



# Bannaby Battery Energy Storage System


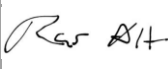

Scoping Report

BW ESS

19 December 2024

→ The Power of Commitment



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# Executive summary

## Introduction

BW ESS proposes to construct a 750-megawatt (MW) battery energy storage system (BESS) and associated infrastructure (the project). The project would be located at 365, 409 and 486 Hanworth Road, Bannaby in New South Wales (NSW) which is about 20 kilometres (km) east of Taralga (the project site).

The project site is located approximately 2.65 km northwest of the existing Transgrid Bannaby 500/330 kilovolt (kV) substation to facilitate connection to the NSW high voltage electricity transmission network.

As NSW seeks to utilise renewable energy sources, BW ESS's project would directly respond to the demand for increased renewable electricity supply across NSW, by storing excess renewable energy in times of surplus, and releasing this energy in times of high demand.

## The project site

The project site is comprised of lots previously used for farming and grazing and has been substantially cleared. The project site (including the transmission line easement) has a total area of approximately 60 hectares (ha) and is characterised by hilly grasslands, a number of farm dams, and planted trees along fence line boundaries. The project site also contains several farm buildings as part of Cross Station, an agricultural facility on the project site previously used for cattle grazing.

## Project overview

The project would have a capacity of 750 MW, with a 3,000 megawatt hour (MWh) output capacity over a four-hour storage duration. A 500 kilovolt (kV) overhead transmission line of about 3.1 km in length would connect the battery to the existing Transgrid Bannaby 500/330 kV substation to the southeast of the project site.

The construction works would involve:

- Clearing of remnant vegetation and earthworks
- Installation of concrete foundations and slabs to support battery modules
- Power conversion systems and transformer structures
- Delivery, installation and electrical fit-out of the battery modules
- Power conversion systems and transformers
- Installation of a 500 kV overhead transmission line from the BESS substation to the existing Transgrid Bannaby substation.

Once operational, the project would provide energy storage and energy exports as required, contributing to the stability of the NSW electricity transmission network. The project would create up to 150 jobs during the approximate 18-month construction period and provide approximately 10-15 jobs on site once operational.

## Strategic context

Traditionally, the major source of electricity generation in NSW has been large coal-fired power stations. Since 2012, three coal fired power stations have been decommissioned including most recently Liddell power station in 2023. The four remaining power stations are planned to be progressively decommissioned over the next 15 years. The transition in energy supplies from coal-fired power stations to renewable energy sources requires the development of a reliable and sustainable energy supply including BESS to ensure grid stability.

The NSW Electricity Strategy is the NSW Government's plan for a reliable, affordable and sustainable electricity future. The strategy acknowledges that renewables, including battery storage, are cost competitive and essential to replace ageing power stations. The project aligns with the strategy's goal of ensuring investment in new demand

response technologies in NSW, as the BESS would improve grid stability in the region, helping to ‘smooth out’ energy peaks and troughs created by variable energy (e.g. solar and wind).

## Statutory context

Section 4.36(3) of the *Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979* provides that a state environmental planning policy may declare any development, or any class or description of development, to be State Significant Development (SSD). The project would be SSD in accordance with section 2.6(1) of State Environmental Planning Policy (Planning Systems) 2021, since the project is electricity generating works with a Capital Investment Value of more than \$30 million. The project is permissible under section 2.36(1)(b) of the State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021, as the project would be electricity generating works undertaken in a prescribed non-residential zone (the site is zoned RU2 Rural Landscape under the Upper Lachlan Local Environmental Plan 2010).

Biodiversity surveys undertaken to date have not identified the potential for a significant impact on biodiversity values of any threatened species and communities listed under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act). Therefore, a referral for a controlled action under the EPBC Act is not proposed to be lodged for this project at this stage.

## Assessment of impacts

The identification of issues to be addressed in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) has been undertaken through a risk-based approach in accordance with the *State significant development guidelines – preparing a scoping report* (DPE 2022a).

The following environmental matters identified during the risk assessment will form the key assessment matters in the EIS:

- Biodiversity
- Amenity (noise and vibration and visual impacts)
- Heritage
- Social impacts
- Hazards and risks
- Land use and soils

Other matters that would require more limited assessment in the EIS include the built environment, air quality and greenhouse gases, contamination, traffic and access, waste and water impacts. For each environmental matter, the potential impacts associated with the construction, operation, and decommissioning and rehabilitation of the project would be identified in the EIS. Mitigation measures would be provided in the EIS to eliminate or reduce potential impacts associated with the project.

## Engagement undertaken to date

Early engagement has commenced. This has comprised discussions with directly affected neighbours, and a community information session to provide the opportunity to discuss the project and provide any early feedback.

## Purpose of this Scoping Report

This Scoping Report has been prepared in accordance with the form and content requirements of the *State Significant Development Guidelines – preparing a scoping report* (DPE 2022a). This Scoping Report provides:

- A description of the project
- An analysis of feasible alternatives considered having regard to the objectives of the development, and identifies the alternatives that would be investigated further in the EIS
- An early indication of community views on the project and identifies what engagement would be carried out during the preparation of the EIS

- A summary of the key matters requiring further assessment in the EIS and the proposed approach to assessing each of these matters having regard to any relevant Government legislation, plans, policies or guidelines.

This Scoping Report seeks to obtain the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) for the project.

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# Abbreviations and glossary of terms

Term	Definition
ACHAR	Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report
AEMO	Australian Energy Market Operator
AHIMS	Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System
BAM	Biodiversity Assessment Method
BC Act	<i>NSW Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016</i>
BDAR	Biodiversity development assessment report
BESS	Battery energy storage system
BOS	Biodiversity Offsets Scheme
BW ESS	The proponent
CEEC	Critically endangered ecological community
CHDDA	Cultural Heritage Due Diligence Assessment
CIV	Capital Investment Value
Cross Station	An area located on the project site consisting of several farm buildings that form an agricultural facility.
DPE	Former NSW Department of Planning and Environment
DPHI	Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EMF	Electric and magnetic fields
EP&A Act	<i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i>
EP&A Regulation	Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021
EPBC Act	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i>
GHD	GHD Pty Ltd
GW	Gigawatt
ha	Hectares
ILUA	Indigenous Land Use Agreement
ISP	Integrated System Plan
km	Kilometres
kmph	Kilometres per hour
kV	Kilovolt
LETS	Low Emissions Technology Statements
LGA	Local government area
MW	Megawatt
MWh	Megawatt hours
N/A	Not applicable
NEM	National Electricity Market
NSW	New South Wales
PCT	Plant community type
PHA	Preliminary Hazard Assessment

Term	Definition
Planning Systems SEPP	NSW State Environmental Planning Policy (Planning Systems) 2021
PMST	Protected Matters Search Tool
SAII	Serious and irreversible impact
SEARs	Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements
SOHI	Statement of Heritage Impact
SSD	State Significant Development
SSI	State Significant Infrastructure
TEC	Threatened ecological community
The project	Construction and operation of Bannaby BESS
The project site	The location of the project, at Bannaby in the Upper Lachlan Shire Council
The Roadmap	NSW Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap
Transport and Infrastructure SEPP	State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021
Upper Lachlan LEP	Upper Lachlan Local Environmental Plan 2010

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Overview

BW ESS proposes to construct a 750-megawatt (MW) battery energy storage system (BESS) with a four-hour storage duration (equating to 3,000 megawatt hours (MWh) of storage and discharge capacity) a 3.1 kilometre (km) long transmission line and associated infrastructure (the project). The project would be located at 365, 409 and 486 Hanworth Road, Bannaby in New South Wales (NSW) which is located about 20 km east of Taralga in a rural area.

The project site is located approximately 2.65 km northwest of the existing Transgrid Bannaby 500/330 kilovolt (kV) substation, to facilitate connection to the NSW high voltage electricity transmission network.

As NSW seeks to utilise renewable energy sources, BW ESS's project would directly respond to the demand for increased renewable electricity supply across NSW, by storing excess renewable energy in times of surplus, and releasing this energy in times of high demand (refer to sections 2.5 and 3.6 for detailed discussion on project site selection and alternatives).

## 1.2 Project background

Traditionally, the major source of energy generation in NSW has been large coal-fired power stations. Since 2012, three coal fired power stations have been decommissioned including most recently Liddell power station in 2023. The four remaining power stations are planned to be progressively decommissioned over the next 15 years. The transition in energy supplies from coal-fired power stations requires the development of a reliable and sustainable energy supply.

The NSW Electricity Strategy is the NSW Government's plan for a reliable, affordable and sustainable electricity future. The strategy acknowledges that renewables, including battery storage, are cost competitive and essential to replace ageing power stations. The project aligns with the strategy's goal of ensuring investment in new demand response technologies in NSW, as the BESS would improve grid stability in the region, helping to 'smooth out' energy peaks and troughs created by variable energy (e.g. solar and wind).

## 1.3 The proponent

The Proponent is BW ESS. BW ESS aims to provide BESS projects globally, with projects currently existing or in development in the United Kingdom, Italy and Australia. BW ESS's battery storage project pipeline currently exceeds 4,000 MWh.

BW ESS has established a trust for the project. The legal entity details of the trust are as follows:

- Name: The Trustee for Bannaby Unit Trust
- ABN: 33132681067
- Address: Unit 7 / 3 Trelawney Street, Eastwood NSW 2122.

## 1.4 Purpose and structure of this report

This report has been prepared to support an application to the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) to request the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) and has been developed in accordance with the *State significant development guidelines – preparing a scoping report* (DPE 2022a). It includes an outline of the strategic context, description of the project, the statutory context, stakeholder engagement completed to date and proposed ongoing engagement, preliminary identification of relevant environmental matters, potential impacts and the proposed scope of the assessment to be undertaken in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

The EIS would be prepared in accordance with the requirements of the SEARs, the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act), the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act), and the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021 (EP&A Regulation).

## 2. Strategic context

### 2.1 National policies

#### 2.1.1 Australia's Long-Term Emissions Reduction Plan, Australian Government 2021

Australia's whole-of-economy Long-Term Emissions Reduction Plan is focused on technology and sets out how Australia would achieve net zero emissions by 2050. One of the key principles of the plan is keeping energy prices down with affordable and reliable power. The plan identifies low emissions technology solutions including battery storage as a priority technology to achieving clean, cheap electricity.

The Technology Investment Roadmap is the cornerstone of the Long-Term Emissions Reduction Plan and sets a process to develop and deploy low emissions technologies. By focusing government investment, it aims to make these technologies cost about the same as existing high emission technologies.

The Technology Investment Roadmap includes a requirement to prepare Low Emissions Technology Statements (LETS) which review, refine and evaluate the government's investments in low emission technologies. The current LETS (2021) includes energy storage as an existing priority technology for government investment.

LETS 2021 indicates that broad deployment of electrical energy storage would facilitate further integration of low-cost solar and wind electricity in the grid. Energy storage would provide system security services and be a source of reliable, dispatchable electricity, and reduce pressure on electricity prices by meeting peaks in consumer demand.

The project is consistent with the high priority technologies outlined in the Long-Term Emissions Reduction Plan which would enable ongoing renewables deployment.

#### 2.1.2 Integrated System Plan, AEMO 2024

The Integrated System Plan (ISP) is a whole-of-system plan that provides a coordinated generation and transmission investment plan to transition the National Electricity Market (NEM) over the next 30 years. The Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) published the most recent ISP for the National Electricity Market in June 2024, and it will be updated every two years.

Under the 'Step Change' scenario, identified in the 2024 ISP as the most likely scenario, the National Electricity Market would need to cater for significant investment in generation capacity, storage, firming generation and transmission augmentation as coal generation withdraws through to 2050.

The 2024 ISP predicts under the Step Change scenario that about 90 per cent of the current 21 gigawatts (GW) of coal capacity would retire by 2034-35, with all coal capacity retiring by 2040.

The project would assist in the transition to renewable energy and provide assistance in smoothing out peaks and gaps from variable renewable energy. The project would also assist in the increased need for the network to shift electricity from where it is produced to where it is needed to maximise the value of geographic diversity and efficiently share resources across the NEM.

### 2.2 NSW policies

#### 2.2.1 NSW Electricity Strategy, NSW Government, 2019

The NSW Electricity Strategy is the NSW Government's plan for a reliable, affordable and sustainable electricity future. Meeting these objectives involves a three-layered approach:

- Supporting the market to deliver reliable electricity at the lowest price, while protecting the environment
- Setting an Energy Security Target to ensure that NSW has sufficient generation capacity to cope with unexpected generator outages during periods of peak demand, such as during heat waves

- Ensuring NSW has sufficient power to deal with an electricity emergency, if one arises.

The strategy notes that four of the state's five remaining coal-fired power stations are set to reach the end of their technical lives and are planned to be progressively decommissioned over the next 15 years. Since 2012, three coal fired power stations have been decommissioned including most recently the Liddell Power Station in 2023. The Eraring Power Station was scheduled to close in 2025, but its closure has been extended to ensure energy reliability during the transition to renewables. As these generators get older, they also become more fragile and more susceptible to outages, making the electricity system less reliable.

The strategy acknowledges that firmed renewables, including batteries, are now the most cost competitive form of new generation.

The strategy is underwritten by a Memorandum of Understanding with the Australian Government to jointly fund over \$2 billion in energy and emission reduction activities, aligned with the NSW Electricity Strategy, to ensure NSW has a reliable and affordable energy system.

The project is consistent with the objectives of the strategy to ensure a reliable electricity supply, able to meet periods of peak demand and with the ability to cope with unexpected generator outages.

## 2.2.2 NSW Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap, NSW Government 2020

The NSW Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap (the Roadmap) is the NSW Government's plan to transition the electricity sector and deliver the major infrastructure needed to modernise our electricity system and power the economy. Under the roadmap, consumers would benefit from low cost, clean electricity generation backed up by 24-hour power sources.

The Roadmap is a coordinated framework to modernise the electricity system and deliver new generation, transmission, long duration storage and firming that would also deliver on the ambition of net zero emissions by 2050.

The modernisation of the electricity system would be built on five pillars:

1. Driving investment in regional NSW
2. Delivering energy storage infrastructure
3. Delivering Renewable Energy Zones
4. Keeping the grid secure and reliable
5. Harnessing opportunities for industry.

As the electricity market moves towards more generation that relies on variable conditions, like weather, generators need to be backed up by long duration storage to ensure power is available at all times when it is needed. Energy storage infrastructure such as batteries allows renewable energy to be stored and then released on demand when it is needed, creating stability and reliability in the electricity system.

The project is consistent with Pillar 2 of the roadmap to provide additional energy storage infrastructure that can quickly stabilise the electricity system and reliably meet peak demand.

## 2.3 Regional and local policies

### 2.3.1 Draft South East and Tablelands Regional Plan 2041

The Draft South East and Tablelands Regional Plan 2014 (the Regional Plan) (DPE 2022b) is the 20-year strategic planning blueprint that sets the land use planning framework, vision and direction for future needs for housing, jobs, infrastructure, a healthy environment and connected communities. Theme 2 of the Regional Plan is about enhancing sustainable and resilient environments, and the related Objective 8 is to 'Plan for a net zero region by 2050'. Strategy 8.1 of the Regional Plan outlines that "*Strategic planning and local plans are to consider opportunities to: ... encourage the co-location of renewable energy generation and storage infrastructure, in proximity to the current and proposed future electricity transmission network, but also to minimise any cumulative adverse effects on the natural environment*".

Given the project is located at the intersection of one existing 550 kV transmission line and three existing 330 kV transmission lines, it is located in proximity to the current and proposed future electricity transmission network, and is therefore consistent with Strategy 8.1 and Objective 8 of the Regional Plan. This is further strengthened by the recent approval of HumeLink.

Objective 11 of the Regional Plan is to 'realise economic benefits from a connected regional economy'. This section of the Regional Plan outlines the economic potential of renewable energy in the region, which the project will support.

### 2.3.2 Upper Lachlan Shire 2040 Local Strategic Planning Statement

The Upper Lachlan Shire 2040 Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) (Upper Lachlan Shire Council 2020) outlines the planning priorities and principles that guide Upper Lachlan Shire Council in the development of the region. It highlights the opportunities and challenges facing Upper Lachlan Shire, and sets actions to undertake.

The LSPS notes under opportunities that the shire has become a regional leader in renewable energy, and there is the potential for future development in this sector. The vision noted under Planning Priority 4 'Business Development' of the LSPS is for a community that *"welcomes new investment and encourages collaborative diversity, and to position ULSC as a hub of renewable energy excellence"*. As a renewable project, the project will help the Upper Lachlan Shire Council realise this vision.

## 2.4 Site setting

As outlined in Section 1, BW ESS is seeking planning approval for the development of a 750 MW BESS, 500kV transmission line and associated infrastructure at 365, 409 and 486 Hanworth Road, Bannaby, NSW, located in the Upper Lachlan Shire Council.

The landscape of the project site is characterised by hilly grasslands, a number of farm dams, and planted border trees along some fence lines (refer to Figure 2.1). The project site also contains several farm buildings as part of Cross Station, an agricultural facility on the project site previously used for cattle grazing (refer to Figure 2.2 and Figure 2.3).



Figure 2.1 Project landscape showing hilly grasslands and an example of planted border trees



