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Planning Permit Application Report

Winton Renewable Energy Stability and Storage Terminal

576 Winton-Glenrowan Road, Winton, Victoria

For Winton Renewable Energy Stability and Storage Terminal Pty Ltd

20 July 2026

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Document Details

Winton Renewable Energy Stability and Storage Terminal

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Cogency Australia Pty Ltd

cogencyaustralia.com.au

office@cogencyaustralia.com.au

Document history

Revision	Date	Description	Author	Approved
1	27/05/2026	Draft Planning Permit Application Report	AP, DM	AT
2	03/06/2026	Planning Permit Application Report	AP	AT
3	20/07/2026	Amended Planning Permit Application Report	RC	AT

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

Acknowledgement of Country

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

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

Executive Summary

Winton Renewable Energy Stability and Storage Terminal Pty Ltd (WRESST Pty Ltd) (the Proponent) has engaged Cogency Australia Pty Ltd (Cogency), a planning and engagement consultancy, to prepare the attached planning permit application for the Winton Renewable Energy Stability and Storage Terminal (WRESST) to be lodged with the Minister for Planning (the Responsible Authority) for approval.

This planning permit application report supports an application for the use and development of land for a 'Utility installation' (land used to transmit, distribute, or store power), a battery energy storage system (BESS) known as the WRESST (the Proposal), located in Winton, Victoria. The Proposal will have an operational capacity of up to 400 MW/1600 MWh.

Located within the proposed Central North Renewable Energy Zone¹, the Proposal is predominantly sited at 576 Winton-Glenrowan Road, Winton, VIC 3673. It comprises the following areas:

- Lots 1 and 2 of Title Plan 836611 - land on which the BESS and ancillary infrastructure are predominantly proposed
- Lot 1 of Title Plan 381841 and Lot 1 of Title Plan 345760 – land required for the underground transmission cable and connection into the Glenrowan Terminal Station
- Winton-Glenrowan Road Reserve – land required for road access.

Together, these areas form the 'Project Site'. The Project Site is ideally suited to a BESS and associated infrastructure, due to the proximity to existing electrical infrastructure including the existing substation and solar farms, minimal existing native vegetation, low quality agricultural land, and distance to nearby dwellings. The Project Site is small relative to surrounding farms, currently used for rural living and low-level grazing. Of the 26-ha comprising the Project Site, approximately 6.5 ha will be used for the Proposal.

The purpose of this planning permit application report is to provide the Responsible Authority and referral authorities with comprehensive information on the Proposal and an assessment against the Benalla Planning Scheme (Planning Scheme). This includes details on the Proponent and consultant team, design features, potential impacts and mitigations, and compliance with relevant Acts, regulations, plans, land use controls, and guidelines, contained within the Planning Scheme.

The Proposal is for the use of 'Utility installation' and is categorised as a Section 2 (permit required) use within the Farming Zone (FZ). Part of the Development Area is also within the Transport Zone 3 (Significant Municipal Road) (TRZ3) and Special Use Zone 4 (SUZ4). The planning permit triggers are summarised in Table ES.1.

The Proposal, representing an approximately \$650-\$850 million investment, includes ancillary infrastructure (including a substation and associated electrical infrastructure and an underground transmission connection to the existing Glenrowan Terminal Station), and ancillary works, such as new access points and internal tracks, native vegetation removal, security fencing, drainage, earthworks, and vegetation screening.

The Proposal has been carefully sited and designed to avoid significant environmental or community impacts. It will contribute to Victoria's energy storage targets, provide essential grid stability services, and deliver economic benefits to the local region. By providing more reliable and affordable energy, it aligns with a number of State, Regional, and Local policies of the Benalla Planning Scheme, including energy generation, economic development, and infrastructure. As a result, it is considered that the application complies with the Benalla Planning Scheme, and we respectfully submit that a permit should be issued.

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¹ The Central North Renewable Energy Zone has not been formally declared by VicGrid.

Table ES.1 – Application Summary

Application Summary	
Site	
Address	576 Winton-Glenrowan Road, Winton VIC 3673
Title Description	Lot 2 TP836611 (BESS Area) Lot 1 TP836611 (BESS Area) Lot 1 TP381841 (Glenrowan Terminal Station point of connection) Lot 1 TP345760 (Glenrowan Terminal Station point of connection) Winton-Glenrowan Road Reserve (Access)
Project Site area	26 ha
Development Area	6.5 ha
Municipality	Rural City of Benalla
Restrictions on title	TP836611 – Encumbering Easement (AU009263X, dated 2021) TP836611 – Encumbering Easement (H912061)
Planning	
Planning Scheme	Benalla Planning Scheme
Responsible Authority	Minister for Planning
Zones	Clause 35.07 - Farming Zone (FZ) (BESS Area) Schedule 4 To Clause 37.01 - Special Use Zone (SUZ4) (Glenrowan Terminal Station) Clause 36.04 Transport Zone – Significant Municipal Road (TRZ3) (Access)
Overlays	Clause 42.02 -Vegetation Protection Overlay
Relevant Particular Provisions	Clause 52.05 Signs Clause 52.06 Car Parking Clause 52.17 Native Vegetation Clause 53.22 Significant Economic Development
Permit triggers	Clause 35.07-1 – Section 2 Use of land for a Utility Installation Clause 35.07-4 – To construct or carry out buildings or works associated with a Section 2 Use Clause 35.07-4 – Buildings or works within 5m of a boundary Clause 35.07-4 – Earthworks that change the flow of water at a boundary Clause 42.02-2 – To remove, destroy or lop any vegetation specified in a schedule to this overlay Clause 52.05-14 – To develop land for a business identification sign Clause 52.06-6 – To provide number of car parking spaces required for other uses to the satisfaction of the responsible authority (satisfaction matter) Clause 52.17-1 – To remove, destroy or lop native vegetation, including dead native vegetation
Notice and review	53.22-4 – Application is exempt from the decision requirements of section 64(1), (2) and (3) and the review rights of section 82(1) of the Planning and Environment Act 1987.
Relevant referral requirements	66.02-2 – Secretary to the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (as constituted under Part 2 of the Conservation, Forests and Lands Act 1987) 66.02-4 – Electricity transmission authority 66.02-7 – Victorian WorkCover Authority

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Appendix B	Application Plans
Appendix C	Ecological Assessment
Appendix D	Cultural Heritage Assessment
Appendix E	Noise Impact Assessment
Appendix F	Hydrology Assessment and Stormwater Management Strategy
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Glossary

Abbreviation	Meaning
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
AEMO	Australian Energy Market Operator
BESS	Battery Energy Storage System
CEC	Clean Energy Council
CFA	Country Fire Authority
DEECA	Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action
EPA	Environment Protection Authority (Vic)
EPBC	Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation
IAP2	International Association for Public Participation
LGA	Local Government Area
kV	kilovolt
MER	Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting
MW	Megawatt
NEM	National Electricity Market
O&M	Operations and maintenance
PCS	power conversion systems
REZ	Renewable Energy Zone
Strategy	Community and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy
WRESST	Winton Renewable Energy Stability and Storage Terminal

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1. Introduction

Cogency Australia Pty Ltd (Cogency), on behalf of WRESST Pty Ltd (the Proponent), has prepared this report to accompany a planning permit application for a utility-scale BESS and ancillary infrastructure predominantly located at 576 Winton-Glenrowan Road, Winton, hereby referred to as the WRESST (the Proposal). The Proponent and their experience are described in section 1.3 of this report.

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

1.1 Proposal summary

The Proponent seeks to use and develop an area of land on an existing rural residential property in Winton, Victoria, for a BESS.

The Proposal is located generally at 576 Winton-Glenrowan Road, Winton, identified as Lot 1 and Lot 2 of Title Plan 836611. Winton is located within the Benalla Rural City Local Government Area, part of the Hume and North East Victorian Region. The Project Site is approximately 26 ha, comprising a 15 ha private landholding (576 Winton-Glenrowan Road), the Glenrowan Terminal Station, and part of the Winton-Glenrowan Road reserve.

The proposed WRESST will comprise the construction, operation, and decommissioning of a utility-scale BESS with an operational capacity of up to 400 MW/1600 MWh. The Development Area within the Project Site will be approximately 6.5 ha, which includes the main BESS area and an underground transmission connection to the Glenrowan Terminal Station (refer Figure 1).

The Proposal will include:

- Batteries, inverters and transformers
- Switching station and associated electrical infrastructure
- Underground transmission connection to the existing Glenrowan Terminal Station
- Auxiliary power supplies
- Protection and control equipment
- Operations and maintenance building and site office
- Temporary construction laydown areas
- Access points and internal tracks
- Water storage systems and fire-fighting infrastructure
- Security fencing and monitoring
- Earthworks/benching
- Stormwater detention and drainage swales
- Landscaping/screening
- Associated uses, buildings and works

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The Proposal may be staged, with part of the BESS built as a stage 1 and the remainder as future stage or stages. Refer to Figure 7 for the concept layout of the Proposal.

Planning permit triggers

The Project Site is subject to the Farming Zone (FZ), Special Use Zone – Schedule 4 (SUZ4), and the Transport Zone – Schedule 3 (TRZ3). It is also within the Vegetation Protection Overlay – Schedule 3 (VPO3). For a detailed assessment of the Proposal against the zones and overlay, refer to sections 6.4 and 6.5.

The planning permit triggers are:

- **Clause 35.07-1** – Use of land for a utility installation
- **Clause 35.07-4** – Buildings and works associated with a Section 2 Use
- **Clause 35.07-4** – Buildings or works within 5 m of a boundary
- **Clause 35.07-4** – Earthworks that change the flow of water at a boundary
- **Clause 42.02-2** – To remove, destroy or lop any vegetation specified in a schedule to this overlay
- **Clause 52.05-14** – Development of a business identification sign
- **Clause 52.17-1** – Removal of native vegetation

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

Engagement

Engagement with immediate Proposal neighbours, the wider communities of Winton and Glenrowan, and key stakeholders has been carried out through early planning and design of the WRESST, informed by a Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan adopting best practice engagement principles. Broadly, community and stakeholder sentiment has been positive or neutral towards the Proposal. Concerns have been voiced around cumulative and social impact of development in the area. This will be further analysed through the WRESST *Social Impact Assessment*.

The following methods of engagement were used to consult the community:

- Direct letter drops on 9 April 2026
- Door knocking of residents within 2 km of the Project Site on 15 April 2026
- One-on-one meetings with nearby neighbours
- Community Drop-In Session held at Glenrowan Recreation Reserve Memorial Hall on 27 April 2026
- Meeting with Winton and Glenrowan local CMA groups on 3 June 2026
- Website with dedicated contact details.

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Key neighbours, the wider community and key stakeholders will continue to be engaged following lodgement of the application, and through construction, operation and eventual decommissioning. Section 4 details the Community and Stakeholder approach for the Proposal and provides a summary of engagement to date.

Strategic Benefit

The site and location of the Proposal have the following strategic advantages:

- Located on low-value agricultural land used for rural living
- Co-location with other energy infrastructure
- Proximity to the existing Glenrowan Terminal Station
- Minimal nearby sensitive receptors
- Minimal vegetation removal required
- Low visibility from key vantage points, including the Hume Freeway
- Within a Renewable Energy Zone

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The WRESST will provide a number of substantial benefits, including:

- Providing energy storage to support energy generation and grid reliability

- Contributing to a more affordable and reliable energy system
- Economic opportunities for local contractors and businesses during construction and operation
- Benefit-sharing framework to support the local community through direct investment into local community or environmental projects.

Please refer to section 4 for more details on how the Proposal will provide benefits to the local community and region.

Technical Consultants

In addition to Cogency, suitably qualified technical consultants have been engaged to assess and provide input into the Proposal. Table 1 lists the specialist technical consultants who have contributed to the design and assessment of the Proposal. A range of impact assessments have been prepared to accompany this application (included as appendices) and should be read in conjunction with this Planning Report.

Table 1 – Consultants

Proposal consultant	Technical expertise	Assessment (refer to Appendices)
Peter Haack Consultancy	Landscape and visual impact	Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
SLR Consulting Pty Ltd	Noise	Noise Impact Assessment
Dalton Consulting Engineers	Hydrology	Hydrology Assessment and Stormwater Management Strategy
DM Ecological	Ecology	Ecological Assessment
Niche	Aboriginal Cultural Heritage	Cultural Heritage Assessment
onemilegrid	Transport	Transport Impact Assessment
NJM Design	Bushfire risk	Fire Safety Study

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

1.2 Traditional Owners

The Proposal is located on the Traditional Country of the Yorta Yorta people, whose traditional lands encompassed the area between Cohuna and West Wodonga along the Victoria and NSW border. The Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation (YYNAC) is the Registered Aboriginal Party for the region.

Whilst the Project Site is not located within an area of Aboriginal cultural heritage sensitivity, the Proponent has elected to prepare a voluntary Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) to ensure that the cultural values and heritage of the Traditional Custodians are appropriately recognised, respected, and protected throughout the development process. The CHMP will be prepared by the appointed cultural heritage consultant, Niche, in consultation with the YYNAC.

1.3 The Proponent

The Proponent is Winton Renewable Energy Stability and Storage Terminal Pty Ltd (WRESST Pty Ltd), an Australian owned development business established for the purpose of developing and operating the WRESST. WRESST Pty Ltd is led by some of Australia's most experienced energy executives.

They are partnering with Grid-Link, a Melbourne based engineering consultancy, to design the WRESST and facilitate grid connection.

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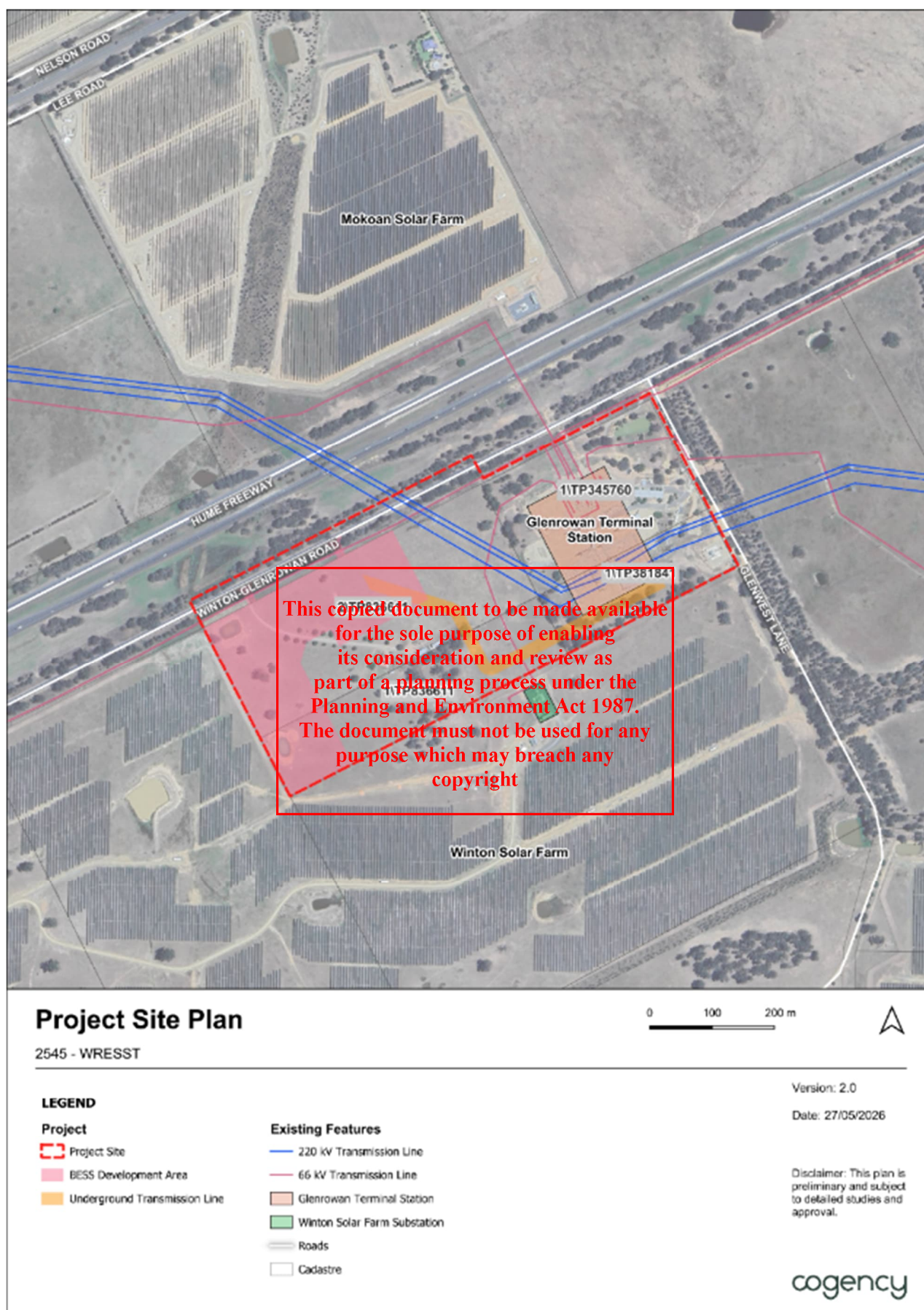


Figure 1 – Proposal Site Plan

2. Site Context and Analysis

The following section provides an overview of the site context and an analysis of the site conditions for the Proposal.

2.1 Site Context

2.1.1 Overview

The Project Site is located at 576 Winton-Glenrowan Road in Winton, within the Rural City of Benalla Local Government Area (LGA) in Victoria's Hume region. Currently, the Project Site is used for rural residential purposes and is situated approximately 4.5 km north-east of Winton, 9 km south-west of Glenrowan, and 14 km north-east of Benalla. Additionally, it is about 5 km from the boundary of the Rural City of Wangaratta.

Winton is a small rural locality with a population of approximately 103 people (ABS, 2021). The township is best known for Winton Motor Raceway and the nearby Winton Wetlands, both of which are significant regional attractions.

Glenrowan is another rural township located within the Rural City of Wangaratta, with a population of approximately 1,049 people (ABS, 2021). The town is historically significant for its strong association with Ned Kelly, particularly as the site of his final siege and capture.

The broader local economy relies on agricultural production, tourism, and manufacturing. Key agricultural sectors include prime lamb and beef production, dairy farming, and broadacre cropping. In recent years, agriculture in the area has become more diversified, with increased activity in viticulture, more intensive horticulture, and forestry. The municipality has experienced a significant increase in the uptake of renewable energy projects.

The site is adjacent to the Winton Solar Farm along the southern and western boundaries of the site and the Glenrowan Terminal Station to the east of the site. The site has direct access to the Winton-Glenrowan Road (an arterial road) and the M31 Hume Freeway (a major national freeway).

The Winton Wetlands are located approximately 1.5 km north of the site, with the Hume Freeway in between. The wetlands feature 32 distinct wetland zones and are home to a variety of flora and fauna species, including 180 species of birds. A restoration project to renew the wetland's ecology is currently underway.

Figure 2 below depicts the broader regional context surrounding the Project Site.

2.1.2 Surrounding land uses

Land uses surrounding the Project Site include:

- Renewable energy and electricity generation infrastructure to the west, south and east (Winton Solar Farm and Glenrowan Terminal Station).
- Agricultural land, mainly consisting of grazing and some cropping.
- Transport infrastructure, including the Hume Freeway to the north
- Winton Wetlands to the north-east
- Townships, including Winton and Glenrowan.

