Yangery BESS

Planning Report

Yangery BESS Development Pty Ltd

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Document control record

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Executive Summary

This report has been prepared for South Energy Pty Ltd on behalf of Yangery BESS Development Pty Ltd to support a planning permit application for the Yangery BESS at 689 Tower Hill Road, Yangery (the Proposal). The application proposes the use and development of land for a proposed Utility Installation (Battery Energy Storage System (BESS)), car parking and the display of business identification signage.

The Proposal will involve the following works:

- Installation of a BESS, with Stage 1 comprising a nominal installed capacity of 120MW/ 480 MWh (provision for expansion subject to future approval demarcated in Figure 2)
- On-site (66/33kV) collector substation including transformer to step up from 33kV to the connection voltage
- Construction of internal access roads including two (2) new access points and associated business identification signage located on Tower Hill Road and Conns Lane
- Underground or overhead cabling (66kV) to connect the onsite substation to the adjoining Powercor Koroit Zone Substation (66/22kV)
- An Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Facility
- Temporary construction facilities including site offices and stores, laydown and hardstand area and construction carpark
- Water storage including two water supply tanks and pump house associated with each of the two BESS areas (comprising four water supply tanks in total)
- Fencing around the perimeter of the BESS and substation facility
- Three permanent car parking spaces
- Installation of a noise wall up to 8m in height surrounding the BESS area
- Construction of two (2) lightning masts up to 21.4m in height adjacent to the collector substation
- Construction of two (2) light poles up to 10.6m in height adjacent to the collector substation
- Construction of two (2) stormwater detention basins
- Realignment of the existing watercourse (optional)

The Proposal is defined as a Utility Installation pursuant to Clause 73.03 (Land Use Terms) of the Warrnambool Planning Scheme and triggers planning approval for the following:

- Clause 35.07 (Farming Zone) – For use of land, and buildings and works for the purpose of a 'Utility installation', to construct a building within 100 metres of a waterway, and for earthworks which change the rate of flow or the discharge point of water across a property boundary, or which increase the discharge of saline groundwater.
  - changes to rate of flow subject to detailed design and to be confirmed prior to endorsement of plans. Stormwater detention basins are expected to manage this requirement
- Clause 52.05 (Signs) – For the display of a business identification sign in a Category 4 – sensitive areas.
- Clause 52.06 (Car Parking) – To provide car parking spaces to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.
- Clause 43.02-2 (Design and Development Overlay) – To construct a building or carry out works for greater than 7.5m in height (Section 2 – Schedule 16).

No native vegetation removal will occur.

This application seeks planning approval from the Minister for Planning via the Development Facilitation Program using the approval pathway provided through Clause 53.22 (Significant Economic Development) of the Warrnambool Planning Scheme.

The Proposal is considered to meet the requirements and policy direction of the Warrnambool Planning Scheme. It is supported by environmental impact assessments that have informed the proposed site selection and indicative design. The Proposal will not result in any significant environmental impacts, including impacts to ecological values, traffic, landscape and visual amenity, and noise.

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Glossary/Abbreviations

Term	Definition
BESS	Battery Energy Storage System
BMO	Bushfire Management Overlay
CEMP	Construction environment management plan
CHMP	Cultural Heritage Management Plan
CHS	Cultural Heritage Sensitivity
CTMP	Construction Traffic Management Plan
DEECA	Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action
DELWP	Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, now known as Department of Transport and Planning and Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action
DTP	Department of Transport and Planning
EMP	Environmental management plan
EPA	Environment Protection Authority Victoria
FZ	Farming Zone
ha	Hectares
km	Kilometres
kV	Kilovolt
m	Metres
MD	Ministerial Direction
MW	Megawatt
Yangery BESS	The development of a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) in Yangery, Victoria.
The Proposal	The proposed use and development of a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) at 689 Tower Hill Road, Yangery.
(the) Proponent	South Energy Pty Ltd, on behalf of Yangery BESS Development Pty Ltd, the organisation responsible for developing and implementing the Yangery BESS Proposal.
Proposal Area	The defined area of the property located at 689 Tower Hill Road, Yangery (see Figure 2). The Proposal Area encompasses 23 hectares (ha).
RAP	Registered Aboriginal Party
(the) Subject Site	The property at 689 Tower Hill Road, Yangery, VIC 3283
TMP	Traffic Management Plan
ZTV	Zone of Theoretical Visibility

1 Introduction

Aurecon Australasia Pty Ltd (Aurecon) has been engaged by South Energy Pty Ltd on behalf of Yangery BESS Development Pty Ltd (the Proponent) to prepare this planning report to support a planning permit application for the development of a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and associated infrastructure (the Proposal) in Yangery in Western Victoria. The Proposal is located within the Warrnambool Local Government Area (LGA).

The Proposal seeks to develop a 120 MW BESS to enhance grid stability and reliability by providing bi-directional power function. The Proposal will connect to the adjacent Koroit Zone Substation, providing access to the National Electricity Market (NEM).

Further details on the Proposal are provided at Table 1.

Table 1 Application Summary

Requirement	Details
Applicant	South Energy Pty Ltd, on behalf of Yangery BESS Development Pty Ltd
Responsible Authority	Minister for Planning
Property Address	689 Tower Hill Road, Yangery, VIC 3283
Formal Property Description	Lot 1 on PS601769
Total Proposal Area	23 hectares (ha)
Proposal	The Proposal will involve the following buildings and works: ■ Installation of a BESS, with Stage 1 comprising a nominal installed capacity of 120MW/ 480 MWh (provision for expansion subject to future approval demarcated in Figure 2). ■ On-site (66/33kV) collector substation including transformer to step up from 33kV to the connection voltage ■ Construction of internal access roads including two (2) new access points and associated business identification signage located on Tower Hill Road and Conns Lane ■ Underground or overhead cabling (66kV) to connect the onsite substation to the adjoining Powercor Koroit Zone Substation (66/22kV) ■ Construction of temporary construction facilities including site offices and stores, laydown and hardstand area and construction carpark ■ Water storage (including two water supply tanks and pump house associated with each of the two BESS areas) ■ Fencing around the perimeter of the BESS and substation facility ■ Three permanent car parking spaces ■ Installation of noise wall up to 8m in height surrounding the BESS area ■ Construction of two (2) lightning masts up to 21.4m in height adjacent to the collector substation ■ Construction of two (2) light poles up to 10.6m in height adjacent to the collector substation ■ Construction of two (2) stormwater detention basins ■ Realignment of the existing watercourse (optional)

Zones (within the Proposal Area)	Farming Zone (FZ)
Overlays (within the Proposal Area)	Design and Development Overlay, Schedule 16 - Warrnambool Regional Airport – Building Height Above 7.5 Metres (RL 79.0m AHD) (DDO16)
Planning Permit Triggers	■ Clause 35.07 Farming Zone – For use of land, and buildings and works for the purpose of a 'Utility installation'. (35.07-1 & 35.07-4) – To construct a building within 100 metres from a waterway (35.07-4). – For earthworks which change the rate of flow or the discharge point of water across a property boundary, or which increase the discharge of saline groundwater. (Schedule 1) ■ Changes to rate of flow subject to detailed design and to be confirmed prior to endorsement of plans. Stormwater detention basins are expected to manage this requirement. ■ Clause 52.05 (Signs) – For the display of a business identification sign in a Category 4 – sensitive areas. ■ Clause 52.06 (Car Parking)– To provide car parking spaces to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority. ■ Clause 43.02-2 (Design and Development Overlay) – To construct a building or carry out works for greater than 7.5m in height (Section 2 – Schedule 16).
Mapped areas of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Sensitivity (CHS)	Yes, a mandatory CHMP is being prepared.
Bushfire Prone Area	Yes

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide an assessment of the Proposal to support an application for a Planning Permit to the Minister for Planning:

The scope of the assessment is to:

- Provide an overview of the Subject Site and surrounding area;
- Outline the applicable planning and regulatory framework under the Warrnambool Planning Scheme as it relates to the proposed use and development; and
- Present a detailed planning assessment of the Proposal against the relevant planning policies and provisions.

1.2 Supporting Documents

This report is accompanied by the following documentation:

Table 2 Supporting Documents

Document Name	Appendix Reference
Certificate of Title	Appendix A
Site Layout Plan	Appendix B
Ecology Assessment	Included separately
Traffic Impact Assessment	Included separately
Risk Management Plan (including Bushfire Hazard Assessment)	Included separately
Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment	Included separately
Surface Water Assessment	Included separately
Consultation Summary Report	Included separately
Noise Impact Assessment	Included separately
Agricultural Impact Assessment	Included separately

2 Proposal Background

2.1 The Applicant

The Proponent, South Energy, is an Australian renewable energy developer and specialist in delivering utility scale renewable energy projects. South Energy's mission is to deliver clean energy solutions to support Australia's transition towards a sustainable future. South Energy are committed to developing, building and operating advanced large-scale, grid-connected projects that help mitigate carbon emissions and create long-term business and employment opportunities for local communities.