**Figure 2.2** Sheds located at Cross Station

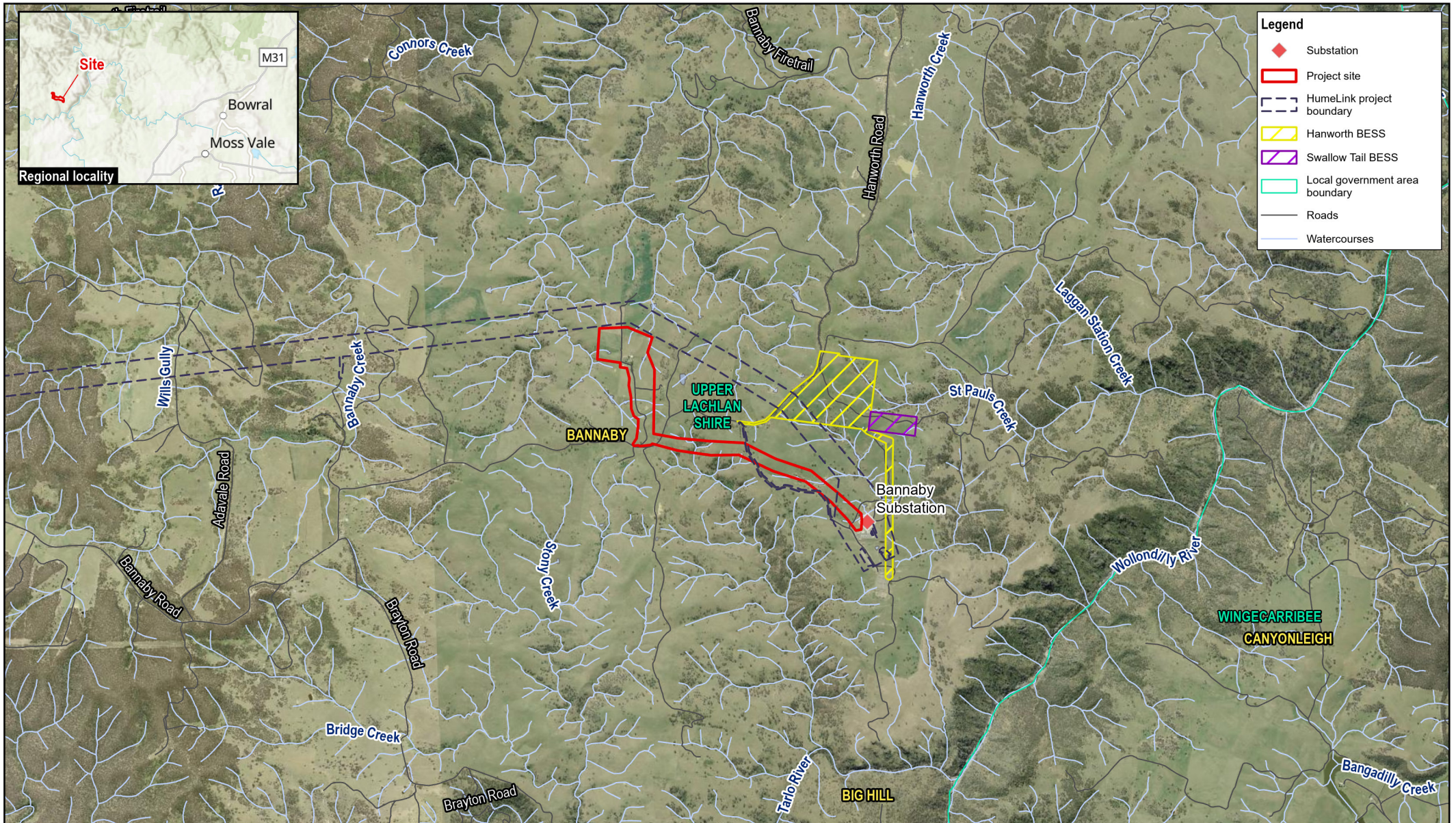


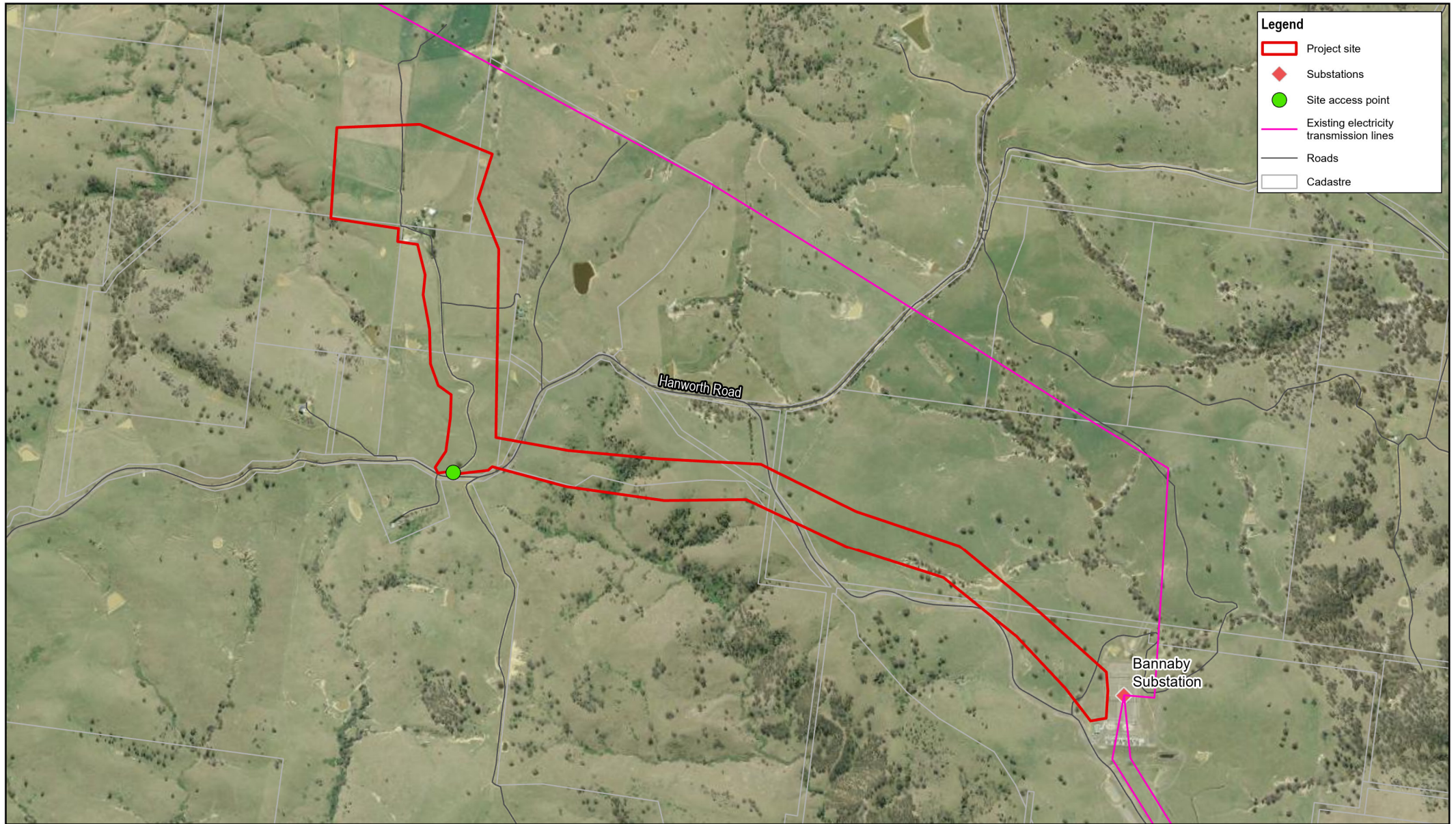
**Figure 2.3** Agricultural structures at Cross Station

The project location and regional context are shown in Figure 2.4 and the project site is shown in Figure 2.5. These figures identify the project site, including the proposed transmission line connection to Transgrid's Bannaby substation.

The project site would be located on six lots as described in Table 2.1. The project site (including the transmission line easement) has an area of approximately 60 hectares and is zoned as RU2 Rural Landscape under the Upper Lachlan Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2010 (Upper Lachlan LEP). The BESS component of the project has an area of approximately 16 ha, and the transmission line would be 3.1 km in length.

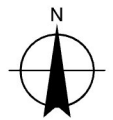
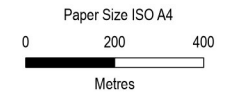
Transgrid's proposed Humelink transmission line project will connect into the Transgrid Bannaby substation and will traverse areas directly north of the project site as identified in Figure 2.5.





**Legend**

- Project site
- ◆ Substations
- Site access point
- Existing electricity transmission lines
- Roads
- Cadastre



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**Bannaby BESS & Solar Farm**  
 Scoping Report

Project No. **12640132**  
 Revision No. **0**  
 Date **12/12/2024**

Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
 Horizontal Datum: GDA2020  
 Grid: GDA2020 MGA Zone 56

**Project site**

**FIGURE 2.5**

## 2.4.1 Property

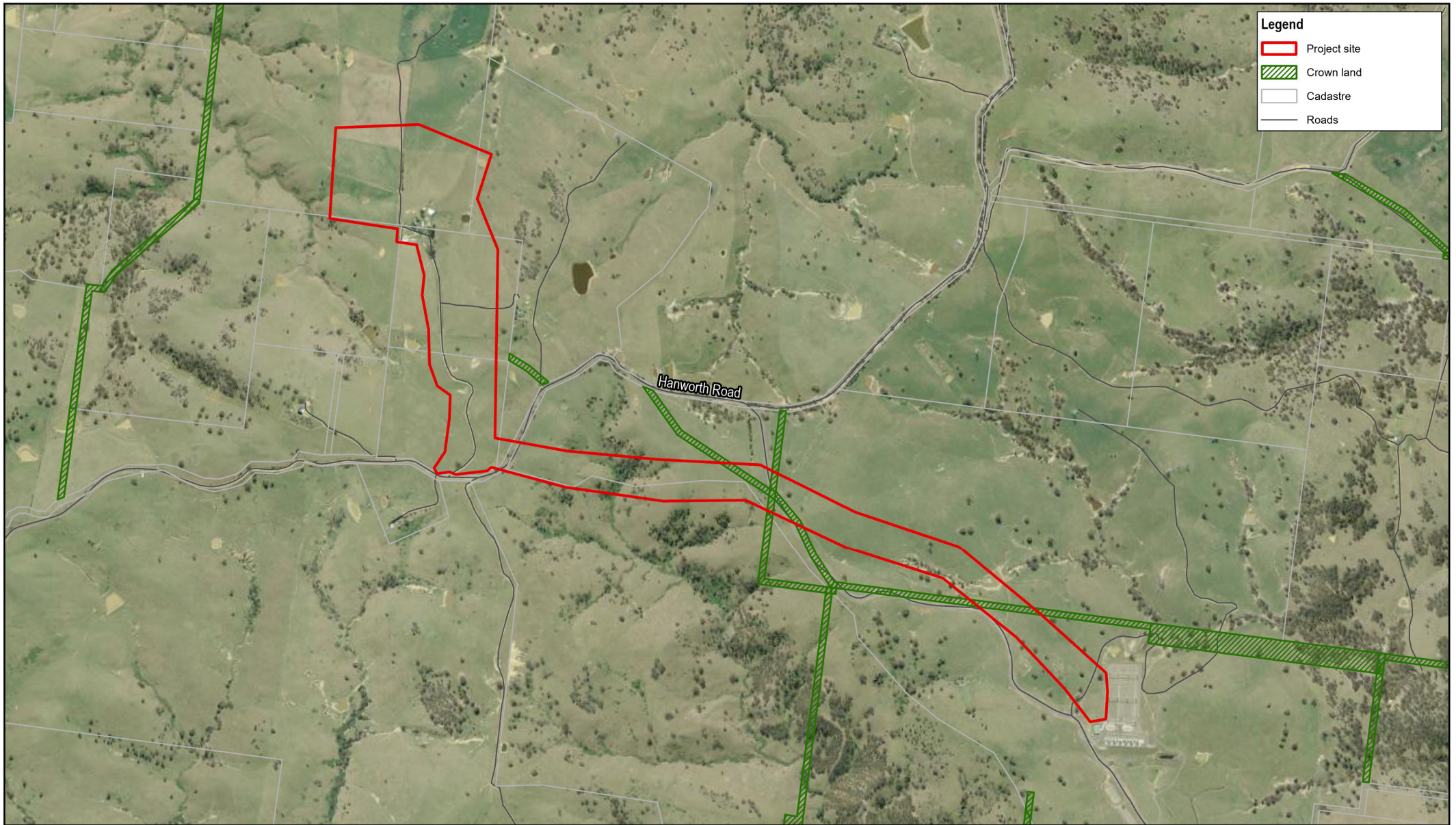
The project would be located on six lots as described in Table 2.1 and on the lands of the Gundungurra people. As detailed in Table 2.1, BW ESS owns three of the lots that the project would be located on, Transgrid owns two and the owner of the other privately owned lot has entered into an agreement with BW ESS to provide a transmission line easement for the project.

A search of the Native Title Claims register undertaken in August 2024 did not identify any Native Title Claims. However, the project site is subject to the Gundungurra Area Agreement Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA). The ILUA does not recognise native title over these lands, and the Gundungurra people agreed to withdraw their native title claim on registration of the agreement. In addition, the ILUA only provides input into the management of lands and water within the agreement area that are National Park, State Conservation Area, Forestry Corporation of NSW lands or Blue Mountains City Council lands, none of which apply to the project site. Therefore, the ILUA does not specifically impact the project, however the project will ensure that the appropriate Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs) are identified and consulted in line with the stakeholder engagement activities for the project.

**Table 2.1** Key project site information

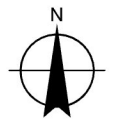
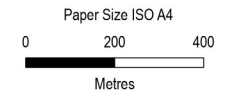
	Lot ID No. 1	Lot ID No. 2	Lot ID No. 3	Lot ID No. 4	Lot ID No. 5	Lot ID No. 6
Address	365 Hanworth Road, Bannaby NSW 2580 Australia	365 Hanworth Road, Bannaby NSW 2580 Australia	365 Hanworth Road, Bannaby NSW 2580 Australia	409 Hanworth Road Bannaby NSW 2580 Australia	486 Hanworth Road Bannaby NSW 2580 Australia	Hanworth Road Bannaby NSW 2580 Australia
Lot / DP	Lot 16 DP750005	Lot 17 DP750005	Lot 1 DP938180	Lot 1 DP873186	Lot 2 DP1096390	Lot 401 DP1265813
Ownership and lease areas	BW ESS	BW ESS	BW ESS	Privately owned	Transgrid	Transgrid
Land use zoning	RU2 Rural Landscape	RU2 Rural Landscape	RU2 Rural Landscape	RU2 Rural Landscape	RU2 Rural Landscape	RU2 Rural Landscape

Land located along the border of the project site to the west and north are classified as Crown Roads, with another Crown Road to the southeast of the project site. These are mapped as Crown Land as identified in Figure 2.6.



**Legend**

- Project site
- Crown land
- Cadastre
- Roads



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**Bannaby BESS & Solar Farm**  
 Scoping Report

Project No. **12640132**  
 Revision No. **0**  
 Date **10/12/2024**

Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
 Horizontal Datum: GDA2020  
 Grid: GDA2020 MGA Zone 56

**Crown land areas**

**FIGURE 2.6**

## 2.4.2 Surrounding land uses and sensitive receivers

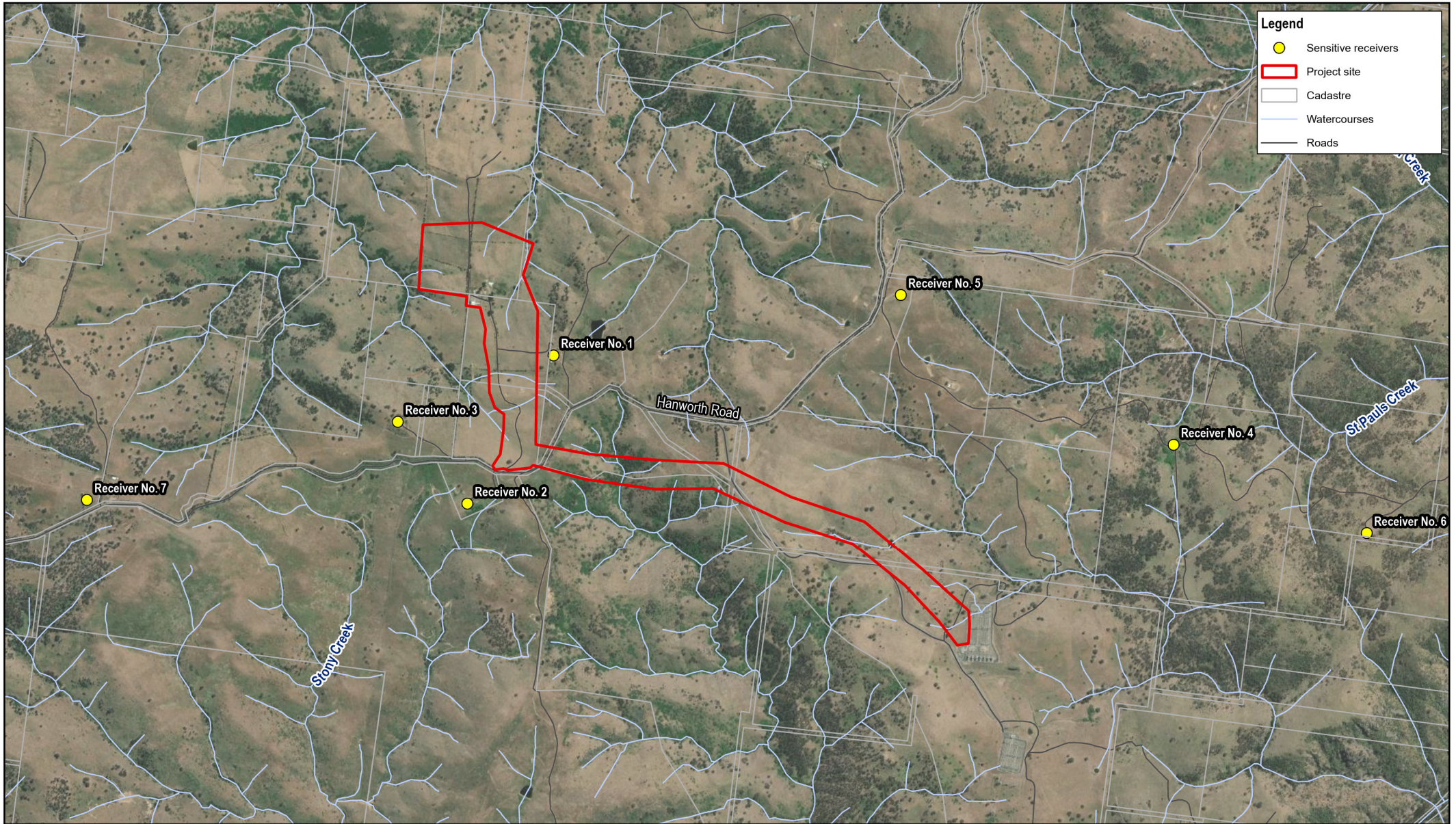
The project site is currently used for livestock grazing. Land uses within the broader locality of the project site comprise a mixture of rural residential properties, agricultural production or electricity infrastructure.

Sensitive receivers are typically regarded as residential properties, schools, childcare centres, aged-care facilities, hospitals and neighbouring businesses. Seven sensitive receivers in the form of residences have been identified within two kilometres of the project site. Potential residential sensitive receivers are presented in Table 2.2.

**Table 2.2** Identified sensitive receivers and potential impacts

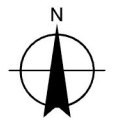
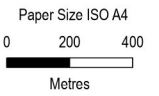
ID	Address	Legal description	Approximate location	Potential sensitive receiver impacts
1	409 Hanworth Road Bannaby 2580	Lot 1 DP 873186	20 m east of the eastern project site boundary	Potential for visual impacts. Impacts from increased traffic during construction (due to proximity to Hanworth Road) and dust during construction. Impacts from construction and operational noise due to proximity to the project site.
2	358 Hanworth Road Bannaby 2580	Lot 1 DP 626894	200 m south of the project site (south of Hanworth Road)	Potential for visual impacts. Impacts from increased traffic (due to proximity to Hanworth Road) and dust during construction. Impacts from construction and operational noise due to proximity to the project site.
3	335 Hanworth Road, Bannaby 2580	Lot 10 DP 1207877	320 m west of the project site boundary	Potential for visual impacts. Impacts from increased traffic (due to proximity to Hanworth Road) and dust during construction. Impacts from construction and operational noise due to proximity to the project site.
4	590 Hanworth Road Bannaby 2580	Lot 38 DP 750005	900 m east of the eastern project site boundary.	Potential for visual impacts. Impacts from increased traffic (due to proximity to Hanworth Road) during construction.
5	Hanworth Road Bannaby 2580	Lot 401 DP 1265813	650 m north of the project site boundary	Potential for visual impacts. Impacts from increased traffic during construction, due to proximity to Hanworth Road.
6	592 Hanworth Road Bannaby 2580	Lot 179 DP 750005	1.7 km east of the eastern project site boundary.	Potential for visual impacts (likely low given distance). Impacts from increased traffic during construction.
7	157 Hanworth Road Bannaby 2580	Lot 2 DP 789741	1.75 km west of the project site	Potential for visual impacts (likely low given distance). Impacts from increased traffic during construction (due to proximity to Hanworth Road).

Figure 2.7 indicates the potential sensitive receivers in proximity to the project as outlined above. These potential sensitive receivers would be confirmed in further detail in the EIS.



**Legend**

- Sensitive receivers
- Project site
- Cadastre
- Watercourses
- Roads



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 Horizontal Datum: GDA2020  
 Grid: GDA2020 MGA Zone 56

**Identified sensitive receivers**

**FIGURE 2.7**

### 2.4.3 Topography and water resources

The topography of the project site is generally hilly with higher elevation in the south, east and west of the project site, dropping in elevation in the north towards Bannaby Creek. A tributary of Bannaby Creek runs through the western side of the project area, and the major creek line in the centre of the transmission line alignment drains southeast towards the Tarlo River. The northwest of the project site, and the southeast are relatively flat, while the central portion of the project site is quite hilly and intersected by a gully. There are also several smaller drainage lines that are tributaries of Bannaby Creek, and several farm dams within the project site.

Based on a search of the Bureau of Meteorology Australian Groundwater Explorer (BOM 2024) and the WaterNSW All Groundwater Map (WaterNSW 2024), there are no groundwater bores located in the project site or project vicinity.

## 2.5 Project justification

Australia aims to achieve net zero emissions by 2050. To assist the transition to net zero, the NSW Government has planned to transition the state's energy sector to renewables. The NSW Electricity Strategy (refer Section 2.2.1) outlines the planned closure and end-of-life of coal-fired power stations in NSW. As these facilities wind-down, reliable, affordable and sustainable energy sources to transition to renewables are required. Battery facilities have been identified as one of the most cost competitive forms of new generation, and cost less than the current wholesale electricity price.

The Bannaby BESS project would perform a critical role in supporting and storing energy generated by the existing and proposed renewable infrastructure in the region, such as solar and wind. The project would provide additional energy storage that would be delivered on demand to quickly stabilise the electricity system, and reliably meet peak energy demand. The BESS would also help manage the variability of renewable energy sources, to ensure a consistent and stable power supply.