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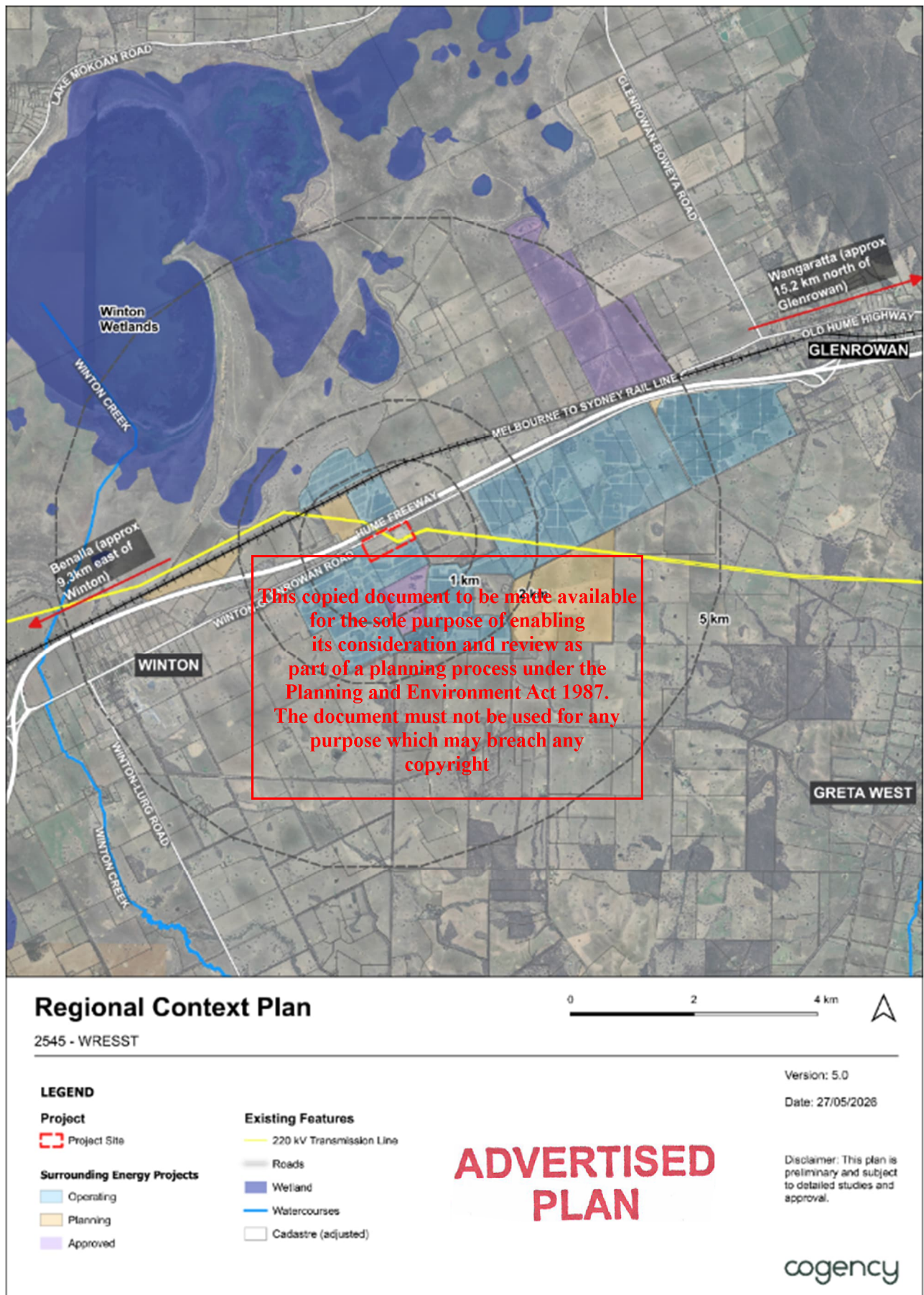


Figure 2 - Regional Context Plan

2.1.3 Nearby dwellings

The nearby area features a low density of dwellings, consistent with an area used predominantly for energy generation and agriculture. There are a number of dwellings and potentially sensitive receptors in proximity to the Project Site (Figure 3). There are 10 dwellings located within 2 km of the Project Site, with five of those dwellings located within 1 km of the Project Site.

The following dwellings are located within 1 km of the Project Site:

- 6 Bowers Road, Winton, approximately 450 m to the north-west (Dwelling 2)
- 21 Bowers Road, Winton, approximately 680 m to the north-west (Dwelling 3)
- 84 Glenwest Lane, Winton, approximately 750 m to the south (Dwelling 4)
- 116 Lee Road, Winton, approximately 780 m to the north-east (Dwelling 5)
- 36 Eleven Mile Creek Road, Glenrowan West 850 m to the east (Dwelling 6).

It is noted that 84 Glenwest Lane contains a dwelling that is proposed to be removed as part of the approved BESS for this land, known as Glenrowan BESS (refer to Figure 3).

2.1.4 Renewable Energy Zone

The Project Site is located within the proposed 2025 Victorian Transmission Plan Central North Renewable Energy Zone (REZ), which promotes significant development of renewable energy generation, transmission, and storage infrastructure. REZs are areas the state government has identified as having an abundance of renewable energy resources, such as wind and solar, and are generally appropriate for development. They are intended to encourage investment in renewable generation and storage projects to enable an orderly and coordinated energy transition.

The Central North REZ has not been formally declared, and is subject to further consultation with the community, industry and Traditional Owners. VicGrid is the responsible entity for planning and delivering the Central North REZ.

Figure 4 and Figure 5 below depicts the location of the Proposal in relation to the Central North REZ.

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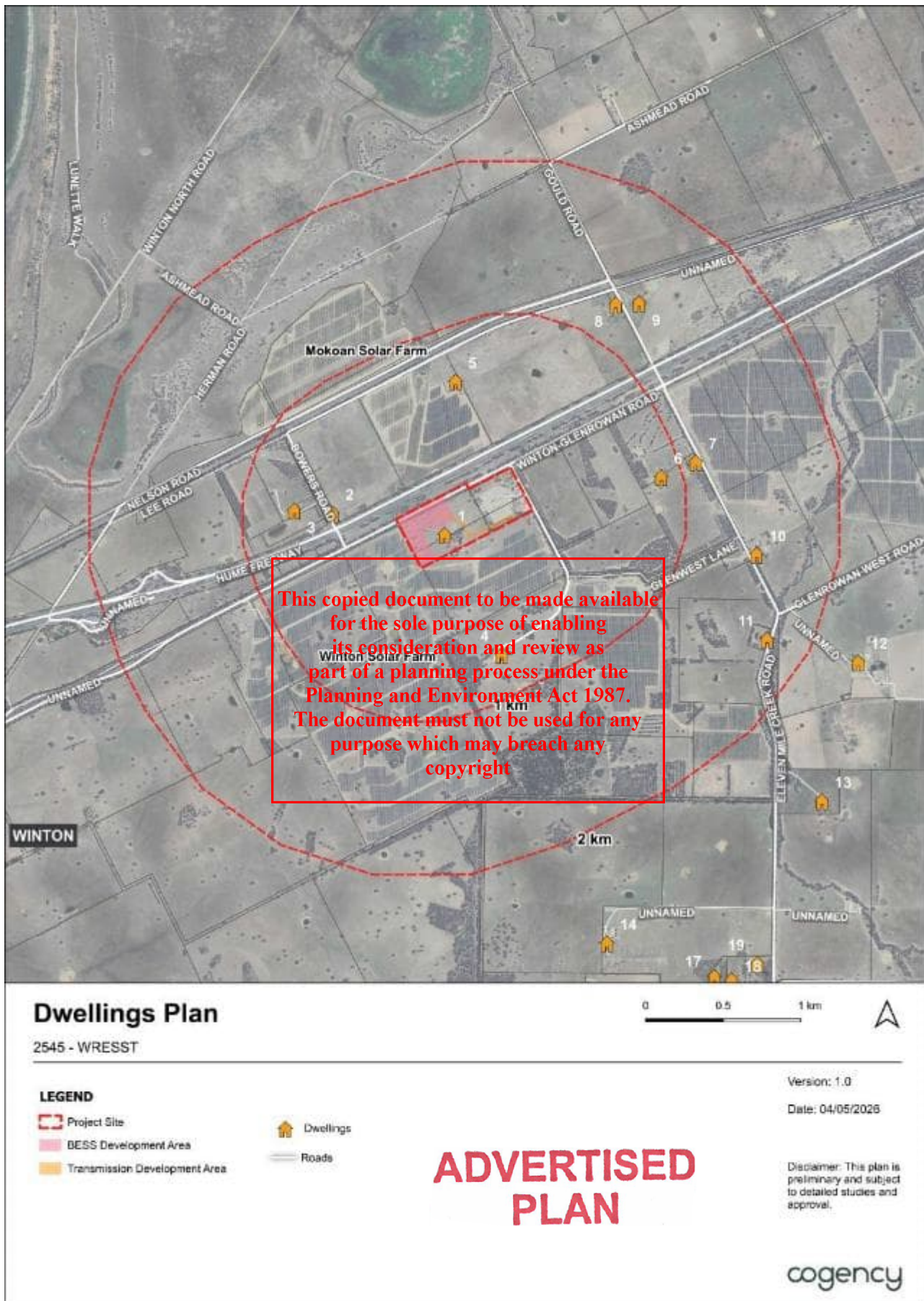


Figure 3 – Nearby Dwellings

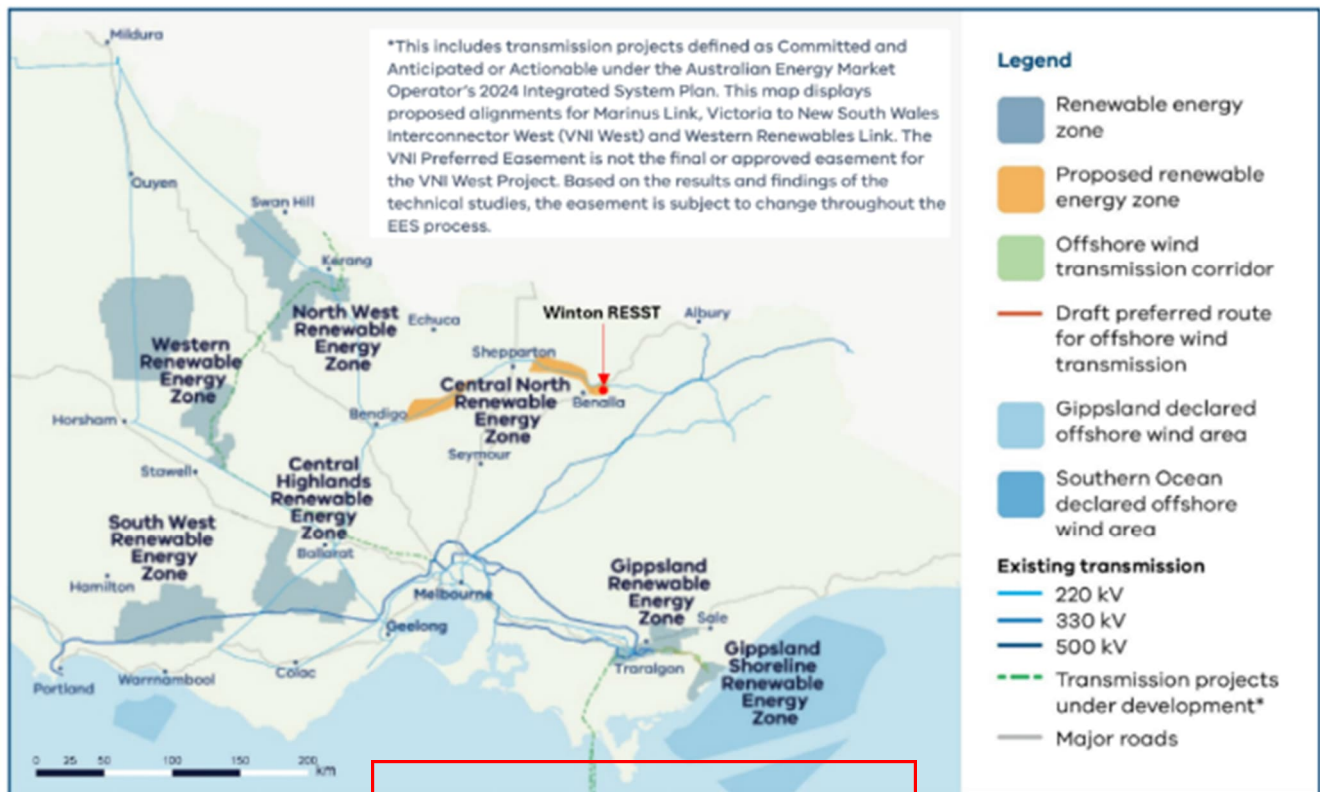


Figure 4 – Victoria Renewable Energy Zones Map (Source: VicGrid, 2026)

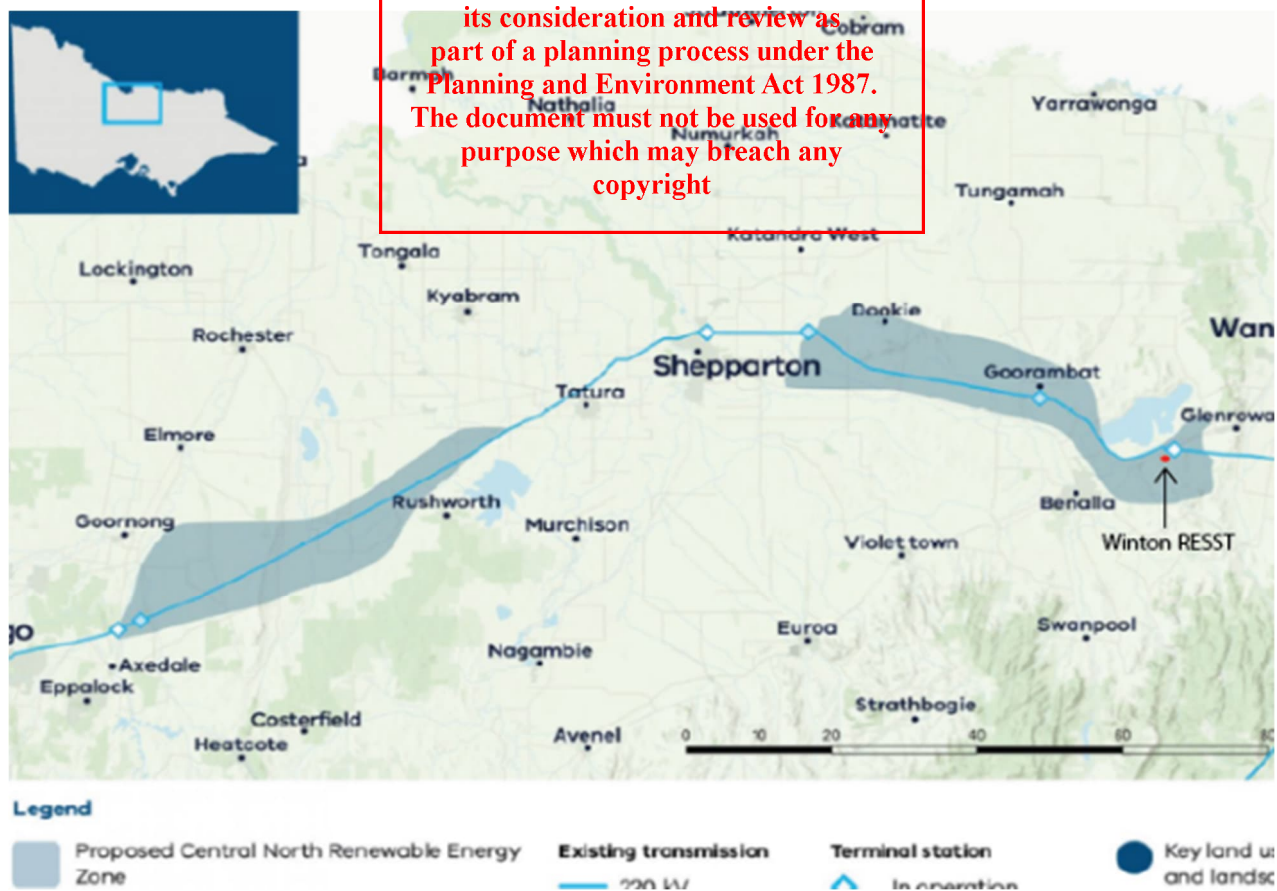


Figure 5 – Central North REZ (Source: VicGrid, 2026)

2.1.5 Energy and transmission

The Project Site currently contains significant transmission and electrical infrastructure. The AusNet managed Glenrowan Terminal Station is located immediately to the east of the Development Area and is connected to 220 kV/66 kV transmission and distribution power lines. The 220 kV Transmission Line runs just outside the north-east corner of the Development Area.

The immediate and broader area surrounding the Project Site also hosts proposed, approved and operational renewable energy projects. Table 2 sets out the details of nearby renewable energy projects (Figure 6).

Table 2 – Nearby renewable energy projects

Project	Key information
<u>Winton Solar Farm</u> Distance to Project: Adjacent Capacity: 85 MW Status: Operational since 2021 Developer: Fotowatio Renewable Ventures (FRV)	Winton Solar Farm abuts the southern and western boundaries of the proposed BESS. The project received development approval in 2018, and construction was completed in January 2021.
<u>Glenrowan West Solar Farm</u> Distance to Project: <1 km Capacity: 149 MW Status: Operational since 2021 Developer: WIRSOL Energy	Glenrowan West Solar Farm is within 1 km of the eastern boundary of the proposed BESS. It has been operational since March 2021, following a construction timeline of nine months. It uses agrisolar for sustainable vegetation management and is home to a sizeable flock of sheep.
<u>Glenrowan BESS</u> Distance to Project: <1 km Capacity: 400 MW/1,600 MWh Status: Approved Developer: Akaysha Energy	The approved Glenrowan BESS is directly south of the proposed BESS, adjacent to the Winton Solar Farm. The project will connect to the existing Glenrowan Terminal Station. The BESS is being developed by Akaysha Energy in collaboration with BZ Renewables. Construction has not
<u>Mokoan Solar Farm (and BESS)</u> Distance to Project: <1 km Capacity: 53 MW Status: Operational since 2025 Developer: European Energy	Mokoan Solar Farm is a 53 MW solar farm and BESS (40 MW) on 300 ha of land, which has been predominantly used for grazing. The project first began operation in December 2024 and has been fully operational since June 2025. Mokoan Solar Farm 2 is the additional solar expansion site to Mokoan Solar Farm.
<u>Winton BESS</u> Distance to Project: <1 km Capacity: 120 MW Status: Planning Developer: Avenis Energy	Winton BESS is a proposed utility-scale BESS with a capacity of up to 120 MW. A planning permit application is currently being assessed by the Minister for Planning.
<u>Glenrowan Solar Farm</u> Distance to Project: 4.5 km Capacity: 130 MW Status: Operational since 2024 Developer: Pacific Partnerships	The Glenrowan Solar Farm is an operating solar farm with a capacity of up to 130 MW. It is located directly to the east of Glenrowan West Solar Farm.
<u>Chivers Road BESS</u> Distance to Project: 4.5km Status: Planning Developer: Pacific Partnerships	The Chivers Road BESS is collocated with the Glenrowan Solar Farm. The proposed Chivers Road BESS will be located on approximately 2.7 ha in the western corner of the site, at the intersection of Chivers Road and Winton-Glenrowan Road.
<u>Winton North Solar Farm</u> Distance to Project: 4.2km Status: Under construction Developer: European Energy	The Winton North Solar Farm is an approved solar farm being developed by European Energy. It is currently under construction with an anticipated capacity of up to 130 MW once operational.

