conditions including requiring a landscaping plan detailing vegetation screening in accordance with the submitted development plan.



Figure 8: Identified sensitive receivers (Visual). Source: – Visual Impact Assessment by GbLA

Traffic

100. Clause 18.01-1S, and the FZ require consideration of access and traffic impacts relating to the proposed use and development.
101. The proposal is supported by a Traffic Impact Assessment by Impact Traffic Engineers dated 27 February 2026.
102. Access to the site will require upgrading of the existing site access off the council managed Cressy-Shelford Road. Swept-path analysis contained in the Traffic Impact Assessment illustrates that the proposed access will provide safe ingress and egress for 26m B-double vehicles.
103. The assessment expects that there will be approximately 292 daily traffic movements during the peak construction period of Stage 1. Stage 2 is expected to experience peak daily traffic volumes of 350. For the purpose of the traffic assessment, the construction period for each stage is expected to be between 6 and 9 months long.
104. A detailed car parking plan has not been provided however the planning report states that parking is expected to be in designated laydown areas, storage locations, or where construction activities are occurring. Further detail on car parking will be conditioned as part of the traffic management plans for each application.
105. Head, Transport for Victoria, and Golden Plains Shire Council provided submissions related to traffic impacts. Head, Transport for Victoria did not object to the proposal and Golden Plains Shire Council provided comments noted above in the submissions section.

106. Of particular relevance to this assessment, Golden Plains Shire Council comments relate to the inclusion of haulage routes, dilapidation reports for Cressy-Shelford Rd and Geggies Rd, and that any damage is addressed by the permit holder to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.
107. The assessment provides three potential haulage routes (figure 9) approaching east from either the Hamilton Highway or Rokewood-Shelford Road, or west from Hamilton Highway.
108. Further assessment of the proposed haulage route is required. Selection of a single haulage route and a full assessment of the proposed haulage route to the satisfaction of Head, Transport for Victoria will be conditioned as part of a traffic management plan to ensure that the traffic impacts of the two BESS facilities are acceptable.
109. Any intersection upgrades associated with the selected haulage route will be identified in the traffic management plan. A recommended condition would ensure that any intersection upgrades identified in the traffic management plan are to be complete ahead of works commencing onsite. It is noted that these upgrades may require separate planning consideration.
110. Through inclusion of conditions requiring a Construction Environmental Management Plan, an Operational Environment Management Plan, and a Traffic Management Plan, DTP is satisfied that the proposal will generate acceptable traffic impacts.

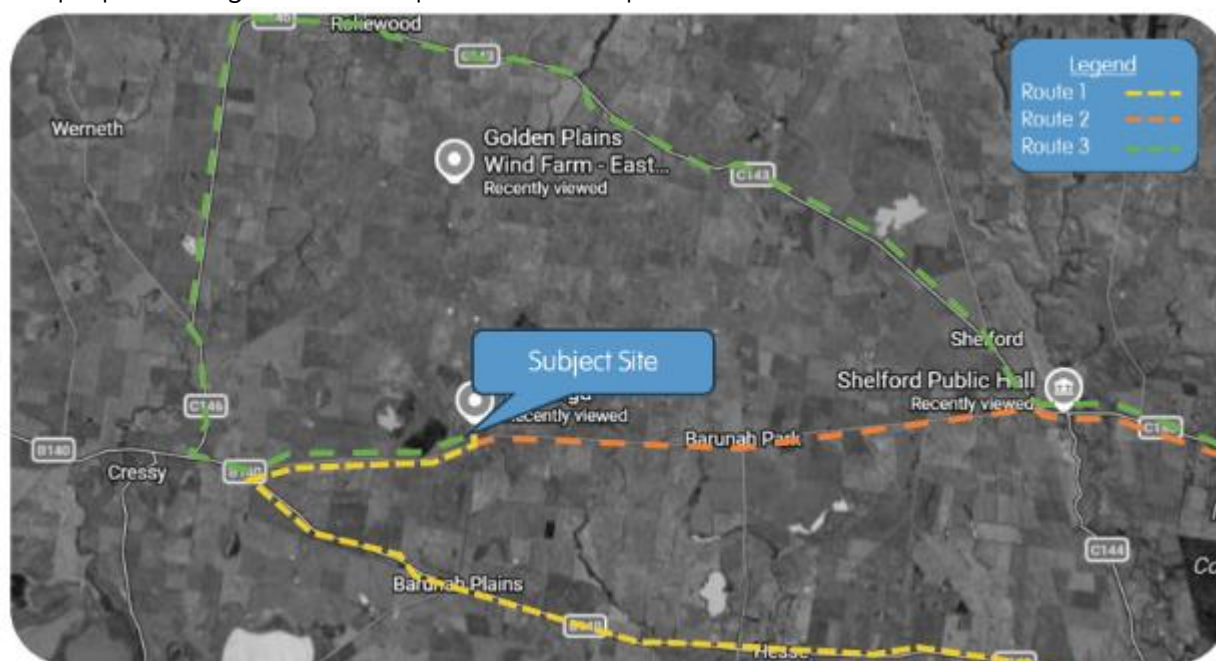


Figure 8: Haulage Route Options. Source: – Traffic Impact Assessment by Impact Traffic Engineers.