## 3. Project description

### 3.1 Overview

The key project characteristics are summarised in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Key project characteristics

Project element	Description
Project summary	Development of a BESS at Bannaby, involving: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Approximate 750 MW BESS</li> <li>– 500 kV transmission line and related infrastructure to connect the BESS to the existing Transgrid Bannaby 500/330 kV substation</li> <li>– Ancillary infrastructure and services required for the project</li> <li>– Works to the existing Transgrid Bannaby Substation would be required to connect the project's transmission line to the existing substation.</li> </ul>
Project site	365 Hanworth Road, Bannaby, NSW on lots: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Lot 16 DP750005</li> <li>– Lot 17 DP750005</li> <li>– Lot 1 DP938180</li> </ul> 409 Hanworth Road, Bannaby, NSW on lot: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Lot 1 DP873186</li> </ul> 486 Hanworth Road, Bannaby, NSW on lot: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Lot 2 DP1096390</li> </ul> Hanworth Road, Bannaby, NSW on lot: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Lot 401 DP1265813</li> </ul>
BESS capacity	Up to 750 MW capacity with a four-hour storage duration, resulting in a total of 3,000 MWh of storage and discharge capacity
Battery chemistry	Lithium-ion
Operation	24 hours a day / 7 days a week / 365 days per year
Ancillary facilities	Switchyard, transmission line connections, site services
Estimated employment	Up to 150 during construction (peak), 10-15 during operation
Capital Investment Value	Up to AUD 1.5 billion

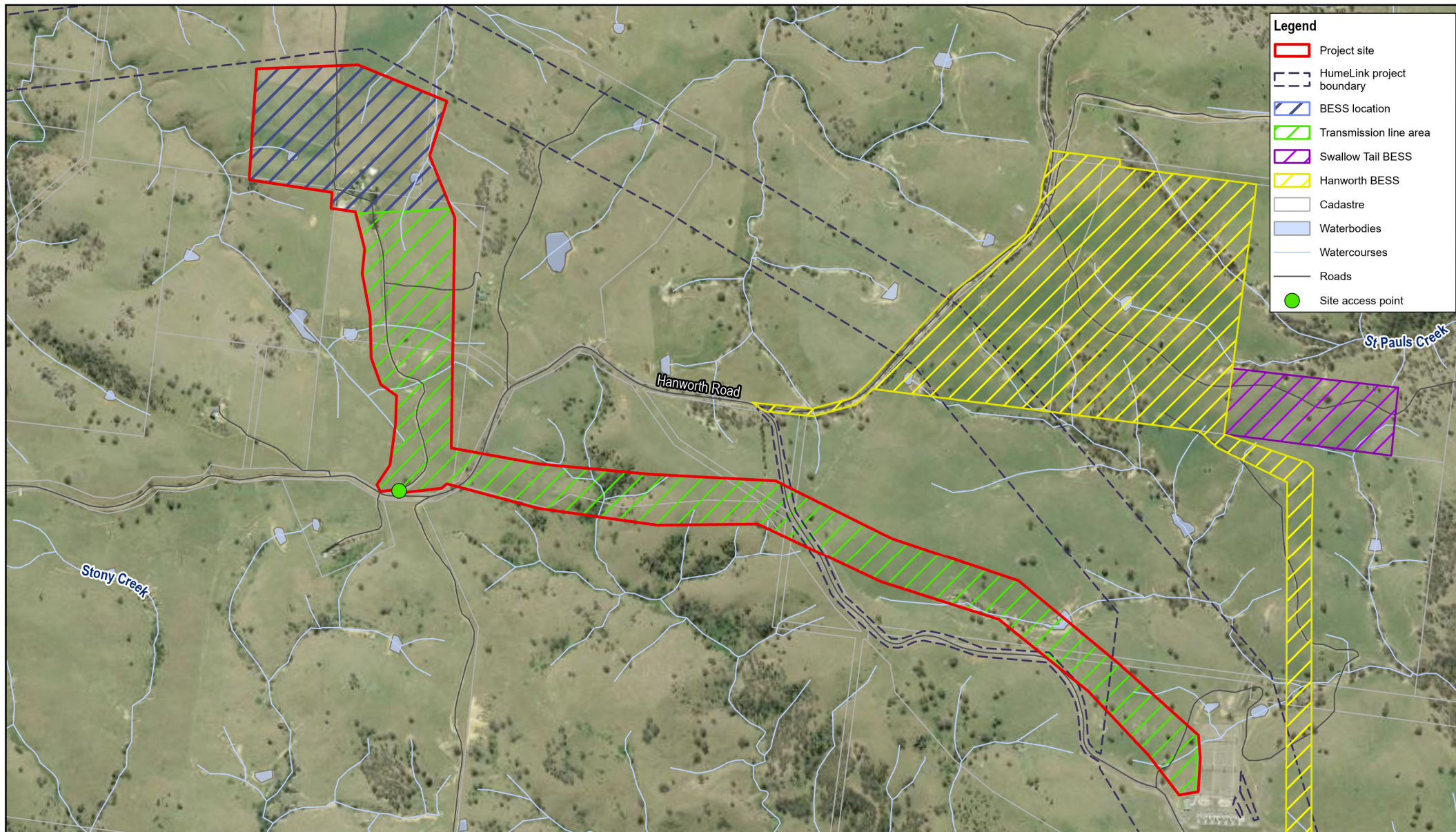
### 3.2 Operational infrastructure

The indicative operational footprint of the project (excluding the transmission line) is about 16 hectares. A concept layout of the project is provided in Figure 3.1.

The project would include a 500 kV transmission line connection from the onsite substation to the existing Transgrid Bannaby 500/330 kV substation. The proposed transmission line would be about 3.1 kilometres in length, located to the southeast of the project site, running through Lot 1 DP873186. The alignment of the proposed transmission line will be located within the shaded zone identified in Figure 3.1. The final alignment will be determined based on physical and environmental constraints of the project site.

#### 3.2.1 Subdivision

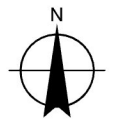
The lots that form the project site may require subdivision for the operation of the project. This potential subdivision relates to the ongoing ownership and operation of electrical infrastructure related to the project. The need for subdivision, particularly in relation to the onsite substation, would be confirmed and detailed in the EIS following further engagement between Transgrid, BW BESS and the landowner.



**Legend**

- Project site
- HumeLink project boundary
- BESS location
- Transmission line area
- Swallow Tail BESS
- Hanworth BESS
- Cadastre
- Waterbodies
- Watercourses
- Roads
- Site access point

Paper Size ISO A4  
 0 200 400  
 Metres  
 Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
 Horizontal Datum: GDA2020  
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**Project concept layout**

**FIGURE 3.1**

## 3.3 Construction

### 3.3.1 Construction staging

Construction would commence in 2026 subject to regulatory approvals being obtained and would be completed in 2028. The construction duration is expected to take about 18 months.

The indicative peak construction period for civil works would be early to mid-2026 (four to six months) with noise and dust the most significant impacts. Equipment delivery (and therefore vehicle movements) is expected to peak mid-late 2026 for a period of four to six months. Construction is expected to comprise of the following typical phases: planning, early works, main works, pre commissioning, commissioning and decommissioning.

The project would create up to 150 jobs during the approximate 18-month construction period.

### 3.3.2 Construction methodology

Construction would involve the following:

- Clearing of vegetation
- Removal or relocation of current agricultural facilities at Cross Station at the project site
- Earthworks and site regrading
- Development of ancillary infrastructure and buildings
- Establishment of a hardstand and construction laydown areas
- Construction of concrete foundations and slabs to support battery modules, power conversion systems and transformer structures
- Delivery, installation and electrical fit-out of the battery modules, power conversion systems and transformer structures
- Installation of a 500 kV transmission line from the BESS to the existing 500/330 kV Transgrid Bannaby substation
- Testing and commissioning activities
- Rehabilitation of construction areas
- Establishment of asset protection zones or other design solutions for bushfire protection

The majority of construction activities would be carried out during the following hours, consistent with the recommended standard hours of the *Interim Construction Noise Guideline* (DECC 2009):

- 7am-6pm Monday to Friday
- 8am-1pm Saturdays
- No work on Sundays or Public Holidays.

### 3.3.3 Site clearance, vegetation removal and earthworks

Construction of the project would involve the removal of some of the existing vegetation that is present on the project site. There are four Plant Community Types (PCTs) listed under the *NSW Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* (BC Act) mapped in some areas of the site. Proposed vegetation clearance and the need for biodiversity offsets would be further defined at the EIS stage.

### 3.3.4 Access

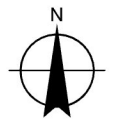
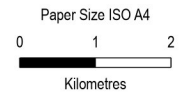
The proposed construction access to the project site is from Goulburn via Taralga. Goulburn is approximately 40 km southwest from the project, and Taralga is about 20 kilometres to the west of the project. It is expected that vehicles would access the project site via Taralga Road (to Taralga), Bannaby Road and Hanworth Road, followed by an unsealed private road to access/egress the project site.

The proposed construction access route is identified in Figure 3.2.



**Legend**

- Project site
- Taralga
- Access route to Taralga
- Roads



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**Proposed project site construction and access route**

**FIGURE 3.2**

## 3.3.5 Utilities

### Power

A residential power supply connection exists at the project site. The need for connection of additional power services would be investigated and considered during the EIS. Power supply to the construction site may be from the existing distribution network, or from on-site generators.

### Water

The project site forms part of a mixed rural-residential and agricultural area, therefore it is unlikely that an existing water supply or sewer line is available. The EIS would consider water supply requirements for the project.

## 3.4 Operation

The project would operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week with electricity storage and export activities occurring as required on an automated basis. Operations and maintenance by operational staff would be undertaken during standard working hours. Emergency response, inspections and maintenance may be required to be undertaken out of hours.

The project would provide approximately 10-15 jobs on site once operational.

## 3.5 Decommissioning

At the end of the design life or agreed timetable, the batteries would either be disposed of and recycled at approved disposal facilities, or subject to confirmation, could be returned to the original equipment manufacturer for refurbishment and recycling. Opportunities to extend the initial design life of 30 years would be reviewed subject to the replacement of components and market conditions.

Following decommissioning, the land would be rehabilitated to a standard agreed with the landowner, which may include pre-development conditions or other arrangements.

## 3.6 Alternatives considered

Alternatives to the project are considered at a site level and overall project level and would continue to be developed through the design stages to ensure the design meets best practice requirements and can avoid or minimise identified environmental, social and economic impacts. The following alternatives have been assessed:

- The “do nothing” approach
- Project site location alternatives
- Battery energy storage technology and provider alternatives.

### 3.6.1 The “do nothing” approach

The “do nothing” approach would involve not constructing and operating the project at the Bannaby site. This approach would not support the NSW and Australian Government plans, policies and strategies identified in section 2 to ensure investment in new demand response technologies in NSW, and improve grid stability in the region, helping to ‘smooth out’ energy peaks and troughs created by variable energy such as solar and wind.

The ‘do nothing’ option would avoid potential environmental impacts associated with the construction of the project. However, it is considered that the benefits of the project, ensuring appropriate mitigation and management measures are implemented during construction and decommissioning, would significantly outweigh any potential environmental impacts.

### 3.6.2 Alternative sites

As outlined in section 2.5, the project site has been selected following an extensive review of suitable project sites for a BESS in NSW. In summary, this process has involved the following considerations:

1. Grid capacity and viable grid connection opportunities
2. The need for energy storage within this section of the network
3. Existing and proposed energy developments.
4. Strategic policy context and suitably zoned land
5. Availability of land and interest from landowners
6. Proximity to potential sensitive receivers
7. Potential environmental and cultural heritage sensitivities
8. Impact on productive land
9. Accessibility and constructability
10. Socio-economic considerations
11. Energy storage technology options.

The objectives of the selection process were to identify a parcel of land which presented the lowest impact, least cost and greatest benefit. Where the potential impacts were deemed to be unacceptable the identified project site was not progressed. This process considered a range of alternative project sites in the vicinity of the substation and identified the current project site to be most favourable.

### 3.6.3 Alternative layouts on selected site

A broader project site was initially considered for the project, as it was expected that the construction of the BESS and transmission line would also include a solar farm. Refer to Figure 3.3 for the preliminary project site. Due to the topography and biodiversity constraints on the project site, the solar farm was removed from the project, and instead the area of the project site was reduced and sited closer to the existing Transgrid substation. Refer to Figure 3.4 for the mapped biodiversity constraints identified for the initial project site.

The proposed layout on the site was chosen due to the flat topography, which was considered appropriate to support the BESS, particularly the onsite substation. The project's siting in the southern portion of the preliminary project site (refer to Figure 3.3) was also considered to ensure the project is close to the existing Transgrid Bannaby substation, thus minimising the length of transmission line connection.

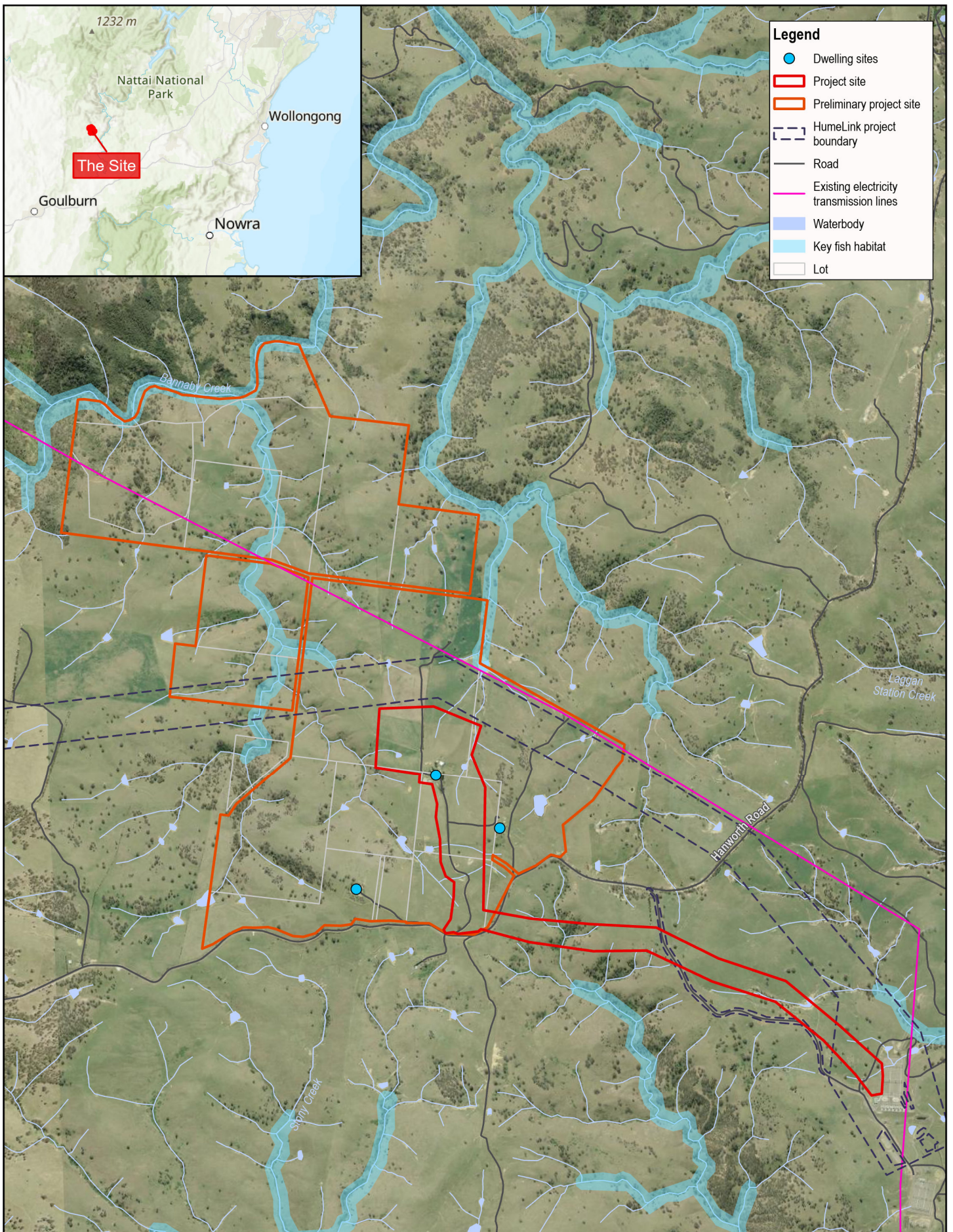
The site configuration options would be further investigated, and the preferred site layout would be documented in the EIS.

## 3.7 Strategies to avoid or minimise impacts

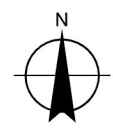
Potential impacts have been avoided or minimised through selection of a relatively remote site with few sensitive receivers and largely clear of vegetation and other environmental constraints. The proposed project site at Bannaby in NSW is located in a rural area, and in close proximity (about two kilometres) to the existing Transgrid Bannaby 500/330kV substation for convenient connection to the NSW electricity transmission network.

The selection of the project site (refer to Figure 3.3) was informed by a preliminary biodiversity constraints assessment in April 2024 that was undertaken for a broader preliminary project site, which identified areas of higher biodiversity constraint in the northern and western portions of the site, as identified in Figure 3.4. The location of the project has been updated and informed by the identified biodiversity constraints to minimise impacts (refer to Figure 3.3).

The project benefits from an existing road access, therefore avoiding the need for significant roadworks.



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 Horizontal Datum: GDA2020  
 Grid: GDA2020 MGA Zone 56

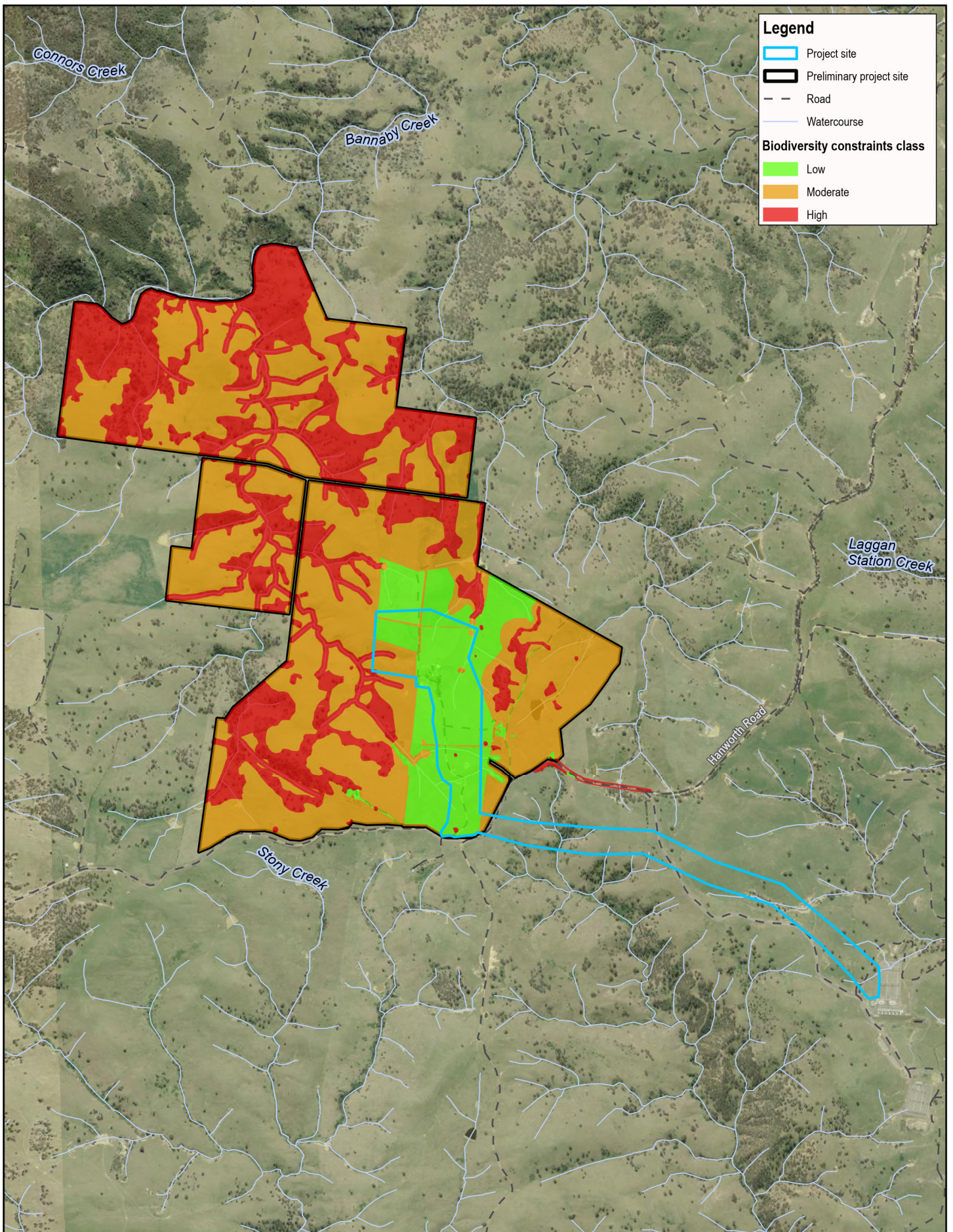


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**Project site and preliminary project site**

**FIGURE 3.3**



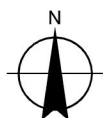
**Legend**

- Project site
- Preliminary project site
- Road
- Watercourse

**Biodiversity constraints class**

- Low
- Moderate
- High

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 Metres



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Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
 Horizontal Datum: GDA2020  
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**Biodiversity constraints identified  
 for the preliminary project site**

**FIGURE 3.4**

## 4. Statutory Context

The key requirements of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act) and other relevant State and Commonwealth legislation in relation to the approval and assessment of the project are summarised in Table 4.1. The project would be SSD in accordance with section 2.6(1) of State Environmental Planning Policy (Planning Systems) 2021, since the project is electricity generating works with a Capital Investment Value of more than \$30 million. The project is permissible under section 2.36(1)(b) of the State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021, as the project would be electricity generating works undertaken in a prescribed non-residential zone.