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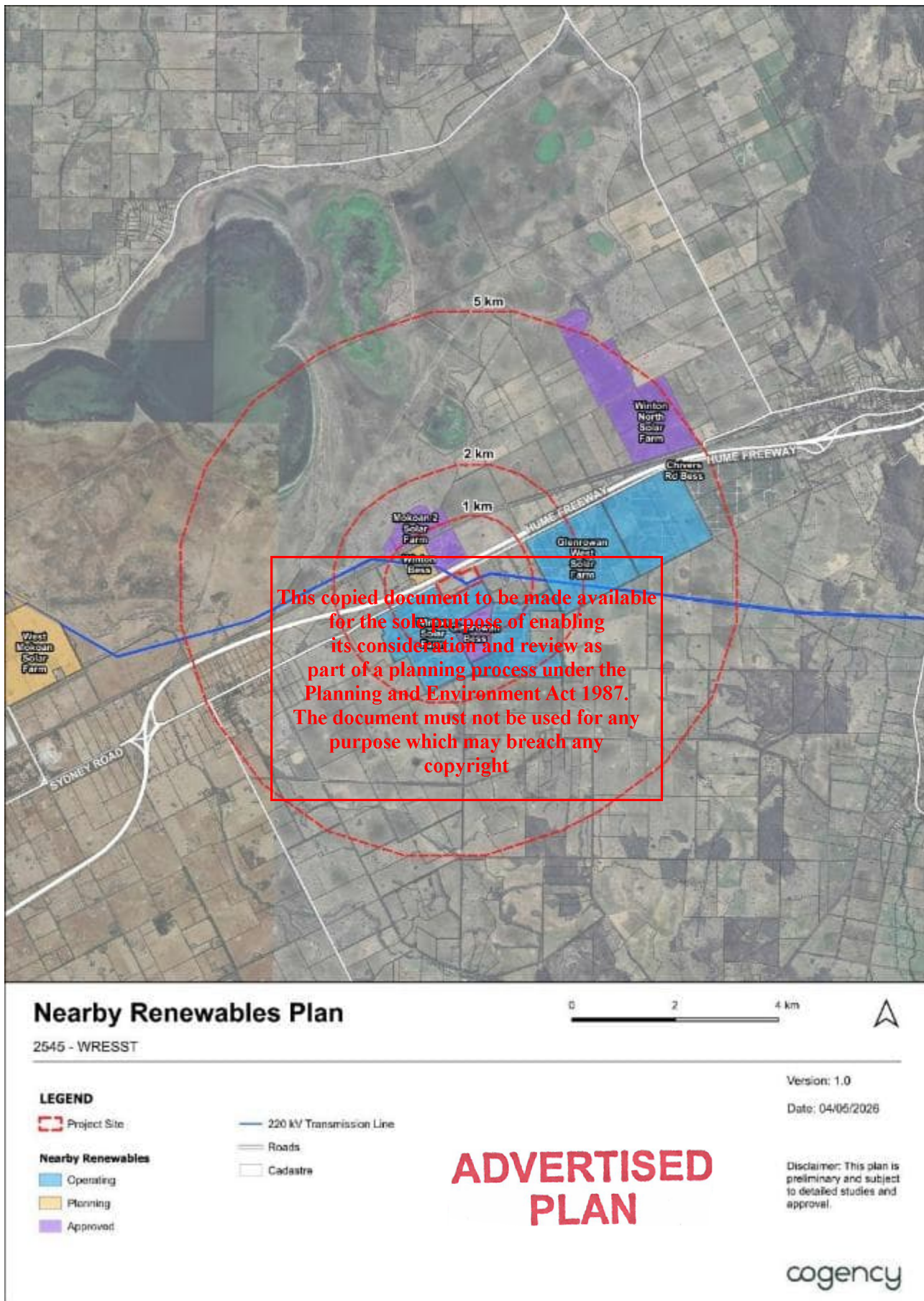


Figure 6 – Nearby Energy Projects

2.2 Site Analysis

The following sections provide an overview of the site conditions, including key features, topography, infrastructure, and land uses applicable to the Project Site and immediate surrounds.

Certificates of Title for the Project Site are provided at Appendix A.

2.2.1 Overview

The Proposal is predominantly located on land at 576 Winton-Glenrowan Road and will also incorporate small portions of land within the Glenrowan Terminal Station (for electrical connection) and the Winton-Glenrowan Road reserve (for road access).

The land at 576 Winton-Glenrowan Road is a rural residential property with an overall area of approximately 15 ha. The Development Area will occupy approximately 6.5 ha within this broader landholding. A small farm dam is located within the north-western corner of the Development Area, while an existing dwelling is situated near the southern boundary of the property. The Project Site features a varying topography, sloping toward a small hill near the border with the Terminal Station, and is largely cleared of vegetation, except for a patch of Grey Box Woodland near the dwelling. An existing overhead transmission line cuts across the north-east corner of the Development Area, connecting with the existing Terminal Station.

The Project Site was selected due to its proximity to the Glenrowan Terminal Station, existing transmission infrastructure, and several nearby solar farm projects that are either approved or currently under development. The dwelling located within the Project Site is an involved dwelling associated with the development and will be removed as part of the Proposal. Within a 2 km radius of the Project Site, there are approximately 10 sensitive receptors (dwellings), which present potential considerations relating to noise, visual amenity, and community sentiment.

Refer to Table 3 for photographs of the site in its existing conditions.

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Table 3 – Site photographs

2.2.2 Easements

The easements and caveats that apply to the Project Site are summarised in Table 4.

Table 4 – Easements and caveats

Property Address	Parcel	Easement	Caveat	Relevance to Proposal
576 Winton-Glenrowan Road	Lot 1 of Title Plan 836611	Encumbering Easement (AU009263X, dated 2021)	N/A	Protects the existing 220kV transmission line route into the Terminal Station.
576 Winton-Glenrowan Road	Lot 2 of Title Plan 836611	Encumbering Easement (H912061)	N/A	Protects the existing 220kV transmission line route into the Terminal Station.

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2.2.3 Access

Existing access to the Project Site is currently provided via a crossover from Winton-Glenrowan Road, located near the north-western corner of the site. This leads to a private driveway up the hill to the rural dwelling.

Winton-Glenrowan Road is an arterial east-west road extending between Gladstone Street in Glenrowan to the east and the Hume Freeway near Winton to the west. Adjacent to the Project Site, the road comprises a single traffic lane in each direction with gravel shoulders on both sides. Adjacent to this road is the Hume Freeway, a major national freeway linking Melbourne and Sydney. There is no direct access from the Freeway to the Project Site.

2.2.4 Vegetation

The Project Site has been extensively cleared of native vegetation as a result of historical agricultural activities, predominantly grazing. As such, the Project Site is primarily characterised by modified pastures containing a mix of non-native pasture grasses and weed species. The existing driveway is lined with planted Desert Ash trees (*Fraxinus angustifolia*), while other introduced species identified across the site include Sugar Gum, Peppercorn and Silky Oak.

Vegetation within the Project Site generally comprises two broad categories:

- disturbed or modified native vegetation, including remnant woodland trees with a heavily grazed understorey and isolated patches of native bulrush vegetation; and
- non-native vegetation, including exotic pasture species, environmental weeds and planted trees associated with historical agricultural land use.

Remnant native vegetation is primarily concentrated along the Project Site boundaries or as scattered paddock trees. Mature eucalyptus trees along the northern boundary provide established native vegetation screening, which assists in limiting views to and from the Hume Freeway. Additional patches of Grey Box woodland are present to the south of the Project Site. Several remnant woodland trees and scattered paddock trees, including dead standing trees (snags), are considered to provide important habitat values for native fauna.

Refer to the Ecological assessment in section 7.1 for further information on native vegetation.

2.2.5 Topography

The Project Site features varying topography, with relatively higher elevations in the eastern portion of the site, gradually transitioning to lower-lying land towards the west. The elevation ranges between 196 m AHD in the east and 174 m AHD in the west.

2.2.6 Hydrology

The Project Site does not contain any recognised waterways and is not immediately adjacent to any recognised waterways. The closest recognised waterway is Eleven Mile Creek, approximately 2 km to the east. There is, however, an existing farm dam at the north-west corner of the Development Area.

The north-western corner of the Project Site is adjacent to a set of culverts under Winton-Glenrowan Road. These culverts convey flow from an indistinct drainage line near the north-western boundary, which is shared with the adjacent solar farm, and drain land to the south and west of the Project Site.

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3. The Proposal

The following section outlines the key details of the WRESST, along with the Proposal's justification and benefits.

3.1 Design approach

The WREEST has been carefully sited and designed to minimise impacts. This includes:

- Locating the Development Area outside the Grey Box Woodland
- Siting the BESS on the flattest part of the site, and designing it in a 'L' shape, to work with the slope of the land and minimise earthworks.
- Designing the access road network to utilise the existing crossover to Winton-Glenrowan Road, minimising native vegetation removal in the road reserve
- Reusing the existing farm dam as a retention basin for stormwater treatment
- Setting the Development Area back from the western boundary to allow for local water flows.
- Including a planted vegetation screen along most of the northern boundary and some of the western boundary, to minimise visibility and landscape impacts from the Hume Freeway and Winton-Glenrowan Road.
- Using an underground transmission line to connect to the Glenrowan Terminal Station, minimising landscape impacts.

3.2 Overview

The WRESST would have a capacity of up to 400 MW/1600 MWh and include the following key components:

- Batteries, inverters and transformers
- Switching station and associated electrical infrastructure.
- Underground transmission connection to the existing Glenrowan Terminal Station
- Auxiliary power supplies
- Protection and control equipment
- Operations and maintenance building and site office
- Temporary construction laydown areas
- Access points and internal tracks
- Water storage systems and fire-fighting infrastructure
- Security fencing and monitoring
- Earthworks/benching
- Stormwater detention and drainage swales
- Landscaping/screening
- Associated uses, buildings and works

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Refer to Figure 7 for the concept layout of the Proposal. The attached Application Plans detail the major elements of the Proposal (refer Appendix B)

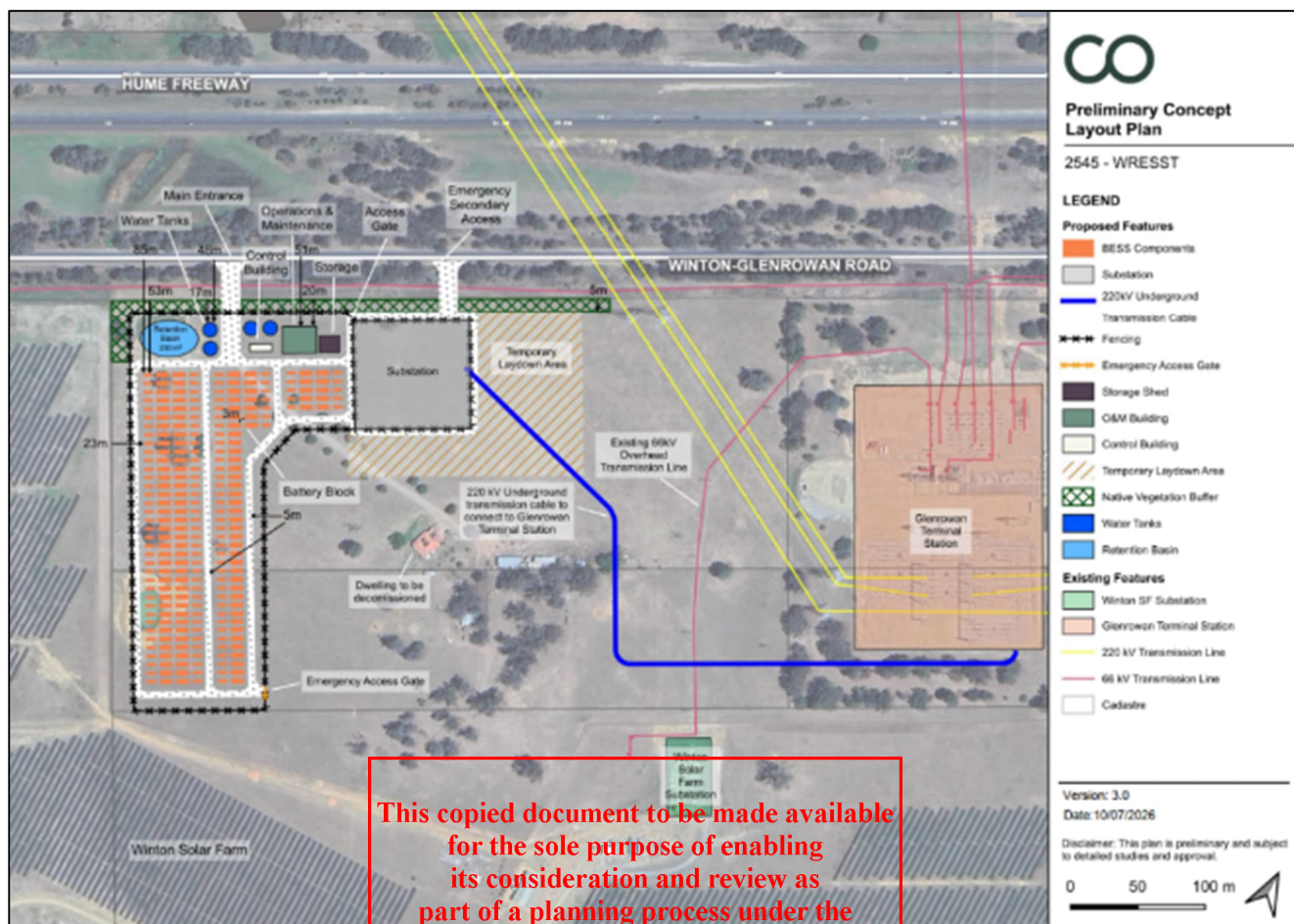


Figure 7 – Preliminary Concept Layout Plan

3.3 Battery storage

The Proposal is anticipated to use Lithium Ferro(iron) Phosphate (LFP) cells. Figure 8 presents diagrams of a typical LFP cell, Battery Module, and Rack.

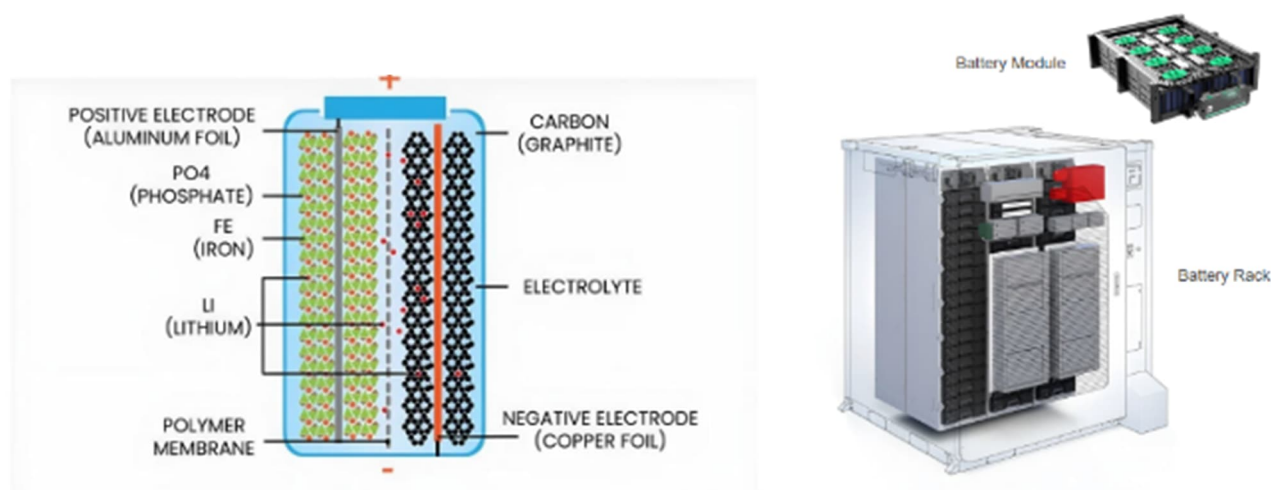


Figure 8 – Typical LFP cells, Battery Module and Rack diagram

The Proposal includes rows of battery units (approximately 128 units), with power conversion systems (PCS) on the outside of the rows (refer to Figure 9). Two BESS units are coupled to each PCS. The current layout provides 3 m of separation between BESS units side-to-side, in accordance with CFA requirements. The

battery enclosures house multiple racks of modules and contain monitoring and communications equipment, a cooling system, and a fire detection and suppression system. The modularity of the batteries allows for ease of construction and maintenance.



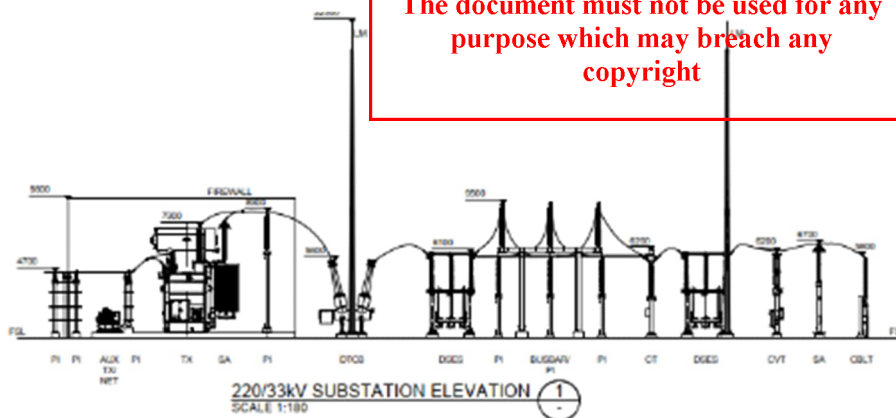
Figure 9 – Typical BESS Elevations

The Proposal includes a managed firebreak of at least 10 m surrounding all battery units, switching station, and associated infrastructure, in line with the *Country Fire Authority's Design Guidelines Model Requirements Renewable Energy Facilities* (June 2025, V4.4) (CFA Guidelines).

3.4 Associated infrastructure

The Proposal includes an on-site substation to the north-east of the battery units, containing a variety of electrical equipment (Refer to Figure 10). Connecting this substation to the BESS units will be a network of electrical and data cabling.

To support the maintenance and operation of the WRESS, a control building, storage room, and operation and maintenance (O&M) building, will be provided close to the entry from Winton–Glenrowan Road. A temporary laydown area will be located to the north-east of the proposed substation and will be decommissioned once the WRESS is operational. Refer to Figure 11.



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Figure 10 – Typical Substation Elevations

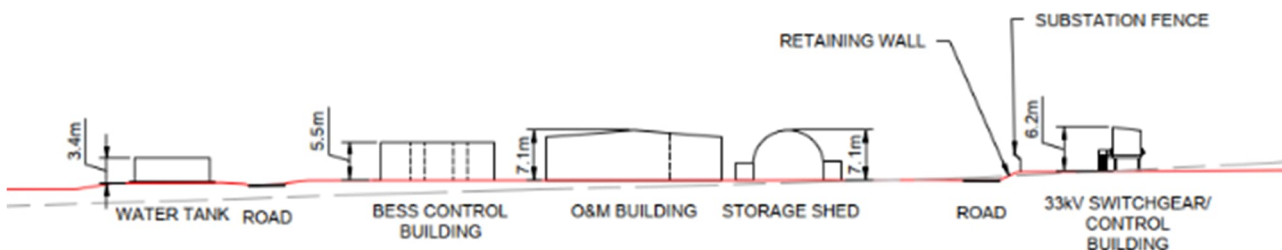


Figure 11 – Typical Building Elevations

3.5 Grid connection

The Proposal includes an underground connection to the National Electricity Market (NEM) at the Glenrowan Terminal Station. The connection would be a 220 kV underground transmission cable from the proposed onsite substation to the south-western section of the Terminal Station.