South Energy is a member of the Growland Group, a Melbourne-based property developer dedicated to responsible and sustainable land development.

South Energy's development approach encourages proactive participation, community engagement, and multi-purpose land use. South Energy has extensive experience undertaking solar farm projects; the Yangery BESS is one of the first BESS Projects pursued by South Energy in Victoria.

2.2 Consultation

Between June and November 2024, South Energy implemented a structured community engagement program for the Yangery BESS ahead of submission to the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP). The engagement aimed to raise early awareness, gather local feedback, and identify potential development considerations. Key engagement activities included notifying neighbouring residents via letters, phone calls, meetings, and emails with key regulatory bodies, council representatives, MPs, local sustainability and community groups, and technical experts. Engagement with stakeholders is to continue as appropriate, to address matters associated with the development through to the date of approval submission.

2.2.1 Community Consultation

A public information session was held on 7 November 2024 to introduce the Yangery BESS Project. The drop-in session was organized to engage with residents and stakeholders, providing a platform to share Project details with the local community. In addition to the drop-in session, the South Energy team visited neighbours to the site who were unable to attend on the day of the session. FAQ sheets and project information letters were provided to those who were not at their homes during the visit. This consultation provided an opportunity to inform potential refinements of the proposed design of the Yangery BESS.

2.2.2 Pre-application meeting with Department of Transport and Planning

A formal pre-application meeting occurred on 3 October 2024, to introduce the Project to DTP. Additional meetings were held with DTP on 23 September 2025 and on 16 December 2025 to discuss the progress of the Proposal.

2.2.3 Pre-application meeting with CFA

A pre-application meeting with the Country Fire Authority (CFA) was held on 27 June 2024. Following this meeting, ongoing consultation with the CFA has informed the design and site layout of the Proposal to ensure accordance with the minimum requirements of the *CFA Design Guidelines and Model Requirements for Renewable Energy*.

2.3 Proposal Benefits

Large-scale energy storage (e.g. BESS) will play an important role in stabilising Victoria's electricity grid, supporting the state's transition to renewable energy, and contributing to the reduction of carbon emissions to help achieve the Victorian Government target of net-zero emissions by 2045. By providing an increased capacity for detection and response to disturbances in power supply, BESS infrastructure helps to facilitate the stable operation of Victoria's electricity network.

The Yangery BESS Proposal will contribute to the reliable delivery of electricity across the state, assisting in stabilising the grid and creating a more flexible and resilient power network. During operation, the BESS will absorb excess power from the electricity network during periods of high output and release it back to the network during peak time or as needed to support network demand. This process minimises energy curtailment and enhances the overall efficiency of the electricity grid, thereby leading to lower electricity costs for consumers. At its maximum capacity, the Proposal is expected to charge and discharge enough stored energy to power approximately 42,000 households for a 4-hour discharge cycle.

The Proposal will also drive local and regional investment and create employment opportunities for the local area. The Proposal is expected to generate approximately 125 direct and indirect jobs during the construction period, and approximately 2-3 permanent positions and additional contract roles on a long-term basis during operation and maintenance of the BESS.

As detailed in Section 6, BESS projects promote the growth and diversification of rural economies. In turn, the Proposal offers new opportunities for industry development driven by climate change responses and sustainability initiatives supported in the City of Warrnambool.

South Energy proposes to voluntarily develop an ongoing Benefit Sharing Program (BSP) in collaboration with local stakeholders to support initiatives which contribute to the delivery of renewable energy projects.

From the Proposal's Commercial Operation Date, South Energy intends to establish a community benefit fund, with the annual contribution amount to be confirmed each year (up to 30k AUD). The fund will be managed locally where possible.

Overall, the Proposal will contribute to the local economy, increase employment opportunities, and improve community wellbeing through more stable and affordable energy supply.

2.4 Site Selection

The site selection and design process has been rigorous to ensure the optimal siting and design for the Proposal, ensuring an efficient use of the land that causes minimal impacts to the environment, cultural heritage, neighbours and road users.

BESS Projects are often co-located with existing network connection points such as terminal stations. Accordingly, the site has been selected due to its proximity to, and access to, the existing Koroit Zone Substation and associated transmission line. The Koroit Zone Substation serves as a major energy hub for the region, playing a critical role in supporting electricity generation across southwest Victoria. The substation's existing capacity and established network connectivity enable streamlined grid integration of the proposed BESS, in addition to reducing the need for additional network upgrades, minimising construction complexity, approval risks and long-term operational constraints.

The Proposal is located approximately 9km northwest of Warrnambool, the largest regional hub in southwest Victoria. As such, the proximity to Warrnambool provides benefits through facilitating access to essential resources, skilled labour, specialist services, supplier and contractors, all of which are essential for the delivery of the Yangery BESS. Furthermore, Warrnambool's accommodation, hospitality, and transportation options provide logistical benefits during both the construction phase and ongoing operations.

The Subject Site is generally flat and has historically been used for agricultural purposes. As a result, the land has been significantly modified. No native vegetation is present on the site. The immediate surrounds of the Proposal comprise of agricultural farms and natural landscapes which serve as a visual buffer to the Proposal (as detailed in Section 3.2). The Subject Site is highly accessible through existing transport connections to Tower Hill Road and Conns Lane.

3 Subject Site and Surrounds

3.1 Subject Site

The Subject Site is located at 689 Tower Hill Road, Yangery, VIC 3283 (formally known as Lot 1 on PS601769) and covers approximately 23 hectares (ha) of land. The proposed BESS will occupy 3.2ha of the allotment. The Subject Site is located within the City of Warrnambool. The Shire of Moyne LGA is directly adjacent to the Subject Site to the north and west.

The Proposal is located adjacent to the existing Koroit Zone Substation network connection point (located to the north-west of the Subject Site), and is owned and operated by Powercor. A 66kV transmission line runs diagonally through the northern section of the site, connecting to the existing Koroit Zone Substation. There are no restrictive covenants, section 173 agreements or other encumbrances on title that restrict the proposed BESS development.

The Subject Site is privately owned, and is located within cleared agricultural land historically used for grazing, and comprises a predominantly flat topography, with no native vegetation present. The land is intersected by a degraded and eroded drainage line that adjoins one isolated waterbody in the southern paddock. This drainage line is a tributary of Yangery Creek, located approximately 1km east of the Subject Site.

The Subject Site is bounded by Tower Hill Road which runs east-west along the northern site boundary, and Conns Lane which runs north-south along the western site boundary. Vehicle access to the site is proposed from both Tower Hill Road and Conns Lane.

3.2 Site Surrounds

The Proposal is located in south-western Victoria, approximately 226km south west of Melbourne. The Subject Site is located in Yangery, approximately 6km east of Koroit and 6km west of Bushfield. Refer to Figure 1 for the Subject Site and broader context.

The Proposal is located in a rural setting and away from established residential neighbourhoods. The surrounding landscape comprises primarily of cleared agricultural land, scattered rural dwellings and primarily flat topography. Warrnambool, located approximately 9km south-east of the Subject Site, is the principal service centre for the south-west region of Victoria, hosting a population of approximately 33,000. The Tower Hill Wildlife Reserve, located approximately 5km west of the Proposal, provides a key environmental feature of the region.

The surrounding region contains other renewable energy projects that have been either proposed or approved. The recently approved 200MW (400MWh) Tarrone BESS project (not yet operational) is located approximately 30km north-west of the Proposal. In addition, the Woolsthorpe Wind Farm (approved, but not yet operational) and the Hawkesdale Wind Farm (operational) are neighbouring wind energy facilities located approximately 15km north of the Proposal.

Figure 1 Proposal Context

Figure 2 Proposal Layout

3.3 Site Surrounds

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The Proposal is located in a rural setting and away from established residential neighbourhoods. The surrounding landscape comprises primarily of cleared agricultural land, scattered rural dwellings and primarily flat topography. Warrnambool, located approximately 9km south-east of the Subject Site, is the principal service centre for the south-west region of Victoria, hosting a population of approximately 33,000. The Tower Hill Wildlife Reserve, located approximately 5km west of the Proposal, provides a key environmental feature of the region.

The surrounding region contains other renewable energy projects that have been either proposed or approved. The recently approved 200MW (400MWh) Tarrone BESS project (not yet operational) is located approximately 30km north-west of the Proposal. In addition, the Woolsthorpe Wind Farm (approved, but not yet operational) and the Hawkesdale Wind Farm (operational) are neighbouring wind energy facilities located approximately 15km north of the Proposal.