Biodiversity

111. Clause 12.01-1S (Protection of biodiversity) and clause 52.17 seek to protect and enhance Victoria’s biodiversity and native vegetation.
112. The application is supported by a biodiversity report, prepared by NGH, which finds there will 0.018 ha of native vegetation removal required to facilitate upgrades to the site access of Cressy-Shelford Road. 1.688 ha of planted native vegetation will be removed in the course of development of access works. It is noted that the removal of planted native vegetation is exempt from requiring a planning permit under Clause 52.17-7..
113. The application documents detail that native vegetation impacts have been avoided and minimised through sensitive design of the BESS and associated infrastructure and access. Further, the *Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation* (DEECA, 2025) identify the proposed removal as being eligible for the intermediate assessment pathway as less than 0.5 hectares are proposed to be




removed in Location category 1, meaning there are limited impacts on biodiversity. These can be adequately managed through the application of permit conditions and securing of offsets.

114. There are 10 patches of Ecological Value Class 132 located near the southern end of the project area at the proposed site access. One of these habitat zones (HZ1) will be partially impacted.
115. The native vegetation impacted by access upgrades is FFG Act listed *Western (Basalt) Plains Grassland Community* and EPBC Act listed *Natural Temperate Grassland of the Victorian Volcanic Plain*
116. Removal of the 0.018 ha of native vegetation in the road reserve occurs on public land and as such triggers the need for a permit under the FFG Act.
117. The securing of offsets for the remaining native vegetation removal will be conditioned as part of **both** permits. See the Staging section below for further discussion.

Hydrology

118. Clauses 12.03-1S and 12.03-1L, clauses 13.03-1S and 13.03-1L, and the LSIO require consideration of impacts to wetlands, floodplains, and impacts of development on flooding.
119. Both applications are supported by Surface Water Assessments by Cumulus Engineering dated November 2025. The assessments detail the existing conditions of the site and provide recommendations for stormwater management.
120. The assessment found that the design of Stage 1 generates no adverse flooding impacts outside the site boundary. The report also found that the resultant flood implication of Stage 1 can be managed through measures including:
 - Cut-off drain along eastern boundary of the BESS and access track combined with cross-drainage directing water to the lower point in the southwest portion.
 - Raising the fill pad to be above the 1% AEP SSP5 2030 flood level and raising the base of batteries/racks/containers to a minimum of 300mm above the 1% AEP SSP5 2100 level.
 - Constructing the main access track as an all-weather track incorporating cross-drainage to manage minor flow paths from east to west across the road **or** designing the access track to withstand periodic shallow overland flow.
121. The assessment of Stage 2 found that the raised fill pads associated with the project do generate some localised changes to flood levels. However, the report finds that increases in water heights resulting from the Stage 2 development are minor and do not significantly impact the overall floodplain dynamics.
122. The modelling for Stage 2 was run as the cumulative impacts of Stage 1 and 2. This assumes that construction of Stage 1 is complete and as such, mitigation measures.
123. The assessment finds that the flood and overland flow risks generated by the Stage 2 proposal can be addressed through the following measures:
 - Cut-off drain along the eastern boundary of the BESS and access track combined with cross-drainage directing water to the lower point in the southwest portion. DTP notes that these works have also been recommended as part of Stage 1.
 - Raising the fill pad to be above the 1% AEP SSP5 2030 flood level and raising the base of batteries/racks/containers to a minimum of 300mm above the 1% AEP SSP5 2100 level.
124. As the applications intersect with the LSIO, the applications were referred to the Corangamite Catchment Management Authority (CCMA). CCMA did not object to the application subject to conditions which align with the recommendations from the Surface Water Assessments including:
 - Raising the fill pad (including the internal roads) above the 1% AEP SSP5 2030 flood level and the base of batteries/racks/containers and other key infrastructure 300mm above the applicable 1% AEP SSP5 2100 flood level. (Special 1% AEP flood levels are to be assessed in more detail at the detailed design stage).
 - A cut off drain should be installed along the eastern boundary of the Stage 1 and 2 fill pads and access tracks with culverts to direct runoff around the pad and away from key infrastructure

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- The primary access track to Cressy–Shelford Road should include cross-drainage and/or surface design to manage minor overland flow paths.
125. With consideration to the decision guidelines in 44.04-8, section 60, and the views of the CCMA, DTP considers that the impacts of the proposed development can be appropriately managed through the proposed conditions above. These conditions will be included in the permit.

Social and Economic Effects

126. Sections 60(1)(f) and 60(1B) of the PE Act require the responsible authority to consider any significant social effects the use or development may have, including having regard to the number of objectors in considering whether the use or development may have a significant social effect.
127. It is considered that, on balance, the proposal achieves a net community benefit when balanced with its other social, economic and environmental outcomes.