The transmission line will be approximately 550 m in length and constructed via trenching. An indicative 1 m trench width and 20 m disturbance corridor is proposed; however, this is subject to detailed cable rating studies during detailed design.

Electrical works and equipment within the Terminal Station will also be required where the proposed transmission line enters the Terminal Station and connects to the grid.

3.6 Access and parking

Primary access to the Project Site will be provided via the existing crossover along Winton-Glenrowan Road, located near the north-western corner of the site. To accommodate construction vehicles and oversized deliveries, this access point will be widened to approximately 20 m, with an extra 10 m of temporary gravel shoulder for the construction period. A secondary access point, sharing the design of the primary access point, will also be established approximately 155 m east of the primary access point, to satisfy CFA requirements for emergency access. The location of this access point has considered both traffic and ecological considerations. Both access points will be utilised during the construction phase.

Once operational, the primary access point will serve as the main site entry, while the secondary access will be retained for emergency access purposes only, and potentially direct access to the on-site substation.

In addition, an emergency access gate will be provided to the south of the BESS units to facilitate CFA access in the event of a fire or other emergency. This access point will provide local CFA services with an alternative route into the property and will be accessed via the surplus land along the southern boundary.

Internal access tracks are proposed around the perimeter of the Development site, and throughout the BESS units. The internal access tracks will be approximately 5 m wide and are designed to accommodate both construction and operational traffic, including access for fire trucks. This has been developed in accordance with the CFA Guidelines (Section 4.2 of the *Design Guidelines and Model Requirements: Renewable Energy Facilities*, Country Fire Authority, June 2025, V4.4), which require access roads to be a minimum of 5 m.

During construction, parking will be provided across the broader site for construction staff as required. Once operational, car parking for staff will be provided within a parking area at the entrance of the facility near the Operations and Maintenance building. During operation, staff attendance at the site will be limited to maintenance and inspection activities; accordingly, four formal parking spaces and additional informal parking areas, if required, will adequately service the facility.

3.7 Earthworks and drainage

Due to the existing topography of the Project Site, cut and fill earthworks will be required to create a flat bench and accommodate the Proposal. The location and shape of the Development Area has been carefully selected to minimise the extent of earthworks. Cutting will occur in the south-east corner of the Development Area and filling in the north-western corner. The height of the filling, and therefore the finished level of the bench, will be higher than surrounding land in the north-west corner, and designed to be well above the area of local inundation in this area. This will be confirmed as part of detailed design.

The Development Area will be graded toward two internal swales, directing runoff to a retention pond located in the north-west corner of the Project Site in the location of the current farm dam. Additional bypass swales will be constructed around the facility to divert external local overland flows away from critical infrastructure.

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3.8 Firefighting infrastructure

In accordance with the CFA Guidelines, the following infrastructure will be provided:

- Fire hydrant system (AS2419 – open yard protection requirements), strategically located at several locations around the BESS units.
- Provision of a dedicated firefighting water supply in a series of permanent water tanks, with a total storage capacity of no less than 288 kL
- Two access points, including emergency access and internal access tracks that can be used by firefighting vehicles
- Retention basins to contain contaminated firefighting water
- Perimeter firebreak of 10 m around the property boundary.
- Perimeter access roads of at least 5 m around and throughout the site

A Fire Management Plan for the Proposal, as required by the CFA Design Guidelines, will be developed as a condition of the permit. Refer to Appendix I for more details.

3.9 Additional works

Perimeter vegetation screening will be provided along the northern boundary and a small portion of the Western boundary of the main BESS area to filter views from high-sensitivity viewpoints and reduce the visual impact of the Proposal. The proposed design and location of the screening are informed by the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Appendix H).

An approximately 2 to 3 m high mesh security fence will be installed. The fence will secure the main infrastructure to deter theft or vandalism and prevent unauthorized access to equipment. The height and design finishes of the security fence will be finalised in the final design, with respect to the existing environment.

3.10 Native vegetation removal

The design and siting of the Proposal have been carefully developed to avoid and minimise impacts on native vegetation, consistent with the 'avoid, minimise and offset' approach. Primarily, this has involved avoiding the Grey Box Woodland near the southern boundary. As a result, impacts to native vegetation are expected to be minimal.

Of the 42 individual native trees assessed within the Project Site, only four scattered trees are proposed to be removed to accommodate the works. In addition, four small patches of native vegetation will require removal to facilitate site access and the construction of the BESS units and associated infrastructure.

Overall, the Proposal will involve the removal of approximately 0.286 ha of native vegetation, resulting in an offset requirement of 0.065 general habitat units.

3.11 Construction, operation, and decommissioning

Construction

Construction is expected to include the following elements:

- Preliminary works to prepare the site
- Installation of fencing, lighting, and site signage, including safety signage
- Earthworks to achieve suitable bench and hardstand areas
- Establishment of temporary construction compound, car parking spaces, and internal roads
- Delivery, assembly, and installation of BESS components and ancillary infrastructure

- Installation of underground cabling from the onsite substation to the Glenrowan Terminal Station, involving trenching
- Testing.

The construction phase is expected to be approximately 12 to 18 months.

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

Operation

The operation of the Proposal will involve charging and discharging of the battery units, monitoring and maintenance of the batteries, inverters, switching station, internal cabling, as well as general site maintenance and general security monitoring.

Ongoing activities will include testing and replacement of components, power connections, and security, access tracks, and undertaking electrical maintenance. The Proposal is expected to have an operational lifespan of 25 years.

Decommissioning

At the end of the Proposal's anticipated operational lifespan (approximately 25 years), a decision will be made to repower or decommission the Proposal. If repowering is to occur, this will involve installing new BESS units and equipment and reestablishing the site for ongoing operation.

If decommissioning is to occur, this will involve removing the above-ground components and recycling and repurposing where possible. The decommissioning phase will aim to return the land to its original condition (that is, rural living farmland) and commence site rehabilitation consistent with the surrounding landscape.

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

- Removal of all aboveground BESS and substation site infrastructure, including perimeter fencing, site offices, and maintenance buildings
- All laydown, bench, access tracks, and infrastructure to be decommissioned and removed
- Project Site to be returned to pre-construction condition and consistency with the surrounding landscape

Other elements, such as the vegetation screen planting, will be retained. Additional features that may be useful for agricultural purposes, such as the water detention basin, will be maintained on site at the request of the landowner.

3.12 Proposal justification

3.12.1 Site suitability

The Project Site is well-suited for a BESS and benefits from its location within the proposed Central North REZ.

The Project Site is considered suitable for the use and development of a BESS for the following reasons:

- Limited sensitive receptors within 1 km of the Project Site (approximately 5 non-involved dwellings)
- Co-located with other energy infrastructure
- Immediately adjacent to the grid connection point, via Glenrowan Terminal Station
- Not characterised as having significant landscape values or significant agricultural land
- Minimal existing native vegetation within the Project Site
- Zoning that allows for the use

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- Convenient road access
- Significant distances to waterways and wetlands.

3.12.2 Economic benefits

The development of the WRESST represents an investment of approximately \$650-\$850 million. It is expected to create around 100 to 150 jobs during the construction phase. These jobs will be both local and international, comprising jobs in the following fields:

- Manufacturing
- Electrical and cabling
- Civil engineering
- Roadworks
- Construction
- Fencing.

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Beyond construction, there are expected to be around 4 to 6 full time equivalent jobs for the lifetime of the Proposal. These will be involved in the operations and maintenance of the facility, including reporting, safety, monitoring, and upkeep of the facility. The Proponent is committed to procuring locally to the extent possible, drawing from the skills in Winton, Glenrowan, or the wider Benalla region.

The Proposal will play an important role in growing the renewable energy generation and energy storage industry in Victoria. As the state's energy supply transitions to renewable energy, the Proposal will support employment in this growing field and contribute to education and skills training. This will grow Victoria's ability to build and operate BESS projects and other electrical projects, securing the economy's future competitiveness in this vital sector.

3.12.3 Why battery energy storage?

There are a number of reasons for developing a BESS on this site. Battery energy storage is essential to ensuring Australia's electricity grid is prepared for the phase out of traditional coal-fired power stations in the coming decades. The variability of renewable energy sources means that there is a need for storage within the grid to supply power during periods of low generation.

Further, the continued popularity of domestic rooftop solar is leading to an oversupply of generation in the middle of the day during sunny periods, offering the opportunity to store power during this time and release it in the evening, when demand is typically highest.

Battery storage technology has advanced to a point where the delivery of numerous grid-supporting batteries is cheaper and more efficient compared to other energy storage solutions, such as pumped hydro. Batteries have a crucial role of quickly firming intermittent renewable energy, as directed in AEMO's Integrated System Plan (2026), which highlights a need for 35 GW of shallow and medium storage and 5 GW of deep storage by 2050.

The WRESST will strengthen grid stability for communities in the region through the ability to rapidly increase or decrease output, and by providing 'ancillary services' such as frequency and voltage support.

In supporting the introduction of more renewable energy generation, the Proposal will assist with Victoria's renewable energy transition and support the legislated Victorian Renewable Energy Target for 65% by 2030 and 95% by 2035. Importantly, the Proposal will be crucial to achieving the Victorian energy storage targets of at least 2.6 GW by 2030 and 6.3 GW by 2035.

4. Community and Stakeholder Engagement

The following section outlines the objectives and principles of the Proposal's engagement, details of the engagement activities completed to date and planned, and the materials provided to stakeholders and the local community.

4.1 Community stakeholder and engagement plan

A Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan (CSEP) was developed in the early stages of the WRESST Proposal in accordance with best practice in Australian community engagement. It details the objectives and principles defining engagement, identification of key stakeholders, and describes the social context of Winton and the surrounding community.

The aim of the CSEP is to ensure the community and stakeholders are proactively and meaningfully informed, consulted and involved with the Proposal throughout the planning, development, assessment and delivery stages.

4.1.1 Engagement objectives

The Plan aims to fulfil the following engagement objectives:

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

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4.1.2 First Nations engagement principles

Beyond the statutory requirements of the Proposal, the Proponent is committed to ensuring sensitive and respectful engagement with the First Nations communities. The approach to Traditional Owners engagement is based on principles adopted from [First Nations Clean Energy Network's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Best Practices Principles for Clean Energy Projects \(2022\)](#) and the Clean Energy Council's Best Practice Charter for Renewable Energy Projects (2018).

The Proposal seeks to:

- Engage in a respectful and inclusive manner
- Prioritise clear, accessible, timely and accurate information about the Proposal
- Protect and preserve Country, cultural heritage and the environment
- Ensure economic and social benefits are shared
- Ensure and encourage cultural competency
- Implement feedback, monitor progress and report back

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4.1.3 Engagement principles

The nine principles of engagement shown in Figure 12 have been developed based on Cogency's experience in planning and consultation, and integrate the principles outlined by the Clean Energy Council as part of the [*Best Practice Charter for Renewable Energy Projects*](#).

These principles are intended to define engagement on the WRESST during all phases of the Proposal, including design, planning, construction, operation and decommissioning.

Mutual benefit and respect

Deliver shared outcomes of mutual benefit in an equitable way for the local host community, landowners, and Proponent. Provide a space for genuine dialogue where people can participate in respectful discussions that help to identify mutually agreeable solutions. Proactive, well-planned, and regular engagement is effective in achieving mutual understanding and openness.



Relationship-building

Build genuine local relationships, networks and links to key local leaders or organisations, by enabling many avenues for interaction and involvement, and allowing key stakeholders to become Proposal advocates and feedback loops. Help the local community to identify positively with the Proposal and integrate it into their sense of community and place.



Authenticity

Have a strong, authentic, and local presence in the local community by providing dedicated staff who are reliably and readily available as the community's trusted 'translator' of technical knowledge, to explain information to the community and stakeholders in a simple yet effective way and to address any misinformation.



Ongoing engagement

Provide diverse and ongoing opportunities for engagement throughout the lifecycle of the Proposal. Monitor and evaluate the community engagement, benefit sharing and social impact management programs to identify areas for improvement and/or modification.



Responsiveness

Listen and respond to community needs and concerns in a comprehensive and timely manner. Maintain a record of the key issues raised and/or complaints received to date and how they were resolved.



Social impact

Understand, minimise, and offset the risk of negative social impacts across a Proposal's lifecycle by taking into consideration the many social factors, and using appropriate social analysis tools and integrating them, alongside the technical and economic factors, into the proposed development.



Inclusiveness

Identify a wide range of different stakeholders across the local and regional communities and ensure that the channels and methods of engagement are tailored to the needs of each stakeholder group so that they are engaged with appropriately and effectively.



Transparency, trust, and accountability

Commit to an ongoing process of monitoring, evaluating, and disclosing information about the Proposal's activities and impacts. Adhere to promises and commitments, to help develop legitimacy and credibility – and ultimately trust – within the community. Provide transparency about the process and how decisions are made.



Fairness

Ensure that consultation is two-way and that opportunities exist for local community members and other stakeholders to participate, with access to balanced information, and having their ideas justly considered, responded to, and incorporated where possible.



Figure 12 – Principles of engagement

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4.2 Engagement activities

To date, engagement has been carried out with direct neighbours of the Proposal site, the wider Winton and Glenrowan communities, key State and Federal government agencies and local community organisations (Table 5). These stakeholders were identified during preparation of the CSEP during the early design and development phase.

Stakeholders are defined as people, groups, organisations and communities that may be directly or indirectly impacted by the Proposal, hold a strong interest or have an influence on the Proposal and its outcomes.

Engagement with identified stakeholders commenced in earnest in April 2026, with the introduction of the Proposal to the immediate neighbours of the Proposal. The following table provides an overview of engagement activities carried out with the community and stakeholders leading up to the submission of this Planning Application.

Table 5 - Summary of engagement to date

Stakeholder	Date	Tools of engagement	Key details
Neighbours	9 April 2026	Letter of introduction	- Direct letter drop to dwellings within approximately 2 km of the site - Express post sent to nine dwellings in total, arriving on 13 April 2026
Neighbours	15 April 2026	Door knock	- Door knock of nine dwellings within an approximately 2 km radius of the site (Figure 13). - Three residents were home and hosted the team for a discussion - All dwellings without residents home were left with a WRESST fact sheet and 'Sorry, We Missed You' card - Views were mainly supportive or neutral of the Proposal with the <i>main concern raised around the social and cumulative impacts of proposed and existing developments</i> - No communications received from the community following the door knock
State and Federal MPs Benalla Rural City Councillors	21 April 2026	Email	Emails offering Proposal briefings and invites to upcoming engagement sessions
All Stakeholders	Weeks of 13 April and 20 April 2026	Advertising in local newspapers	- Advertising carried out for 2 weeks leading up to the Community Drop-In Session on 27 April 2026 - Published in the Benalla Ensign and Wangaratta Chronicle
All Stakeholders	27 April 2026	Community Drop-In Session	- Drop-in session was hosted between 2:30pm and 6:30pm on Monday, 27 April 2026 at Glenrowan Recreation Reserve Memorial Hall - Information materials included fact sheets and information boards 15 people were in attendance, with the majority sharing contact details and opting in for future Proposal updates. - Community sentiment was a mix of curious, neutral and supportive. <i>There was a degree of apprehension towards the Proposal, with concern raised around broad fire risk, noise, and flooding</i> - Following an invitation, Proposal team members conducted a visit to a community member's home who raised concern around visual impact - Figure 14 and Figure 15 show photos of the drop-in session

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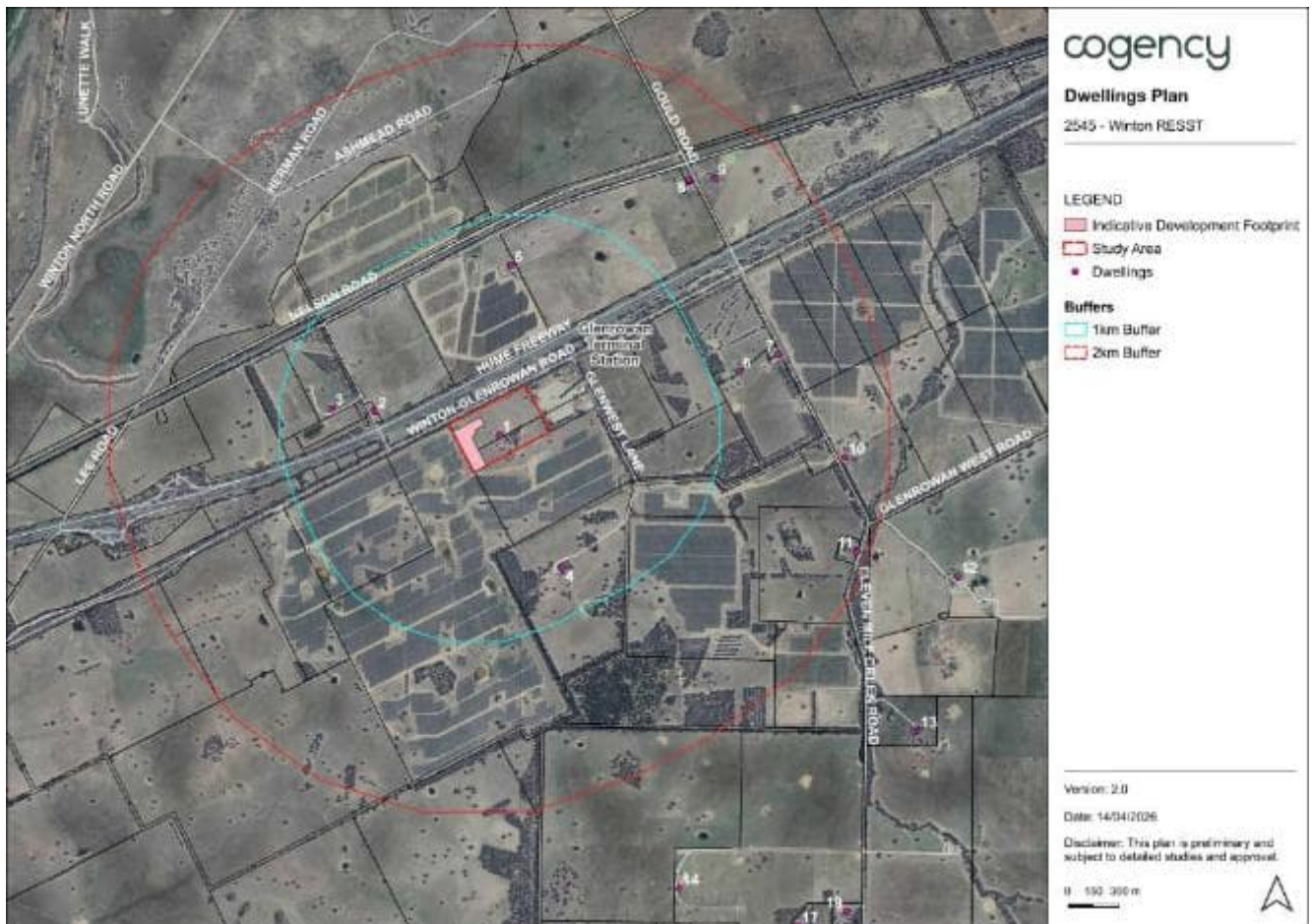


Figure 13 - Dwellings plan



Figure 14 - Community members at the drop-in session



Figure 15 - Community member in discussion with a member of the Proposal team

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4.3 Engagement tools and methods

A wide range of communication tools and activities have been identified to ensure that the community and stakeholders are effectively informed, consulted and involved in the Proposal, to reduce to the extent possible (Table 6):

- The risk of conflict between community, stakeholders, and the Proposal.
- Any intrusion and disruption to businesses and land uses.
- Concerns around consultation fatigue.

