



Mr Gerrit Prent
Senior Development Planner
Equis
Ground Floor
36 Esplanade Brighton
Melbourne VIC 3186

14 March 2024

Dear Gerrit,

Calala BESS EIS Department of Primary Industries Agriculture

I refer to the EIS which has been prepared by Meccone and for which I prepared the Agricultural Land Capability Study and Land Use Risk Assessment last year and to the letter from Department of Primary Industries (DPI) Agriculture dated 13 December 2023. I also refer to our recent discussions about this matter.

I note that DPI Agriculture have raised some concerns about the impact of the BESS and the adjoining Tamworth Agricultural Institute (TAI) and vice versa. The Institute is the principal research institute for the cropping zone of northern inland NSW. It has an area of 332 ha of land and carries out research into cereal and pulse cropping, pasture grazing, weed management and soil research amongst others.

The Institute land was taken into consideration when I prepared both Studies but as it was open grazing and cropping land, I did not consider that it had a major impact on the BESS and vice versa. This is mainly due to the fact that I did not observe any dwellings or other occupied buildings on the land close to the proposed BESS and the LUCRA particularly focuses on the impact of dwelling houses. However, I note the issues raised by the DPI and have addressed them below.

I refer you to map 2 of the Agricultural Land Capability Report and also to the EQUIS site plan which shows the proposed BESS overlaid with the aerial image. This shows that the majority of the BESS will be adjacent to the cropping area and a small part near the grazing land adjacent to Calala Creek. I have spoken to the Manager of the Institute, and he has advised me as follows in regard to the use of the land near the proposed BESS:

1. There are several small research plots with areas ranging from 1,500m² to 1 ha which adjoin the subject land.
2. There are a number of structures as follows:
 - (a) nine greenhouses in three locations. The closest one is approximately 200m from the boundary, four are approximately 275m and the other four are approximately 300m.
 - (b) One machinery shed and some shipping containers approximately 400m from the boundary.

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- (c) One shearing shed approximately 430m from the boundary.
3. These produce dust when they are ploughed and sowed with grain, however this only takes a maximum of one half of one day.
 4. The prevailing wind is from the North West and any dust will be blown away from the subject land.
 5. The staff can be in the field carrying out weeding or measurements for as short as 10-15 minutes and as long as one day. However this is not every day.
 6. The staff are in the paddocks five times longer than a commercial farm due to the research nature of the cropping systems.
 7. Sheep are grazed in the land on the north and south of Calala Creek as well as the paddocks fronting Calala Lane.

The DPI raises the following issues:

1. Noise.
2. Impacts on TAI Activities.
3. Hazards Impact on TAI

I note advice has been received from Marshall Day and Sherpa Consulting which addresses the Acoustic and Hazard impact issues. I have taken this advice into account in making the following comments.

1. Noise

It is noted that the Noise and Vibration Assessment prepared by Marshall Day Acoustics Pty Ltd considered the impact on residential land uses and identified several receptors to the north, west and south but did not specifically address the impacts on the operations of the TAI. In particular, it has been requested that the potential impacts of noise from the BESS on livestock (sheep) grazing in adjacent paddocks and on researchers undertaking field work.

I have reviewed the Technical Memo prepared by Marshall Day Acoustics Pty Ltd dated 7 February which has considered this impact. The noise emitted by the BESS is not expected to impact on the livestock or the researchers working in the paddocks.

I have also reviewed the LUCRA and note that it has not addressed the impact on the TAI in the risk ranking. I have considered this and do not see any need to revise the risk ranking, having regard to the advice from Marshall Day Acoustics.

2. Impacts on Tamworth Agriculture Institute Activities

The DPI have stated that the LUCRA has not addressed the potential impact of DPI activities on the BESS, noting that dust is generated from agricultural machinery. I also note that livestock can breach fences and that the current fence is a standard rural fence which has been breached by cattle in the past.

I have noted the advice from the Manager of the TAI as well as consulting the Wind Roses prepared by the Bureau of Meteorology for the Tamworth Airport which is the closest weather station, and this confirms that the dominant wind direction is from the north west and west with some wind from the south east but mostly in the morning.

I have also noted that the cropping beds are very small and as such any machinery used to plough or plant crops will not generate dust for a long time and as such it is not anticipated that if any dust does cross the boundary, it will not be there for any length of time.

You have advised me that the batteries are enclosed, and that dust would not cause any problems with the ongoing operations of the BESS.

I have noted that the TAI was not considered in the LUCRA and the risk ranking. However, I consider that there is no need to revise this risk ranking due to the advice about the batteries being enclosed as well as the operational aspects of the cropping land which is adjacent to the BESS.

3. Hazards Impact

The DPI have noted that the potential hazards that may arise from the BESS have not been considered for impact on the Institute. The hazards identified are fire, and exposure to Electro Magnetic Fields (EMF).

I have reviewed the Hazards Report prepared by Sherpa Consulting Pty Ltd and note that it does not identify any hazards impacting on the Tamworth Agricultural Institute. I have also reviewed the response from Sherpa Consulting in relation to the hazards from a fire and resultant toxic gas dispersion and this found that it would not impact on the TAI land. Sherpa also considered the impacts of EMF exposure, and it was noted that exposure levels of EMF would not be exceeded at the boundary of the TAI land.

I note that the LUCRA did not address these impacts, however I do not consider that there is any need to revise the risk ranking due to the advice from the Hazards Report.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Yours Faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'I. W. Sinclair'.

Ian Sinclair MPIA (Life Fellow)
Principal Consultant



Mr Gerrit Prent
Senior Development Planner
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6 May 2024

Dear Gerrit,

Calala BESS EIS Revised Plans and Environmental Noise Assessment

I refer to the EIS which has been prepared by Meccone and for which I prepared the Agricultural Land Capability Study and Land Use Risk Assessment last year. I also refer to me letter of 14 March regarding the impact on the Tamworth Agricultural Institute and to your email dated 3 May 2024 about new equipment and a new Environmental Noise Assessment.

I have read the Environmental Noise Assessment which considered and modelled the noise generated from the proposed new equipment for the BESS. I note that the report concludes that the noise from the worst case scenarios, with the proposed noise wall in place, is predicted to comply with the relevant noise criteria.

I wish to advise you that having reviewed this report and its conclusions, my letter about the impact on the Tamworth Agricultural Institute dated 14 March 2024 and the Land Use Conflict Risk Assessment date July 2023 remain current and do not need to be revised.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Yours Faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "I. W. Sinclair".

Ian Sinclair MPIA (Life Fellow)
Principal Consultant