Table 4.1 Summary of statutory requirements for the project

Matter	Comment
Power to grant consent	<p>Section 4.36(2) of the EP&amp;A Act provides that a State environmental planning policy may declare any development, or any class or description of development, to be State Significant Development (SSD). The project is deemed SSD in accordance with section 2.6(1) of State Environmental Planning Policy (Planning Systems) 2021 (Planning Systems SEPP), since Section 20 of Schedule 1 of the Planning Systems SEPP lists electricity generating works with a Capital Investment Value (CIV) of more than \$30 million as SSD.</p> <p>In accordance with section 4.5(a) of the EP&amp;A Act, the consent authority for State significant development is the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces or the Independent Planning Commission (pursuant to section 2.7 of the Planning Systems SEPP).</p>
Permissibility	<p>The project site is located within the Upper Lachlan Shire Council and the relevant local environmental plan is the Upper Lachlan LEP 2010. The project site is zoned RU2 Rural Landscape.</p> <p>Section 2.36(1)(b) of the State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021 (Transport and Infrastructure SEPP) applies to development for the purpose of electricity generating works and provides that development for this purpose is permissible with consent, if carried out on any land in a prescribed non-residential zone.</p> <p>Clause 2.35 provides the following relevant definition of electricity generating works:</p> <p><b>electricity generating works</b> means a building or place used for the following purposes, but does not include a solar energy system—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) making or generating electricity,</li> <li>(b) electricity storage.</li> </ul> <p>Pursuant to Section 2.35 definitions, RU2 is a prescribed non-residential zone. Therefore, the electricity generating works are permissible in the RU2 Rural Landscape zone.</p> <p>Pursuant to the provisions of Section 4.38(3) of the EP&amp;A Act, consent may be granted for State significant development.</p>
Other approvals	<p><b><u>Consistent approvals</u></b></p> <p>Any authorisations under certain legislation, identified in Section 4.42 of the EP&amp;A Act, cannot be refused if it is necessary for carrying out an approved SSD project and is to be substantially consistent with the SSD approval. In relation to the project, these authorisations could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– An aquaculture permit under section 144 of the <i>Fisheries Management Act 1994</i></li> <li>– An environment protection licence under Chapter 3 of the <i>Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997</i></li> <li>– A consent under section 138 of the <i>Roads Act 1993</i></li> <li>– A licence under the <i>Pipelines Act 1967</i>.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Approvals not required</u></b></p> <p>An authorisation under certain other legislation, identified in Section 4.41 of the EP&amp;A Act, is not required for approved State significant development. In relation to the project, these authorisations could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– A permit under Section 201, 205 or 219 of the <i>Fisheries Management Act 1994</i></li> <li>– An approval under Part 4, or an excavation permit under section 139, of the <i>Heritage Act 1977</i></li> <li>– An Aboriginal heritage impact permit under Section 90 of the <i>National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974</i></li> <li>– A bush fire safety authority under Section 100B of the <i>Rural Fires Act 1997</i></li> </ul>

Matter	Comment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– a water use approval under Section 89, a water management work approval under Section 90 or an activity approval (other than an aquifer interference approval) under Section 91 of the <i>Water Management Act 2000</i>.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act)</u></b></p> <p>The EPBC Act is Australia’s main environmental law. It outlines nine protected matters known as ‘matters of national environmental significance’. These matters include World Heritage areas, listed threatened species, ecological communities and migratory birds, among others.</p> <p>Biodiversity surveys undertaken to date have not identified the potential for a significant impact on biodiversity values of any threatened species and communities listed under the EPBC Act. Therefore, a referral for a controlled action under the EPBC Act is not proposed to be lodged for this project at this stage. If further biodiversity surveys do indicate that a significant impact is likely, a referral will be lodged.</p> <p><b><u>Native Title Act 1993</u></b></p> <p>The Commonwealth <i>Native Title Act 1993</i> gives Indigenous Australians who hold native title rights and interests - or who have made a native title claim - the right to be consulted and, in some cases, to participate in decisions about activities proposed to be undertaken on the land.</p> <p>The project is located within the Gundungurra Area Agreement ILUA, Tribunal No: NI2014/001, registered in February 2015. The ILUA covers an area of about 6,942 square kilometres southwest of Sydney (OEH 2014). The ILUA does not recognise native title over these lands, and the Gundungurra people agreed to withdraw their native tile claim on registration of the agreement. In addition, the ILUA only provides input into the management of lands and water within the agreement area that are National Park, State Conservation Area, Forestry Corporation of NSW lands or Blue Mountains City Council lands, none of which apply to the project site. Therefore, the ILUA does not specifically impact the project, however the project will ensure that the appropriate Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs) are identified and consulted in line with the stakeholder engagement activities for the project.</p> <p><b><u>Other approvals</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016</i></li> </ul>
Pre-conditions to exercising the power to grant approval	<p><b><u>Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016</u></b></p> <p>Part 7 of the BC Act applies to approvals under the EP&amp;A Act. Section 7.9 requires a development application for State significant development to be accompanied by a Biodiversity Development Assessment Report (BDAR). Section 7.14 requires the consent authority to take into consideration the likely impact of the proposed development on biodiversity values as assessed in the Biodiversity Development Assessment Report.</p>
Other approvals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>Contaminated Land Management Act 1997</i></li> <li>– <i>Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016</i></li> </ul>
Mandatory matters for consideration	<p><b><u>State Environmental Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards) 2021</u></b></p> <p>Section 4.6 stipulates that a consent authority must not consent to the carrying out of development unless:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– It has considered whether the land is contaminated, and</li> <li>– If the land is contaminated, it is satisfied that the land is suitable in its contaminated state (or would be suitable, after remediation) for the purpose for which the development is proposed to be carried out, and</li> <li>– If the land requires remediation to be made suitable for the purpose for which the development is proposed to be carried out, it is satisfied that the land would be remediated before the land is used for that purpose.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</u></b></p> <p>The following sections of the EP&amp;A Act need to be considered by the consent authority prior to granting approval:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Section 1.3 – Objects of the Act</li> <li>– Section 4.15 – Evaluation</li> <li>– Section 4.38 – Consent for State Significant Development.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Upper Lachlan Local Environmental Plan 2010</u></b></p> <p>Under the Upper Lachlan LEP 2010, electricity generating works are permitted with consent in the RU2 Rural Landscape zone.</p> <p>The EIS would need to demonstrate consideration of the objectives of the RU2 zone.</p>

# 5. Engagement

## 5.1 Interest groups identified

BW ESS has undertaken an initial stakeholder scoping exercise and has identified a number of key interest groups and stakeholders as outlined in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1 Stakeholders identified

Stakeholder type	Stakeholder
Australian government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Hon Mark Coulton MP (Federal Member for Parkes)</li> <li>– Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW)</li> <li>– Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO)</li> </ul>
NSW government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure</li> <li>– Department of Primary Industries (DPI)</li> <li>– Mrs Wendy Margaret Tuckerman, MP (State member for Parkes)</li> <li>– Regional Development Australia – Southern NSW and ACT</li> <li>– National Parks and Wildlife Service</li> </ul>
Local government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Upper Lachlan Shire Council – Pam Kensit (CEO)</li> </ul>
Emergency services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– NSW Rural Fire Service</li> <li>– Fire and Rescue NSW</li> </ul>
Aboriginal community and stakeholder groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Gundungurra ILUA Consultative Committee</li> <li>– Gundungurra Aboriginal Heritage Association Incorporated</li> <li>– Gundungurra Tribal Council Aboriginal Corporation</li> </ul>
Utility owners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Transgrid (Transmission line and connection)</li> </ul>
Community – local residents and broader community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Neighbouring residents at 335 and 409 Hanworth Road</li> <li>– Other residents along Hanworth Road</li> <li>– Bannaby residents and businesses</li> <li>– Taralga and local area residents and businesses</li> </ul>
Community – special interest groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Harden-Murrumburrah Chamber of Commerce and Industry</li> </ul>
Community – local action group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Bannaby Resident Action Group (BRAG)</li> </ul>

## 5.2 Early engagement carried out

Early neighbour and community engagement has commenced. This has comprised discussions with directly affected neighbours, a letter to local residents introducing the project and an in-person community information session to provide the community with the opportunity to discuss the project and provide any early feedback.

Discussions with directly adjacent neighbours have focused on the potential amenity impacts of the project, particularly landscape and visual impacts, and noise impacts from construction and operation of the project. Feedback received by BW ESS to date has been positive and generally supportive of the need for the project, while noting that full details of project impacts and mitigation measures will become available as the EIS progresses. Key issues raised by direct neighbours are potential noise and visual impacts from the project. The landowner directly to the east-southeast (Lot 1 DP 873186) has entered into an agreement with BW ESS to provide a small transmission line easement for the project, along their southern border.

A letter was sent to 213 properties within 10 kilometres of the site as well as along Hanworth Road to Taralga. The letter outlined the project, provided contact details for the project team, and advertised an in-person community information session.

A community information session was held at the Taralga Memorial Hall on 27 November 2024 from 4:30 pm to 7:30 pm. The project team provided information to attendants on the proponent BW ESS, an overview of the need

for the project and proposed project details, as well as seeking feedback from the community on potential benefits the project can provide to the local community. Similar to direct neighbour engagement, the general sentiment from the community was positive. Several opportunities to share benefits of the project were identified, including the potential to improve mobile and internet connections in Bannaby, and potential sponsorship of local community groups.

The project team had additional conversations with Taralga locals to identify key stakeholders for the EIS phase and understand general community sentiment.

## **5.3 Engagement to be carried out**

### **5.3.1 Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan**

A Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan has been developed for the project which outlines the activities that BW ESS will undertake to inform and consult the community and other identified key stakeholders. This Plan is provided at Appendix A. BW ESS will keep the community up to date as the EIS progresses and continue community engagement prior to the public exhibition of the EIS. BW ESS would also provide project related information on its website.

The effectiveness of engagement will be monitored throughout engagement activities, based on the level of attendance and feedback received from the community and neighbouring residents during engagement activities. Future engagement activities will be adapted by undertaking engagement in venues identified in Taralga as hubs of community activity. In addition, notification letters to residents on Bannaby Road and Hanworth Road will be sent further in advance of engagement activities occurring during the EIS phase, as Scoping Report phase engagement identified some residents may not live in properties along these roads full time.

### **5.3.2 Potential issues from community and stakeholders**

Due to the location and nature of the project, the following concerns are anticipated:

- Potential for community impacts or benefits, e.g. employment and economic development, community identity associated with existing energy generation and transition to renewable energy sources
- Curiosity about how batteries function, concern around safety, emissions and operations
- Possible community benefits, lower energy bills, better internet connectivity along Hanworth Road
- Potential for increased traffic movements during construction and how that could impact the local road network, particularly for local residents
- Potential visual, noise, and dust impacts to local residents from the construction, operation and eventual decommissioning of the project
- Possible concern from relevant stakeholders in regard to the loss of agricultural land.

It is expected that the following elements of the project will be influenced and shaped by the community during the EIS phase:

- Detailed location of project infrastructure (e.g. battery modules) to minimise visual and noise impacts
- Landscape and visual impact mitigation measures
- Construction methods to minimise impacts on the community
- Community benefit-sharing arrangements.

### **5.3.3 Agency consultation**

Consultation would be undertaken with the government agencies identified in Section 5.1 including matters raised in the SEARs and other relevant agency requirements. Details of the engagement carried out, and the outcomes of the consultation would be included in the EIS.

## 6. Proposed assessment of impacts

The identification of issues to be addressed in the EIS has been undertaken through a risk-based approach in accordance with Appendix A of the *State Significant Development Guidelines – Preparing a Scoping Report* (DPE 2022a). This process involved reviewing previous reports, undertaking limited investigations (such as site inspections), and desktop searches of proprietary environmental databases to identify key issues and sensitive areas from February to September 2024.

A summary of the key environmental matters identified during the risk assessment is provided in section 6.1 through to section 6.5. Other matters for consideration are identified in section 6.7. A Scoping Summary Table (as required by Appendix A of the *State Significant Development Guidelines – Preparing a Scoping Report* (DPE 2022a)) is provided in Appendix B of this Scoping Report. The intent of the discussion is to demonstrate an understanding of the matters and the need for further environmental assessment and mitigation measures to inform the preparation of the SEARs.

### 6.1 Biodiversity

#### 6.1.1 Existing environment

##### Overview

GHD's biodiversity team has undertaken preliminary flora and fauna surveys across the project site, and are currently in the early stages of targeted surveys for threatened species which have the potential to be impacted by the project.

##### Threatened species database searches

A search of the BioNet Atlas and EPBC protected matters search tool (PMST) was undertaken in September 2024 for the project site using a 10-kilometre radius surrounding the project site. The search of the BioNet Atlas identified no threatened ecological communities (TECs) and no threatened species known to occur within 10 kilometres of the project site.

The search using PMST identified three TECs, 56 threatened species and 12 migratory species likely or known to occur within 10 kilometres of the project site.

##### Vegetation and Threatened Ecological Communities

The Plant Community Types (PCTs) identified through site biodiversity surveys undertaken are outlined in Table 6.1. The association of PCTs with TECs is also shown in Table 6.1.

Surveys have identified the presence of a number of habitat resources for threatened biota including a number of hollow-bearing trees as well as surface rock.

**Table 6.1** PCTs and associated threatened ecological communities mapped within the project site, based on biodiversity surveys to date

<b>Current PCT ID</b>	<b>PCT name</b>	<b>Threatened Ecological Communities (BC Act)</b>	<b>Threatened Ecological Communities (EPBC Act)</b>
PCT0: Not classified	N/A	N/A	N/A
PCT 3373	Goulburn Tableland Box-Gum Grassy Forest	Vegetation on the project site aligns with the Critically Endangered Ecological Community (CEEC) White Box – Yellow Box – Blakely’s Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Derived Native Grassland in the NSW North Coast, New England Tableland, Nandewar, Brigalow Belt South, Sydney Basin, South Eastern Highlands, NSW South Western Slopes, South East Corner and Riverina Bioregions.	The local occurrence of PCT 3376 within the project site does not align with the CEEC White Box-Yellow Box-Blakely’s Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Derived Native Grassland.
PCT 3376	Southern Tableland Grassy Box Woodland	Vegetation on the project site aligns with the Critically Endangered Ecological Community (CEEC) White Box – Yellow Box – Blakely’s Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Derived Native Grassland in the NSW North Coast, New England Tableland, Nandewar, Brigalow Belt South, Sydney Basin, South Eastern Highlands, NSW South Western Slopes, South East Corner and Riverina Bioregions.	The local occurrence of PCT 3376 within the project site does not align with the CEEC White Box-Yellow Box-Blakely’s Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Derived Native Grassland.
PCT 3483	Central Gorges Box-Red Gum Grassy Forest	The local occurrence of PCT 3483 within the project site does not align with any TEC’s listed under the BC Act.	The local occurrence of PCT 3483 within the project site does not align with any TEC’s listed under the EPBC Act.
PCT 3738	Goulburn-Lithgow Tableland Hills Grassy Forest	The local occurrence of PCT 3483 within the project site does not align with any TEC’s listed under the BC Act.	The local occurrence of PCT 3483 within the project site does not align with any TEC’s listed under the EPBC Act.

## Threatened species

Threatened fauna identified on the site during surveys includes the Scarlet Robin (*Petroica boodang*) and the White-bellied Sea eagle (*Haliaeetus leucogaster*), which are both classed as Vulnerable under the BC Act, and the Brown Treecreeper (eastern subspecies) (*Climacteris picumnus victoriae*), which is classed as Vulnerable under both the BC Act and the EPBC Act.

### 6.1.2 Potential impacts

Based on the existing biodiversity values within the study area, the project site is likely to contain moderate biodiversity constraints to a future development project, with the largest constraint likely to be the presence of vegetation commensurate with Critically Endangered Ecological Communities (CEECs) listed under State legislation. There are also likely to be suitable habitat resources of relevance for numerous threatened flora and fauna species.

The following biodiversity constraints are likely to be present in the project site:

- Areas of remnant or regenerating native vegetation that comprise threatened species habitat. A development that includes removal of native vegetation for an SSD or SSI project would require appropriate biodiversity offsets under the BC Act and associated NSW Biodiversity Offsets Scheme (BOS) and BAM.
- A local occurrence of TECs aligned with CEECs listed under the BC Act.
- Habitat resources for a number of threatened fauna species.
- Potential habitat for a number of threatened plant species.

### 6.1.3 Assessment approach

A Biodiversity Development Assessment Report (BDAR) would need to be prepared for the EIS in accordance with the BAM and the Project SEARs. Detailed seasonal flora and fauna surveys would need to be conducted throughout the project site. The BDAR would assess the potential impacts to threatened species, populations and communities and their habitats as a result of the project in accordance with the BC Act and EPBC Act and calculate the biodiversity credits required to offset the impacts of the project.

## 6.2 Amenity

### 6.2.1 Noise and vibration

#### Existing environment

The project site was previously used for livestock grazing, and the land is largely undeveloped aside from several farm buildings located at Cross Station, an agricultural facility on the project site. Surrounding land uses and the broader locality are a mixture of agriculture and rural-residential land uses.

No existing significant noise or vibration sources have been identified in the vicinity of the project site. Seven sensitive receivers have been identified within two kilometres of the project site. These are identified in Table 6.2.

Table 6.2 Identified sensitive receivers

ID	Name	Address	Legal description	Approximate location
1	N/A	409 Hanworth Road Bannaby 2580	Lot 1 DP 873186	20 m east of the eastern project site boundary
2	N/A	358 Hanworth Road Bannaby 2580	Lot 1 DP 626894	200 m south of the project site (south of Hanworth Road)
3	Low Round Hill Housing Complex	335 Hanworth Road, Bannaby 2580	Lot 10 DP 1207877	320 m west of the project site boundary

ID	Name	Address	Legal description	Approximate location
4	N/A	590 Hanworth Road Bannaby 2580	Lot 38 DP 750005	900 m east of the eastern project site boundary.
5	N/A	Hanworth Road Bannaby 2580	Lot 401 DP 1265813	650 m north of the project site boundary
6	N/A	592 Hanworth Road Bannaby 2580	Lot 179 DP 750005	1.7 km east of the eastern project site boundary.
7	N/A	157 Hanworth Road Bannaby 2580	Lot 2 DP 789741	1.75 km west of the project site

## Potential impacts

### Construction

During construction, noise and vibration has the potential to be generated as a result of the following activities:

- Project site establishment and earthworks
- Movement of heavy and light vehicles to and from the project site (construction traffic)
- Loading and unloading of materials and waste
- Construction of ancillary facilities
- Concrete pouring activities.

Noise generating activities during construction works are likely to exceed the noise management limits, given the close proximity of sensitive receivers. Noise and vibration impacts would be short-term and temporary during construction and limited to the proposed working hours (refer to Section 3.3.2). Mitigation measures to avoid or reduce noise impacts would be outlined in the EIS. An environmental management plan would also be developed prior to construction, containing measures to minimise noise during the construction phase of the project.

Construction of the transmission line has the potential to generate noise and impact nearby sensitive receivers. Assessment of these impacts would be considered at the EIS stage of the project once the study area has been confirmed. Sources of vibration during construction would be from heavy vehicle movements, and potentially piling of transmission structure foundations.

It is expected that sensitive receivers are located at a sufficient separation distance to be unaffected by vibration. This would be assessed in further detail during the preparation of the EIS. The proposed construction schedule minimises the construction period (and associated construction noise and vibration) as far as practicable.

### Operation

Key noise generating sources during operation would include:

- Battery enclosures with associated cooling fans and inverters
- Transformers
- A singular battery unit is relatively quiet however when a significant number of units are required, then cumulatively the noise generated can become significant. As the requirement for battery cooling increases so too does the noise emissions from the cooling fans.

There are also existing noise emissions from the existing Transgrid substation that would need to be considered cumulatively as per the requirements of the Noise Policy for Industry (EPA, 2017).

### Decommissioning

Noise generated during decommissioning would be similar to noise generated during construction (e.g. movement of heavy and light vehicles, loading and unloading of materials and waste, removal of facilities, etc.) and would be short-term and temporary, and limited to within the proposed working hours. Mitigation measures to avoid or reduce noise impacts would be outlined in the EIS. In addition, an environmental management plan would be developed prior to decommissioning that would contain measures to minimise noise during decommissioning of the project.

## Assessment approach

A detailed Noise and Vibration Impact assessment of the potential impacts of construction and operation noise and vibration on sensitive receivers would be undertaken to support the EIS. The significance of these impacts would be assessed in accordance with relevant guidelines. This would include:

- Adopting minimum Rating Background Levels from the Noise Policy for Industry, due to the rural (and therefore quiet) location of the site
- Modelling of construction and operational activities and noisy equipment. The operational noise assessment would include consideration of cumulative impacts with HumeLink.
- Identification of noise minimisation measures and modelling the effectiveness of these measures.

Consultation would be undertaken with sensitive receivers potentially impacted by the project, including those near access routes.

## 6.2.2 Visual

### Existing environment

The western portion of the project site where the BESS would be sited, is characterised by rural open terrain which is generally hilly with higher elevation toward the south, and reduced elevation to the north. The sensitive receiver at Lot 10 DP 1207877 (sensitive receiver ID 3) is the primary source of views towards the BESS component of the project site. This visual receiver is located southwest of the project site and has a view of the project site due to the property's location on a higher elevation compared to the lower elevation of the project site. These views are currently of undeveloped land at the project site, and several farm buildings as part of Cross Station, an agricultural facility on the project site.

The eastern portion of the project site where the construction and operation of the overhead transmission line from the BESS to the existing Transgrid substation would take place is also characterised by rural open terrain, and generally hilly with higher elevation toward the north and east, and reduced elevation to the south. Sensitive receivers at Lot 401 DP 1265813 (sensitive receiver ID 5), Lot 179 DP 750005 (sensitive receiver ID 6) and Lot 2 DP 789741 (sensitive receiver ID 7) are the primary source of views towards the overhead transmission line component of the project site. These views are currently of undeveloped land at the project site, as well as the existing Transgrid substation to the south.

### Potential impacts

Construction of the BESS and transmission line has the potential to have a visual impact in the landscape, with the landscape currently largely undeveloped and situated in a rural area. Construction of the project would alter the visual character of the locality from one of a predominantly natural landscape to one that has a mixture of industrial and rural land uses. While this may result in some visual impacts in the area, the existing Transgrid substation, to the southeast of the project reduces the potential impact, given there is an existing industrial character to the landscape. The project would have some potential visual impacts, particularly on the nearby residents at Lot 10 DP 1207877 (Sensitive receiver ID 3), Lot 401 DP 1265813 (sensitive receiver ID 5), Lot 179 DP 750005 (sensitive receiver ID 6) and Lot 2 DP 789741 (sensitive receiver ID 7).

### Assessment approach

A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) would be undertaken for the EIS, to assess visual impacts of all components of the project, including the transmission line, substation and other ancillary infrastructure. The LVIA would consider the locality of the project, including surrounding residences in view of the project site, as well as local roads that may have a view of the project site. The assessment would also include consideration of cumulative impacts with HumeLink. The LVIA would provide details of measures to mitigate and/or manage potential impacts.

## 6.3 Heritage

GHD undertook a Cultural Heritage Due Diligence Assessment (CHDDA) to support this Scoping Report. The assessment and Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System (AHIMS) search findings are summarised below.