Table 6 – Recommended tools and techniques

Tool	Purpose	Stakeholders	Level of engagement
Presentation and briefing pack Presentation slide decks to government and agency stakeholders providing various key updates	▪ To provide clear and concise information about the Proposal as it develops ▪ To notify the stakeholders about key milestones in the Proposal and how to influence the planning and design ▪ To avoid the spread of misinformation and to mitigate concerns, where possible.	All stakeholders	Inform Consult
Direct letter drops Direct letters delivered to households within a 2 km radius of the Site. Letter drops included Proposal introduction, details of upcoming engagement events – Door Knocking activities and Community Drop-In Sessions	▪ To inform neighbours and the wider community of upcoming engagement activities and participation opportunities ▪ To inform neighbours of technical studies and assessment activities for the Proposal that may be relevant to their property, and to provide detailed information about the work and the impact of the Proposal	Neighbouring landowners Local businesses	Inform Consult
Door knocking Door knocking activities carried out by the Proposal team to liaise with all dwellings and landowners face-to-face, at their residence, within 2 km radius of the Proposal.	▪ To provide an opportunity for the Proposal team to meet neighbouring landowners face-to-face ▪ To inform neighbouring landowners about the Proposal, process, and upcoming community information sessions ▪ To receive preliminary feedback from the neighbouring community and assess initial community sentiment.	Neighbouring landowners	Inform Consult
Emails Emails to nearby neighbours and key stakeholders notifying them of the Proposal and offering a Proposal briefing, as well as inviting them to attend upcoming engagement events, participation opportunities, and providing Proposal updates.	▪ To inform key stakeholders of the Proposal and upcoming engagement activities ▪ To provide updates to key stakeholders and offer briefings for further discussions ▪ To demonstrate responsiveness and foster strong relationships with key community members, organisations and stakeholders.	State and local government Neighbouring landowners	Inform Consult
Face to face and online stakeholder meetings/ interviews In person and online meetings were conducted with key stakeholders and neighbouring landowners for various key issues and updates.	▪ To establish rapport and foster ongoing relationships with primary stakeholders and key impacted neighbours ▪ To inform, consult or involve interested and concerned local community members and stakeholder groups ▪ To identify potential risks and issues associated with the Proposal's construction or operation ▪ To mitigate negative issues or spreading of misinformation ▪ To provide a direct feedback mechanism.	State and Local government Community groups Neighbouring landowners	Inform Consult Involve

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Tool	Purpose	Stakeholders	Level of engagement
Contact phone and email address Provision of Proposal contact details to near neighbours, interested community members and stakeholders.	- To establish a point of contact for community members and stakeholders wanting to learn more about the Proposal, voice their concerns or raise matters of interest during all phases of Proposal development - To allow for initial introductions and quick responses to community members and stakeholders - To facilitate further meetings or briefings	All stakeholders	Inform Consult
Proposal webpage Proposal webpage created to host information regarding the Proposal, key details, milestone updates, community information material, and contact details	- Established in April 2026 - To provide clear information about the Proponent, and the Proposal - To provide progress and planning updates, including upcoming engagement opportunities and key milestones - Accessible at: https://celeroinfrastructure.com/celero-projects/winton-renewable-energy-stability-and-storage-terminal/	All stakeholders	Inform Consult
Fact sheets and information posters Factsheets and information boards written in plain English to support engagement activities, including door knocking and Community Drop-In Sessions.	- To provide clear and concise information about the Proposal as it develops - Written in plain language, translating complex Proposal information, incorporating the use of visual tools including graphics and iconography where possible, to make information as accessible as possible - To notify the community about key milestones in the Proposal and how to get involved, to avoid the spread of misinformation and concerns where possible	All stakeholders	Inform
Local advertising Advertisement of Community Drop-In Session	To promote the community drop-in session in the Benalla Ensign and Wangaratta Chronicle	Local media	Inform
Community Drop-In sessions In-person "drop-in" style event hosted by the Proponent at the Glenrowan Recreation Reserve Memorial Hall	- To introduce the Proposal to the wider community and stakeholders - To facilitate strong face to face interactions between the Proposal team – the Proponent and key technical consultants – and the community / stakeholders. - To provide Proposal information through plain language and mixed visual media - To provide an opportunity for community members to clarify information, voice their ideas and concerns, encourage engagement in the planning process - To establish a point of contact for the Proposal.	All stakeholders	Inform Consult
Thank you email Email to close the loop with the community and key stakeholders, relaying discussions heard at engagement activities and informing them of next steps and actions to be undertaken.	To foster trust and confidence within the community and to strengthen existing relationships, aligning with the Proponent's commitment to transparent communication.	All stakeholders	Inform Consult

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4.4 Future engagement

The Proponent commits to ongoing, meaningful engagement with key neighbours, Winton and Glenrowan communities, and key stakeholders. This commitment reflects the Proponent's recognition that community relationships established during pre-application engagement are sustained through transparent and responsive communication across the full project lifecycle.

Following lodgement of the planning application, key engagement activities are expected to include:

- Updates to website and project collateral to reflect lodged application and public exhibition details
- Second Community Drop-In Session hosted during public exhibition period
- Direct letter drops to neighbours within 2 km of the Project Site of Project Update factsheet
- Direct neighbour engagement, either online or face-to-face, if requested
- Targeted engagement and intelligence gathering for Community Benefit Sharing agreements including with the community, Traditional Owners, local government, state agencies, key community organisations and other nearby renewable energy developers
- Ongoing engagement with key neighbours and affected neighbours
- Key stakeholder meetings, including with Council, CFA, DTP and others.
- Monitoring and evaluation reporting in line with permit conditions
- Announcements of community benefit sharing initiatives via direct letter drops and website updates
- Continued active engagement and responsive communication with any interested or affected neighbours and community members.

During public exhibition of the planning application, the Proponent will host a second Community Drop-In Session, aimed at informing and updating the community on the progress of design and technical assessment. This will provide an accessible, in-person opportunity for the community and key stakeholders to engage directly with the WRESST project team to provide feedback ahead of lodging a formal submission. The Proponent will ensure the session is promoted through appropriate local channels and provide direct notification to identified neighbours and stakeholders.

Should the Project receive planning approval, the Proponent will continue engagement with relevant stakeholders through to construction and into operation.

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5. Legislation and Policy Context

The following section outlines the legislation and policy relevant to the Proposal at the Commonwealth, State and Local levels (Table 7). The table briefly assesses the alignment of the Proposal against the relevant objectives and key actions.

Table 7 - Policy and strategic alignment

Legislation / Policy	Relevant Objectives & Actions	Proposal Alignment
Commonwealth		
Paris Climate Agreement 2016	- Strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change - Maintain global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C - Achieve net zero emissions by 2050 and inscribe low emissions technology stretch goals.	The Proposal will contribute to Australia's commitment to the Paris Climate Agreement by supporting more renewable energy projects to connect to the National Electricity Market (NEM) and is in line with recent Federal announcements regarding a long-term emissions reduction strategy.
Climate Change Act 2022	- Advance Australia's response to climate change - Promote accountability in governance and policymaking regarding climate change - Achieve Australia's greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets, per s 10 of the Act, at least 43% below 2005 levels by 2030, and net zero by 2050	- The Proposal supports Australia's greenhouse gas reduction targets by storing and distributing renewable energy that can contribute to the replacement of fossil fuel-based energy - This Proposal will also help reduce reliance on fossil fuels by enhancing the reliability and stability of renewables, contributing to grid decarbonisation - The Proposal will also provide construction and maintenance jobs for the local and wider community, helping develop a new employment industry centred on green infrastructure.
Australian Renewable Energy Target Scheme	- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the electricity sector - Encourage the generation of electricity from renewable sources - Investment in new renewable energy projects until the target of 33,000 gigawatt-hours of renewable electricity generation is met and sustained until 2030.	The Proposal supports Australia's renewable energy targets by seeking to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through the storage and distribution of electricity from renewable sources.
AEMO Integrated System Plan 2026	- Provide essential support for Australia's energy transition - Triple grid-scale variable renewable energy by 2030, and increase it six-fold by 2050 - Almost quadruple firming capacity to support variable renewable energy.	- The Proposal will contribute to grid stability and management - The Proposal will help improve firming capacity for the NEM and Victoria's electricity transmission network as it transitions to variable renewable energy sources.
Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act)	- Ensures that development Projects do not significantly impact Matters of National Environmental Significance (MNES) - Ensures that development avoids or mitigates impacts on biodiversity, particularly on listed species or ecological communities - To protect threatened species and ecological communities - To promote ecologically sustainable development - To enhance Australia's capacity to address environmental challenges.	- An assessment of the Proposal against MNES listed under the EPBC Act has been undertaken as part of the Biodiversity Assessment (refer to Section 7.1 and Appendix D). - The Proposal has been intentionally designed and sited to avoid and minimise impacts on flora and fauna, including MNES. - No significant impacts to MNES are expected, and a referral under the EPBC Act is not required.

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Legislation / Policy	Relevant Objectives & Actions	Proposal Alignment
State (Victoria)		
Climate Change Act 2017	To set a long-term greenhouse gas emissions reduction target.	The Project will actively support the State's greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets by supporting the production and distribution of renewable electricity.
Renewable Energy (Jobs and Investment) Act 2017 & Victorian Renewable Energy Target (VRET)	- To increase the proportion of Victoria's electricity generated by the means of large-scale facilities that utilise renewable energy sources - To contribute to achieving the renewable energy targets, and energy storage targets - To support the development of projects and initiatives to encourage investment, employment and technology development in Victoria in relation to renewable electricity generation, and energy storage - To contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in Victoria and to achieve associated environmental and social benefits - To promote the transition of Victoria to a clean energy economy - To contribute to the security of electricity supply in Victoria.	- The proposed BESS will be key to achieving Victoria's ambitious energy storage targets of at least 2.6 GW by 2030. - The battery storage capacity of the Proposal supports the Victorian Government's goals of providing reliable, affordable, and clean energy. - The Proposal will also contribute to Victoria's renewable energy targets by allowing more renewable energy generators to connect to the grid.
Victoria's Climate Change Strategy	- Transition the state to a clean energy future and promote the creation of clean energy jobs and strengthen the energy system. - Invest in infrastructure and innovation - Reduce greenhouse gas emissions levels by 28-33% from 2005 levels by 2025 and 45-50% by 2030.	- The Proposal aligns with the State's transition to a renewable energy future and delivers the State's objectives to build more battery infrastructure to provide critical storage and facilitating the distribution of electricity generated from nearby renewable sources. - The Proposal will contribute to the State's emissions reduction targets by allowing a greater mix of renewable energy in the electricity grid and storing energy that would otherwise be generated through fossil fuel sources. - The Proposal will utilise the latest LFP cell battery technology, demonstrating innovation to meet best practice standards.
Environment Effects Act 1978	If a project is expected to have significant environmental effects, an Environment Effects Statement may be required to be prepared and submitted to the Minister for assessment of the environmental effects of the works.	- An assessment of the Proposal against ecological values has been undertaken as part of the Biodiversity Assessment (refer to Section 7.1 and Appendix C). - No significant impact on ecological values is expected, and an Environment Effects Statement referral is not warranted.
Planning and Environment Act 1987 (P&E Act)	- To establish a framework for planning the use, development and protection of land in Victoria - Provides legal weight to instruments under the P&E Act, including the Victorian Planning Provisions, planning schemes (such as the Benalla Planning Scheme), regulations and Ministerial directions.	- The Proposal is in accordance with the general objectives for planning and land use within Victoria - It has been selected for its strategic location, in proximity to existing electrical infrastructure and renewable energy facilities - Planning approval from the Minister for Planning is being sought as part of this application. A detailed assessment against the relevant provisions of the Benalla Planning Scheme has been provided in Section 6.
Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006	- To recognise, protect and conserve Aboriginal cultural heritage in Victoria in ways that are based on respect for Aboriginal knowledge and cultural and traditional practices - To promote the management of Aboriginal cultural heritage as an	- The Proposal is situated on the traditional lands of the Yorta Yorta people, with the YYNAC as the RAP for the area. - An assessment of the Proposal against places onsite of Aboriginal cultural heritage sensitivity has been undertaken as part of a Cultural Heritage Assessment which considers the Proposal against the objective of the Act (refer to Section 7.2 and Appendix D)

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Legislation / Policy	Relevant Objectives & Actions	Proposal Alignment
	integral part of land and natural resource management.	It was determined that no significant effects on Aboriginal Cultural Heritage values are anticipated, and a mandatory Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) is not required.
Heritage Act 2017	- To protect and conserve the cultural heritage of the State - To create offences and other enforcement measures to protect and conserve cultural heritage.	The Proposal is generally consistent with the objectives of the Act, as it would not disturb any places of European heritage.
Environment Protection Act 2017	- Provides the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) powers and tools to prevent and minimise the risks of harm to human health and the environment from pollution and waste - Provides the EPA with the ability to pursue stronger sanctions and penalties to hold environmental offenders to account.	The Proposal is consistent with the purposes of the EP Act.
Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988 (FFG Act)	- To prevent taxa and communities of flora and fauna from becoming threatened and to recover threatened taxa and communities so their conservation status improves - To identify and mitigate the impacts of potentially threatening processes to address the important underlying causes of biodiversity decline.	- The Proposal is consistent with the purposes of the FFG Act in that it does not impact threatened species or communities. - The Planning Application is accompanied by a Biodiversity Assessment (refer to Section 7.1 and Appendix C) which addresses the requirements in the FFG Act.
Road Management Act 2004	To establish a system for the management of safe and efficient public roads that best meet the needs and priorities of state and local communities.	- The planning application is accompanied by a Transport Impact Assessment (refer to Section 7.5 and Appendix G), which outlines the proposed strategies for the road management. - The Proposal is consistent with the road management principles outlined in the Road Management Act 2004.
Water Act 1989	- To provide for the integrated management of waterways in Victoria - To promote the orderly, equitable and efficient use of water resources in Victoria.	- The planning application is accompanied by a Hydrology Assessment (refer to Section 7.4 and Appendix F), which outlines how the Proposal will interact with water resources. - The Project Site is not adjacent to any existing waterways.
Dangerous Goods Act 1985	- To promote the safety of persons and property concerning the manufacture, storage, transport, transfer, sale and use of dangerous goods - To ensure that adequate protections are taken against certain fires, explosions, leakages and spillages of dangerous goods - To ensure that information relating to dangerous goods is provided by occupiers and owners of premises to the relevant authorities - To allocate responsibilities to occupiers and owners of premises to ensure that the health and safety of workers and the general public is protected.	- The planning application is accompanied by a Risk Management Plan (including Fire Safety Study) (refer to Section 7.7 and Appendix I), which assesses the hazard associated with the Proposal. - The Proponent has extensive experience in the development of grid-scale battery storage systems that commonly utilise LFP cell technology, and are familiar with the associated dangerous goods and hazards handling processes in the respective states and territories they have worked in. - Elements of the Proposal classified as Dangerous Goods will be listed within the site's Dangerous Goods register. Maintenance programs will be enacted to ensure all elements containing Dangerous Goods will be maintained in accordance with manufacturer specifications and relevant Australian Standards.

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Legislation / Policy	Relevant Objectives & Actions	Proposal Alignment
<i>Design Guidelines and Model Requirements: Renewable Energy Facilities CFA (June 2025, V4.4)</i>	- Provides standard considerations and measures about fire safety, risk and emergency management to be considered when designing and operating new renewable energy facilities - Provides design guidelines for battery facilities in bushfire-prone areas.	- The planning application is accompanied by a Risk Management Plan (including Fire Safety Study) (refer to Section 7.7 and Appendix I), which assesses the Proposal against the guidelines. - The CFA will be consulted during the design, construction, and operation phases.
Regional		
<i>Hume Regional Growth Plan</i>	- Provides broad direction for regional land use and development in the region and more detailed planning frameworks for key regional centres - To support thriving, productive, and sustainable communities, environments, and industries - Importance of integrating transport and infrastructure with development to facilitate economic and employment growth - Diversifying the regional economy and enhancing sustainability - Support the region's transition to a more sustainable energy future.	The Proposal will help support economic diversification in the Hume region while facilitating its transition to a sustainable energy future.
Local		
<i>Benalla Rural City Community Plan 2016-2036</i>	- The plan emphasises the importance of environmental responsibility and sustainability - Reflects the community's aspirations for a sustainable future, with an implied emphasis on renewable energy and environmental responsibility as key components of its long-term vision.	The Proposal supports the community's vision for a future powered by renewable energy sources and will help to contribute to more sustainable outcomes for the local community.
<i>Benalla Rural City Council Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan 2013-2025</i>	- To prepare for and mitigate the impacts of climate change on council operations and the broader community - Minimising susceptibility to climate-related impacts and leveraging opportunities arising from climatic changes - Illustrates commitment to building resilience against climate impacts and recognises the role of renewable energy initiatives in broader climate change mitigation efforts	The Proposal aligns with the Council's commitment to mitigating climate change impacts by enabling the storage of renewable energy.

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6. Planning Assessment

The following section provides an assessment of the Proposal against the relevant provisions of the planning scheme.

6.1 Planning permit triggers

The Planning Scheme outlines a range of State, Regional and local policies, along with detailed planning provisions, that direct use and development, including the land on which the Proposal is located.

Table 8 identifies the planning permit triggers under the Benalla Planning Scheme that apply to the Proposal.

Table 8 – Planning permit triggers

Clause	Permit requirement
Clause 35.07-1 Farming Zone	Use of land for a Utility installation (BESS)
Clause 35.07-4 Farming Zone	To construct a building or carry out works associated with a Section 2 use (i.e. Utility installation)
Clause 35.07-4 (Schedule) Farming Zone	Buildings and works within 5 metres of any boundary.
Clause 35.07-4 (Schedule) Farming Zone	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
Clause 42.02-2 – Vegetation Protection Overlay	To remove, destroy or lop any vegetation specified in a schedule to this overlay
Clause 52.05-14 Signs	Developments for business identification sign
Clause 52.06-6 Car parking	Provide car parking to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority (as a condition of use)
Clause 52.17-1 Native vegetation	To remove, destroy or lop native vegetation, including dead native vegetation

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6.2 Municipal planning strategy

The Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) is provided in Clause 02 of the Planning Scheme and provides the context, vision and strategic directions of Benalla Rural City Council. The relevant clauses include:

- Clause 02.01 – Context
- Clause 02.02 – Vision
- Clause 02.03 – Strategic Directions

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Table 9 sets out the sub-clauses and provisions relevant to the Proposal and an assessment of them.

Table 9 – Relevant Strategic Directions and Assessment

Sub-clause	Relevant Provision	Assessment
Clause 02.03-2 Environmental and landscape values	Planning for the protection, restoration and enhancement of sites and features of nature conservation, biodiversity, geological or landscape value.	The Proposal has sought to minimise the impacts on native vegetation and has been considerate of the presence of the Regent Honeyeater known to the area. The landscape value of the Project Site is not recognised in the planning scheme, and in any event, the site is well hidden by existing vegetation, especially from the Hume Freeway.