4 Proposal Description

The application proposes the use and development of the site for a Utility Installation (a BESS) and ancillary infrastructure. The application proposes to provide three (3) permanent car parking spaces, and the display of business identification signage to identify the proposed use of the land for a BESS. No native vegetation is proposed to be removed in association with the Proposal.

4.1 Permanent and ancillary infrastructure

The Proposal features the following permanent core and ancillary infrastructure:

- BESS, with Stage 1 comprising a nominal installed capacity of 120MW/ 480 MWh (provision for expansion subject to future approval demarcated in Figure 2)
- On-site (66/33kV) collector substation including transformer to step up from 33kV to the connection voltage
- Internal access roads including two (2) new access points
- Underground or overhead cabling (66kV) to connect the onsite substation to the adjoining Koroit Zone Substation (66/22kV)
- Temporary construction facilities including site offices and stores, laydown and hardstand area and construction carpark
- Water storage (including two water supply tanks and pump house associated with each of the two BESS areas)
- Fencing around the perimeter of the BESS and substation facility
- Three (3) permanent car parking spaces
- Business identification signage at two (2) site entry points located on Tower Hill Road and Conns Lane
- (Optional) realignment of the existing watercourse
- Noise wall (up to 8.0m) surrounding the BESS area
- Construction of two (2) lightning masts up to 21.4m in height adjacent to the collector substation
- Construction of two (2) light poles up to 10.6m in height adjacent to the collector substation
- Two (2) stormwater detention basins

The site layout of the Proposal is at Appendix B.

BESS infrastructure will be divided into two areas, located both north and south of the transmission line bisecting the lot. BESS equipment will have a maximum height in the order of 3m and positioned together with light poles at a maximum height of approximately 10.6m. Two (2) lighting masts measuring 21.4m will also be located on the site. BESS equipment will be surrounded by noise walls at a height of 8m.

The proposed collector substation will be located in the north of the Subject Site, directly adjacent to the existing Koroit Zone Substation. The collector substation will have a maximum height of approximately 7m and be adjacent to lightning masts measuring up to 21.4m in height.

4.1.1 Fencing

The areas designated for the BESS infrastructure and the collector substation will be enclosed by a chain link perimeter fence at a height of 3.2m. A set of double fence gates will be provided at each entry point across the internal access roads to facilitate vehicular access. A temporary construction fence is proposed along the northern boundary of the site, adjacent to Tower Hill Road, enclosing the temporary ancillary infrastructure, including the construction car park, site offices and laydown area. Two emergency access

gates are proposed, located on the southern boundary and directly above the northern BESS area respectively.

4.1.2 Signage

Business identification signage will be installed at each site access point, with one sign positioned at the Tower Hill Road main entrance, and a second at the Conns Lane access.

The dimensions of the business identification signage will be 2m (width) by approximately 1.5m (height) on the Tower Hill Road entrance, and 1m (width) by 1m (height) on the Conns Lane entrance, totalling 3sqm, and will sit 1.7m above the ground. The signs will be non-reflective and not be illuminated, electric or animated.

The signage dimensions and business details to be displayed are specified in detail within the signage plan submitted as part of this application.

4.2 Temporary ancillary infrastructure

The Proposal features the following temporary ancillary infrastructure:

- Construction carpark
- Site offices
- Laydown and hardstand area
- Temporary construction fencing

4.3 Construction

The construction phase is expected to last 15 to 18 months, starting in January 2027. The construction phase is typically broken into stages based on the type of works, with different construction vehicle types and volumes in each stage. Further information is to be provided in the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) to be prepared prior to the commencement of construction.

4.4 Operations

Commercial operation of the facility is planned to commence in April 2028 with a proposed operation lifetime of 40 years, followed by 2 years for decommissioning.

The BESS facilities are available to operate 24/7 and will be monitored remotely in real-time and do not require dedicated staff to be on-site at all times. Staff will access the site periodically to undertake inspections and maintenance with approximately 2-3 full-time staff typically on-site during business hours for rolling maintenance and troubleshooting activities. It is anticipated that no more than two staff will be on site at any one time.

Vehicles which access the site during the operations phase are expected to be mostly light vehicles with occasional heavy vehicles required for instances of major maintenance.

5 Legislative and Policy Context

The following section identifies key legislation and policies of relevance to the Proposal.

Legislation, strategies, policies and guidelines	Description	Proposal Response
Climate Change Act 2017 and subsequent plan and strategies: ■ Renewable Energy Action Plan (DELWP [now Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action], 2017) ■ Victoria's Climate Change Strategy (Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action, 2026-2030)	The *Climate Change Act 2017* and *Victoria's Climate Change Strategy (2026-2030)* establish the long-term target of net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045. The Act sets five-yearly interim targets for achieving net-zero emissions. Updates to the Act in 2024 have included setting in law the state's emissions reduction targets of: ■ 28–33% below 2005 levels by 2025 ■ 45–50% below 2005 levels by 2030 ■ 75–80% below 2005 levels by 2035. ■ Net zero emissions by 2045 – five years earlier than Victoria's previous commitment The Renewable Energy Action Plan (2017) outlines the Government's vision for a strong, sustainable and locally based renewable energy industry in Victoria.	■ The Proposal supports the policy objectives of the *Climate Change Act 2017* as it facilitates the development of renewable energy supply infrastructure. It will support the transition to a low-carbon economy by providing energy storage capacity that enables renewable energy generation and contributes to greenhouse emission reductions.
Plan for Victoria (2025)	The Plan for Victoria provides a long-term strategic framework which sets out the state-wide vision for Victoria from 2025 through to 2050. ■ Plan for Victoria provides a set of short and long-term actions to track progress towards the state's vision, including for renewable energy infrastructure and regional economic development. ■ Action 22 seeks to support regional Victoria's leading role in the state's energy transition in line with the Victorian Transmission Plan (2025).	■ The Proposal aligns with the Plan for Victoria by supporting the state's transition to renewable energy. The Project is consistent with actions and strategies provided by the Plan for Victoria which support regional economic development opportunities.

Victorian Transmission Investment Framework (VicGrid 2023) and subsequent plans including: ■ Victorian Transmission Plan (VicGrid, 2025) ■ Victorian Government's Renewable Energy Zones (Proposed)	The Victorian Government has proposed new Renewable Energy Zones (REZ) through the Victorian Transmission Plan (VTP). REZs were selected through a strategic land use assessment which considered a number of factors including abundance of wind and sun, and appropriateness of development from a land use and environmental perspective.	■ Although not located within a REZ, the Proposal supports the objectives of the REZ framework by facilitating the operation and use of supporting infrastructure that promotes the long-term interests of electricity consumers, particularly in relation to reliability and security of the national electricity system. The Proposal connects to existing transmission line infrastructure which intersects the site.
Warrnambool City Council – Council Plan 2021-2025	The Warrnambool Council Plan is a long-term strategic plan for addressing the economic, social, cultural and environmental outcomes for the Warrnambool Local Government Area and its communities. The Plan sets out the objective to facilitate and support the delivery of climate change mitigation, adaptation and resilience actions, including the development of renewables in the Warrnambool region.	■ The Proposal supports the strategic objectives of the Plan to support the delivery of renewable energy production within the Warrnambool region through the proposed BESS development. ■ The Yangery BESS will enhance grid stability by providing bi-directional energy function, helping to smooth out fluctuations and allowing an increased supply of cost-effective, clean renewable energy.
Designated Bushfire Prone Area	Bushfire Prone Areas (BPA) are locations where the bushfire hazard has been identified and mapped under the building system. These areas are subject to or likely to be subject to bushfires. Clause 13.02 (Bushfire) sets out planning policy that applies to land in a designated BPA, BMO or any use or development that may create a bushfire hazard. Clause 13.02-1S (Bushfire Planning) outlines the State's objectives in managing bushfire risk to life and property through appropriate hazard identification and strategic planning, and sets out the use and development within a BPA that should consider bushfire risk.	■ A summary of the assessment against Clause 13.02-1S (Bushfire Planning) can be found at Section 6.3. ■ The Risk and Bushfire Hazard Assessment undertaken is submitted with this application.

Design Guidelines and Model Requirements for Renewable Energy Facilities (Country Fire Authority, 2025) (CFA Guidelines)	The CFA Guidelines establish the risk assessment methodology and key emergency and safety mitigation for renewable energy installations, including BESS.	▪ The Proposal has been assessed against the CFA Guidelines (refer to Section 0 and accompanying Bushfire and Risk assessment) and make several recommendations for technical and management safeguards to aid in compliance with the Guidelines, to reduce the residual risk such that no identified hazard poses a significant risk to the community, the Proposal or the surrounding area. ▪ Further study and planning will be undertaken per the Guidelines in the detailed design phase.