## 6.3.1 Aboriginal

### Existing environment

The project site has undergone moderate disturbance in the form of activities including vegetation clearing, livestock grazing, fluvial and alluvial erosion, construction of dwellings/farm buildings, water-source modification, dam excavation and vehicle tracks.

GHD undertook a site inspection of the project site (excluding the transmission line easement) on 12 February 2024. No Aboriginal sites were identified during this visual inspection.

A search of the National Native Title Tribunal's mapping of Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUA) identified that the project is located within the Gundungurra Area Agreement ILUA, Tribunal No: NI2014/001 (National Native Title Tribunal 2023).

An AHIMS search undertaken on 13 September 2024 found 13 sites located in the vicinity of the project site, with no sites located directly on the project site.

### Potential impacts

There is a moderate likelihood for further Aboriginal objects being recorded within the project site. The site prediction model as part of the CHDDA assessment identified that the following Aboriginal objects and places within the project site may be identified:

- Ovens and hearths as roughly circular areas of heat fractured rock associated with charcoal fragments and stone artefacts
- Grinding grooves located amongst sandstone outcrops
- Large remnant native trees within the project site may contain cultural modification
- Quarries within the project site would likely occur in rocky outcrops of silcrete, quartz or quartzite

The project would disturb the previously disturbed ground surface through activities described above in section 3. Further systematic surveys for Aboriginal objects would be undertaken on the project site, supported by consultation with the Aboriginal community to gain an appreciation of cultural significance of any Aboriginal objects found.

The project is located within the Gundungurra Area Agreement ILUA, Tribunal No: NI2014/001, registered in February 2015. The ILUA covers an area of about 6,942 square kilometres southwest of Sydney (OEH 2014). The ILUA does not recognise native title over these lands, and the Gundungurra people agreed to withdraw their native title claim on registration of the agreement. In addition, the ILUA only provides input into the management of lands and water within the agreement area that are National Park, State Conservation Area, Forestry Corporation of NSW lands or Blue Mountains City Council lands, none of which apply to the project site. The project will ensure that the appropriate Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs) are identified and consulted in line with the stakeholder engagement activities for the project.

### Assessment approach

An Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report (ACHAR) would be prepared for the project as part of the EIS. As part of further investigations to be undertaken as part of the ACHAR, a site inspection would be completed by archaeologists and members of the Aboriginal community in accordance with the *Code of Practice for the Archaeological Investigation of Aboriginal Objects in NSW* (DECCW 2010b). The results of the survey would indicate whether test excavation at any specific landforms is warranted. Further investigations would include full consultation with the Aboriginal community following the *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Consultation Requirements for Proponents 2010* (DECCW 2010a).

## 6.3.2 Historic

### Existing environment

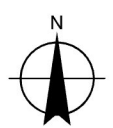
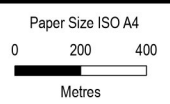
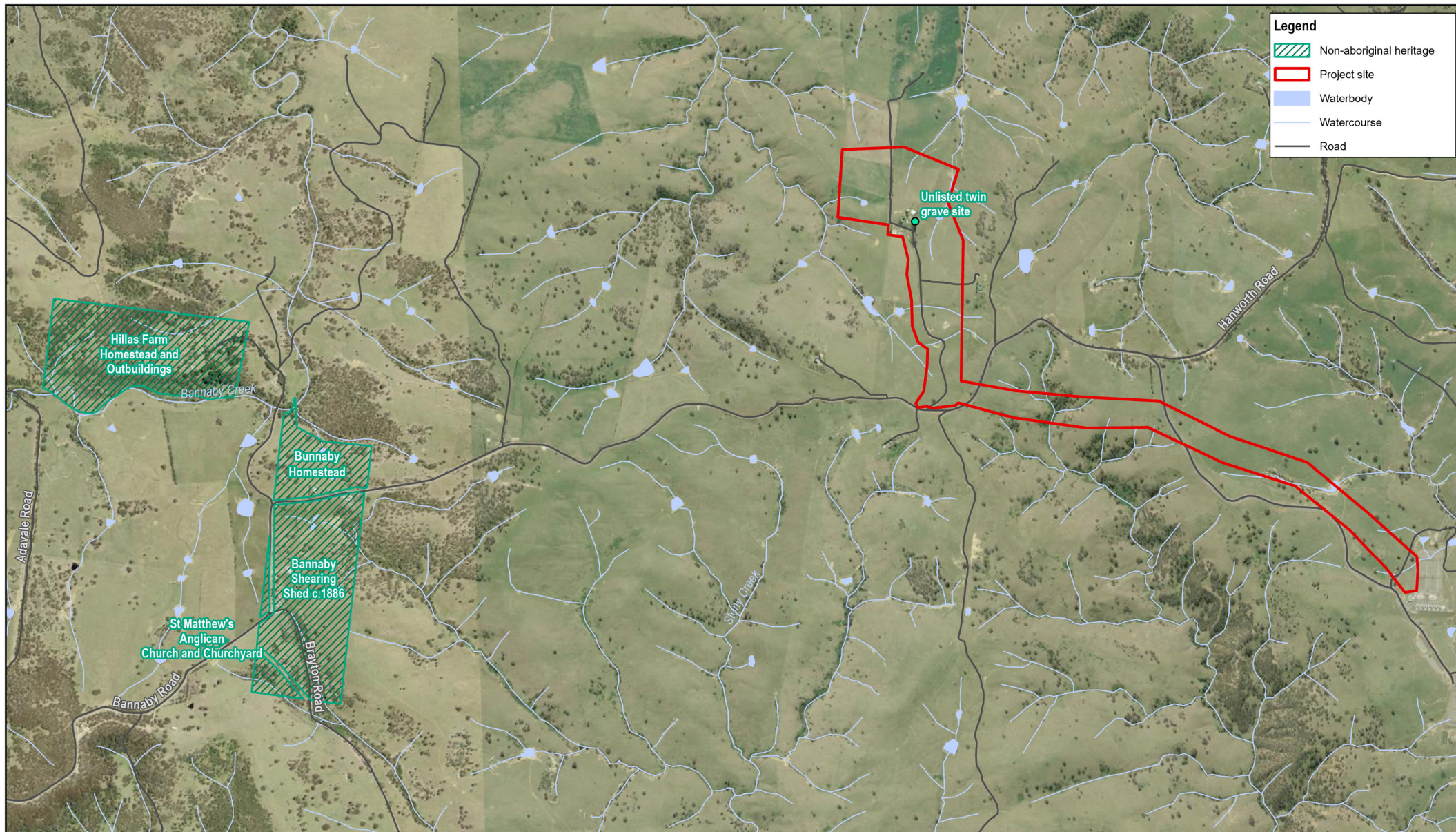
An inspection of the project site was conducted on 12 February 2024 and identified an unlisted twin grave site beneath a large Yew tree east of the existing farm shedding at Cross station. The site inspection also confirmed evidence of additional graves also present beneath the Yew tree, however poor condition and limited ground surface visibility due to long grass prevented identification of these.

A desktop search of the relevant NSW and Commonwealth heritage databases, and the Upper Lachlan LEP 2010 was undertaken in September 2024 for items of historic heritage. The search did not identify any heritage items within the project site and identified one site of state significance and three sites of local significance located within two kilometres of the project site. These sites are summarised in Table 6.3.

**Table 6.3** *Previously recorded non-Aboriginal sites located within 2 km of the project*

	Distance to project site	NSW State Heritage Register	Upper Lachlan LEP 2010 Schedule 5 Listing	National Trust of Australia Register	Highest level of heritage significance
Hillas Farm Homestead and Outbuildings	2.22 km west	Listing 00301	Listing I1	Yes	State
Bannaby Homestead	1.94 km southwest	N/A	Listing I2	N/A	Local
Bannaby Shearing Shed c.1886	2.28 km southwest	NA	Listing I3	Yes	Local
St Matthew's Anglican Church and Churchyard	2.91 km southwest	NA	Listing I4	Yes	Local

The non-Aboriginal sites identified in this search are shown in Figure 6.1.



Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
Horizontal Datum: GDA2020  
Grid: GDA2020 MGA Zone 56

**Penso Power Australia Pty Ltd**  
**Bannaby BESS & Solar Farm**  
**Scoping Report**

Project No. **12640132**  
Revision No. **0**  
Date **12/12/2024**

**Previously recorded European  
heritage sites**

**FIGURE 6.1**

## Potential impacts

Under the *Heritage Act 1977* it is an offence to disturb a burial. The graves identified within the project site during the site inspection would not be impacted by the project.

There is potential for additional burials to be located in proximity to those identified during the site inspection. This area would be avoided completely and not disturbed by project activities. Refer to Figure 6.1 for a markup of the indicative area that would be avoided.

## Assessment approach

A Statement of Heritage Impact (SOHI) would be undertaken to support the EIS. As part of the investigations to be undertaken for the SOHI, the project area would be subject to pedestrian surveys by archaeologists to assess the potential for additional historic values being present. The SOHI would also identify the potential impacts and mitigation strategies required to protect the historic heritage values of the grave sites identified as well as any other non-listed items in the locality.

## 6.4 Social

The initial scoping of social impacts has been prepared in accordance with the DPHI *Social Impact Assessment Guideline for State Significant projects* (DPE, 2023).

In accordance with these guidelines, social impact assessment (SIA) scoping and initial assessment is undertaken early in project development and involves:

- Establishing the social locality to understand the communities likely to be affected by the project
- An initial evaluation of the social baseline of the social locality
- An initial evaluation of social impacts
- Consideration and articulation of any project refinements

This process is assisted by applying the SIA worksheet provided by DPHI. The following section provides an overview of the social locality and the outcomes of the initial evaluation of potential social impacts and benefits.

### 6.4.1 Existing environment

A preliminary social locality was identified based on the location of the project site and the communities most likely to experience impacts or benefits as a result of the project. The preliminary social locality is outlined in Table 6.4.

Table 6.4 Preliminary social locality study area

Interaction with project	Area (ABS Census area)
The project site is located in Bannaby Suburb and Locality (SAL). According to the 2021 Census, there was a very small residential population that live in the locality of Bannaby, and there is limited ABS Census data available. There are no businesses or social infrastructure located in Bannaby. Landholders hosting project infrastructure and nearby local residents may experience social impacts and benefits during construction and operation of the project.	Bannaby Suburb and Locality (SAL)
The closest residential area to the project site is located adjacent to Bannaby in the town of Taralga, approximately 20 km west of the project site. Local residents, businesses and users of social infrastructure in Taralga may experience social impacts and benefits during construction and operation of the project.	Taralga SAL
The project is located within the Upper Lachlan LGA. Communities in this LGA may experience some impacts and benefits during construction and operation of the project.	Upper Lachlan Local Government Area (LGA)

The project site is located at 365, 409 and 486 Hanworth Road in the rural suburb of Bannaby, in the northeast of the Upper Lachlan LGA. The project site would be located on three privately owned lots of rural land currently

used for farming and livestock grazing purposes. There are seven residential properties, within two kilometres of the project site. The Gundungurra people are the Traditional Custodians of the area.

The project site is located on Hanworth Road and accessed via Bannaby Road in the west from Taralga, or south from Brayton Road and the Hume Highway. The Hume Highway provides connections further southwest to Goulburn, east to Wollongong and northeast towards Sydney.

The suburb of Bannaby is predominantly rural, characterised by low density primary production lots. Land use is primarily agricultural, including the production of wool, prime lamb and beef, and also consists of rural residential areas. At the time of the 2021 Census, there were 47 people living across 44 dwellings in Bannaby (ABS, 2022). The Bannaby community is characterised as an ageing population, with a high proportion of the population aged over 50 years (51.1 per cent). As a rural suburb, the top industry of employment was agriculture, forestry and fishing.

The Index of Relative Socio-Economic Advantage/Disadvantage (IRSAD) divides a population into ten equal groups, called a decile. A decile number of 1, indicates the highest level of disadvantage, and a decile of 10, indicates the highest level of advantage. According to the IRSAD (ABS, 2022a), Bannaby scored a decile 7 within the state, indicating a moderate to high level of advantage.

Bannaby is bounded by the Tarlo River National Park in the south, Guula Ngurra National Park in the east and Wombeyan Caves to the north. These are popular visitor destinations for a range of recreational activities including hiking, camping, birdwatching, fishing and swimming. In particular, Guula Ngurra National Park, translated to 'Koala Country', holds significant meaning to the Gundungurra people of the area (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, 2024). There is no town centre in Bannaby, and residents would travel to the nearby rural town of Taralga, located 20 kilometres west, or 30 kilometres south to Marulan to access essential shops and services.

The closest residential area is located approximately 20 kilometres west of the project site in the town of Taralga. Taralga is a small rural village identified as a popular stopover point for tourists traveling to the Wombeyan Caves. The town is characterised by large lot rural residential properties and a small historic town centre. The town centre is situated along Taralga Road and offers a number of shops and businesses, four restaurants, a public school, health centre, history museum and a number of accommodation providers.

At the time of the 2021 Census, there were 403 people living across 232 dwellings in Taralga. Similar to Bannaby, Taralga has an ageing population, with a median age of 53 years. The unemployment rate was 4.7 per cent, which is higher than the Upper Lachlan Shire LGA average (three per cent). The top industry of employment was agriculture, forestry and fishing, followed by health care and social assistance and construction. According to the Index of Relative Socio-Economic Advantage/Disadvantage (IRSAD), Taralga has a moderate to high level of disadvantage.

## 6.4.2 Initial evaluation of social impacts and benefits

The potential social impacts and benefits that may result from construction and operation of the project have been identified through a review of the information presented in this Scoping Report, a desktop review and understanding of the social locality, and based on previous professional experience undertaking social impact assessment for state significant projects in NSW. The potential social impacts have been evaluated according to the characteristics of magnitude as defined in DPHI's SIA Guideline. The outcomes of the social impact scoping process are summarised below.

The initial evaluation found there is the potential for social impacts and benefits to occur during the construction of the project. There are a number of residences located within proximity of the project site which would be located close to construction activities. Due to the rural landscape and amenity of the project site, residents may be sensitive to increased noise, dust, traffic and visual amenity impacts.

Construction and operational activities would utilise the existing road network in Bannaby. Due to the low baseline of existing traffic on rural local roads in Bannaby and agricultural identity of the project site, increased traffic movements during construction may impact the local road network, particularly for local residents.

There is potential for skilled and unskilled residents located in Taralga or the Upper Lachlan Shire LGA to benefit from the 150 peak construction employment opportunities, and 10 to 15 employment positions during operation. A

small number of local and regional businesses may benefit from procurement opportunities, while some local businesses (e.g. food outlets in Taralga) may also benefit from construction workers spending wages.

During operation, there may be social impacts resulting from changes to local amenity, such as changed views for properties located in close proximity to the BESS. Some residents may be sensitive to this change given the rural landscape and farming identity of the area. However, it is not expected to affect the broader community. In addition, while a singular battery unit is relatively quiet, a number of units can produce noise. There are also existing noise emissions from the existing Transgrid substation to be considered. Some nearby residents and community members may be concerned about noise emissions from the facility given the quiet rural lifestyle of the area. Community concerns about emissions could have perceived or actual impacts on local amenity and health and wellbeing.

### 6.4.3 Assessment approach

The outcomes of the SIA scoping exercise indicate that the potential social impacts and benefits that may occur during construction and operation would require a minor level of assessment in the EIS. This would be likely to include:

- A desktop review of relevant secondary data sources including population and economic data and research.
- Consultation with relevant local stakeholders such as the Upper Lachlan Shire Council.
- EIS communication and engagement activities, and Aboriginal cultural heritage consultations, would also be key inputs to the SIA.

The initial scoping of social impacts did not identify opportunities for project refinement in response to the preliminary impact evaluation.

## 6.5 Hazards and Risks

### 6.5.1 Existing environment

The project site is located within an agricultural area and is located south of an existing transmission line. The project site is located in a bushfire prone area included in the Upper Lachlan LEP, as shown in Figure 6.2.

### 6.5.2 Potential impacts

#### **Bushfire**

The project site contains areas mapped both as Vegetation Category 1, Category 2 and Vegetation Buffer. Therefore, consideration must be given to the provision of adequate asset protection zones on the project site layout to minimise the risk of fire through spatial separation of vegetation and battery infrastructure.

Consultation would be undertaken during the EIS stage with the NSW Rural Fire Service and Fire and Rescue NSW, as well as any other relevant authorities identified.

#### **Flooding**

The project is not in an area identified by Upper Lachlan LEP as being a flood prone area. The preliminary flooding assessment found that flooding at the project site could occur due to the following hydrological processes:

- Local flooding from the tributaries of Bannaby Creek flowing through the project site
- Inundation of areas north of the project site boundary due to flood waters surcharging the banks of Bannaby Creek.

However, due to the topography of the surrounding area, the tributary is relatively steeply incised, therefore reducing the impacts of flooding to the project site. Potential flooding impacts at the project site would be localised and limited to low lying areas (which project infrastructure would avoid), however a surface water assessment would be conducted as part of the EIS to ensure impacts are minimised and mitigated.

## **BESS risks**

Installation, commissioning and operation of battery energy storage can present increased hazards associated with overheating, fire, hazardous chemicals and gas emissions.

The design and installation of the battery system would be undertaken in accordance with relevant Australian Standards and guidelines and would be operated in accordance with the manufacturers requirements. Appropriate fire suppression apparatus and installations would be incorporated into the design.

A site operational management plan would be prepared by the service provider detailing information regarding procedures to be implemented in the event of a fire. Consultation would be undertaken with relevant authorities during the EIS stage.

## **Electromagnetic radiation**

Electricity powerlines, substations, transformers and other electrical sources such as common electrical appliances and wiring, all emit electric and magnetic fields (EMF). The Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency considers that for substations and transformers, the magnetic fields at distances of five to ten metres away are generally indistinguishable from typical background levels in the home.

Overhead transmission line connections from the project to the switchyard would generate EMF. However, as the project site is a controlled site and entry would be limited to authorised personnel trained in these hazards and hazard avoidance, human health risks from EMF are unlikely.

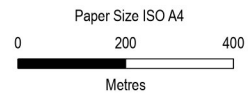
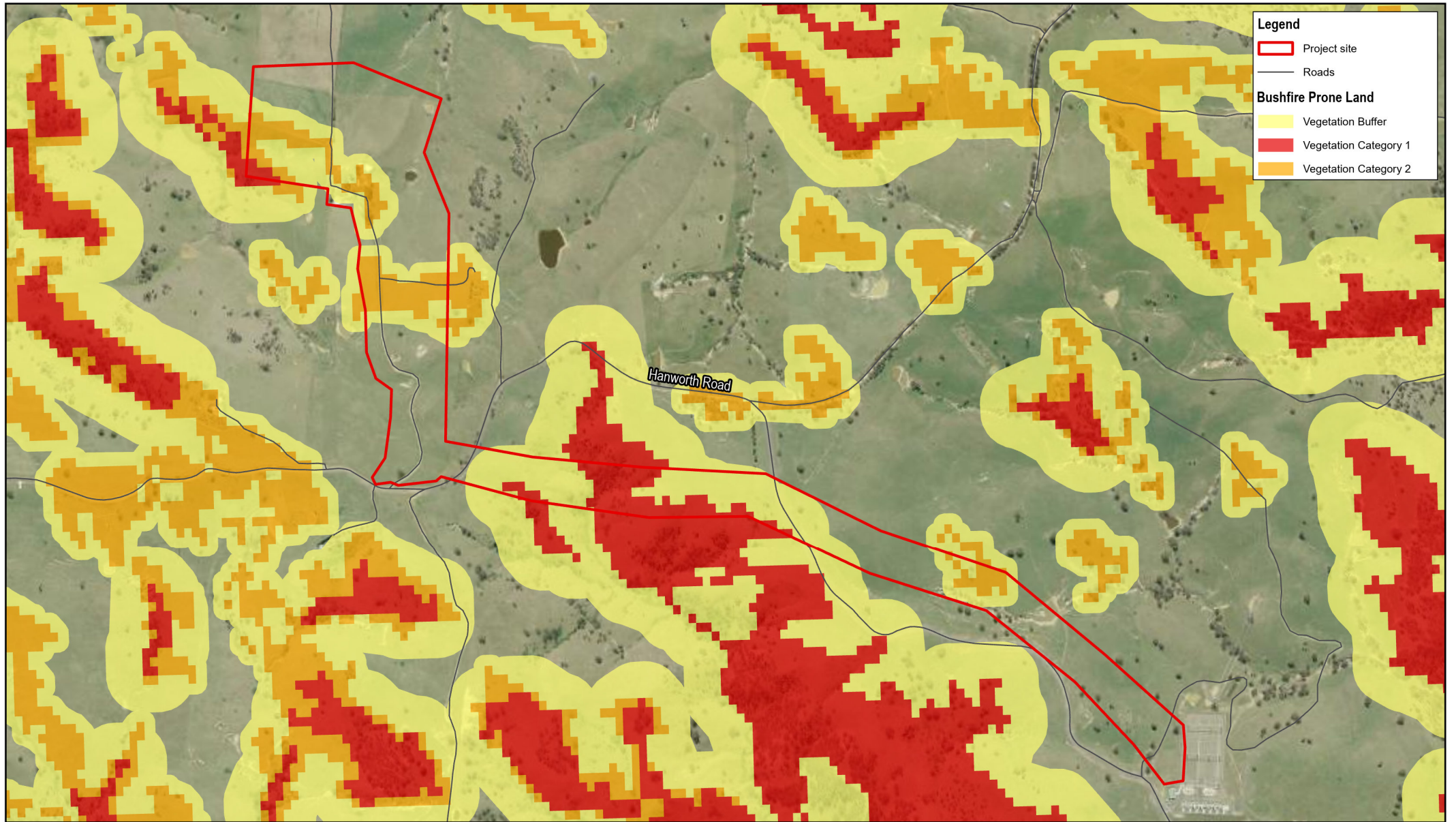
## **Decommissioning**

Hazards and risks during decommissioning would be similar to those during construction and may include an increased potential for bushfire and the generation of waste. Mitigation measures to avoid or reduce hazards and risks would be outlined in the EIS. In addition, an environmental management plan would be developed prior to decommissioning that would contain measures to avoid or minimise hazards and risks during decommissioning of the project.