Sub-clause	Relevant Provision	Assessment
Clause 02.03-3 Environmental risks and amenity	Planning for bushfires seeks to reduce bushfire risk through various protection measures to minimise the threat from bushfires.	The Project is located outside of the Bushfire Management Overlay; however, like most of rural Victoria is located within a Bushfire Prone Area. Supported by a Fire Safety Study, the Proposal has been carefully designed in alignment with the Design Guidelines and Model Requirements: Renewable Energy Facilities (CFA, 2025) and is supported by a Fire Hazard and Risk Assessment. It includes a number of specific fire features, such as firebreaks, onsite water tanks, and permitted roads.
Clause 02.03-4 Natural resource management	Planning for agriculture seeks to retain large lots and discourage the establishment of sensitive or non-agricultural related land uses on high-quality agricultural land to retain its productive viability. Planning for agriculture seeks to facilitate non-agricultural related use and development that respect settlement patterns, landscape, amenity and environmental values and adjacent land uses in highly fragmented rural areas Planning for water seeks to encourage the improvement of water quality and environmental values of waterways	The Proposal has been located in proximity to existing and future energy infrastructure, reducing the fragmentation of valuable agricultural land. The Project Site is a small land holding, used for rural residential purposes, and is not considered high quality agriculture land. Water quality will be protected through the stormwater management strategies, including vegetated swales and retention ponds. Environmental values will be further protected through an Environmental Management Plan prepared during detailed design.
Clause 02.03-7 Economic development	Planning for economic growth seeks to enable the community to prosper from the transition to a low-carbon future by supporting the diversification of employment opportunities Planning for economic growth seeks to encourage alternative energy industries, including renewable energy in locations with convenient access to existing energy distribution infrastructure.	The Proposal represents an investment of approximately \$650-\$850 million, offering a significant economic boost to the local and wider economies. Through local employment opportunities, the Proposal will help stimulate economic development in the local region and help to support Benalla's transition to a low-carbon future.

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6.3 Planning policy framework

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

Table 10 sets out the relevant PPF Clause objectives and strategies. An assessment is provided against each objective.

Table 10 - Relevant PPF Objectives, Strategic Directions and Assessment

Clause	Objectives and Strategies	Assessment
Clause 12 – Environmental and Landscape Values		
Clause 12.01-1S Protection of biodiversity	Ensure that the impacts of land use and development on Victoria's biodiversity take cumulative impacts and habitat fragmentation into consideration	The Proposal has been sited in an area with minimal significant ecological values. An Ecological Assessment (refer to Section 7.1 and Appendix C) has been undertaken to guide the design, ensuring ecological values are carefully
Clause 12.01-2S Native vegetation management	Ensure that there is no net loss to biodiversity as a result of the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation	

Clause	Objectives and Strategies	Assessment
Clause 12.03-1S River and riparian corridors, waterways, lakes, wetlands and billabongs	Protect the environmental, cultural, and landscape values of all waterway systems as significant economic, environmental and cultural assets Sensitively design and site development to maintain and enhance the waterway system and the surrounding landscape setting, environmental assets, and ecological and hydrological systems This copied document to be made available for the sole purpose of enabling its consideration and review as part of a planning process under the Planning and Environment Act 1987. The document must not be used for any purpose which may breach any copyright	considered. Impacts on native vegetation have been minimised, leading to minimal native vegetation removal. The Project Site has minimal interaction with local waterways but forms part of a broader regional catchment, with approximately 885 ha of upstream catchment area draining toward the culverts beneath Winton-Glenrowan Road. As a result, portions of the site may be susceptible to overland flow flooding, particularly near the culverts, which represent a local low point within the catchment. Land in this area will be filled to achieve adequate floor levels. A Hydrology Assessment (refer to Section 7.4 and Appendix F) was undertaken to inform the design and identify appropriate stormwater management measures, including site grading and the provision of a water retention basin.
Clause 13 – Environmental Risks and Amenities		
Clause 13.02-1S Bushfire planning	Identify bushfire hazards and undertake appropriate risk assessment by applying the best available science to identify vegetation, topographic and climatic conditions that create a bushfire hazard. Consulting with emergency management agencies and the relevant fire authority early in the process to receive their recommendations and implement appropriate bushfire protection measures	The Proposal has been strategically located near existing energy generation and transmission infrastructure to minimise potential land use conflicts where possible. This application is accompanied by various technical assessments, including assessments of fire hazard and risk, hydrology, and noise (refer to Section 7). These assessments have concluded that the Proposal has minimal risks and meets relevant standards, including noise standards.
Clause 13.03-1S Floodplain management	Avoid intensifying the impact of flooding through the inappropriately located use and development	
Clause 13.05-1S Noise Management	Ensure that development is not prejudiced, and community amenity and human health is not adversely impacted by noise emissions. Minimise the impact on human health from noise exposure to occupants of sensitive land uses (residential use, childcare centre, school, education centre, residential aged care centre or hospital) near noise emission sources through suitable building siting and design (including orientation and internal layout), urban design and land use separation techniques as appropriate to the land use functions and character of the area.	
Clause 13.07-1S Land use compatibility	Ensure that the use or development of land is compatible with adjoining and nearby land uses Avoid or otherwise minimise adverse off-site impacts from commercial, industrial and other uses through land use separation, siting, building design and operational measures.	

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Clause	Objectives and Strategies	Assessment
Clause 14 – Natural resource management		
Clause 14.01-1S Protection of Agricultural land	Avoid permanent removal of productive agricultural land from the state's agricultural base without consideration of the economic importance of the land for the agricultural production and processing sectors.	The Proposal comprises the use of agricultural land (FZ) that is currently used for rural residential purposes and not high-intensity agricultural production. The Project Site is not considered to be high-quality or recognised as such in the planning scheme. The lot is a small agricultural lot containing a dwelling, existing transmission lines, and is surrounded by energy infrastructure.
Clause 15 – Built environment and heritage		
Clause 15.01-6S Design for rural areas	Ensure that the siting, scale and appearance of development protect and enhance rural character Protect the visual amenity of valued rural landscapes and character areas along township approaches and sensitive tourist routes by ensuring new development is sympathetically located Site and design development to minimise visual impacts on surrounding natural scenery and landscape including, but not limited to, hills, waterways, lakes and wetlands.	The Project Site is situated near existing and planned renewable energy generation and transmission infrastructure, which are already prominent non-natural features within the landscape. The Proposal has been designed to utilise existing screening vegetation located on its northern boundary and benefits from being screened by existing infrastructure in the area.
Clause 15.01-6L Rural Design	Encourage the use of suitable materials. Encourage siting and design that reduces the visual impact of the building on the landscape.	BESS units and ancillary buildings are low-scale and will use muted colours to blend in with the existing environment. Complementing the existing screening vegetation, there will be additional plantings on the northern and part of the north-western boundaries, meaning that over time, the Proposal will blend into the landscape.
Clause 15.03-2S Aboriginal cultural heritage	Provide for the protection and conservation of pre-contact and post-contact Aboriginal cultural heritage places Ensure that permit approvals align with the recommendations of any relevant CHMP approved under the <i>Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006</i> .	The Proposal will not impact any Aboriginal cultural heritage values.
Clause 17 – Economic Development		
Clause 17.01-1S Diversified economy	Protect and strengthen existing and planned employment areas and plan for new employment areas Facilitate growth in a range of employment sectors based on the emerging and existing strengths of each region.	The Proposal will help contribute to the expansion of an emerging employment sector, fostering economic growth and diversification for the rural communities of Benalla.
Clause 17.01-1R Diversified Economy – Hume	Encourage appropriate new and developing forms of industry, agriculture, tourism and alternative energy production.	
Clause 19 – Infrastructure		
Clause 19.01-1S Energy supply	Support the development of energy generation, storage, transmission, and distribution infrastructure to transition to a low-carbon economy Develop appropriate infrastructure to meet community demand for energy services	The Proposal strongly aligns with Clause 19.01-1S by providing energy storage that supports the transition to a low-carbon economy.

Clause	Objectives and Strategies	Assessment
	Ensure energy generation, storage, transmission and distribution infrastructure and projects are resilient to the impacts of climate change Support energy infrastructure projects in locations that minimise land use conflicts and that take advantage of existing resources and infrastructure networks Facilitate energy infrastructure projects that help diversify local economies and improve sustainability and social outcomes.	It promotes the development of energy infrastructure in a suitable location near existing renewable energy generation assets, and within a designated Renewable Energy Zone. Additionally, it contributes to renewable energy adoption, reduces greenhouse gas emissions, enhances sustainability, supports social outcomes, diversifies the local economy, and strengthens regional resilience.
Clause 19.01-2S Renewable energy	Facilitate renewable energy development in appropriate locations. Consider the economic, social and environmental benefits to the broader community of renewable energy generation while also considering the need to minimise the effects of a Project on the local community and environment.	
19.01-2R Renewable energy -Hume	Create renewable energy hubs that support co-location of industries to maximise resource use efficiency and minimise waste generation.	

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6.4 Zones

The following zones apply to the Project Site.

6.4.1 Clause 35.07 – Farming Zone

The site is zoned Farming Zone – Schedule 1 (FZ) under the Benalla Planning Scheme (Figure 16).

The purpose of the Farming Zone is:

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

Clause 73.03 defines 'utility installation' as 'land used to transmit, distribute or store power.' As a result, the most appropriate definition of the proposed BESS is a 'utility installation'.

The Farming Zone tables 'utility installation' as a section 2 use, meaning a permit is required for the use of BESS.

Under Clause 35.07-4 a permit is required for building and works associated with a section 2 use.

A permit trigger under Clause 35.07-4 also applies to buildings and works within 5 m of any boundary. The proposed battery and associated infrastructure are located at least 15 m from any boundary; however, fencing, earthworks and access tracks will be located close to property boundaries. Therefore, a permit is required.

An additional permit trigger applies to earthworks that change the rate of flow or the discharge point of water across a property boundary under the Schedule to Clause 35.07.

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

Table 11 – Relevant Decision Guidelines under the FZ

Decision Guideline	Assessment
General issues - The Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework. - Any Regional Catchment Strategy and associated plan applying to the land. - The capability of the land to accommodate the proposed use or development, including the disposal of effluent. - How the use or development relates to sustainable land management. - Whether the site is suitable for the use or development and whether the Project is compatible with adjoining and nearby land uses. - How the use and development make use of existing infrastructure and services.	- The Proposal is appropriately located on land that is capable of accommodating the proposed use of a utility installation. - The Project Site is appropriate for the proposed use given the adjacency to the existing Glenrowan Terminal Station, limited number of sensitive receptors within 2 km, and lack of significant native vegetation removal needed to accommodate the Proposal.
Agricultural issues and the impacts from non-agricultural uses - Whether the use or development will support and enhance agricultural production. - Whether the use or development will adversely affect soil quality or permanently remove land from agricultural production. - The potential for the use or development to limit the operation and expansion of adjoining and nearby agricultural uses. - The capacity of the site to sustain agricultural use. - The agricultural qualities of the land, such as soil quality, access to water and existing rural infrastructure. - Any integrated land management plan prepared for the site. - Whether Rural worker accommodation is necessary having regard to: - The nature and scale of the agricultural use. - The accessibility to residential areas and existing accommodation, and the remoteness of the location. - The duration of the use of the land for Rural worker accommodation.	- The Proposal would result in the net loss of approximately 6.5 ha of low agricultural land within a broader 15-ha lot. Given the low agricultural potential of the land and its use as a rural residential property, the relatively small footprint of development, this loss of agricultural land is considered to be acceptable. - The Project Site is bounded by a transport corridor containing the Winton–Glenrowan Road and Hume Freeway, limiting its ability to be combined with nearby lots to form a larger agricultural holding. - The Proposal would not limit the operations of adjoining and nearby properties, most of which are already used for renewable energy generation.
Environmental issues - The impact of the Proposal on the natural physical features and resources of the area, in particular on soil and water quality. - The impact of the use or development on the flora and fauna on the site and its surrounds. - The need to protect and enhance the biodiversity of the area, including the retention of vegetation and faunal habitat and the need to revegetate land including riparian buffers along waterways, gullies, ridgelines, property boundaries and saline discharge and recharge area. - The location of on-site effluent disposal areas to minimise the impact of nutrient loads on waterways and native vegetation.	- The Proposal has been carefully designed to avoid the Grey Box Woodland and locate access points within natural clearing on the Winton–Glenrowan Road to minimise native vegetation removal. - Accompanying this application is an Ecological Assessment (section 7.1). This assessment concluded that the development footprint does not contain significant biodiversity values. The Proposal will not cause significant detriment to the onsite or nearby natural environment.
Design and siting issues The need to locate buildings in one area to avoid any adverse impacts on surrounding agricultural uses and to minimise the loss of productive agricultural land.	- The Proposal has been sited on land that has predominantly been used for rural residential land, minimising the loss of high-value agricultural land, and is co-located adjacent to existing renewable energy infrastructure. - The materials and finishes of the proposed BESS would not present a significant additional visual impact to the existing

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Decision Guideline	Assessment
- The impact of the siting, design, height, bulk, colours and materials to be used, on the natural environment, major roads, vistas and water features and the measures to be undertaken to minimise any adverse impacts. - The impact on the character and appearance of the area or features of architectural, historic or scientific significance or of natural scenic beauty or importance. - The location and design of existing and proposed infrastructure including roads, gas, water, drainage, telecommunications and sewerage facilities. - Whether the use and development will require traffic management measures. - The need to locate and design buildings used for accommodation to avoid or reduce noise and shadow flicker impacts from the operation of a wind energy facility if it is located within one kilometre from the nearest title boundary of land subject to: - A permit for a wind energy facility; or - An application for a permit for a wind energy facility; or - An incorporated document approving a wind energy facility; or - A proposed wind energy facility for which an action has been taken under section 8(1), 8(2), 8(3) or 8(4) of the Environment Effects Act 1978. - The need to locate and design buildings used for accommodation to avoid or reduce the impact from vehicular traffic, noise, blasting, dust and vibration from an existing or proposed extractive industry operation if it is located within 500 metres from the nearest title boundary of land on which a work authority has been applied for or granted under the <i>Mineral Resources (Sustainable Development) Act 1990</i>.	landscape. The BESS will be mostly not visible from major public viewpoints such as the Hume Freeway and will be further concealed by proposed vegetation screening. The Proposal takes advantage of existing infrastructure, being adjacent to the Glenrowan Terminal Station and Winton-Glenrowan Road. This copied document to be made available for the sole purpose of enabling its consideration and review as part of a planning process under the Planning and Environment Act 1987. The document must not be used for any purpose which may breach any copyright ADVERTISED PLAN

6.4.2 Clause 36.04 Transport Zone 3

The Winton-Glenrowan Road reserve is located within the Transport Zone 3 - Significant Municipal Road, under the Benalla Planning Scheme (refer to Figure 16), and it is proposed to construct access points / driveways within this road reserve to service the Proposal. The purpose of the TRZ3 is for the following:

- To implement the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.
- To provide for an integrated and sustainable transport system.
- To identify transport land use and land required for transport services and facilities.
- To provide for the use and development of land that complements, or is consistent with, the transport system or public land reservation.
- To ensure the efficient and safe use of transport infrastructure and land comprising the transport system.

The use of land for a road does not require a permit under Clause 62.01. Further, as the use is exempt under Clause 62.01 and is not a section 2 use, a planning permit is also not required to construct or carry out buildings and works associated with that use.

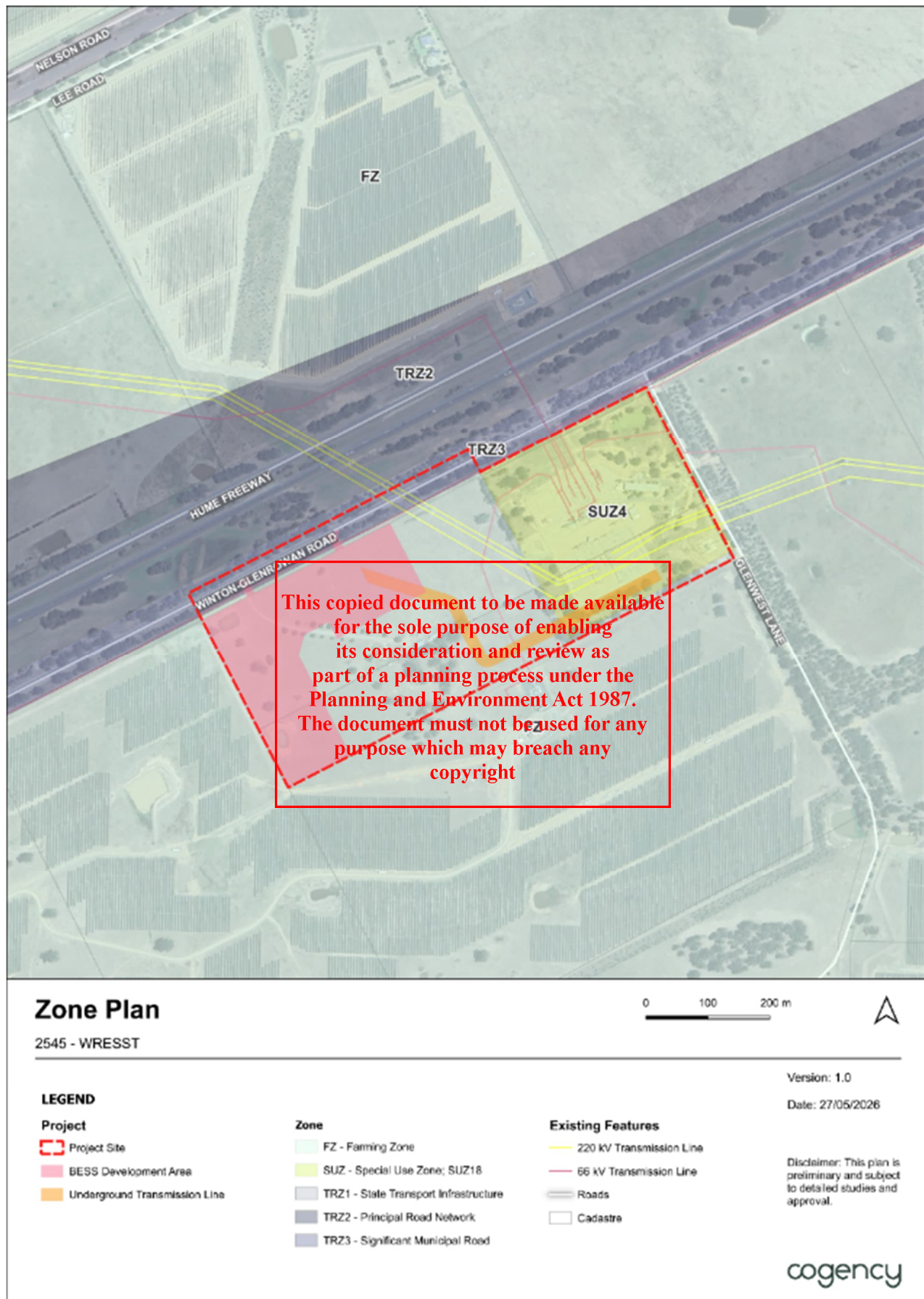


Figure 16 – Zone Plan

6.4.3 Clause 37.01 Special Use Zone – Schedule 4

The existing Glenrowan Terminal Station that is located within the Special Use Zone -Schedule 4 (SUZ4) under the Benalla Planning Scheme. Refer to Figure 16. It is proposed to use this land for electrical works to connect to the existing Terminal Station.

The purpose of the Special Use Zone is to recognise or provide for the use and development of land for specific purposes as identified in the schedule to the zone. Schedule 4 to the Special Use Zone is for the Glenrowan Terminal Station, with the purpose:

- To provide for the future use and development of the Glenrowan Terminal Station facility.
- To ensure that use and development of the land does not adversely impact upon the operation of the Terminal facility.

Pursuant to Section 1.0 (Table of uses) of Schedule 4 to Clause 37.01, 'utility installation' is a Section 1 – Permit not required use as the 'utility installation' is directly associated with the transmission of electricity. There are no Section 1 conditions that need to be met for a utility installation.

Pursuant to Clause 37.01-4 (Buildings and works), a permit is not required to construct a building or construct or carry out works with a Section 1 use.

6.5 Overlays

The following overlays apply to the Project Site.

6.5.1 Clause 42.02 Vegetation Protection Overlay – Schedule 3 (VPO3)

The Project Site falls within the Vegetation Protection Overlay – Schedule 3 under the Benalla Planning Scheme (refer to Figure 17). This overlay is designed to protect native vegetation and critical habitats for threatened species.