6 Warrnambool Planning Scheme

6.1 Land use definition

Under Clause 73.03 (Land Use Terms) of the Warrnambool Planning Scheme, the proposed BESS is a Utility installation is defined as:

'*Land used to transmit, distribute or store power'.*

6.2 Municipal Planning Strategy

Warrnambool's Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) sets out the long-term vision, objectives and strategies for future development of the area. The MPS provides policy direction which supports the vision of the Warrnambool municipality and reflects the land uses and development intensity of the area. These policy directions are general in nature and rely on the application of the Planning Policy Framework (PPF) to achieve the broad strategic direction of the MPS.

An assessment against the Municipal Planning Strategy of the Warrnambool Planning Scheme is provided in Table 3 Assessment of the Proposal against the Municipal Planning Strategy, below:

Table 3 Assessment of the Proposal against the Municipal Planning Strategy

Clause	Proposal Response
Clause 02.03-2 Environment and landscape values Warrnambool's relevant strategic directions are as follows: ■ Protecting and enhancing sites of biodiversity conservation significance. ■ Providing wildlife habitat and corridors for vulnerable and threatened flora and fauna species in coastal reserves. ■ Arresting the decline and fragmentation of native vegetation to minimise land and water degradation issues. ■ Protecting coastal areas, waterways and sensitive ecosystems from the detrimental impacts of urban and rural development. ■ Protecting significant landscapes and landforms from inappropriate development.	The Proposal is not considered to result in any impacts to significant ecological values. The Subject Site does not support any patches of native vegetation or significant habitat features that are considered to support threatened flora and fauna species. The Proposal is not located in an area of significant landscape value. The immediate surroundings of the Subject Site comprise of cleared land and agricultural farms, which act as a buffer to ensure the Proposal will not create adverse visual impacts to the surrounding landscape.
Clause 02.03-3 Environmental risks and amenity Warrnambool's relevant strategic directions are as follows: ■ Planning for and managing bushfire risk.	The Proposal is situated within a Designated Bushfire Prone Area but is not subject to the Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO). As such, the Proposal has been appropriately designed and sited to comply with the requirements and mitigation objectives of the: ■ CFA Fire Safety Studies for Battery Energy Storage Systems Guidelines (v1, June 2025) ■ Clause 13.02-1S (Bushfire Planning) of the Planning Scheme. The Proposal's compliance with the relevant CFA guidelines is set out in detail in the accompanying Bushfire Hazard Assessment.

Clause 02.03-4 Natural resource management Warrnambool's relevant strategic directions are as follows: ■ Protecting rural areas to ensure agricultural uses remain viable. ■ Limiting use or development that will be incompatible with the agricultural use of the land.	The proposed use of land for a BESS will not adversely impact the agricultural land that currently surrounds the Subject Site. The Proposal would not preclude the Subject Site from returning to agricultural use following the decommissioning of the BESS (Utility installation).
Clause 02.03-7 Economic development Warrnambool's relevant strategic directions are as follows: ■ Developing value-adding opportunities ■ Protecting the significance of agriculture in the local economy.	The Proposal would have a positive impact on Warrnambool's economic development. The constructions phase of the Proposal is expected to generate approximately 125 direct and indirect jobs, with approximately 2-3 permanent positions and additional contract roles on a long-term basis required during the operations phase.

6.3 Planning Policy Framework

The Planning Policy Framework (PPF) contains local, state and regional level policies that apply across Victoria. An assessment of the Proposal against the relevant sections of the PPF is provided below:

Table 4 Assessment of the Proposal against Planning Policy Framework

Clause	Proposal Response
Clause 12: Environment and Landscape Values Clause 12.01-1S Protection of biodiversity Clause 12.01-1L Warrnambool biodiversity Clause 12.01-2S Native vegetation management	The Subject Site is devoid of native vegetation. The Proposal is not considered to result in any impacts to ecological values. The BESS is strategically located to benefit from the adjacent transmission line and substation infrastructure, thereby avoiding the need to construct further transmission infrastructure and minimising impacts to landscape values in the surrounding area.

Clause 13: Environmental Risks and Amenity Clause 13.01-1S Natural hazards and climate change Clause 13.02-1S Bushfire planning Clause 13.05-1S Noise management Clause 13.06-1S Air quality management Clause 13.07-1S Land use compatibility Clause 13.07-1L-04 Land use conflict – Agriculture	The Subject Site is located adjacent to an existing transmission line and substation infrastructure. The proposed use as a BESS is compatible with this existing infrastructure. Co-location with existing transmission lines represents an efficient use of land and minimises the need for construction of additional transmission infrastructure within the area. The Proposal includes the installation of a noise wall surrounding the BESS equipment up to a height of 8m. As further detailed in the accompanying Noise Impact Assessment, the Proposal ensures that appropriate integration with the surrounding environment is undertaken, with the noise wall installation supporting the Proposal's commitment to maintain amenity to the surrounding area. Additional noise mitigation measures undertaken include the implementation of silencing measures on the BESS batteries and inverters. As such, the Noise Impact Assessment demonstrates that noise levels from the Proposal are not expected to cause unreasonable acoustic impacts on the surrounding environment and landscape. The Proposal will continue to have an obligation to implementing noise reduction methods, as per the General Environmental Duty. The Proposal has been designed to not preclude the return of the land to agricultural use at the end of its operational life. Design measures have been incorporated to minimise the risk of bushfire impacting the site and the potential for fire spreading beyond the site. Compliance with CFA Guidelines will ensure that relevant planning objectives are achieved. Further details are provided in the accompanying Bushfire Hazard Assessment.
Clause 14: Natural Resource Management Clause 14.01-1S Protection of agricultural land Clause 14.01-1L Protection of agricultural land Clause 14.01-2S Sustainable agricultural land use Clause 14.01-2L Agricultural land	The proposed use of the land for a BESS will not adversely affect the surrounding agricultural land. Utility installations are compatible with farming uses, as the Proposal will not preclude the return of the land to agricultural use at the end of its operational life.
Clause 15: Built Environment and Heritage Clause 15.01 -1S Urban design Clause 15.01 -1L-01 Urban design Clause 15.01-1L-02 Signs Clause 15.01-2S Building design Clause 15.01-6S Design for rural areas	The Proposal has been strategically located next to existing transmission line infrastructure to group similar uses together, reducing visual impact to road users and the local community. The BESS infrastructure will be located behind the existing Koroit Zone Substation, further minimising visibility from public viewpoints. The proposed business identification signage is proportioned and designed to be appropriately integrated with the site and respect the amenity of the area. Details of the proposed signage are provided in Section 6.6.1.

Clause 17 Economic Development Clause 17.01-1S Diversified economy Clause 17.01-1R Diversified economy – Great South Coast Clause 17.01-1L Diversified Economy	The construction and operational phases of the Proposal will generate employment opportunities and support the sustainable growth and diversification of Warrnambool's economy. By facilitating the integration of renewable energy and contributing to electricity grid stability, the proposed BESS presents a new industry opportunity aligned with climate change and renewable energy initiatives which are currently encouraged in Warrnambool.
Clause 19 Infrastructure Clause 19.01-1S Energy supply Clause 19.01-2S Renewable energy Clause 19.01-2R Renewable energy – Great South Coast	The Proposal involves the development of energy storage infrastructure that supports the transition to a low-carbon economy. The BESS is strategically located to minimise land use conflicts and to make efficient use of existing transmission infrastructure, thereby reducing environmental and community impacts, including visual impacts on road users. The BESS design also incorporates climate-resilient measures, including appropriate bushfire management controls and surface water management considerations. The Proposal will contribute to the local economy during construction and support long-term sustainability and positive social outcomes by facilitating future renewable energy infrastructure

6.4 Zones

The Proposal is located within the Farming Zone (FZ), as shown in Figure 3. The relevant purpose of the FZ is:

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

Under the FZ, a planning permit is required for:

- Use of land for a Utility Installation pursuant to Clause 35.07-1 (Table of uses).
- To construct a building or carry out works for a Utility Installation pursuant to Clause 35.07-4 (Buildings and works).
- To construct a building within 100 metres from a waterway.
- For earthworks that change the rate of flow or the discharge point of water across a property boundary, or which increase the discharge of saline groundwater pursuant to Clause 35.07-4 (Buildings and works).
  - changes to rate of flow subject to detailed design and to be confirmed prior to endorsement of plans.

Clause 35.07-7 specifies that signage requirements are at Clause 52.05 and that the FZ is subject to Signage Category 4- sensitive areas.