### **6.5.3 Assessment approach**

The following assessments would be undertaken as part of the EIS to assess potential hazards and risks:

- A preliminary risk screening completed in accordance with the *State Environmental Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards)* and *Applying SEPP 33* (DoP 2011c)
- A Preliminary Hazard Analysis (PHA) prepared in accordance with *Hazardous Industry Planning Advisory Paper No. 6 – Guidance for Hazard Analysis* (DoP 2011b) and *Multi-Level Risk Assessment* (DoP 2011a)
- An assessment of potential bushfire hazards and risks against the RFS *Planning for Bushfire Protection 2019*
- An assessment of potential electromagnetic fields or proposed grid connection infrastructure against the *International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) Guidelines for limiting exposure on Time-varying Electric, Magnetic and Electromagnetic fields*.



Penso Power Australia Pty Ltd  
Bannaby BESS & Solar Farm  
Scoping Report

Project No. 12640132  
Revision No. 0  
Date 10/12/2024

Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
Horizontal Datum: GDA2020  
Grid: GDA2020 MGA Zone 56

**Bushfire prone land**

**FIGURE 6.2**

## 6.6 Land Use and Soil

### 6.6.1 Existing environment

#### Topography

The topography of the project site is generally hilly with higher elevation in the south, east and west of the project site, dropping in elevation in the north towards Bannaby Creek. A tributary of Bannaby Creek runs through the western side of the project area, and the major creek line in the centre of the site drains southeast towards the Tarlo River. The northwest of the project site, and the southeast are relatively flat, while the central portion of the project site is quite hilly and intersected by a gully. There are also several smaller drainage lines that are tributaries of Bannaby Creek, and several farm dams within the project site.

#### Soils

The project site is located in a mixed agricultural and rural-residential area, formerly used as agricultural grazing land, and has been largely unmodified aside from several farm buildings as part of Cross Station, an agricultural facility on the project site and planted border trees along some fence lines.

The waterbodies located on the project site include a major creek line in the centre of the project site which drains southeast towards the Tarlo River, numerous farm dams, a tributary of Bannaby Creek which runs through the western side of the project area, and several smaller drainage lines that are tributaries of Bannaby Creek. There are no groundwater bores located in the project site or project vicinity.

The project site is located within the Kurosols (natric) soil group in the western part of the project site, and within the Rudosols soil group in the rest of the project site (DPIE 2021a).

The project site is not mapped as containing Acid Sulphate Soils under the Upper Lachlan LEP 2010.

#### Agricultural productivity

The project site is not classified under the Strategic Regional Land Use Policy as having Strategic Biophysical Agricultural land (DPHI 2024a) or as DPI State Significant Agricultural land (DPI 2022). The closest Strategic Biophysical Agricultural Land and DPI State Significant Agricultural land is located approximately 7.5 km west from the project site.

The project site is classified by the NSW Government SEED mapping as having very severe limitations to extreme limitations, rated as Land and Soil Capability Classes 6, 7, and 8 (DPIE 2021b).

The project site has historically been used to graze livestock.

### 6.6.2 Potential impacts

#### Construction

The site establishment and construction of the project would result in a minor alteration of the landform at the project site and involve some vegetation clearance and earthworks which would alter the local landscape. Construction of the transmission line and BESS have the potential to generate soil erosion. Movement of construction plants over exposed surfaces may lead to erosion and compaction of soils. Topsoil and subsoil materials stockpiled during construction have the potential to become mobilised by wind or rain.

#### Operation

The project would result in the loss of approximately 16 hectares of agricultural land on the site, comprising the BESS and onsite substation. Agricultural activities could continue to occur under the transmission line.

## Decommissioning

Impacts to land during decommissioning would be similar to those during construction, such as alteration of the local landscape, and generation of soil erosion. Mitigation measures to avoid or reduce impacts to land would be outlined in the EIS.

An environmental management plan would also be developed prior to decommissioning that would contain measures to avoid or minimise impacts to land during decommissioning of the project.

### 6.6.3 Assessment approach

As part of the EIS, an Agricultural Impact Assessment would be undertaken that would include investigation of land use, land, and a soil survey. This assessment will consider the site's current agricultural production value and the implications of locating the project on rural zoned land. A Land Use Conflict Risk Assessment (LUCRA) would also be undertaken to identify potential sources of land use conflict in accordance with the Department of Industry's *Land Use Conflict Risk Assessment Guide*.

## 6.7 Other matters

This section provides an overview of other environmental matters for those environmental aspects that, based on existing information and the description of the project, would require limited or no further assessment in the EIS.

Table 6.5 Summary of relevant information for issues other than key issues for the project

Environmental matter	Existing environment	Potential impact	Level of assessment/assessment approach
Air quality and greenhouse gas	<p>The air quality of the Upper Lachlan Shire is generally good as indicated by the air quality monitoring station at Goulburn (NSW Government 2024).</p> <p>A search of the National Pollutant Inventory did not identify any facilities within a 25 km radius of the project.</p> <p>Existing air quality would generally be impacted by dust from agricultural activities, or by strong winds in drought conditions.</p>	<p>Excavation has the potential to generate dust resulting in short term, localised impacts to air quality during construction. The operation of construction machinery has the potential to generate emissions to air from vehicle, plant and equipment exhausts. These emissions are considered to be negligible.</p> <p>Greenhouse gas would be limited to emissions associated with construction.</p>	<p>Air quality would be assessed qualitatively within the EIS. This would include determining the existing air quality conditions of the project site, sources of potential air pollutants and dust, predictions of air quality emissions during the construction phase, and assessment of potential impacts on air quality.</p>
Built environment	<p>The agricultural facilities that form Cross Station are present on the project site.</p> <p>Existing built forms in the locality and in proximity to the project site are low-density residential dwellings and agricultural structures.</p> <p>There is also an existing transmission line to the north of the project site.</p>	<p>There is the potential for agricultural related facilities at the project site to be demolished or relocated by the proposed works.</p> <p>There would be no impact by the project works to the existing nearby residential dwellings or existing transmission line.</p>	<p>No further assessment is required given that the built environment elements that would be impacted are located on the project site.</p>
Contamination	<p><b>Contamination</b></p> <p>A search of the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) contaminated sites and notified sites database undertaken in September 2024 did not return any results for the project site or immediate vicinity. There are two sites 18 km west of the project site, one with a POEO license and notice, and one with a notice.</p> <p>The local and regional area is predominantly dominated by agricultural land use supporting grazing, as well as areas of native vegetation. Agricultural land uses within the project site could involve the application of fertilisers, herbicides and pesticides which have the potential to be present within the soils.</p>	<p>Soil erosion could mobilise sediment that could be transported downstream into Bannaby creek and other unnamed tributaries in the project area during major rainfall events.</p>	<p>Assessment of contamination impacts would be considered qualitatively in the land impact assessment for the EIS.</p>

Environmental matter	Existing environment	Potential impact	Level of assessment/assessment approach
Traffic and access	<p>Access to the project site is via a private road on the project site, through Hanworth Road, via Bannaby Road which are both local roads. Bannaby Road enables access to Taralga Road, a regional road with a speed limit of 100 kmph. Access roads to the site are sealed.</p>	<p>Construction of the project would require the transport of construction materials, plant and heavy equipment to the project site by road. The existing Transgrid substation to the southeast of the project demonstrates that similar construction activities have already taken place in the area via the project site's access roads and are likely to be suitable for navigation by heavy vehicles.</p> <p>Since Hanworth Road and Bannaby Road are both local rural roads, peak construction times may impact surrounding residents and local users of the road. These impacts are expected to be short-term and moderate.</p>	<p>A Traffic and Transport Impact Assessment would be undertaken as part of the EIS.</p> <p>The EIS would provide additional details on the proposed size of the construction workforce, forecast construction traffic volumes and include a qualitative assessment of the impacts of these additional movements during construction and operation.</p> <p>Where required, consultation with Transport for NSW, key stakeholders and Upper Lachlan Shire Council would be undertaken as part of the traffic and transport assessment for the EIS.</p>
Waste	<p>The project site is situated on largely cleared rural land which was previously used for agricultural purposes. Therefore, the existing land use does not generate a large volume of waste.</p>	<p>The waste streams produced from the project construction are likely to be standard with well-known management options.</p> <p>The likely waste generation associated with the project would mainly occur during the construction stage and may include green waste from cleared vegetation, construction materials, general waste from site personnel and earthworks spoil.</p> <p>Opportunities for reuse and recovery of key waste streams would be identified and documented in the Construction and Operational Environmental Management Plans for the project.</p> <p>All waste produced during construction and operation would be managed and disposed of at appropriate licensed facilities.</p>	<p>The assessment of waste impacts as part of the EIS would identify potential waste streams associated with the construction and operation of the project and identify mitigation measures to manage potential waste impacts.</p> <p>Waste categorisation for potential waste streams would be based on NSW Waste Classification Guidelines (NSW EPA, 2014). The EIS would include standard management practices compliant with the <i>Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Act 2001</i> and other relevant policies and guidelines.</p>
Water	<p>The project site is located within the Declared Catchment – Inner and Outer of the Sydney Drinking Water Catchment.</p> <p>Nearby waterbodies include Bannaby Creek located north of the project site, as well as Stony Creek, south of the project site (south of Hanworth Road) (NSW DPE 2023). There are also farm</p>	<p>Flood assessments for the area identified that there is the potential for localised flooding and inundation, largely due to Bannaby Creek. However, the project is located on the higher parts of the site and therefore flood impacts are not expected to occur.</p> <p>Due to the project construction works of the BESS and transmission line, impervious surfaces would increase in the area, increasing the potential for</p>	<p>The assessment for water as part of the EIS would include impacts of the development on surrounding watercourses and groundwater resources and identify any changes and mitigation measures for flood risk.</p>

Environmental matter	Existing environment	Potential impact	Level of assessment/assessment approach
	<p>dams and unnamed creeks located within the project site.</p> <p>Bannaby Creek and Stony Creek are mapped as riparian lands and watercourses (NSW DPE 2023). A tributary of Bannaby Creek located within the project site to the west is mapped within the Hawkesbury-Nepean Key Fish Habitat (NSW DPI no date).</p> <p>There are no groundwater bores located in the project site or surrounding vicinity.</p>	<p>stormwater flows and increase of runoff. Should deep excavations form part of the project construction, there may be groundwater impacts from dewatering. The transmission line towers would not be located near waterbodies at the project site and therefore have a low to no impact.</p>	<p>Impacts to waterfront land would be assessed in accordance with the <i>DPI Guidelines for Controlled Activities on Waterfront Land</i> (2018), and erosion and sediment control measures would be outlined in accordance with <i>Managing Urban Stormwater: Soils &amp; Construction</i> (Landcom 2004).</p> <p>Assessment of the potential impacts of the project on Sydney's drinking water catchment and determination of whether the project can have a neutral or beneficial effect on water quality consistent with the <i>State Environmental Planning Policy (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021</i>.</p>

## 6.8 Cumulative impacts

Cumulative impacts of the project would be assessed in the EIS. The assessment would focus on the project's key issues that have the potential to generate cumulative impacts with other projects in the vicinity which are likely to have concurrent construction and/or operational timeframes.

A search of the DPHI Major projects database was undertaken in November 2024 to identify SSD and State Significant Infrastructure (SSI) projects within the vicinity of the project that may be relevant for the EIS cumulative impact assessment (see Table 6.6). This search identified the HumeLink project (SSI-36656827), that proposes to construct new transmission lines between existing substations, including one located at Bannaby. HumeLink would involve the construction of a new transmission line within the project site, north of the proposed location of the BESS. The transmission line for HumeLink and the transmission line for this project would likely traverse parallel easements between the project site and connection point to the Transgrid Bannaby substation (refer to Figure 2.5). HumeLink was approved in November 2024 and there is the potential for the two projects to be constructed concurrently, including access road and transmission requirements.

The search also identified the Hanworth Battery Energy Storage System project (SSD-78179499) and the Swallow Tail Battery Energy Storage System project (SSD-78039972). The Hanworth BESS is a proposed 1.2-gigawatt, 4.8-gigawatt hour BESS located at 576 Hanworth Road, Bannaby, about two kilometres east of the project site. The Swallow Tail BESS is a proposed 375-megawatt, 1,500-megawatt hour BESS, located at Lot 39 DP 750005, also about two kilometres east of the project site. Both of these BESS projects propose to connect to the existing Transgrid Bannaby 330 kV substation, whereas the project proposes to connect to the existing Transgrid Bannaby 500 kV substation.

Table 6.6 Known relevant future projects

Project	Distance from project	Status	Potential overlap
HumeLink (SSI-36656827)	Directly north, within 100 m	Approved in November 2024	Construction period of 2.5 years, therefore construction periods may overlap.
Hanworth BESS (SSD-78179499)	About 500 m north of project's transmission line	SEARs received December 2024	24 month construction period, therefore construction periods may overlap.
Swallow Tail BESS (SSD-78039972)	About one km north of project's transmission line	SEARs received December 2024	Construction scheduled for 2027, therefore construction periods may overlap.

In addition to HumeLink, Hanworth BESS and Swallow Tail BESS, it is noted that a number of other renewable energy projects are currently in various stages of development within the Upper Lachlan Shire and Goulburn Mulwaree Council LGAs and may be constructed concurrently with the project. This could place pressure on the regional centre of Goulburn, to house the workforce or provide resources for these projects.

The project may generate cumulative biodiversity, social, visual, Aboriginal heritage, noise, waste and traffic impacts, with HumeLink (SSI-36656827), Hanworth BESS (SSD-78179499) and Swallow Tail BESS (SSD-78039972). The biodiversity, social, visual impact, Aboriginal heritage, noise and traffic assessments would include consideration of cumulative impacts, and these would be summarised in the EIS in accordance with the *Cumulative Impact Assessment Guidelines for State Significant Projects* (DPE 2022c). A cumulative impact assessment scoping summary is provided in Appendix C.

The project also has the potential to generate significant positive cumulative impacts in conjunction with other renewable energy projects in the surrounding area to decarbonise energy generation in NSW. It is also expected that the combined renewable energy projects in the region would have positive cumulative impacts on the regional economy and economies of Goulburn resulting from expenditure on local goods, services and employment. The recently released *Benefit-Sharing Guideline* (DPHI 2024b) will assist in shaping community benefits from renewable energy projects in the region.

# 7. Conclusion

BW ESS is seeking approval for the construction, operation and eventual decommissioning of a BESS with a capacity of 750 MW, overhead transmission line and associated ancillary infrastructure. The overhead transmission line would be connected to the existing Bannaby 500/300 kV substation operated by Transgrid.

The aim of the project is to support the renewable energy power supply in NSW by improving grid stability in the region, assisting to 'smooth out' energy peaks and troughs created by variable renewable energy sources. This will further assist the energy capacity and resilience of NSW and further efforts for Australia to reach net-zero emissions by 2050.

This Scoping Report seeks to obtain the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) for the project. It provides an overview of the project, the site context and the anticipated scope of assessment requirements.

The project would be SSD in accordance with section 2.6(1) of State Environmental Planning Policy (Planning Systems) 2021, since the project is electricity generating works with a Capital Investment Value of more than \$30 million. The project is permissible under section 2.36(1)(b) of the State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021, as the project would be electricity generating works undertaken in a prescribed non-residential zone.

The key environmental matters identified by this scoping report for the project are:

- Biodiversity
- Amenity (noise and vibration and visual impacts)
- Heritage
- Social impacts
- Hazards and risks
- Land use and soils

The project EIS is proposed to address the following:

- A detailed description of the project including construction activities, ancillary sites and project components
- A comprehensive assessment of the potential impacts on the key issues, including a description of the existing environment and assessment of potential impacts of construction, operation and decommissioning of the project
- Measures to be implemented to avoid, minimise, manage, mitigate, offset and/or monitor the identified potential impacts
- Identify and address issues raised by stakeholders and community members.

This scoping report demonstrates the importance of this project to support the transition to renewable energy sources, and to ensure the availability of power.

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# Appendices

# **Appendix A**

## **Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan**



# Bannaby BESS

## Community and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy

BW ESS

19 December 2024

→ The Power of Commitment



<b>Project name</b>		Bannaby BESS					
<b>Document title</b>		Bannaby BESS   Community and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy					
<b>Project number</b>		12640132					
<b>File name</b>		12640132_RPT_CSES					
<b>Status Code</b>	<b>Revision</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Reviewer</b>		<b>Approved for issue</b>		
			<b>Name</b>	<b>Signature</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Signature</b>	<b>Date</b>
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# 1. Introduction

NSW is in the midst of an energy transition from traditional fossil fuel generation to renewable energy generation. Transitioning to distributed and intermittent low-carbon renewable energy sources presents several challenges to our energy system. Deploying battery storage systems can ease the integration of renewable energy and help mitigate the need for costly network upgrades. Energy storage is increasingly vital for maintaining the resilience of our electricity networks. Batteries offer a scalable solution, uniquely capable of quickly and effectively addressing imbalances between electricity supply and demand. By supporting lower emissions, reducing costs, and helping to lower energy prices, battery storage systems play a crucial role in advancing our energy infrastructure.

In response, BW ESS is proposing to develop a 750-megawatt (MW) Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) (the project) at 365 Hanworth Road, Bannaby, NSW (the site). GHD have been engaged to prepare a Scoping Report to request the project Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) from the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI). The Scoping Report will be based on information about the project provided by BW ESS, drawing on the results of previous assessment stages undertaken by GHD, and consideration of the potential for impacts based mainly on desktop investigations.

The Scoping Report will be prepared by GHD accordance with DPHI's *State Significant Development Guidelines – Preparing a Scoping Report* as well as other recent examples of BESS projects prepared by GHD and other proponents.

DPHI's guidelines encourages proponents to:

- Plan early and then engage as early as possible
- Ensure the engagement is effective and proportionate to the scale of the project
- Consider innovate approaches
- Be open and transparent about what can be influenced.

Following the completion of the Scoping Report, GHD will prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). This involves detailed environmental assessments, community consultations, and mitigation strategies. The EIS will adhere to the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*<sup>1</sup> (EP&A Act) and the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021*<sup>2</sup>, ensuring all environmental impacts, alternatives, and justifications are thoroughly analysed. Once complete, the EIS will be submitted for review, public exhibition, and feedback, addressing all environmental and community concerns.

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<sup>1</sup> Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 No 203, 2024)

<sup>2</sup> Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021 (Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021, 2024)

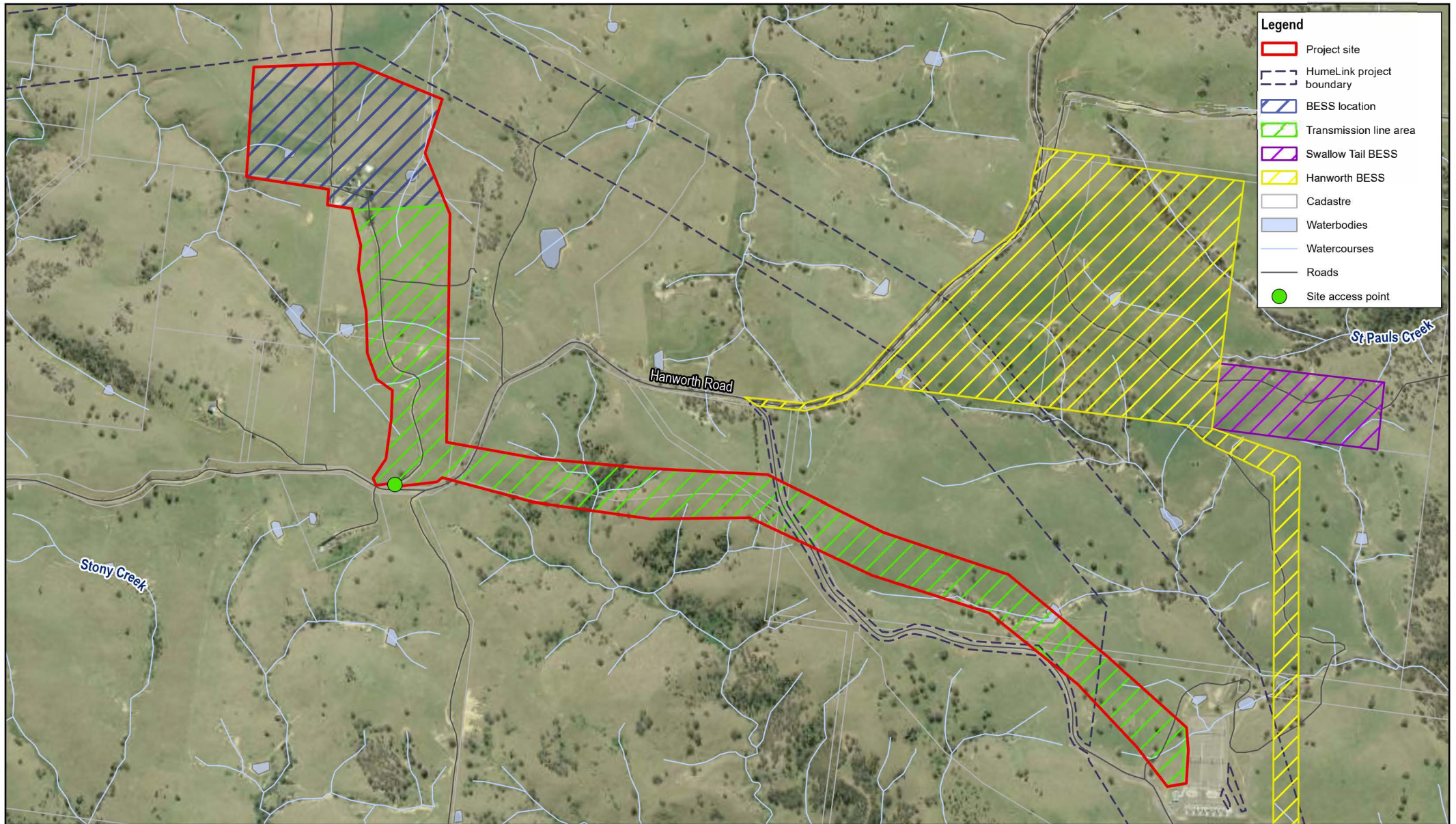
# 1.1 Project background

The project site is located about 20 kilometres (km) east of Taralga and is in close proximity to the Transgrid Bannaby 500/330 kilovolt (kV) substation about two km southeast (see Figure 1). The project also includes the construction of a transmission line connection from the site to the Transgrid Bannaby substation.