The Benalla region is one of the few remaining habitat areas for the Regent Honeyeater, which is listed as endangered under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* (FFG Act). It also provides an essential habitat for several other rare or endangered species, including the Squirrel Glider, Brush-tailed Phascogale (Tuan), Grey-crowned Babbler, Bush Stone-curlew, and Quoll. Additionally, vegetative corridors between the Warby Range and the Great Dividing Range serve as important habitat and migratory routes for indigenous fauna.

Purpose of the Vegetation Protection Overlay – Schedule 3

- To protect and prevent the removal of native vegetation in areas that support the Regent Honeyeater.

Under Clause 42.02-2, a permit is required to remove, destroy or lop any vegetation specified in a schedule to this overlay.

Any application must demonstrate:

- The species of native vegetation proposed for removal.
- Measures to minimise the removal of Mugga Ironbark, White Box, Yellow Box, and Blakely's Red Gum, as these species are vital to the survival of the Regent Honeyeater and other threatened wildlife.

The Project Site is currently used for rural residential living and has been predominantly cleared due to historical agricultural practices; therefore, features minimal native vegetation. Where native vegetation is present, it features mostly as mature Gum trees or as patches of native vegetation. The Proposal has been designed to avoid the major Grey Box patch near the dwelling.

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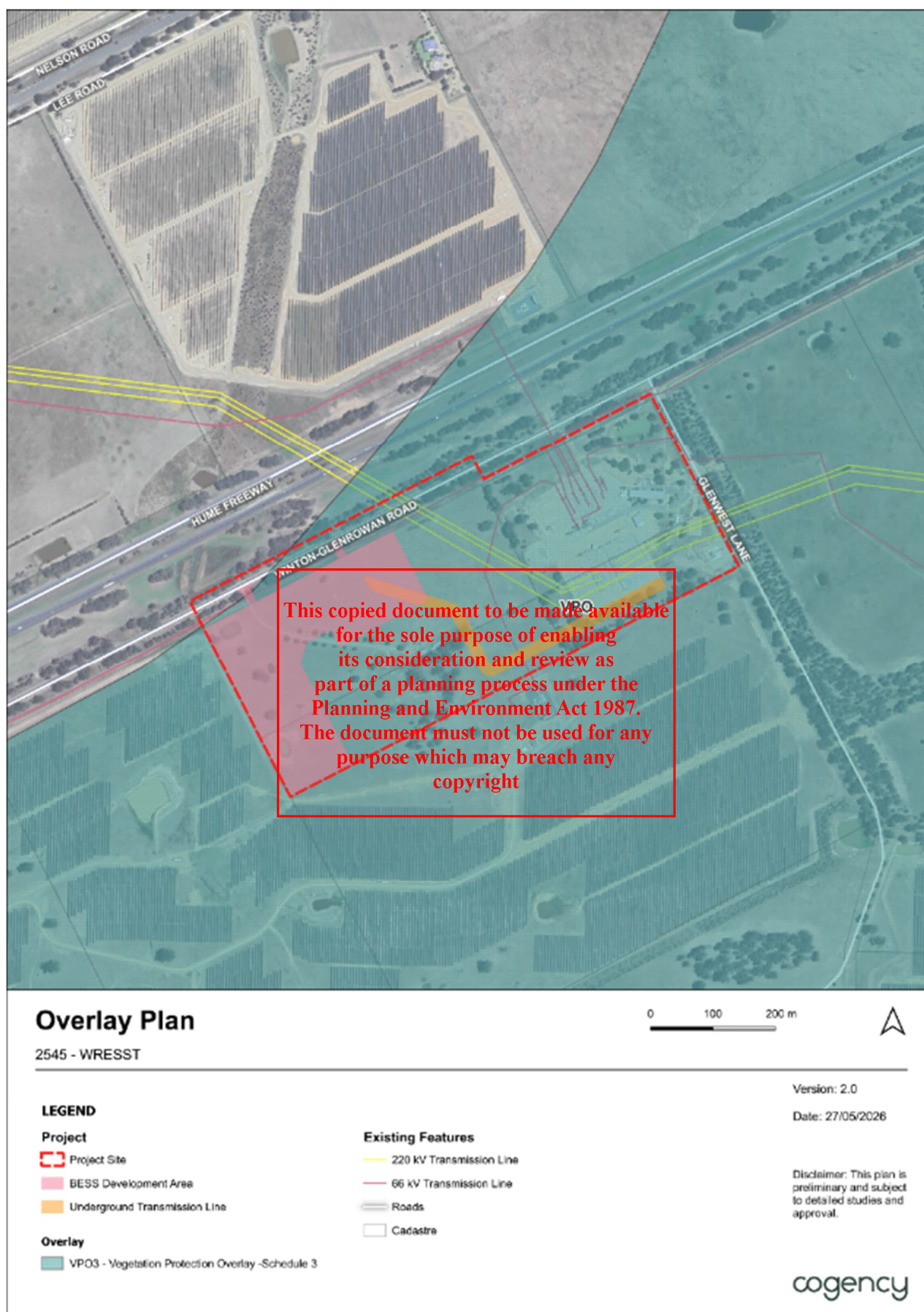


Figure 17 – Overlay Plan

The Proposal would include the removal of four trees to construct the BESS units and to provide access along Winton-Glenrowan Road. In addition to these trees, the Proposal will remove approximately 0.286 ha of native vegetation. This low amount of vegetation removal is a result of the early design efforts to avoid and minimise impacts on native vegetation wherever practicable, including locating key infrastructure within previously disturbed areas and refining the layout to retain existing vegetation where possible.

The ecological assessment concluded that the proposed works are unlikely to significantly impact any threatened flora species, threatened ecological communities, or threatened fauna species under the FFG Act and the EPBC Act. This includes the Regent Honeyeater, which is identified as a key species to be protected under the VPO. The assessment determined that the native vegetation and scattered trees within the Project Site do not provide suitable foraging, breeding, or habitat resources for the Regent Honeyeater and, as such, the Proposal is unlikely to adversely affect this species.

Please refer to section 7.1 and Appendix C for further information regarding the impacts on native vegetation and other ecological values.

6.6 Particular provisions

Particular provisions are planning controls that apply only to certain uses and development or to particular aspects of certain uses and development. The following Particular Provisions of the Benalla Planning Scheme are considered relevant to the Proposal. Their purposes, permit triggers, application requirements, referrals, and decision guidelines are considered in Table 12.

Table 12 – Particular Provisions

Particular Provision	Planning Permit Requirements	Assessment
Clause 52.05 Signs	A planning permit is required for the development of land for a business identification sign within Category 4 – sensitive areas (Clause 52.03-14). The total display area for each premise must not exceed three square metres.	A small business identification sign is proposed to be placed at the entrance to the site. The sign will be no more than 3 m ² and will provide for appropriate identification of the facility and directions for workers and visitors. The sign will not be illuminated. The details of the sign will be finalised at the detailed design stage. Other minor signs that do not require a permit may be installed on the site.
Clause 52.06 Car Parking	Car parking must be provided to the satisfaction of the responsible authority (Clause 52.06-6).	As there is no number of required spaces listed for 'utility installation' in table 1, the number of spaces needs to be to the satisfaction of the responsible authority. The Transport Impact Assessment (section 7.5) notes that sufficient car parking can be accommodated at the Project Site during both the construction period and operation of the Proposal. During construction, parking for staff will be provided across the broader site as required. Once operational, staff parking will be located near the Operations and Maintenance building at the site entrance, with four formal parking spaces, supplemented by informal parking areas if required, will adequately service the facility.
Clause 52.17 Native Vegetation	A planning permit is required to remove, destroy or lop native vegetation, including dead native vegetation (Clause 52.17-1). An application to remove, destroy or lop native vegetation must comply with the application requirements specified in the Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation	An Ecological Assessment has been undertaken, which identifies where native vegetation is located within the site (Section 7.1). The Proposal has demonstrated the three steps approach to 'avoid, minimise and offset' by avoiding the major patch of Grey Box Woodland and roadside vegetation, and minimising

Particular Provision	Planning Permit Requirements	Assessment
	(Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, 2017).	elsewhere. Offsets will be provided in accordance with the Guidelines. Native vegetation removal will comprise approximately 4 trees. In addition to these trees, the Proposal will remove approximately 0.286 ha of native vegetation, generating an offset requirement of 0.065 general habitat units.
Clause 53.22 Significant Economic Development	An application is exempt from the decision requirements of sections 64(1), (2) and (3) and the review rights of section 82(1) of the P&E Act (Clause 53.22-4).	This Proposal is classified as a Category 1 application under Clause 53.22 of the Benalla Planning Scheme. The conditions outlined in Table 1 (Clause 53.22-1) do not apply, as the Proposal is for the use and development of a utility installation. Under Table 2, the use of the land for a 'Utility installation other than a data centre' meets the specified conditions, as the proposed facility will have an installation capacity exceeding 1 MW. As such, the Proposal meets the requirements of Clause 53.22. Additionally, this application is made under Clause 53.22, exempting the application from the decision requirements of sections 64(1), (2) and (3) and the review rights of section 82(1) of the P&E Act (Clause 53.22-4).

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6.7 General provisions

Within the Planning Scheme, general provisions apply to the decision making process, decision guidelines, and referral and notice provisions that may apply to the Proposal. The following general provisions of the Benalla Planning Scheme are contained in the Proposal. Table 13 summarises the relevant referral requirements for the Proposal as set out in the general provisions.

Table 13 – General Provisions

General Provision	Planning Permit Requirements	Assessment
Clause 66.02-2 Native vegetation	The Secretary to the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (as constituted under Part 2 of the <i>Conservation, Forests and Lands Act 1987</i>) is a recommending referral authority for an application to remove, destroy or lop native vegetation in the Detailed Assessment Pathway as defined in the Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation (DEECA, 2025).	A Native Vegetation Removal Report was prepared for the Proposal, and it was determined that the proposed extent of native vegetation removal falls within the Intermediate Assessment Pathway. Under the native vegetation removal regulations, applications within the Intermediate Assessment Pathway are generally not required to be referred to DEECA.
Clause 66.02-4 Major electricity line or easement	The electricity transmission authority is a determining referral authority for an application to construct a building or construct or carry out works on land within 60 m of a major electricity transmission line (220 kV or more) or an electricity transmission easement.	This application will be referred to the electricity transmission authority. It is noted that the Proponent has and will continue to consult with AusNet (the electricity transmission authority) and VicGrid concerning the proposed connection to the Glenrowan Terminal Station. No works are proposed within the easement.
Clause 66.02-7 Industry, utility installation or warehouse	The Victorian WorkCover Authority is a determining referral authority to use the land for a utility installation if the fire protection quantity is exceeded under the Dangerous Goods (Storage and Handling) Regulation 2012.	This application will be referred to the Victorian WorkCover Authority.

7. Impact Assessment

7.1 Ecology

An Ecological Assessment was prepared by DM Ecological. The assessment was undertaken to determine the ecological constraints of the site and inform the design development process. A copy of the assessment dated 8 July 2026 is provided in Appendix C.

The assessment found vegetation within the Project Site generally comprises two broad categories:

- disturbed or modified native vegetation, including remnant woodland trees with a heavily grazed understorey and isolated patches of native bulrush vegetation; and
- non-native vegetation, including exotic pasture species, environmental weeds and planted trees associated with historical agricultural land use.

Seven native vegetation patches were assessed, including three within the main property of the Project Site and four within the adjacent Winton-Glenrowan Road reserve. A total of 42 native trees were assessed and mapped within the Project Site, including 32 large trees exceeding the relevant Ecological Vegetation Class (EVC) benchmark. Of these, 28 were identified as habitat trees containing hollows, fissures, cracks, or nests suitable for arboreal and avian fauna.

Outside the remnant woodland area, most native trees occurred as scattered paddock trees, including several dead standing trees (stags), which provide important habitat values. Non-native species, including Sugar Gum, Peppercorn, Desert Ash and Silky Oak were also identified across the Project Site.

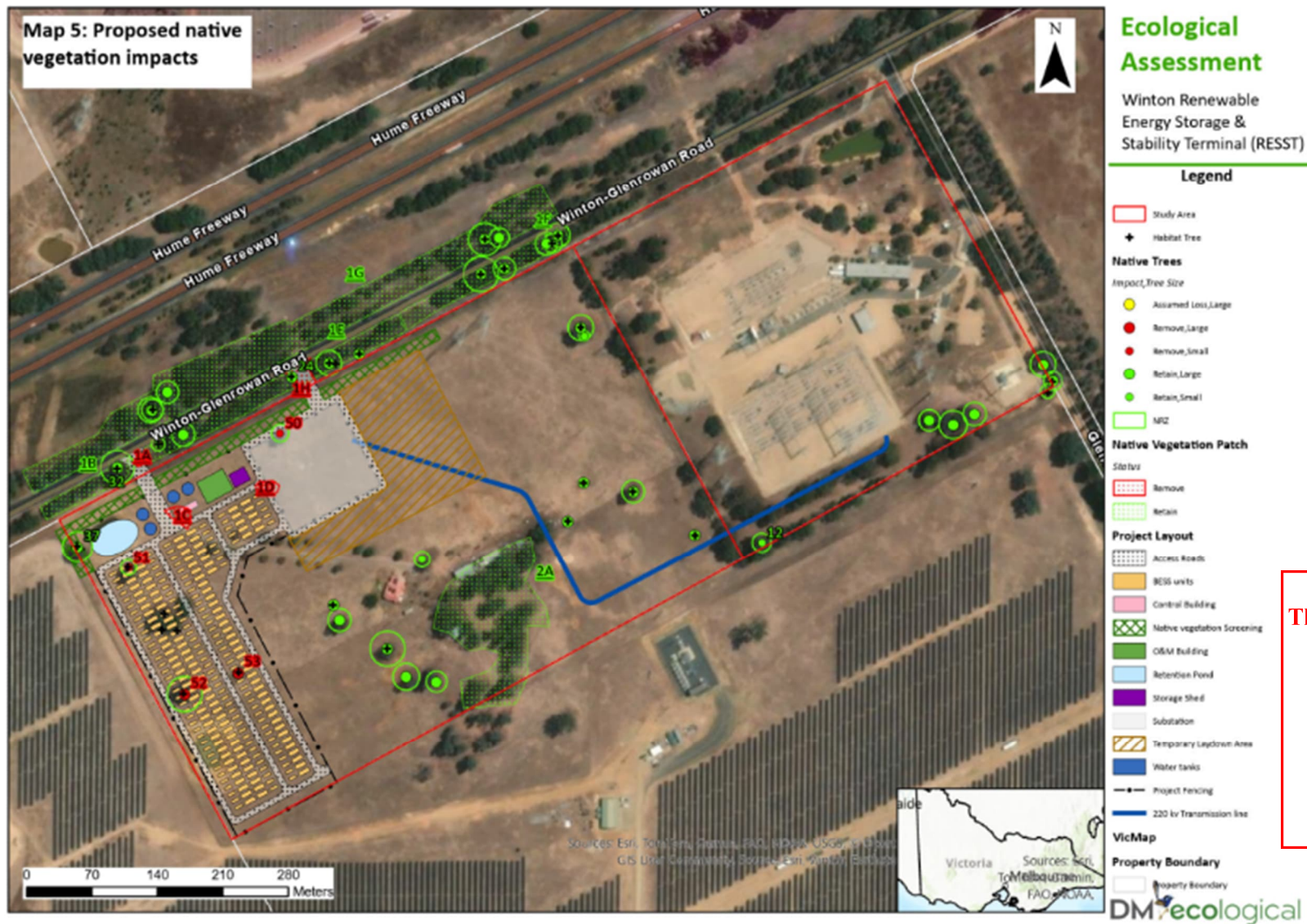
The main ecological values most likely to be affected by the Proposal are native vegetation, which will need to be removed to accommodate the proposed works. However, the Proposal has been carefully designed to avoid and minimise impacts wherever possible. Of the 42 assessed native trees, only four scattered trees are proposed to be removed. In addition, four small patches of native vegetation will be removed to facilitate site access and the construction of the BESS units and associated infrastructure. Overall, approximately 0.286 ha of native vegetation will be removed, generating an offset requirement of 0.065 general habitat units. Refer to Figure 18 for the proposed impacts to native vegetation as a result of the Proposal.

The ecological assessment concluded that the Proposal is unlikely to result in significant impacts on any threatened flora or fauna species, threatened ecological communities, or matters protected under the EPBC Act. While the Project Site may provide habitat associated with the FFG Act-listed Victorian Temperate Woodland Bird Community, including species such as the Grey-crowned Babbler, the extent of proposed vegetation removal is minor and is not expected to result in significant ecological impacts.

The assessment also considered the Regent Honeyeater, a key species identified for protection under the VPO3 and determined that the native vegetation and scattered trees within the Project Site do not provide suitable foraging, breeding, or habitat resources for the species. Accordingly, the Proposal is unlikely to adversely affect the Regent Honeyeater or its habitat. Nevertheless, it is recommended that the Proponent consult with DEECA Hume Region to confirm whether approval is required under the FFG Act for the proposed vegetation removal in the road reserve.

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Figure 18 – Proposed native vegetation impacts (Ecological Assessment, DM Ecological)

Impact mitigation

To further minimise impacts to native vegetation, the Ecological Assessment recommends a number of avoidance and minimisation strategies, including:

- Continue to avoid and minimise impacts to native vegetation through detailed siting and design of the WRESST and cable route.
- Confine all construction activities, including stockpiles, laydown areas, access tracks and parking, to the approved construction footprint.
- Protect retained native vegetation and habitat areas through fencing, signage and clearly identified no-go zones.
- Prefer pruning or lopping over tree removal where feasible, in accordance with AS 4373-2007
- Undertake vegetation removal, where practicable, outside key breeding seasons for woodland bird species and retain habitat hollows wherever possible.
- Complete pre-clearing ecological surveys and fauna salvage, where required, under the supervision of a suitably qualified ecologist or zoologist.
- Reuse removed logs and timber on-site or within nearby shelterbelts to provide ongoing fauna habitat.
- Ensure all contractors are inducted on environmental requirements and ecological protection measures prior to construction.
- Maintain Tree Protection Zones (TPZs) around retained trees and avoid construction encroachment within these areas unless approved by a qualified arborist.
- Implement best practice erosion control and pollution control measures in accordance with EPA guidelines.
- Use indigenous, locally sourced species for any landscape or rehabilitation planting.
- Where large trees are removed, investigate opportunities for local agencies to repurpose logs or root balls for habitat enhancement purposes which may have any

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The Proposal implements these recommendations through careful design that avoids the majority of native vegetation present within the Project Site. The remaining recommendations will be implemented during construction and operation, where relevant and practicable through a proposed Construction Management Plan. The flora and fauna report concluded that the proposed works are unlikely to significantly impact any threatened flora species, threatened ecological communities or threatened fauna species.

7.2 Aboriginal cultural heritage

A Cultural Heritage Assessment suitable for lodgement has been prepared by Niche Consulting Pty Ltd to support the development of the Proposal. A copy of the assessment dated 29 May 2026 is provided at Appendix D

The initial desktop assessment identified that within a 3 km buffer of the site, 28 registered Aboriginal Places have been recorded. The closest registered Aboriginal Place is VAHR 8125-0457 (Glenrowan West 3), a scarred tree located approximately 900 m south of the study area. The assessment found no previously recorded Aboriginal Places within the Project Site.

Additionally, the desktop assessment found that the Project is considered to have a low likelihood of impacting identified Aboriginal cultural heritage values, given the absence of registered Aboriginal Places and mapped areas of cultural heritage sensitivity within the Project Site, together with the separation distance to the nearest recorded Aboriginal Place.