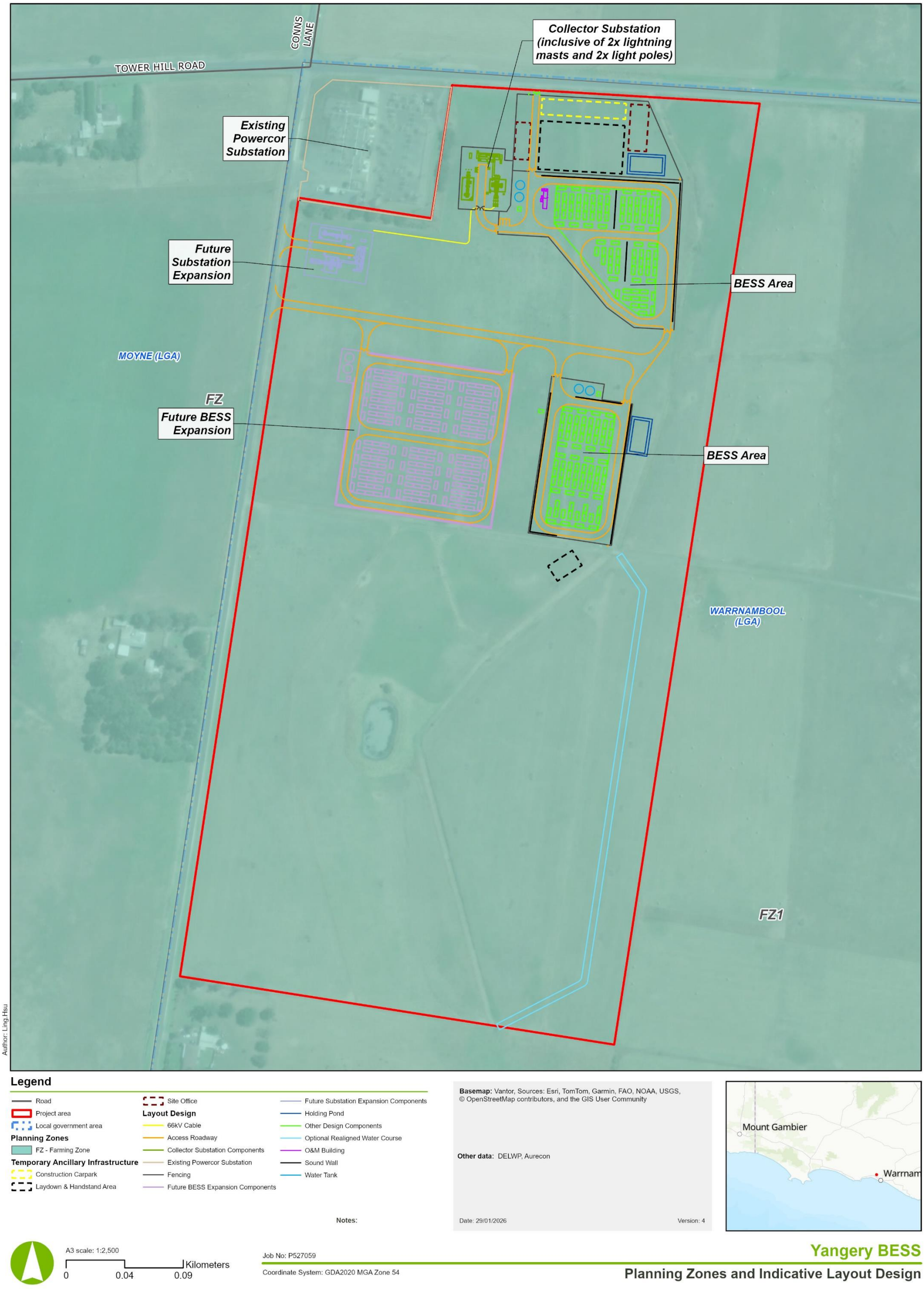

Figure 3 Zone Map

Exemption from notice and review

Under Clause 53.22 (Significant Economic Development – see Section 6.6.3) applications are exempt from decision requirements of 64(1), (2) and (3), and the review rights of section 82(1) of the P&E Act. While there is no exemption for notice and review under the FZ, Clause 53.22 supersedes review requirements articulated under the Zone.

With respect to the notice requirements of section 52(1)(a) and (d) of the Act, Aurecon submits that the giving of notice is not required because material detriment to adjoining land or any other person will not occur for the following reasons:

- The proposed buildings and works would not cause material detriment having regard to key matters under the Decision Guidelines below.
  - The proposed buildings and works support the intent of the Farming Zone to protect landscape values and allow for sustainable agriculture.
  - The Proposal has been well integrated into the surrounding landscape and sited appropriately away from any major roads, as detailed in the associated Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA). This design and siting minimise visual impacts and support the maintenance of the rural character of the area.
  - Noise to sensitive receptors is managed through the construction of noise walls around key infrastructure.
  - No native vegetation removal is proposed.

Decision Guidelines

An assessment against the relevant decision guidelines of the FZ is provided by Table 5 below.

Table 5 Assessment of the Proposal against relevant FZ Decision Guidelines

Decision Guideline	Proposal Response
The Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.	Refer to Section 6.2 and Section 6.3 of this report.
Any Regional Catchment Strategy and associated plan applying to the land.	The Proposal is located within the jurisdiction of the Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority (CMA). Yangery Creek is located approximately 1km west of the site, running north to south with one of its tributaries passing north to south through the Subject Site adjoining a small waterbody in the southernmost paddock. This tributary is a designated waterway under the *Water Act 1989* (despite being an eroded drainage line) and therefore a permit is required from Glenelg Hopkins CMA to undertake works within 30m of the waterway. Consultation with Glenelg Hopkins CMA has been undertaken in October 2024 regarding the mitigation of impacts to the water course. Works proposed are not considered to the threaten the health or function of the waterway. The Proposal has minimised impacts where possible and will not require the removal of any native vegetation on site, nor will it constitute any impact to significant ecological values in the area. During construction, mitigation measures including stormwater management and sediment or erosion control measures will be implemented to protect water quality and avoid adverse impacts. The required permit from Glenelg Hopkins CMA will be obtained following planning approval. With respect to the change of flow or the discharge point of water across a property boundary, or which increase the discharge of saline groundwater, it is not anticipated that a change to the rate of flow is likely to occur. Stormwater detention basins are expected to manage this requirement. Confirmation through detailed construction drawings will be provided to the Minister for Planning prior to the endorsement of plans. No connection to sewer is proposed. The Proposal will either utilise a tank system to manage effluent, or an aerated wastewater treatment system may be used, to be verified and fully detailed at the detailed design stage.
The capability of the land to accommodate the proposed use or development, including the disposal of effluent.	
Whether the site is suitable for the use or development and whether the proposal is compatible with adjoining and nearby land uses.	The Proposal is located adjacent to the Koroit Zone Substation, with an existing transmission line connecting to the substation through the northern section of the site.

Decision Guideline	Proposal Response
How the use and development makes use of existing infrastructure and services.	As such, the Proposal benefits from its proximity to existing NEM energy infrastructure and minimises the need for additional transmission lines. The immediate surrounding sites comprise of agricultural land. The Proposal will not adversely impact nearby farming activities. Siting and design of the Proposal is informed by detailed assessments which consider nearby dwellings and potential visual or acoustic impacts. These impact assessments are summarised in Section 7 and accompany this application. A noise wall of up to 8m is proposed to be installed surrounding the BESS equipment, to mitigate the acoustic impacts of the Proposal on the surrounding land.
How the use or development relates to sustainable land management. Whether the use or development will support and enhance 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. Whether the use or development will adversely affect soil quality or permanently remove land from agricultural production. 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.	The Proposal will not impact the host landowner's or surrounding agricultural land. Land used to host BESS infrastructure will be decommissioned as the equipment reaches end-of-life. Impacts to soil quality and the ability of the site to sustain agriculture following decommissioning will be minimised and managed through an Environmental Management Plan (EMP). The Proposal will not impact access to water or nearby resources.
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 Subject Site does not support any patches of native vegetation, remnant trees or significant habitat features supporting threatened species. No native vegetation removal is proposed. Pursuant to Clause 35.07-4, a permit is required to construct a building within 100m of waterway. The eroded drainage line that traverses the eastern section of the site is located within 100m of proposed buildings and works. The proposed works are considered to not threaten the health or function of the waterway, as per the attached *Surface Water and Groundwater Assessment* (Aurecon, 2025). Accordingly, the proposed buildings and works are appropriate having regard to the purpose and decision guidelines of Clause 35.07-4. A Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) and Environmental Management Plan (EMP) will be developed to guide construction and operation of the Proposal. The CEMP and EMP will determine any spoil

Decision Guideline	Proposal Response
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.	management measures for potentially contaminated soils and unexpected finds. The Proposal will utilise either a tank system to manage effluent, or an aerated wastewater treatment system, to be determined during detailed design. Two stormwater detention basins are provided to manage stormwater runoff, with one basin located adjacent to each BESS area. These will be designed in consultation with Glenelg Hopkins CMA. In the event of an emergency, stormwater detention basin design will ensure that the exit can be isolated as needed to ensure the contents of the basin can be contained and tested before controlled release.
The location of on-site effluent disposal areas to minimise the impact of nutrient loads on waterways and native vegetation.	
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 Subject Site sits adjacent to the Koroit Zone Substation and is intersected by an existing transmission line. This strategic siting and co-location allows the Proposal to minimise impacts on agricultural land and nearby residents as the additional energy infrastructure required to facilitate the Proposal is reduced. The BESS has been carefully sited to be located behind the existing substation to minimise impact on the character and appearance of the Subject Site from Tower Hill Road or Conns Lane. As described in Section 4, the BESS infrastructure is proposed to utilise metal sheeting consistent with those used in other BESS projects. The materials selected have low-reflectivity and comprise of neutral colours. The Proposal also includes a noise wall of up to 8m surrounding the BESS equipment to mitigate acoustic impacts. See Section 7 for further details on environmental impacts.
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.	