The project would involve the construction, operation and decommissioning of a BESS. A BESS is an energy storage system that will store power when there is an excess of energy available and release it during periods of high demand to maintain a reliable energy supply for the network. Key site investigations will be conducted by GHD. GHD is working with Ozark who will lead the Aboriginal heritage assessment, including site surveys and consultation with Registered Aboriginal Parties.

Construction and operation would include:

- 750 MW BESS
- Battery containers
- Inverters
- Transformers
- Transmission line
- Cooling system if required
- Fire suppressions systems
- Switch rooms
- Switchyard
- Parking, site office and amenities for operation use.



- Legend**
- Project site
  - HumeLink project boundary
  - BESS location
  - Transmission line area
  - Swallow Tail BESS
  - Hanworth BESS
  - Cadastre
  - Waterbodies
  - Watercourses
  - Roads
  - Site access point

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**Penso Power Australia Pty Ltd**  
**Bannaby BESS & Solar Farm**  
 Scoping Report

Project No. **12640132**  
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Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
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**Project concept layout**

**FIGURE 1**

## 1.2 Scope and limitations

*This report: has been prepared by GHD for BW ESS and may only be used and relied on by BW ESS for the purpose agreed between GHD and BW ESS as set out in section 2.1 of this report.*

*GHD otherwise disclaims responsibility to any person other than BW ESS arising in connection with this report. GHD also excludes implied warranties and conditions, to the extent legally permissible.*

*The services undertaken by GHD in connection with preparing this report were limited to those specifically detailed in the report and are subject to the scope limitations set out in the report.*

*The opinions, conclusions and any recommendations in this report are based on conditions encountered and information reviewed at the date of preparation of the report. GHD has no responsibility or obligation to update this report to account for events or changes occurring subsequent to the date that the report was prepared.*

*The opinions, conclusions and any recommendations in this report are based on assumptions made by GHD described in this report (refer section(s) 2.1 of this report). GHD disclaims liability arising from any of the assumptions being incorrect.*

## 2. About this Community and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy

### 2.1 Purpose

This Community and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy (CSES) outlines the approach to consultation and engagement for the duration of the Scoping Report and EIS preparation. The CSES describes how this approach fits with the wider project timeline and closely aligns with the NSW Community Participation Plan<sup>3</sup> requirements. The CSES also identifies and map stakeholders, as well as their propensity to engage, and their potential interests and concerns with the project.

In summary, this document

- Provides an overview of engagement to date
- Identifies key stakeholders
- Provides key messages for engagement
- Details the approach to engagement
- Outlines the engagement action plan and project timeline
- Details the communication and engagement tools
- Identifies engagement risks
- Details communications protocols.

### 2.2 Engagement objectives

The community and stakeholder engagement objectives for the preparation of the Bannaby BESS are outlined in Table 1.

Table 1 Engagement objectives

Stakeholder	Engagement objectives	Measures
Government	All levels of government have been informed about the project.	Clear records of meetings and/or correspondence with local, State and Federal governments informing them of the project.
Landowners	Adjoining landowners are aware of the project and how construction will impact them.	Landowners appreciate our engagement efforts and do not object to Bannaby BESS. If landowners do object, evidence that we have engaged appropriately through inform/consult and potential involvement through discussion of potential aesthetics modifications.
Traditional Owners	Traditional Owner feedback is considered and informs the project.	Traditional Owners will be consulted by Ozark during the cultural heritage assessment.
Local stakeholders and community members	Local community members are informed about the project and feedback is acknowledged.	Local stakeholders and communities have multiple avenues to access information about the project through distributed information, and by contacting the engagement team directly if they wish. Feedback from stakeholders demonstrates understanding of project goals and processes, and acknowledgement of the ability to provide feedback throughout the project lifecycle. All feedback is acknowledged and recorded in consultation manager.

<sup>3</sup> NSW Community Participation Plan (Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 No 203, 2024).

## 2.3 Engagement to date

Early neighbour and community engagement has commenced. This has comprised discussions with directly affected neighbours, a letter to local residents introducing the project and an in-person community information session to provide the community with the opportunity to discuss the project and provide any early feedback.

Discussions with directly adjacent neighbours have focused on the potential amenity impacts of the project, particularly landscape and visual impacts, and noise impacts from construction and operation of the project. Feedback received by BW ESS to date has been positive and generally supportive of the need for the project, while noting that full details of project impacts and mitigation measures will become available as the EIS progresses. Key issues raised by direct neighbours are potential noise and visual impacts from the project. The landowner directly to the east-southeast (Lot 1 DP 873186) has entered into an agreement with BW ESS to provide a small transmission line easement for the project, along their southern border.

A letter was sent to 213 properties within 10 kilometres of the site as well as along Hanworth Road to Taralga. The letter outlined the project, provided contact details for the project team, and advertised an in-person community information session.

A community information session was held at the Taralga Memorial Hall on 27 November 2024 from 4:30 pm to 7:30 pm. The project team provided information to attendants on the proponent BW ESS, an overview of the need for the project and proposed project details, as well as seeking feedback from the community on potential benefits the project can provide to the local community. Similar to direct neighbour engagement, the general sentiment from the community was positive. Several opportunities to share benefits of the project were identified, including the potential to improve mobile and internet connections in Bannaby, and potential sponsorship of local community groups.

The project team had additional conversations with Taralga locals to identify key stakeholders for the EIS phase and understand general community sentiment.

### 2.3.1 Other projects in the area – Transgrid’s

Transgrid plans to build a new 500kV transmission line (HumeLink) through local properties to 'future proof' the network and connect the Snowy Hydro 2.0 scheme with a new substation at Wagga Wagga and upgraded substations at Menangle and Bannaby. In response to this recent public announcement, a resident-led advocacy group, the Bannaby Residents' Action Group (BRAG), has been established. BRAG expresses significant reservations regarding the proposed corridor, particularly the final segment which traverses established agricultural land and impacts existing homesteads within the Bannaby community.

### 3. Stakeholder and community identification

Engagement with the stakeholders outlined in Table 2, Table 3 and Table 4 have been identified as key to the success of this phase of the project. Adjoining landholders and some residents will need to be informed and consulted, while other stakeholders, who are likely to be supportive of renewables will be informed.

#### 3.1 Government agencies

Table 2 Stakeholder mapping (Government agencies)

Stakeholder category	Stakeholder	Topics of Interest	Key Risk	Stakeholder interest	Engagement effort	IAP2 level of engagement
Federal Government	Hon Mark Coulton MP (Federal Member for Parkes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Supporting net zero policy</li> <li>- Economic development</li> <li>- Environmental impact</li> <li>- Community consultation</li> <li>- Grid integration and impact</li> <li>- Job creation and economic development</li> <li>- Energy costs</li> <li>- Stakeholder sentiments</li> <li>- Being kept up to date.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Supportive of renewables, inform of project and level of community engagement.</li> </ul>	Medium	Medium	Inform
State Government	Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Supporting net zero policy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Supportive of renewables, inform of project and level of community engagement.</li> </ul>	Medium	Medium	Inform
	Mrs Wendy Margaret Tuckerman, MP (State member for Parkes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Economic development</li> </ul>				

Stakeholder category	Stakeholder	Topics of Interest	Key Risk	Stakeholder interest	Engagement effort	IAP2 level of engagement
	Regional Development Australia – Southern NSW and ACT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Environmental impact</li> </ul>		Medium	Medium	Inform
	National Parks and Wildlife Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Community consultation</li> <li>– Grid integration and impact</li> <li>– Job creation and economic development</li> <li>– Energy costs</li> <li>– Stakeholder sentiments</li> <li>– Being kept up to date.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Concern based on impacts to flora and fauna.</li> </ul>	Low	Low	Inform
Local Government	Upper Lachlan Shire – Pam Kensit (CEO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Energy supply and security</li> <li>– Community consultation</li> <li>– Job creation and economic development</li> <li>– Workforce procurement strategy and accommodation</li> <li>– Ratepayer concerns and feedback.</li> <li>– Increased volume of traffic on the local road network as a result of construction.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Supportive of renewables, inform of project and level of community engagement.</li> </ul>	High	High	Consult
Emergency services	Mandemar Rural Fire Station Fire and Rescue NSW Bowral Fire and Rescue Moss Vale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– A fire management plan is in place during design, delivery, construction and operation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Concern/community concern based on expected problematic fire season.</li> </ul>	High	High	Consult

Stakeholder category	Stakeholder	Topics of Interest	Key Risk	Stakeholder interest	Engagement effort	IAP2 level of engagement
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Fire risks during operation</li> <li>– Impacts and disruption on local roads</li> <li>– Safety.</li> </ul>				
Traditional Owners	Gundungurra LALC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Impacts to country</li> <li>– Property impacts</li> <li>– Visual impacts</li> <li>– Access changes</li> <li>– Environmental changes</li> <li>– Community benefit</li> <li>– Impacts on cultural heritage items and relics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Potential disruption to sacred sites or areas of cultural significance.</li> </ul>	High	High	Consult

## 3.2 Neighbouring properties

Table 3 Stakeholder mapping (Neighbouring properties)

Stakeholder category	Stakeholder	Topics of Interest	Key Risk	Stakeholder interest	Engagement effort	IAP2 level of engagement
Easement negotiation	409 Hanworth Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Easement discussions</li> <li>– Impacts to property</li> <li>– Access</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Removal of prime farmland</li> <li>– Change in aesthetics</li> <li>– Fear of noise/fire/risks/issues during construction.</li> </ul>	High	High	Consult
Impacted landowners	335 Hanworth Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Visibility of the project (including construction activities), reducing the amenity of</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Visual impacts</li> <li>– Noise impacts.</li> </ul>	High	High	Consult

Stakeholder category	Stakeholder	Topics of Interest	Key Risk	Stakeholder interest	Engagement effort	IAP2 level of engagement
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>nearby sensitive receivers</li> <li>– Property impacts</li> <li>– Noise impacts</li> <li>– Access changes</li> <li>– Commercial agreements</li> <li>– Community benefits</li> <li>– Impacts on agricultural outputs</li> <li>– Transmission infrastructure</li> <li>– Could be influenced by misinformation or absence of information.</li> <li>– Construction impacts</li> </ul>				
Indirectly impacts landowners/residents	Other neighbours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Impacts to agricultural production</li> <li>– Impacts on disruptions on local roads</li> <li>– Construction impacts (noise, dust, vibration)</li> <li>– Community consultation</li> <li>– Local jobs</li> <li>– Energy costs</li> <li>– Perceived impacts to property values</li> </ul>	– Opposition to project	High	High	Inform/consult
Utility owners	Transgrid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Impacts on local infrastructure</li> <li>– Land access</li> </ul>	– Access to land and power station	Medium	Medium	Inform

Stakeholder category	Stakeholder	Topics of Interest	Key Risk	Stakeholder interest	Engagement effort	IAP2 level of engagement
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Assessment process</li> <li>- Consideration of impacts</li> <li>- Consideration and mitigation of concerns.</li> <li>- Application of standards and framework</li> </ul>				

### 3.3 Community and stakeholder groups

Table 4 Stakeholder mapping (Community and stakeholder group)

Stakeholder category	Stakeholder	Topics of Interests	Key Risk	Stakeholder interest	Engagement effort	IAP2 level of engagement
Residents and businesses	Bannaby residents and businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Impacts during construction and operation</li> <li>- Impacts to neighbours</li> <li>- Visual impacts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Potential opposition due to misinformation</li> </ul>	Medium	Medium	Inform
Residents and businesses	Taralga and local area residents and businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Impacts during construction and operation</li> <li>- Impacts to neighbours</li> <li>- Visual impacts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Potential opposition due to misinformation</li> </ul>	Medium	Medium	Inform
Community groups	Harden-Murrumburrah Chamber of Commerce and Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stakeholder sentiment</li> <li>- Property impacts</li> <li>- Access changes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Potential opposition due to misinformation</li> </ul>	Medium	Medium	Inform
Local action group	Bannaby Resident Action Group (BRAG)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use of private land</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Potential opposition due to misinformation and previous</li> </ul>	High	High	Inform

Stakeholder category	Stakeholder	Topics of Interests	Key Risk	Stakeholder interest	Engagement effort	IAP2 level of engagement
		– Impacts during construction	experience with Transgrid			



## 4. Engagement approach

Engaging early with targeted landholder consultation activities to support the Scoping Report will ensure sensitive receiver and landholder perspectives are included in the Scoping Report phase and will help mitigate potential serious stakeholder concerns as early as possible.

By doing so, landholders can expect:

- Clear and concise communication about the project and its impacts
- To look forward to engagement activities that encourage public facilitation
- Assurance their feedback is heard and reported back on.

This will encourage a better understanding of the issues and feedback received and how they have been considered in the scope of the project.

Proactive strategic engagement is crucial to support the GHD project team in:

- Undertaking an in-depth stakeholder identification and analysis process
- Listening to and understanding community and stakeholder concerns
- Documenting and mitigating community concerns
- Managing community and stakeholder expectations
- Informing the community about the project's progress
- Highlighting where and how the community can be expected to be engaged in the project
- Providing stakeholders and the community with the opportunity to be involved in the planning, design and environmental assessment stages of the project
- Building understanding of the project.

For a better understanding of the proposed Scoping Report and EIS engagement approach, refer to Table 5.

Table 5

## GHD Scoping Report and EIS engagement approach

Phase	What we will do	Proposed timing	Purpose
<b>①</b> Project is being scoped	Development of CSES and communications collateral	July 2024	To define project benefits and develop key messages, communication material and activities that will encourage meaningful participation.
	Implementation of CSES	August 2024	To encourage meaningful participation of stakeholders and the community who have an interest or influence on the project, maintain open and transparent communication with key stakeholders.
	Collection, collation and analysis of engagement for inclusion in Scoping Report	November/December 2024	To provide a summary of early engagement for inclusion on the Scoping Report.
<b>②</b> SEARs are issued and EIS is being prepared	Update of CSES and prepare project announcement collateral	January 2025	To ensure the CSES and material are responsive to any revisions during the scoping phase.
	Continue delivery of engagement activities and prepare EIS collateral	Q1-pre-EIS exhibition phase 2025	To provide ongoing opportunities for meaningful participation that will inform the final concept.
<b>③</b> EIS is exhibited	Implement activities to provide the community opportunities to engage and understand the project.	TBC 2025	EIS documents are displayed, and community are able to provide feedback for a 28 day period.
<b>④</b> Proponent responds to submissions	Continue delivery of engagement activities for EIS	TBC 2025	To review, collate and respond to submissions to inform a comprehensive review of the EIS and Submissions Report.
<b>⑤</b> EIS is assessed	Provide regular updates on the status of the project	TBC 2025	To ensure communities are kept informed on the project as it progresses through the assessment process.

# 4.1 Engagement planning and delivery

The community and stakeholder management approach for the project will be guided by the project objectives and the core values and code of ethics established by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2). The IAP2 framework, shown in Figure 2, will guide the engagement approach designed to meet the project objectives and deliver best practice engagement. This approach is designed to build credibility and strengthen the project's reputation.

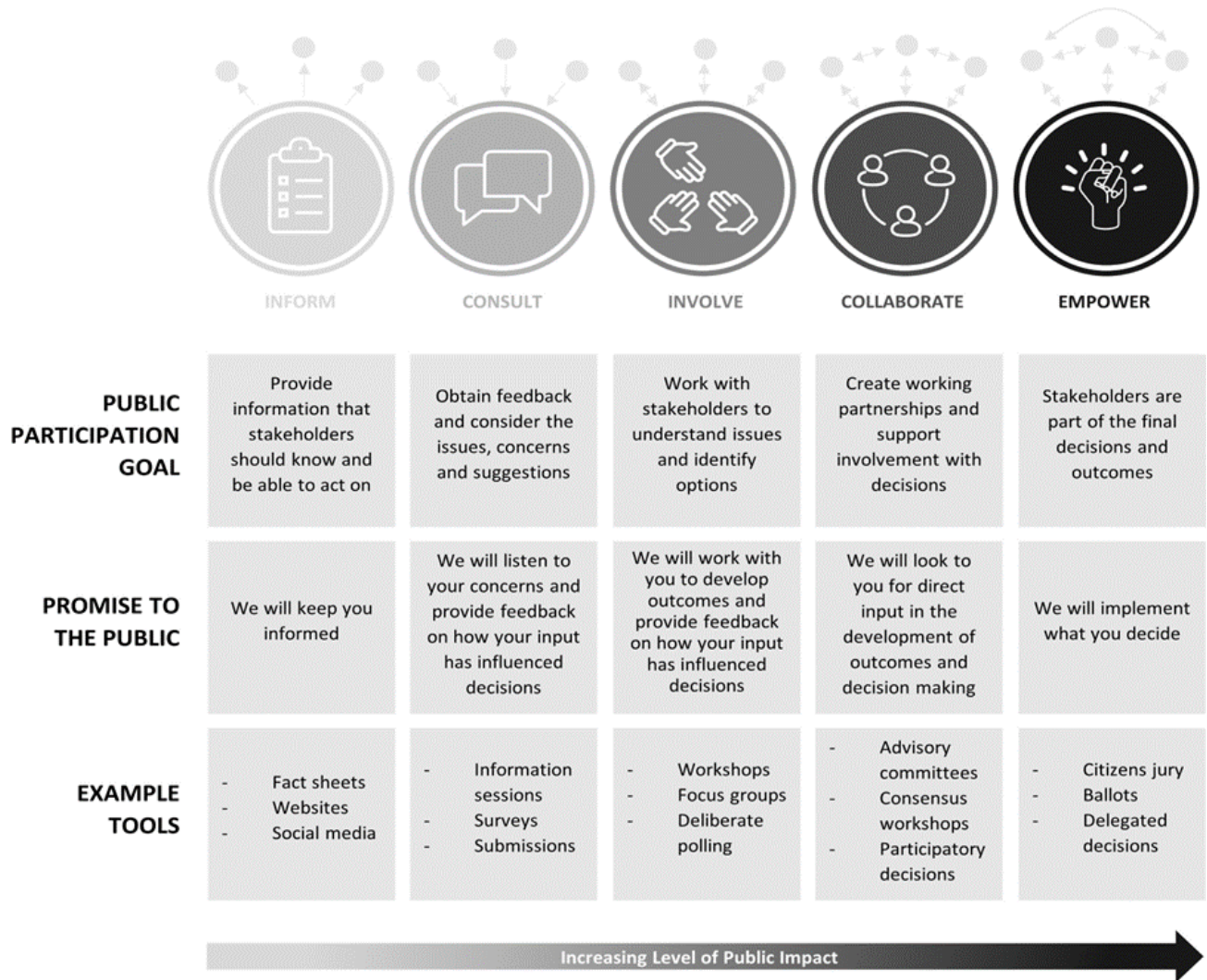


Figure 2 International Association for Public Participation engagement spectrum

The level of participation for this project will be to **inform and consult**. By engaging the community and stakeholders at these levels, we will work with the community to ensure that concerns and aspiration are reflected. Engagement will then move into the **consult** stage to understand how the project will impact them and develop outcomes that are mutually beneficial where possible.

## 4.2 Communications risk management

GHD has identified potential concerns and/or areas of interest that may arise when engaging with stakeholders and the community. These are identified in Table 7. This risk matrix will be revised as the project progresses.