Decommissioning

128. The future decommissioning of the proposed facility can be adequately addressed via permit conditions requiring a decommissioning management plan. These conditions will require the infrastructure to be removed from the site and the land to be rehabilitated and reinstated to its prior condition to ensure that there is no permanent loss of agricultural land.

Staging

129. Applications for Stage 1 and 2 were submitted concurrently however the proponent has indicated that Stage 1 will be developed first. Further, the Planning Report states that access upgrades are associated with Stage 1, including the native vegetation removal.
130. Considering access upgrades as solely a Stage 1 issue gives rise to the possibility that the Stage 2 development may take place without appropriate conditions in place on the Stage 2 permit.
131. DTP considers it appropriate to duplicate conditions related to traffic management and native vegetation removal on both permits to ensure compliance regardless of the sequencing of the two Stages. This duplication could be reconciled or amended through the post approval stages.

Other Victorian and Commonwealth legislation

132. The subject of this report is the assessment of the project under the PE Act.
133. The table at Attachment 1 of this report provides an overview of the project's key approval and assessment requirements under other Victorian and Commonwealth legislation.



Recommendation

134. The proposal has been considered against the matters at section 60 of the PE Act, is consistent with the relevant planning policies of the **Golden Plains** Planning Scheme and will contribute to the provision of **energy storage** that will contribute towards Victoria's renewable energy transmission and net-zero targets.
135. The proposal is supported by the various referral agencies, subject to conditions which have been included in the recommendation.
136. It is recommended that planning permits **PA2504144** and **PA2504148** for **the use and development of land for a utility installation (Battery Energy Storage System), native vegetation removal, and business identification signage** be issued under delegation from the Minister for Planning, subject to conditions.
137. It is recommended that the following stakeholders be notified of the above decision in writing:
- Applicant
 - Council
 - Referral authorities:
 - AusNet
 - Corangamite Catchment Management Authority
 - WorkSafe etc
 - All submitters, including the following agency submitters:
 - CFA
 - Head, Transport for Victoria
 - All other agencies notified under section 52(1)(d), including:
 - Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation
 - Energy Safe Victoria
 - VicGrid



Prepared by:

I have considered whether there is a conflict of interest in assessing this application and I have determined that I have:

- No Conflict
- Conflict and have therefore undertaken the following actions:
 - Completed the Statutory Planning Services declaration of Conflict/Interest form.
 - Attached the Statutory Planning Services declaration of Conflict/Interest form on to the hardcopy file.
 - Attached the Statutory Planning Services declaration of Conflict/Interest form into the relevant electronic workspace.

Dated: 27 May 2026

Reviewed by:

I have considered whether there is a conflict of interest in assessing this application and I have determined that I have:

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Dated: 27 May 2026

Approved by:

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Dated: 27 May 2026

Attachment 1: Requirements under other legislation

Act	Discussion
Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 (AH Act)	<p>The AH Act seeks to avoid adverse effects to Aboriginal cultural heritage values as far as reasonably practicable. Where adverse effects cannot be avoided, measures must be implemented to minimise and mitigate adverse effects.</p> <p>The subject site includes areas of Aboriginal cultural heritage sensitivity, and a mandatory Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) is required. An approved CHMP was received on 28 November 2025.</p>
Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988 (FFG Act)	<p>Under the FFG Act a permit is required to take, kill, injure, disturb or collect threatened species or protected flora species from public land. There are permit exemptions under the FFG Act which apply to the non-commercial removal of protected flora from private land, unless there is 'critical habitat' that has been declared on the land.</p> <p>The Flora and Fauna Assessment outlines that the FFG listed <i>Western (Basalt) Plains Grassland Community</i> species will likely be impacted by the project.</p> <p>Given the native vegetation removal occurs on public land (road reserve), a permit under the FFG Act will be required.</p>
Climate Action Act 2017 (CA Act)	<p>The purpose of the CA Act includes (but is not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– to facilitate the consideration of climate change issues in specified areas of decision making of the Government of Victoria; and,– to set policy objectives and guiding principles to inform decision-making under this Act and the development of government policy in the State. <p>Section 20 of the CA Act states that:</p> <p><i>The Government of Victoria will endeavour to ensure that any decision made by the Government and any policy, program or process developed or implemented by the Government appropriately takes account of climate change if it is relevant by having regard to the policy objectives and the guiding principles.</i></p> <p>This assessment has had consideration of the policy objectives and the guiding principles of the CA Act.</p> <p>The proposed facilities are estimated to store a combined 500 MW of electricity, which will help achieve the emissions reduction targets in Part 2 of the CA Act.</p> <p>It is noted that the community were invited to be involved in the decision-making process via public notice under s52 of the PE Act.</p>
Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (the Charter)	<p>The Charter gives legal recognition and protection in Victoria to many important human rights, particularly civil and political rights. DTP is committed to upholding its responsibilities under the Charter.</p> <p>This planning application has been assessed in a manner that is compatible with the human rights identified in the Charter.</p>



Department
of Transport
and Planning