Decision Guideline	Proposal Response
Whether the use and development will require traffic management measures.	A Traffic Impact Assessment has been undertaken and is submitted alongside this report. This assessment is discussed at Section 7.4. The construction and operation of the Proposal is not expected to have a noticeable impact on traffic movements. During the operational phase staff will only access the site periodically for routine maintenance and inspection activities. This will involve a small number of light vehicle movements per day which are not expected to impact the capacity or safety of the surrounding road network. The increase in traffic volume on the key access roads during the construction phase is expected to be manageable as per the attached Traffic Impact Assessment. It is recommended that comprehensive sight distance checks are undertaken during the detailed design phase, and mitigation measures undertaken during the construction and operations phase are set out as part of a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP).

6.5 Overlays

The Proposal intersects the Design and Development Overlay – Schedule 16 (Warrnambool Regional Airport – Building Height above 7.5 metres (RL 79.0 AHD)) (DDO16) in the north-west corner of the site, as shown in Figure 4.

The purpose of the DDO is:

- *To implement the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.*
- *To identify areas which are affected by specific requirements relating to the design and built form of new development.*

Pursuant to Clause 43.02-2, a permit is required to construct a building or carry out works for greater than 7.5m in height (Section 2, Schedule 16). As the proposed BESS includes the construction of elements that would exceed 7.5m in height (specifically two (2) lightning masts adjacent to the substation building measuring 21.4m, light poles throughout the site measuring 10.6m in height, and a noise wall measuring 8m in height), a permit is required under DDO16. An assessment against the decision guidelines of DDO16 is found in Table 6.

Table 6 - Assessment of the Proposal against Schedule 16 of DDO Decision Guidelines

Decision Guideline	Proposal Response
The approved Obstacle Limitation Surface plan for the airport.	N/A
The location and height of the proposed development.	The Proposal is located approximately 2.4 kilometres south west of Warrnambool airport. The highest element of the Proposal would be two (2) lightning masts associated with the collector substation, measuring a maximum height of 21.4m. Other elements of the Proposal exceeding 7.5m in height include two lighting poles at 10.6m, and a noise wall at 8m. Initial engagement with Warrnambool Regional Airport's coordinator of operations took place over the course of 2025. The final design and siting of these Project elements will consider the height of existing structures at the adjoining Koroit Zone Substation as per the advice of Warrnambool Regional Airport during previous discussions. Detailed design will be carried out in consultation with Warrnambool Regional Airport to ensure compliance with aviation safety requirements and to prevent any interference with aircraft operations.
The need to prevent the development of buildings or structures that could interfere with and cause a safety hazard to aircraft operations.	
The effect of the proposed development, including construction materials, on the clear flight path of aircraft.	

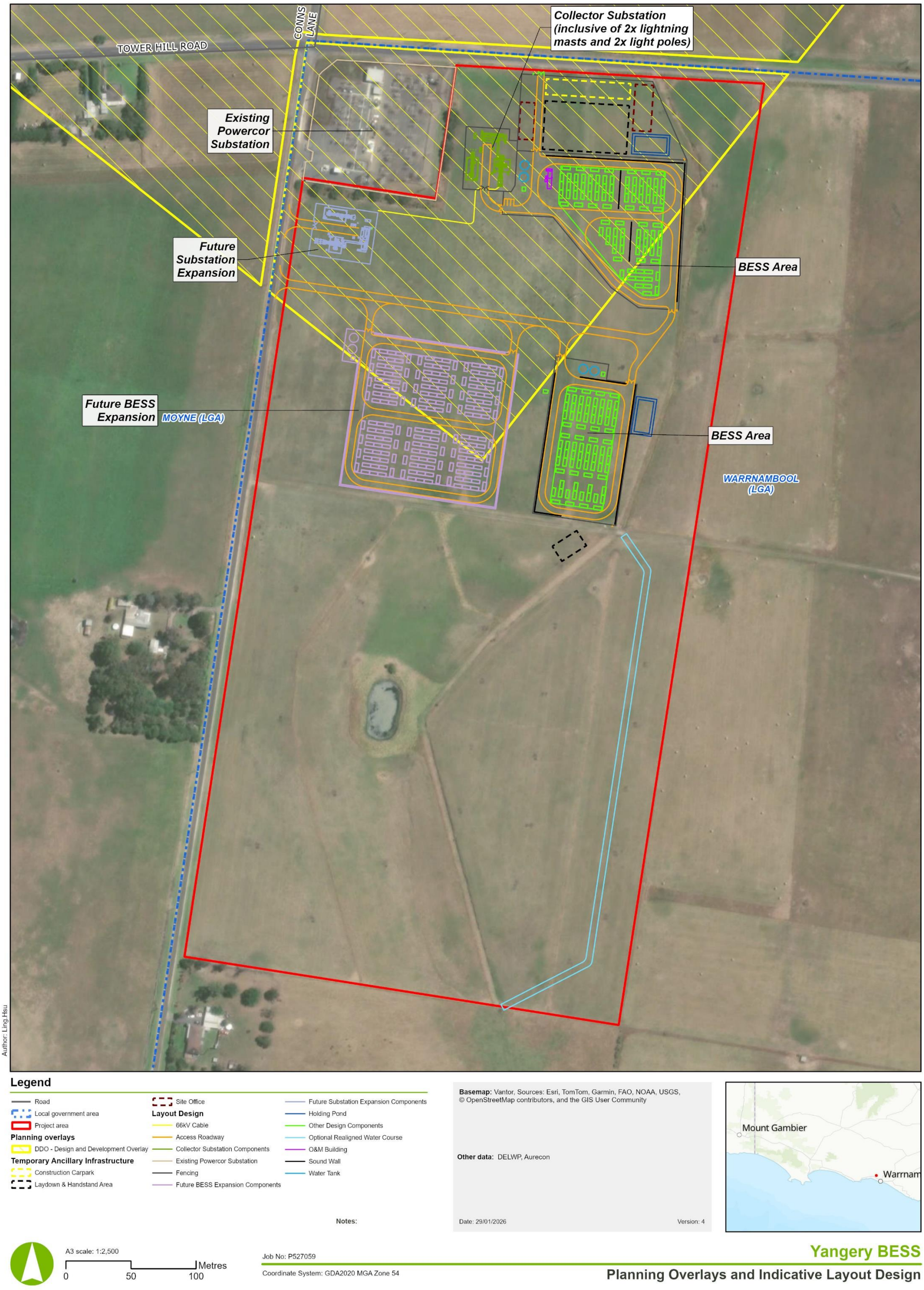

Figure 4 Overlay Map

6.6 Particular Provisions

6.6.1 Clause 52.05 Signs

Clause 35.07-7 of the Farming Zone designates the zone as Category 4 – Sensitive Areas. Category 4 signage areas operate to provide for unobtrusive signs in areas requiring strong amenity control.

Pursuant to Clause 52.05-14, a permit is required for a business identification sign, subject to the condition that the total display area to each premises must not exceed 3 sqm, otherwise the sign is prohibited.

Business identification signage will be installed at each site access point, with one sign positioned at the Conns Lane access and a second at the Tower Hill Road access.

Exemption from notice and review.

An application for a sign is exempt from the notice requirements of section 52(1)(a), (b) and (d), the decision requirements of section 64(1), (2) and (3) and the review rights of section 82(1) of the Act provided the sign is to be constructed or displayed on land specified in the schedule to this clause and meets any condition specified in the schedule to this clause.