A site inspection of the study area was undertaken by Niche on 13 March 2026. No areas of high Aboriginal archaeological potential were identified during the inspection. An elevated area within the central portion of

the Project Site (but outside the Development Area) was assessed as having low to moderate archaeological potential for Aboriginal cultural heritage. Winton-Glenrowan Road reserve was also assessed as having moderate potential due to its proximity to remnant vegetation.

One potentially scarred tree was identified during the site inspection, located at the northern end of the road reserve beyond the clearing associated with the high-voltage transmission line. The tree is situated outside the Development Area, and, with the implementation of an appropriate buffer, no proposed works will occur within its vicinity. The assessment concluded that the tree does not meet the criteria required for classification as an Aboriginal scarred tree. The location of the tree and associated buffer area is shown in Figure 19.



Figure 19 – Site Inspection Results (Niche)

As no registered Aboriginal Places are located within the Project Site, a Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) is not required. Additionally, the proposed works for the Proposal are not expected to harm any recorded Aboriginal Places, areas of cultural heritage sensitivity, or the potentially scarred tree identified during the assessment.

Impact mitigation

A mandatory CHMP is not required, as the study area does not contain areas of cultural heritage sensitivity. However, the Proponent has elected to prepare a voluntary CHMP to ensure that the cultural values and heritage of the Traditional Custodians are appropriately recognised, respected, and protected throughout the development process. The CHMP will be prepared by the appointed cultural heritage consultant, Niche, in consultation with the YYNAC.

7.3 Noise

A Noise Impact Assessment has been prepared by SLR Consulting Pty Ltd. A copy of the assessment dated 1 June 2026 is provided at Appendix E.

Key considerations for the Noise Impact Assessment include:

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

The assessment identified 13 sensitive receptors within approximately 3 km of the Development Area and concluded that:

- Construction noise impacts are controlled by limiting works to day periods and a combination of training/equipment maintenance and community engagement.
- Operational noise from the Proposal is predicted to comply with the applicable EPA Noise Protocol at all sensitive receivers for all relevant time periods under 3 scenarios applied in the assessment.
- Cumulative noise was considered from the Proposal together with the existing industries in the vicinity of the Project Site. With the modelled operating fan duties, operational noise levels (with a 2 dB tonal adjustment factor applied) are expected to comply with the noise limits at all receivers throughout the Day, Evening, and Night periods.
- Low-frequency noise was assessed for the Proposal, which demonstrated that the risk of problematic low-frequency noise at the closest receivers is low.
- The noise impact to Winton Wetlands is also expected to be negligible.
- Compliance with the EPA Noise Protocol limits is expected to be achieved at all receivers with the modelled operational scenarios.
- All plant, equipment and design layout will be reviewed during the detailed design stage to ensure that compliance with the noise criteria, including cumulative noise, is maintained as the acoustic performance of the plant and layout is refined.

Overall, the Proposal is considered to meet relevant regulatory requirements and is not expected to result in unreasonable noise impacts on the surrounding area; as a result, no additional noise mitigation measures are required for the Proposal.

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Impact mitigation

During construction, potential noise impacts will be mitigated by restricting works to daytime hours, appropriate equipment selection and maintenance, workforce training, and ongoing community engagement. Once operational, no further impacts are anticipated on nearby sensitive receptors, meaning no further noise mitigation measures are proposed.

7.4 Hydrology and stormwater management

A Hydrology Assessment and Stormwater Management Strategy was prepared by Dalton Consulting Engineers. The assessment investigated the existing conditions of the Project Site, as well as post-development hydrology, informing the design of the Proposal and providing appropriate management strategies. A copy of the assessment dated 29 May 2026 is provided in Appendix F.

The assessment determined that the Project Site features varying topography, with higher elevations to the east and the proposed BESS infrastructure located within the lower-lying western portion of the site. Surface water runoff across the site ultimately drains toward the culverts beneath Winton-Glenrowan Road at the western extent of the study area.

The Project Site forms part of a broader regional catchment, with approximately 885 ha of upstream catchment area draining toward the existing culverts beneath Winton-Glenrowan Road. Based on site observations undertaken by DCE, the culvert structure comprises eight cells measuring approximately 1.2 m wide by 0.9 m high. A preliminary assessment of the culverts was undertaken to estimate their hydraulic capacity and assess the potential influence of upstream surface water flows on the proposed BESS development footprint.

The assessment identified that portions of the Project Site may be susceptible to overland flow flooding, particularly in the vicinity of the culverts, which represent a local low point within the catchment. As such, site grading will form a critical component of the stormwater management strategy, ensuring the BESS infrastructure is protected from external overland flows and that runoff generated within the Development Area is appropriately managed.

Overall, the assessment demonstrates that the proposed utility installation can be developed with minimal impact on existing hydrological conditions and downstream environments, including the Winton Wetlands. The proposed stormwater management framework is also capable of meeting relevant Council, CMA, and CFA requirements, while incorporating green engineering measures to improve downstream water quality outcomes.

Impact mitigation

The following measures will be implemented to manage stormwater runoff, mitigate potential flooding impacts, and protect key electrical infrastructure:

- Construction of an on-site retention pond, which will also support firewater management and containment.
- Grading of the BESS development footprint toward two internal swales that will direct runoff to the retention pond located in the north-western corner of the study area.
- Installation of bypass swales around the BESS facility to divert external overland flows away from critical infrastructure.
- Placement of key infrastructure above the 1% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) flood level, including an appropriate freeboard allowance, to be confirmed through detailed flood modelling during subsequent design stages.

Collectively, these mitigation measures will ensure the Proposal can effectively manage stormwater and flood risks while maintaining the safety and resilience of the proposed infrastructure.

7.5 Transport

A Transport Impact Assessment has been prepared by onemilegrid. The impact assessment outlines existing traffic conditions, proposed traffic generation, and the impact of the Proposal on the road network. A copy of the assessment dated 29 May 2026 is provided at Appendix G.

Two access points are proposed along Winton-Glenrowan Road. The existing access point / driveway at the north-western corner of the site will be upgraded to accommodate construction vehicles and will serve as the primary site access. A secondary access point will also be established approximately 155 m east of the primary access. Both access points will be utilised during construction, with the secondary access retained for emergency vehicle use only during operation.

Given the low level of traffic generation, the previous use of Winton-Glenrowan Road for construction traffic, and the short duration of works, additional intersection upgrades are not considered necessary. The assessment confirms that safe turning movements can be accommodated at both access points without significant road upgrades.

Advanced warning signage is recommended at both access points during construction to assist vehicle movements and notify motorists of temporary traffic changes. A detailed Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) will also be prepared to outline traffic management and mitigation measures during construction.

Overall, the Proposal is expected to generate only short-term increases in traffic during peak construction periods, with minimal impact on the safety and operation of the local road network. Operational traffic associated with the Proposal is anticipated to be negligible.

Impact mitigation

The Transport Impact Assessment recommends the following traffic impact mitigation measures to be implemented as part of the CTMP:

- All construction works will be advised by standard traffic management signage as appropriate, including reduced speed limits and advanced warning signage along Winton-Glenrowan Road
- During construction hours, vehicle access can be assisted by traffic controller supervision, including heavy vehicle access as required; and
- Temporary fencing with shade cloth will be installed and is to be located around the perimeter of the construction zone to protect the work zone.

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7.6 Landscape and visual

A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has been prepared by Peter Haack Consulting. A copy of the LVIA dated 29 May 2026 is provided in Appendix H.

Key considerations for the LVIA include:

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

The LVIA identified 15 sensitive viewpoints within 1 km of the Development Area, with 8 requiring detailed assessment and 7 excluded due to limited visibility from intervening topography. Refer to Figure 20.



Figure 20 - Assessed viewpoint locations (LVIA, Peter Haack Consulting)

The assessment found the landscape has a high absorptive capacity due to the Proposal's limited vertical scale, relatively flat to gently undulating topography, and existing vegetation, which effectively screens views from most sensitive locations.

While the Proposal will introduce some change to the immediate landscape character, it remains consistent with the surrounding renewable energy infrastructure and the character anticipated under the existing zoning. No viewpoints were assessed as having a high visual impact. The highest impacts identified were low-moderate from the southbound Hume Freeway (Viewpoint 1) and moderate from Winton-Glenrowan Road (Viewpoints 8 and 8A).

Aside from these two viewpoints, visual impacts are expected to be very low or negligible due to existing vegetation screening and the co-location of the Proposal near existing infrastructure, which limits cumulative visual impacts. Additional mitigation measures are proposed to further reduce visual effects.

Refer to Figure 21 and Figure 22, which illustrate the view from public viewpoints, VP2 and VP8A, five years post construction, with the proposed vegetation screen fully grown.

Impact mitigation

The LVIA proposes the following amelioration strategies:

- Perimeter screen planting (with a minimum 5 m width) along the northern boundary and a small portion of the western boundary of the site
- Use recessive surface colours for BESS Units and associated infrastructure

A landscape amelioration strategy is included in the LVIA. A condition of the permit would require a landscape plan to be prepared and approved.



Figure 21 - Photomontage of VP2 view west from Bowers Road to the south-west of the residence to the Project Site, 5 years post landscape amelioration (LVIA, Peter Haack)

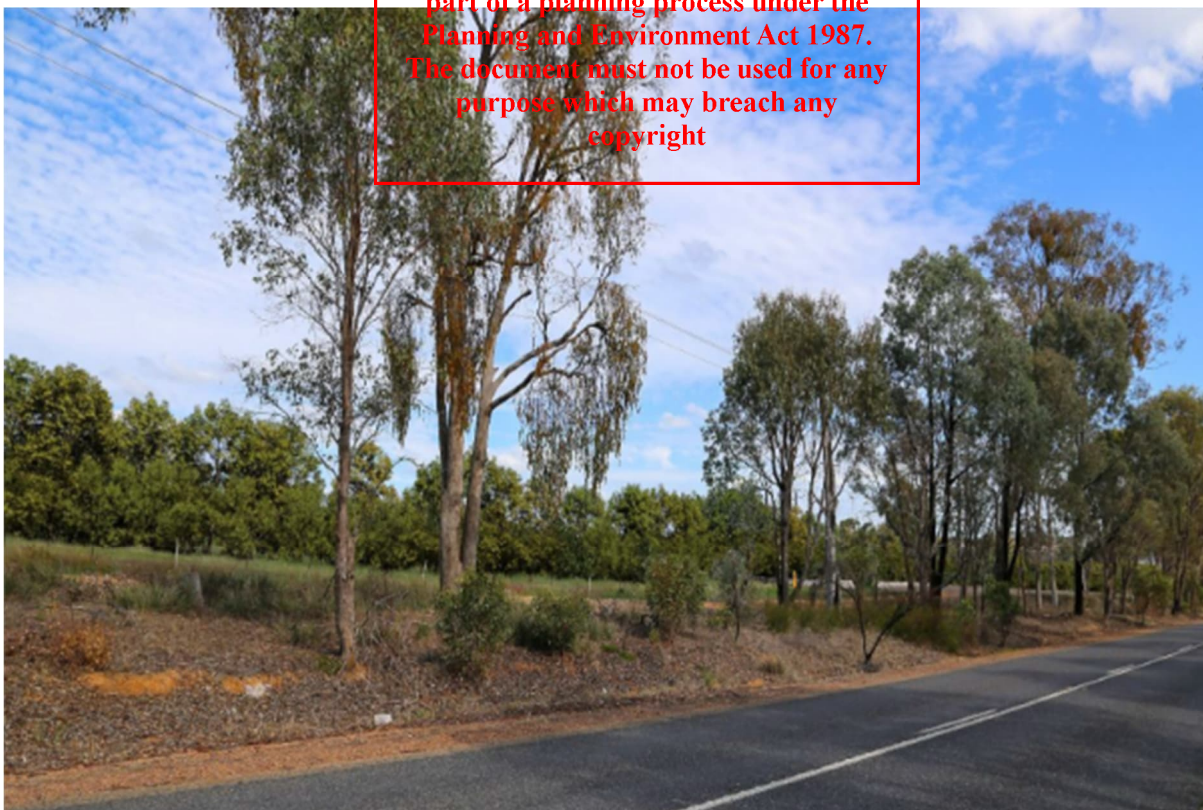


Figure 22 – Photomontage of VP8A south-west of Winton-Glenrowan Road to the Project, 5 years post landscape amelioration (LVIA, Peter Haack)

7.7 Fire hazard and bushfire risk

A Fire Safety Study was prepared by NJM Design. A copy of the assessment dated 2 June 2026 is provided at Appendix I.

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

In accordance with the CFA Guidelines, the following infrastructure will be provided:

- Fire hydrant system (AS2419 – open yard protection requirements), strategically located at several locations around the BESS units.
- Provision of a dedicated firefighting water supply in a series of permanent water tanks, with a total storage capacity of no less than 288 kL
- Two access points, including emergency access and internal access tracks that can be used by firefighting vehicles
- Retention basins to contain contaminated firefighting water
- Perimeter firebreak of 10 m around the property boundary.
- Perimeter access roads of at least 5 m around and throughout the site

The scope of the assessment was to:

- Provide a Fire Safety Study consistent with fire risk assessment techniques for hazardous industry planning
- Quantify the severity of fires, including heat radiation levels at various distances from BESS and transformer fires and durations of the fire
- Put the risks into context via comparison with other accepted risks, such as those from existing energy infrastructure
- Ensure compliance of the Proposal with Country Fire Authority (CFA) requirements to address fire risk within renewable energy and energy storage facilities, and any other applicable standards
- Recommend mitigation measures if required.

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The assessment of the Proposal and associated fire risks concluded that:

- Fire spread to adjacent properties is not anticipated, as separation distances exceed the minimum requirements prescribed by the relevant Australian Standards.
- While fire spread between equipment is generally unlikely, there remains a potential risk of thermal runaway propagation between BESS units under windy conditions due to elevated heat flux and temperatures.
- The location of buildings will require further review to ensure compliance with the National Construction Code (NCC) Deemed-to-Satisfy (DtS) provisions.
- The proposed layout provides adequate separation between BESS infrastructure and surrounding vegetation, removing the need for bushfire-specific construction measures.
- Appropriate mitigation measures have been identified to reduce the risk of fire spread between allotments and equipment to an acceptable level and to support effective Fire Brigade intervention procedures.
- Based on the fire spread assessment, the consequences of a fire event on the continuous operation of the BESS are considered to be “Minor”.

Overall, the assessment demonstrates that the Proposal can achieve an acceptable level of fire safety risk management through appropriate design, separation distances, and mitigation measures. Subject to detailed design review and compliance with relevant Australian Standards and NCC requirements, the Proposal is not expected to result in significant off-site fire impacts and can be safely operated with manageable residual risk.

Once a BESS supplier has been selected, an updated Risk Management Plan will be provided to confirm these conclusions before construction.

Impact mitigation

As part of the Fire Safety Study, NJM recommend the following requirements be implemented to minimise the risk of fire and to satisfy the objectives of the relevant authorities:

- The BESS units must have the following safety measures (not limited to):
 - Provision of a BMS (Battery management system).
 - Smoke and heat detection.
 - Gas detection.
 - Fire alarm.
 - Door alarms.
 - Electrical safety measures (e.g., ground faults, high voltage, communication faults, etc.).
 - Automatic and manual stops that shut down the battery.
 - Temperature controls.
 - Deflagration and ventilation systems/overpressure vents.
- A firebreak of at least 10 m wide must be designed and maintained.
- A 5 m perimeter road within the perimeter fire break must be maintained
- The clearances between BESS units must not be less than 3 m.
- Develop a vegetation management plan
- Develop a Fire Management Plan as required by the CFA Design Guidelines
- Develop a containment and management plan for contaminated firewater runoff from the BESS for the facility.
- Access to the site to include full perimeter access to the BESS area, including appropriate widths and load limits from two separate access points.
- Where transformers are oil-insulated, transformers shall use an FR3 (or similar) Ester oil where practical in lieu of the normal mineral oil.
- All the equipment within the proposed layout has compliant distances between them in accordance with the Australian Standard AS 2067.
- Each vehicle and heavy equipment must carry at least a 9 L water stored-pressure fire extinguisher with a minimum rating of 3A, or other firefighting equipment as a minimum when on-site during the Fire Danger Period.
- The firefighting water will be sufficient for 4 hours supply based on at least 2 hydrants; hence the water storage must be at least 288 kL.
- Signage must be provided to indicate the location of the water tanks.

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The Proposal has incorporated, or will incorporate, the measures outlined above. The current design includes 5 m wide perimeter access roads, a 10 m firebreak, secondary access arrangements, an additional emergency access gate, dedicated water tanks, and a retention pond designed to contain and manage firewater runoff.

It is also anticipated that any planning permit issued for the Proposal would include conditions requiring the preparation of a Fire Management Plan prior to the commencement of operations, together with other fire safety and emergency management requirements.

8. Conclusion

This Planning Application demonstrates that the proposed WRESST application, for use and development of land for a Utility installation, is an appropriate use and form of development for the Project Site.

The 400 MW/1600 MWh BESS is a key energy infrastructure development for the Benalla Rural City Council and the wider Hume region. The Proposal is considered to be strongly aligned with the stated purposes of the applicable zones and overlays, as well as key state, regional, and local policies within the Benalla Planning Scheme. It also implements a range of Federal and Victorian policy objectives in relation to renewable energy, storage, and emissions reduction. The Proposal will provide critical electricity grid services, significant regional economic benefits, and a major contribution to Victoria's energy storage targets.

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

- The Proposal provides significant dispatchable energy storage, supporting Victoria's energy storage targets, and local existing and future energy generation projects and energy intensive users
- The Proposal is strategically located adjacent to Glenrowan Terminal Station and the existing 220 kV transmission line.
- The Proposal is located within a highly modified landscape character, currently used for rural residential purposes
- The Proposal has been sited such that it is a sufficient distance from residential land and nearby sensitive receptors
- The Development Area has been designed and sited to avoid impacts on biodiversity, cultural heritage and will result in limited native vegetation removal
- The Proposal will have significant local and regional economic benefits, including direct investment of approximately \$650-850 million, and local economic benefits through a proposed community benefit sharing scheme
- Creation of approximately 100-150 construction jobs and 4-6 FTE operational jobs
- The Proposal addresses fire safety requirements within the CFA Guidelines and flooding and stormwater run-off management
- Noise modelling demonstrates that the Proposal is capable of meeting EPA Noise Protocol obligations upon operation.

The application is supported by technical assessments that follow detailed investigations. Based on these technical assessments, the Proposal is not expected to generate any unreasonable or significant environmental or community impacts.

The Proponent has also undertaken a comprehensive community and stakeholder engagement program, appropriately informing nearby residents and the wider Winton, Glenrowan and Benalla communities of the Proposal. Consistent and clear information has been provided to stakeholders and community members about the details of the Proposal, any potential impacts, and how to get involved. Further engagement will occur following lodgement of this planning application.

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

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Appendices

Appendix A	Certificate of Titles
Appendix B	Application Plans
Appendix C	Ecological Assessment
Appendix D	Cultural Heritage Assessment
Appendix E	Noise Impact Assessment
Appendix F	Hydrology Assessment and Stormwater Management Strategy
Appendix G	Transport Impact Assessment
Appendix H	Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
Appendix I	Fire Safety Study

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Appendix A Certificate of Titles

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Appendix B Application Plans

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Appendix C Ecological Assessment

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Appendix D Cultural Heritage Assessment

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Appendix E Noise Impact Assessment

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Appendix F Hydrology Assessment and Stormwater Management Strategy

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Appendix G Transport Impact Assessment

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Appendix H Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

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Appendix I Fire Safety Study

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