

Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure
Major Projects Portal

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Ebor BESS (SSD-85362210) Armidale Regional Council – EIS

Dear Cameron,

Thank you for your correspondence of 17 June 2026 and the opportunity to provide advice on the proposed Ebor Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD, the Department) collaborates with our stakeholders to protect and enhance the productive and sustainable use and resilience of agricultural resources and the environment.

The EIS has been reviewed. The proposed BESS will be located at 8511 Waterfall Way, at Ebor in the eastern extent of the Armidale Regional Local Government Area (LGA). The subject site, being Lot 2 DP749654, also includes Lot 7005 DP1117635 and Lot 7024 DP1117640, making up approximately 252ha of rural land zoned RU1 Primary Production, incorporating a 6.8ha development footprint. The site has traditionally been used for livestock grazing. The proposed BESS will have a storage capacity of up to 100MW/800MWh.

The subject site is mapped as Land and Soil Capability (LSC) Classes 3 and 4, the majority being LSC Class 3 with moderately high inherent soil fertility. There is also an area of Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land on the site. LSC Class 3 is the highest class of land in the LGA for agricultural production, making up less than 11.3% of all land.

The Land Use Conflict Risk Assessment (LUCRA), provided as part of the EIS, identifies several agriculture-related concerns. Thematically these are the loss of agricultural expansion opportunities, biosecurity, construction and operational risks to sensitive receivers, and decommissioning. A range of mitigations are proposed, some discussed below.

Biosecurity

The proposed biosecurity mitigations concern both biodiversity and agricultural risks. The EIS refers to the preparation of a Biosecurity Management Plan (BMP) using the Department's Guide, across the Construction and Operational Environmental Management Plans, which is supported.

Decommissioning

The EIS identifies the 25-year project as temporary, with impacts to soils, land capability and agricultural productivity deemed to be low. The Department's position for the removal of

underground infrastructure to a minimum depth of 500mm at decommissioning is reflected in the EIS. It is important that remediation allows the return of agricultural activities post-development and rehabilitation. The reinstatement of topsoil and vegetation at remediation will assist in retaining the inherent high production values of the site at the end of project life. This should not however apply solely to LSC Class 3 land, but all land with productive agricultural capability.

Dwelling eligibilities

The EIS proposes subdivision of Lot 2 DP749654 to create a ~1.9ha lot for the proposed substation with a right of way for access and maintenance. The provided options indicate retention of the residue of Lot 2 as an intact parcel without additional dwelling eligibilities, and this is supported.

Worker's accommodation options have been resolved in collaboration with UNE as opposed to a Temporary Workers Accommodation facility, which is supported.

Should you require clarification on any of the information contained in this response, please do not hesitate to contact me at landuse.ag@dpird.nsw.gov.au

Yours sincerely



Nita Scott

Agriculture and Biosecurity
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