Assessment

The proposed signs will be self-supporting structures located at both the entrance to the site on Conns Lane and Tower Hill Road. The signs will be used to identify the Yangery BESS facility and identify the owner and operator of the facility (logos will be displayed). The signs will include a contact number for the facility and other key Project information.

The proposed business identification signage will not exceed 3 square metres and will be positioned approximately 2 metres above ground level. Final signage dimensions are subject to further design. The sign will be non-reflective and not be illuminated, electric or animated.

Pursuant to Clause 52.05-8 (Decision guidelines), before deciding on an application, in addition the decision guidelines in Clause 65, the Responsible Authority must consider, as appropriate:

Table 7 Assessment of the Proposal against Decision Guidelines for Clause 52.05 Signs

Decision Guideline	Proposal Response
The character of the area including: ■ The sensitivity of the area in terms of the natural environment, heritage values, waterways and open space, rural landscape or residential character. ■ The compatibility of the proposed sign with the existing or desired future character of the area in which it is proposed to be located. ■ The cumulative impact of signs on the character of an area or route, including the need to avoid visual disorder or clutter of signs. ■ The consistency with any identifiable outdoor advertising theme in the area.	The signage will be located at both site entrances, on Conns Lane and Tower Hill Road. As such, the proposed signage will coincide with proposed and existing infrastructure visible from the road and not significantly detract from the character of the area.

The impacts on views and vistas: ■ The potential to obscure or compromise important views from the public realm. ■ The potential to dominate the skyline. ■ The potential to impact on the quality of significant public views. ■ The potential to impede views to existing signs.	The signage will be located within the property boundaries at the entrance of the Proposal site on Conns Lane and Tower Hill Road. The signs will be fit for purpose, and of an appropriate scale and design to ensure it does not impact views or compromise the public realm. No vegetation removal or landscaping will be required to facilitate the signage.
The relationship to the streetscape, setting or landscape: ■ The proportion, scale and form of the proposed sign relative to the streetscape, setting or landscape. ■ The position of the sign, including the extent to which it protrudes above existing buildings or landscape and natural elements. ■ The ability to screen unsightly built or other elements. ■ The ability to reduce the number of signs by rationalising or simplifying signs. ■ The ability to include landscaping to reduce the visual impact of parts of the sign structure.	
The relationship to the site and building: ■ The scale and form of the sign relative to the scale, proportion and any other significant characteristics of the host site and host building. ■ The extent to which the sign displays innovation relative to the host site and host building. ■ The extent to which the sign requires the removal of vegetation or includes new landscaping.	
The impact of structures associated with the sign: ■ The extent to which associated structures integrate with the sign. ■ The potential of associated structures to impact any important or significant features of the building, site, streetscape, setting or landscape, views and vistas or area.	
The impact of any illumination: ■ The impact of glare and illumination on the safety of pedestrians and vehicles. ■ The impact of illumination on the amenity of nearby residents and the amenity of the area. ■ The potential to control illumination temporally or in terms of intensity.	The proposed signs will not be illuminated, electric or animated.
The impact of any logo box associated with the sign: ■ The extent to which the logo box forms an integral part of the sign through its position, lighting and any structures used to attach the logo box to the sign. ■ The suitability of the size of the logo box in relation to its identification purpose and the size of the sign.	The signs will identify the owner and operator of the facility. The logos will be of an appropriate scale relative to the size of the signs. The signs will display key Project information including a contact person, safety protocols for the site and security information.

▪ The need for identification and the opportunities for adequate identification on the site or locality	
The impact on road safety. A sign is a safety hazard if the sign: ▪ Obstructs a driver's line of sight at an intersection, curve or point of egress from an adjacent property. ▪ Obstructs a driver's view of a traffic control device, or is likely to create a confusing or dominating background that may reduce the clarity or effectiveness of a traffic control device. ▪ Could dazzle or distract drivers due to its size, design or colouring, or it being illuminated, reflective, animated or flashing. ▪ Is at a location where particular concentration is required, such as a high pedestrian volume intersection. ▪ Is likely to be mistaken for a traffic control device, because it contains red, green or yellow lighting, or has red circles, octagons, crosses, triangles or arrows. ▪ Requires close study from a moving or stationary vehicle in a location where the vehicle would be unprotected from passing traffic. ▪ Invites drivers to turn where there is fast moving traffic or the sign is so close to the turning point that there is no time to signal and turn safely. ▪ Is within 100 metres of a rural railway crossing. ▪ Has insufficient clearance from vehicles on the carriageway. ▪ Could mislead drivers or be mistaken as an instruction to drivers.	Proposed signage will be appropriately sited within the property boundaries to avoid driver conflict. Proposed signage will not impact the safety of drivers. ADVERTISED PLAN

6.6.2 Clause 52.06 Car Parking

Clause 52.06 seeks to ensure that an appropriate number of car parking spaces is provided having regard to the demand likely to be generated, the activities on the land and the nature of the locality.

Clause 52.06 applies as this Proposal comprises a new use, however the land use 'Utility Installation' has no specific car parking requirements identified under Clause 52.06-5 (Table 1 - Car parking requirement).Clause 52.06-6 (Number of car parking spaces required for other uses) specifies that before a new use commences, car parking spaces must be provided to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

BESS facilities are available to operate 24/7 and are monitored remotely in real-time and do not require dedicated staff to be on-site at all times. Staff will access the site periodically for inspections and maintenance activities with approximately 2-3 full-time staff on-site during business hours.

This application proposes a total of three car parking spaces to provide sufficient servicing of the proposed use.

Assessment

A Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) has been undertaken and accompanies this report. The TIA determines that during the Proposal's operations phase there is expected to be limited operational vehicles, with two to three operational staff visiting for rolling maintenance and troubleshooting activities. Vehicles accessing the

site will be mostly light vehicles (e.g. passenger cars, utility vans) with some heavy vehicles to be required for major maintenance during the operational phase. As such, a minimum of three parking spaces is required for the operation of the BESS, and the application therefore proposes the provision of three permanent car parking spaces on the site. The accompanying TIA is discussed in further detail at Section 7.3.

6.6.3 Significant Economic Development

The Proposal seeks planning approval from the Minister for Planning via the Development Facilitation Program, utilising the approval pathway provided by Clause 53.22 (Significant Economic Development) of the Warrnambool Planning Scheme.

The purpose of Clause 53.22 Significant Economic Development is:

- *To prioritise and facilitate the planning, assessment and delivery of Proposals 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.*

Clause 53.22 applies to this application as the following tests are met:

- This application is classified as a Category 1 application under Table 1 of Clause 53.22-1.
  - Aurecon notes that under Category 1 applications, written advice from the Chief Executive Officer or delegate of Invest Victoria is not required for a proposed utility installation.
- The conditions outlined in Table 2 are met as the application is for a utility installation used to store electricity if the installed capacity is 1 megawatt or greater.

Exemption from notice and review

An application under any provision of this planning scheme is exempt from the decision requirements of sections 64(1), (2) and (3), and the review rights of sections 82(1) of the Act.

Assessment

A Utility Installation is identified in Table 2, and the corresponding condition is met; to *store electricity if the installed capacity is 1 megawatt or greater*.

All application requirements under Clause 53.22-3 have been met.

Before deciding on an application, the Responsible Authority must consider the Decision Guidelines outlined in Table 8,below.

Table 8 Assessment of the Proposal against Significant Economic Development Decision Guidelines

Decision Guidelines	Proposal Response
The purpose of the Clause	The Proposal supports the implementation of battery energy storage infrastructure that will help facilitate the transition to more sustainable electricity sources in Victoria. The Proposal supports the statewide transition to a low-carbon economy, providing public benefit to Victorians.
The views of the office of the Victorian Government Architect	The Proposal comprises a utility installation situated away from any built-up area and adjacent to existing energy infrastructure. As such, the Proposal does not warrant input from the office of the Victorian Government Architect.

Under Clause 53.10-1 of the Warrnambool Planning Scheme, an application for a utility installation must be referred to the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) as there is no specific land use threshold distance provided in the planning scheme. This referral is required under Section 55 of the Act to ensure that the EPA reviews the potential environmental impacts of the proposed use and provides recommendations or conditions for mitigating any adverse effects.

6.7 General Provisions

6.7.1 Clause 66.02 Use and Development Referrals

Pursuant to Clause 66.02-7 (Industry, Utility installation of Warehouse), a referral is required to the Victorian WorkCover Authority as determining referral authority. A referral is required to use land and for buildings and works where the area for buildings and works will increase by more than 25% for a Utility Installation where the fire protection quantity is exceeded under the Dangerous Goods (Storage and Handling) Regulations 2022. The Proposal exceeds UN Class 9 for the use of Lithium Ion. The application is therefore to be referred to WorkSafe Victoria as the Victorian WorkCover Authority.

7 Summary of Impact Assessments

7.1 Ecology

The ecological field assessment confirmed that the Study Area does not support any patches of native vegetation, remnant trees or significant habitat features that are considered to support threatened species.

The Yangery BESS project and associated construction activities (including the optional re-alignment of existing drainage line and infilling of farm dam) is not determined to result in any impacts to significant ecological values. Additionally, native vegetation offsets are also not required for the Project.

7.2 Noise

Compliance with the Noise Protocol, provided by the EPA Publication 1826.5 (September 2025), is expected at all sensitive receiver locations across all time periods for the proposed BESS. The noise assessment also accounted for the combined cumulative noise from the Project and the adjacent Koroit Zone Substation.

Noise mitigation measures undertaken include the implementation of silencing measures on the BESS batteries and inverters, as well as the construction of designed noise barriers in the form of noise walls up to 8m in height.

Low frequency noise was evaluated following the Low Frequency Guidelines, indicating a low likelihood of problematic low frequency noise at the nearest receivers. Accordingly, the Project complies with the relevant Regulations and is not expected to cause unreasonable acoustic impacts on the surrounding environment and landscape.

7.3 Agriculture

The site has historically been used for grazing with occasional fodder harvesting, and its removal from agricultural use will not denote a significant impact on either regional and state-level agricultural output. The Proposal is also unlikely to affect the operations of nearby farming properties. Additionally, any loss of retail margin for suppliers due to reduced sales linked to the construction of the BESS will be minimal.

7.4 Traffic and Transport

Two access points are proposed for the site, with one access point from Tower Hill Road on the northern site boundary and the other from Conns Lane on the western boundary. The Tower Hill Road accessway will facilitate access in both construction and operational phases.

During the peak construction period (16 weeks duration) the project is estimated to generate 50 ‘in’ light vehicle movements in the AM peak, 50 ‘out’ light vehicle movements in the PM peak and 6 heavy vehicle trips (12 movements) per day across construction hours, outside the AM and PM road network peak hours. The increase in traffic volumes on the key access roads due to the construction phase vehicle movements is considered to be manageable.

Traffic arrangements during construction can be addressed via a Construction Traffic Management Plan as part of the Construction Environment Management Plan.

When the BESS is operational, staff will require access to the site for periodic maintenance and inspection activities. The Proposal is anticipated to generate up to six light vehicle movements per day per visit during the operational phase. Therefore, the Proposal’s operation is not expected to impact the capacity or safety of the surrounding road network. This application proposes a total of three car parking spaces to provide sufficient servicing during the operational phase.

7.5 Surface Water and Groundwater

The Proposal is located in the Merri River catchment area and the South West Limestone Groundwater Management Area (GMA). The Assessment identified the unnamed drainage line which traverses the Subject Site as a small tributary of the Yangery Creek.

High level analysis of flow undertaken within the catchment indicates that during a flood, flows may extend beyond the drainage line and pond near the noise walls in some locations. An option is available to relocate the drainage line in the southern half of the site, so that it continues to flow along the eastern boundary. Discussions with the CMA confirmed this is feasible and should be agreed upon with the relevant landowner. If required, the CMA have indicated a willingness to grant a licence to conduct works on or near a waterway.

Groundwater resources in this area are from the Port Campbell Limestone which is a regionally significant aquifer that supports dairy irrigation areas such as Nullawarre, and supplements urban supply to Warrnambool, Koroit and Allansford.

Three existing bores are recognised to be on site. These are recommended to be located to confirm if they need to be decommissioned prior to commencing construction. If construction works are likely to extend beyond 2 m depth, it is recommended that a groundwater investigation is undertaken to confirm the depth to watertable. The existing groundwater bores (if located) could be used to inform the groundwater investigation. If dewatering is required, an impact assessment would be completed to assess potential impacts on groundwater and surrounding groundwater users.

7.6 Landscape and Visual Amenity

The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment was conducted using a Study Area derived from a Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) which illustrates the theoretical area from which the Project could be visible, based on the height of proposed elements and lidar geometry. The Study Area was refined to a two-kilometre radius of the Proposal Area.

The baseline assessment identified one Landscape Character Type (LCT) ‘Pastoral Plains’ within the Study Area. The Assessment concluded that the Proposal would have a very low impact to the surrounding landscape character as it is adjacent to an existing substation within land that is modified by farming.

An assessment of six public viewpoints concluded that visual impact ratings would be up to moderate during the construction and operational phases at specified viewpoints at 651 Tower Hill Road (VP2), 332-334 Conns Lane (VP6), and 641 Tower Hill Road, and low to negligible for other sensitive viewpoints within the Study Area. Moreover, the residual visual impacts would be low to negligible.

The Project has potential for localised cumulative impacts as a result of increased large-scale electrical infrastructure including and ancillary electrical elements, adjacent the existing Koroit Zone Substation, experienced by a low number of receivers and temporarily for passersby. However these potential cumulative impacts are considered to be limited in nature and able to be addressed through mitigation measures.

7.7 Bushfire

A Bushfire assessment confirms the Yangery BESS facility location is considered suitable for the siting of a BESS. The proposed location has a low level of bushfire risk in relation to hazards adjoining the project area and in the wider landscape. The site is also easily accessible with generally flat topography.

The location allows for key design requirements for separation of batteries from potential ignition sources and risks of thermal runaway and allows for separation of emergency access, water supply and other services.

The design will incorporate appropriate fire detection and suppression systems and include fencing and battery containment barriers to prevent mechanical damage. Further consideration will be given to non-combustible, floor to ceiling partition walls (thermal barriers between battery racks stacked modules) within battery containers to further mitigate risk of fire spread through the facility.

An Emergency Management Plan and Fire Management Plan are recommended to be developed for the facility in consultation with CFA during detailed design.

7.8 Risk

The dangerous goods screening assessment concluded the following:

- Under Clause 53.10-1 of the Warrnambool Planning Scheme, an application for a utility installation must be referred to the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) as there is no specific land use threshold distance provided in the planning scheme. This referral is required under Section 55 of Planning and Environment Act 1987 to ensure that the EPA reviews the potential environmental impacts of the proposed use and provides recommendations or conditions for mitigating any adverse effects.
- As the placard quantity thresholds for Class 9 as set out by Schedule 2 of the Dangerous Goods (Storage and Handling) Regulations 2022 have been exceeded, placards are required during construction. They should be located at every entrance to the buildings and rooms that store the batteries.
- As the manifest quantity thresholds for Class 9 set out by Schedule 2 of the Dangerous Goods (Storage and Handling) Regulations 2022, are exceeded, in accordance with Regulation 44, the occupier of premises must ensure that the manifest is kept on premises in a location or place where it is readily accessible to the emergency services authority (CFA). In addition, an updated emergency plan shall be prepared for the facility and provided to the CFA. WorkSafe Victoria must be notified of lithium-ion battery storage exceeding manifest quantities.

Recommended safeguards, in compliance with the CFA Guidelines, are proposed to reduce residual risk such that no identified hazards will pose a significant risk. The assessment recommends that a safety management system is implemented prior to the commencement of commissioning or operation of the Proposal.

7.9 Aboriginal Heritage

A mandatory Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) is currently being prepared by the proponent in consultation with the Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP), being the Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation. All requirements of the CHMP when completed will be satisfied prior to construction commencing on the Project.

8 Conclusion

This planning application report demonstrates support for the Warrnambool City Council's strategic directions with respect to environmental and landscape values and amenity, natural resource management, built environment and heritage, economic development, and infrastructure.

The Proposal is considered to have met the requirements and policy direction of the Warrnambool Planning Scheme and associated guidelines. This application is supported by environmental impact assessments that support the proposed site selection and indicative design. The application confirms the Proposal is suitable as:

- The Proposal will support the generation of a renewable, affordable and reliable energy supply using large-scale energy storage technology.
- The Proposal is compatible and complementary to the current land use and is strategically located adjacent to existing transmission line infrastructure.
- The Proposal will support the sustainable growth and diversification of Warrnambool's rural economy in addition to the generation of employment opportunities.
- The buildings and works have been sited to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Farming Zone.
- The Proposal will not impact the amenity of the local area.

In addition to the notice and review exemptions afforded by the Planning Scheme, we request the Minister for Planning consider that the giving of notice under section 52(1)(a) and (d) of the P&E Act is not required because material detriment to adjoining land or any other person will not occur.

For the above reasons, we consider that the Proposal is consistent with the Warrnambool Planning Scheme and presents a unique opportunity for significant economic investment in the immediate and surrounding area. Accordingly, we request the Minister for Planning issue a planning permit

Appendix A: Certificate of Title

Appendix B: Site Layout Plan

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