Table 6 Risk level key

Key	
Low	
Medium	
High	

Table 7 Identified risks for engagement

Risk name / rating	Details
Lack of public understanding about the EIS and approvals processes. <b>Rating</b> – High	<b>Summary:</b> Stakeholders do not understand what the EIS process involves and how it influences and affects them. <b>Mitigation:</b> Develop clear and simple communication tools to provide community and stakeholders with the information they need to participate meaningfully.
Opposition to the project. <b>Rating</b> – Medium	<b>Summary:</b> Local residents are opposed to alternative energy infrastructure following the Transgrid project. <b>Mitigation:</b> Identify and understand who the opposition is, reasons for oppositions and address the concerns proactively through clear and simple communication tools.
Decreased stakeholder support. <b>Rating</b> – Medium	<b>Summary:</b> Stakeholders and community perceive that there are not acceptable opportunities to engage. <b>Mitigation:</b> Provide multiple avenues for stakeholders to opt to choose how they would like to participate in a flexible manner. <b>Opportunity:</b> Build the narrative of an empowered, informed community who can participate in engagement in a way that is suitable and of interest to them.
Perceived lack of stakeholder and community consultation. <b>Rating</b> – Medium	<b>Summary:</b> Perceived lack of stakeholder and community consultation due to accelerated project delivery timeframe. This could potentially lead to political lobbying and the formation of protest groups by concerned stakeholders. This could result in State Government and Department involvement, as well as changes to route options, delays to approvals, and delayed project commencement and completion dates. <b>Mitigation:</b> Early identification of stakeholders and community members who may be interested or impacted by the project has been undertaken. Resources have been allocated to undertake effective consultation with a clear outlined engagement approach.
Consultation fatigue. <b>Rating</b> – Medium	<b>Summary:</b> Consultation fatigue due to multiple projects happening in the area causes confusion and hinder engagement efforts. If Hume Link is approved, there will be additional consultation for the residents of Bannaby. <b>Mitigation:</b> It is important to develop an understanding of the other projects occurring in the project area. GHD will examine the opportunities to combine activities such as through joint stakeholder briefings and make engagement easier by bringing it to the people. Engagement tools will be developed with consideration of other projects and their impacts. The messages and information will be easy to understand and easily accessible.
Negative media coverage. <b>Rating</b> – Medium	<b>Summary:</b> Negative media coverage causes reputational impacts. Given there is existing negative media coverage on HumeLink, this project will likely raise attention and thus, the GHD project team need to prepare and manage negative attention in the medium. <b>Mitigation:</b> Transparent, open and ongoing communication with external stakeholders will be maintained with structure issues management. This includes the development of question responses aligned with key messages and with equivalent messaging developed and used by the GHD project team.

Risk name / rating	Details
Stakeholder consultation difficulties. <b>Rating – Medium</b>	<p><b>Summary:</b> Opposition for groups may introduce various challenges, including increased regulatory scrutiny, and the need for additional studies and mitigation measures. These factors may contribute to delays in works.</p> <p><b>Mitigation:</b> Early and transparent engagement for the purpose of working towards a balanced resolution that addresses both development and conservation concerns. An interface for stakeholder involvement will be incorporated into the engagement execution for incorporating reasonable stakeholder suggestions into the project design.</p>
Bushfire. <b>Rating – Low</b>	<p><b>Summary:</b> Community concern of an increase in bushfire risk.</p> <p><b>Mitigation:</b> Vegetation management: keeping the area clear of trees is critical to preventing bushfires. A bushfire assessment is a component of the EIS.</p>

## 5. Engagement action plan

The engagement and communications proposed during the scoping and preparation process of the EIS for the Bannaby BESS are outlined in Table 8. These activities are designed to ensure robust community and stakeholder engagement, transparency, and responsiveness throughout the EIS process.

The project announcement phase action plan is outlined in



Table 9.

The timings indicated are based on the current program for the EIS process specific to the project. Table 10 summarises the engagement objectives, proposed activities, collateral, timing to be produced for each stage.

**Table 8** Scoping Report phase consultation (August/September 2024)

Activity	Planned Timing	Stakeholder/s	Responsible	Status	Completion date
Ongoing easement discussions	August /September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 409 Hanworth Road</li> <li>- Transgrid</li> </ul>	BW ESS	Underway	September /October
Council briefing	As required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Upper Lachlan Shire Council</li> </ul>	GHD project team	Not started	November 2024
Prepare investigation notifications	If required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Neighbours</li> <li>- Transgrid</li> </ul>	GHD project team	Not started	November 2024
NSW Government	As required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure</li> </ul>	GHD project team	This has been prepared by PM	Sent out 4 October 2024
MP Briefing	If required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mrs Wendy Margaret Tuckerman, MP</li> <li>- State Member for Parkes</li> <li>- Hon Mark Coulton MP</li> <li>- Federal Member for Parkes</li> </ul>	GHD project team	Not started	TBC
Community information session	October 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Neighbouring properties</li> <li>- Local community</li> </ul>	GHD project team	Started	November 2024
Webpage development	October 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Visitors to the webpage site</li> </ul>	GHD project team	Not started	TBC
Prepare frequently asked questions	October 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Neighbouring properties</li> <li>- landowners</li> <li>- Bannaby businesses and residents</li> </ul>	GHD project team	Not started	TBC

**Table 9** *Project announcement phase*

Activity	Planned Timing	Stakeholder/s	Responsible	Status	Completion date
Prepare intro newsletter/factsheet	October 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Neighbouring properties and landowners</li> <li>– Bannaby businesses and residents</li> </ul>	GHD project team	Underway	November 2024
Community drop-in session – Taralga – to be advised by Council	November 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Neighbouring properties and landowners</li> <li>– Bannaby businesses and residents</li> </ul>	GHD project team	Underway	November 2024
Resident meetings	As required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Neighbouring properties and landowners</li> <li>– Bannaby businesses and residents</li> </ul>	GHD project team	Not started	TBC
CSES update	Early 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– BW ESS</li> </ul>	GHD project team	Not started	TBC

**Table 10** *EIS phase consultation (to be revised following scoping report completion)*

Activity	Planned Timing	Stakeholder/s	Responsible	Status	Completion date
Prepare EIS project postcard/fact sheet	TBC (2 weeks prior to display)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Neighbouring properties and landowners</li> <li>– Bannaby businesses and residents</li> </ul>	GHD project team	Not started	TBC
Update frequently asked questions	TBC (2 weeks prior to display)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Neighbouring properties and landowners</li> <li>– Bannaby businesses and residents</li> </ul>	GHD project team	Not started	TBC
Community drop-in session including intercept survey	April 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Interested parties</li> </ul>	GHD project team	Not started	TBC
Meetings with interested parties	April 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Neighbouring properties and landowners</li> <li>– Bannaby businesses and residents</li> </ul>	GHD project team	Not started	TBC
Community information sessions (x1 virtual)	Mid 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Neighbouring properties and landowners</li> <li>– Bannaby businesses and residents</li> </ul>	GHD project team	Not started	TBC
Prepare community	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Local councils</li> </ul>	GHD project team	Not started	TBC

Activity	Planned Timing	Stakeholder/s	Responsible	Status	Completion date
session notification letter		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Other state government departments</li> <li>– Industry groups</li> <li>– Community and interest groups</li> </ul>			
Community drop-in session and intercept survey	EIS exhibition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Interested parties</li> </ul>	GHD project team	Not started	TBC
Consultation outcomes report	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– BW ESS</li> </ul>	GHD project team	Not started	TBC

## 5.1 Alignment with Community Participation Plan requirements

The project will adhere to the Community Participation Plan (CPP) requirements as outlined by the EP&A Act, division 2.6 'Community Participation'<sup>4</sup>. This ensures that all community engagement activities are conducted in a transparent, inclusive, and timely manner.

Key milestones in the project timeline will include:

### **Notification and exhibition periods**

- The community will be notified about planning proposals and decisions, with documents made available for public review during designated exhibition periods.

### **Consultation methods**

- A variety of consultation methods, such as public meetings, workshops, surveys, and digital engagement tools, will be employed to gather community feedback.

### **Feedback mechanism**

- Mechanisms will be established for the community to provide feedback, and responses will be documented and addressed.

### **Review and updates**

- The engagement plan will be regularly reviewed and updated to reflect any changes in community needs or best practices.

By following the CPP requirements, we aim to ensure meaningful community participation throughout the project's duration.

<sup>4</sup>NSW Community Participation Plan (Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 No 203, 2024)

## 6. Key messages

### 6.1 Scoping phase messages

The key messages provided in Table 11 are designed to provide a foundation for communication activities and convey the needs, benefits and outcomes associated with the project. GHD will develop messages for each communication task, which will be tailored and will be refined through the life of the project to ensure currency and accuracy.

Table 11 Key messages

Expected Question	Response
What is BW ESS's role?	<p>BW ESS is currently in the planning stage of the Bannaby BESS and will be the developing company for this BESS.</p> <p>BW ESS has a lot of experience in the renewable energy space and have developed and implemented a substantial pipeline of large-scale battery energy storage projects in the UK, Italy and Australia.</p>
What is the project?	The project would involve the construction, operation and decommissioning of a BESS.
What is a BESS?	A BESS is an energy storage system that will store power when there is an excess of energy available and release it during periods of high demand to maintain a reliable energy supply for the network.
What are the project benefits?	<p>The Bannaby Bess will improve the reliability of the area's electricity network by storing power for use during peak periods. This stored power will then be released during periods of high demand to maintain a reliable energy supply for the network. The project would be a key piece of infrastructure in supporting energy storage development in regional Australia.</p> <p>This project will help Australia to reduce its emissions, improve national resilience in energy supply and support affordable energy for Australians.</p> <p>It will also contribute to achieving the NSW target of zero net emissions by 2050.</p>
How large will the BESS be?	The BESS will be 750 megawatts (MW).
Why is the project needed?	By storing excess renewable energy from solar and wind when production is high, BESS can help ensure a reliable and consistent supply of clean electricity, even when weather conditions are not ideal. Additionally, a BESS can act as a buffer, absorbing excess energy during surges and injecting it back into the grid during dips. This helps maintain grid stability and reduce the risk of outages.
When will the project be completed?	<p>The project has not been determined and is subject to impact assessment as required by state legislation.</p> <p>BW ESS is currently in the planning stage of the Bannaby BESS.</p> <p>BW ESS will inform the community of construction timelines if the project is approved by all relevant authorities.</p>
What approvals will be followed for the project to determine the official project route?	<p>State significant projects must undergo a rigorous environmental assessment, and subject to an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).</p> <p>A Scoping Report is being prepared and will be submitted to support a request for Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs).</p> <p>The EIS will be displayed for community and stakeholder comment. The Minister for Planning and Public Spaces is the approval authority under the Act.</p>
What happens if an easement is required through a property?	<p>NSW legislation ensures the amount of compensation is reflective of property market value. It also ensures the landowner has adequate time to consider their options and obtain independent expert legal and valuation advice.</p> <p>If an easement is needed, BW ESS will negotiate with landowners to enter into an agreement for use of the land.</p>

Expected Question	Response
How will bushfire risk be managed?	A detailed bushfire assessment will take place. This will involve understanding the geographic site (context) including topography to identify the potential for bushfire attack, and then will recommend specific bushfire mitigation measure including asset protection zones.
How will local flora and fauna be affected by construction and operation?	Extensive environmental and ecological studies will be conducted during planning to ensure minimal impact on the environment.
How can I give feedback or learn more?	Share your feedback and ideas at community information sessions and scheduled meetings. Email via <a href="mailto:cominput@ghd.com">cominput@ghd.com</a> or call 1800 810 680.

## 8. Communication and engagement tools

A range of consultation and communication tools will be used to achieve engagement objectives. A summary of the tools able to be used is provided in Table 12.

Table 12 Communication and engagement tools, methods and responsibilities

Tool	Description	Creator/owner
<b>Media</b>		
Social media tiles	Social media including Facebook and LinkedIn to provide regular project process updates and allowing the project team to tailor content and use geotargeting to reach interested and impacted stakeholders and community members.	GHD project team
<b>Communication collateral</b>		
Project postcard and newsletter	Draft and design project postcard/newsletters to be distributed across a number of relevant suburbs to invite community to pop-in sessions, including language translation symbol.	GHD project team
Project fact sheet	Project fact sheet that outlines the project description, status, timing, project explanation, maps ad date information.	GHD project team
Project FAQ	One base will be developed, followed by two updates.	GHD project team
Website	Project website page designed to provide general information about the project and facilitate feedback process.	BW ESS
<b>Consultation methods</b>		
Government and departmental meetings	Targeted meetings with key identified Government and Government Departments. GHD will assist in facilitating government and departmental meetings.	GHD project team
1800 number and email	Continuous and ad hoc contact information that allows communication with the project team, as well as facilitating community feedback. GHD's general community number 1800 810 680 number and email <a href="mailto:cominput@ghd.com">cominput@ghd.com</a> to be used.	GHD project team
Targeted landholder consultation	One-on-one meetings with impacted landowners which would act as a mechanism for which feedback can be provided to the project team.	GHD project team/ BW ESS
Pop up kiosks	Pop up kiosks at local community festivals, markets and events.	GHD project team
Surveys	Intercept surveys at community centres, shopping centres and local events (allowed for four separate intercept survey gathering events, including two pop-up kiosks).	GHD project team
Community information sessions	Provide opportunity for meet and greet as well as sharing project information and updates.	GHD project team
Virtual stakeholder meetings	Key stakeholders would be invited and would ensure stakeholder understanding and buy-in.	GHD project team

*\*Note\* Collateral (digital and printed) communication material will be plain-English and accessible to a wide audience. All collateral on the website will be WCAG compliant.*

# 9. Protocols

## 9.1 Roles and responsibilities

To provide clarity around key responsibilities, we have outlined the roles in Table 13.

Table 13 Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
BW ESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Attend key stakeholder meetings, including Council, landowners, neighbours and Aboriginal community, as required.</li> <li>- Discussions with landowners around easement negotiations.</li> <li>- Meet the <i>Undertaking Engagement Guidelines for State Significant Projects</i> and ensure that community and stakeholder engagement continues to be proactive and comprehensive.</li> <li>- Provide guidance to the project team on stakeholders, insights and appropriate community engagement session framing.</li> <li>- High quality maps to support the stakeholder identification process and collateral development.</li> <li>- Undertake all media liaison as required</li> <li>- Provide branding guidelines and templates for the project.</li> <li>- Provide staff to support engagement events as required</li> <li>- Approve reports and collateral.</li> </ul>
GHD project team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prepare and implement community and stakeholder engagement strategy.</li> <li>- Advise the team on the obligations and requirements for the project.</li> <li>- Consult with relevant stakeholders captured in the engagement plan and maintain positive relationships with key stakeholders.</li> <li>- Draft communication materials and coordinate approvals process – newsletter, property owner notification letter, social media tiles</li> <li>- Facilitate stakeholder meetings</li> <li>- Attend in-person and one virtual community information sessions</li> <li>- Complete intercept surveys</li> </ul>

## 9.2 Communication protocols

### 9.2.1 Approval of communication material

All material will be documented in plain English and will be based on approved messaging. Once the collateral has been drafted, the communication material will be reviewed and endorsed by BW ESS prior to distribution.

### 9.2.2 Media enquiries and releases

BW ESS will undertake all media liaison as required.

### 9.2.3 Social Media

Social media will be used to provide project process updates and news to the general community. GHD will prepare two social media tiles for BW ESS to use throughout the early engagement period to raise awareness of the project and its objectives. Updates will be released as agreed with BW ESS's media team.

## 9.2.4 Record keeping

Details of all meetings, phone calls, emails, interactions, notifications and/or newsletters, along with all engagement's events, will be stored in GHD's Consultation Manager database throughout the lifespan of the project. These protocols include the type of engagement activity and feedback received. Complaints will also be recorded through the system.

## 9.3 Reporting

There are a number of ways that GHD will formally and informally report on community enquires received, community sentiment and issues / risks. These include:

- A monthly report including key activities, statistics and any issues
- Attendance and verbal reporting at meetings regarding issues and risks
- Verbal reporting, on an as needed basis, for urgent issues or stakeholder contacts

## 9.4 Enquiries and complaints management

Responding to enquiries and complaints promptly and effectively is central to effective project communications and building relationships with stakeholders and the community.

Enquiries and complaints may be received directly by members of the Stakeholder and Engagement team via the community information line (1800 810 680) or the project's community email address [cominput@ghd.com](mailto:cominput@ghd.com). All project communication materials contain these central contact details.

The GHD project team is responsible for managing enquiries and complaints relating to the project. They will seek input and assistance from key members of the project team as needed, investigate the source of the complaint to ensure an appropriate solution is reached and will remain the point of contact until the issue is resolved.

# Appendices

# **Appendix A**

**Revised scoping phase action plan**

**Table 14** Updated Action Plan

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Planned Timing</b>	<b>Stakeholders</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Completion date</b>
Notification letter	Prepared late October to go early to mid-November	Neighbouring properties	GHD project team	Completed	November 2024
Notification letter	Prepared late October to go early to mid-November	Residents and businesses	GHD project team	Completed	November 2024
Meeting with Council	As required	Upper Lachlan Shire Council	GHD project team	Completed	November 2024
MP briefing	As required	Federal and state members for Parkes	GHD project team	Planned for 2025	TBC



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# **Appendix B**

**Scoping summary table**

Level of assessment	Matter	Cumulative impact assessment?	Engagement	Relevant government plans, policies and guidelines	Scoping report reference
<b>Key issues</b>					
Standard	Biodiversity	Yes	Specific	<i>Biodiversity Assessment Method</i> (Department of Planning, Industry and Environment 2020)	Section 6.1
Detailed	Amenity – noise and vibration	Yes	Specific	<i>Noise Policy for Industry</i> (Environment Protection Authority 2017) <i>Interim Construction Noise Guideline</i> (Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water 2019) <i>NSW Road Noise Policy Guideline</i> (Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water 2011) <i>Assessing vibration: A technical guideline</i> (Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water 2006)	Section 6.2
Detailed	Amenity – visual	Yes	Specific	<i>Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third Edition</i> (2013) (GLVIA), prepared by the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment	Section 6.2
Standard	Aboriginal cultural heritage	Yes	Specific	<i>Guide to Investigating, Assessing and Reporting on Aboriginal Cultural Heritage in New South Wales</i> (Office of Environment and Heritage 2011) <i>Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Consultation Requirements for Proponents</i> (Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water 2010)	Section 6.3
Standard	Historic heritage	No	General	<i>Assessing Significance for Historical Archaeological Sites and 'Relics'</i> (Heritage Branch of the Department of Planning 2009)	Section 6.3
Standard	Social	Yes	General	<i>Social Impact Assessment Guideline</i> (Department of Planning and Environment February 2023)	Section 6.4
Standard	Hazards and risks	No	General	<i>Assessment Guideline: Multi-Level Risk Assessment</i> (Department of Planning and Infrastructure, 2011) <i>Guidelines for the Assessment and Management of Groundwater Contamination</i> (NSW Environment Protection Authority 2007) <i>Planning For Bushfire Protection</i> (NSW Rural Fire Service 2019)	Section 6.5
Standard	Land use and soil	No	General	<i>Land Use Conflict Risk Assessment Guide</i> (Department of Primary Industries 2011)	Section 6.6
<b>Other issues</b>					
Standard	Built environment	No	Specific	<i>Land Use Conflict Risk Assessment Guide</i> (Department of Primary Industries 2011)	Section 6.7

Level of assessment	Matter	Cumulative impact assessment?	Engagement	Relevant government plans, policies and guidelines	Scoping report reference
Standard	Air quality and greenhouse gas	No	General	<i>Approved Methods for Modelling and Assessment of Air Pollutants in NSW (2022)</i> <i>Guidance on the Assessment of Dust from Demolition and Construction, Institute of Air Quality Management (IAQM) (2016)</i>	Section 6.7
Standard	Contamination	No	General	<i>National Environment Protection (Assessment of Site Contamination) Measure (National Environment Protection Council 2011)</i> <i>Guidelines on the Duty to Report Contamination under the Contaminated Land Management Act 1997 (Environment Protection Authority 2015)</i>	Section 6.7
Standard	Traffic and access	Yes	General	<i>Guide to traffic management Part 12: Integrated Transport Assessments for Developments (Austroads 2020)</i> <i>Traffic Modelling Guideline (TfNSW 2013)</i>	Section 6.7
Standard	Waste	Yes	General	<i>Waste Classification Guidelines (Environment Protection Authority 2016)</i> <i>NSW Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy 2041 (Environment Protection Authority 2022)</i>	Section 6.7
Standard	Water	No	General	<i>Australian and New Zealand guidelines for fresh and marine water quality (ANZECC &amp; ARMCANZ 2000)</i> <i>Guidelines for Groundwater Protection in Australia</i> <i>Guidelines for Groundwater Documentation for SSD/SSI Projects - Technical guideline</i>	Section 6.7

# **Appendix C**

**Cumulative impact assessment scoping  
summary**

**Table 8.1** Cumulative impact assessment scoping summary

Future project	Approximate distance to project	Project status/ indicative timing/ overlap	Potential overlap between impact of project on assessment matter and impact of other project on the same assessment matter						
			Relevant assessment matters						
			Biodiversity	Social	Visual	Aboriginal heritage	Noise	Traffic	Waste
HumeLink	Within 100 m north	Approved in November 2024. Construction period of 2.5 years, therefore construction periods may overlap	Biodiversity impacts directly adjoining site.	Cumulative social impacts given cluster of projects.	Cumulative visual impacts from transmission lines.	Potential for cumulative impacts if multiple sites identified in assessment.	Potential for cumulative noise emissions.	Access via Hanworth Road and Bannaby Road.	Potential for concurrent cumulative waste generation.
Hanworth BESS	500 m north	SEARs received December 2024. 24 month construction period, therefore construction periods may overlap	Biodiversity impacts nearby project site.	Cumulative social impacts given cluster of projects.	Cumulative visual impacts from transmission lines.	Potential for cumulative impacts if multiple sites identified in assessment.	Potential for cumulative noise emissions.	Access via Hanworth Road and Bannaby Road.	Potential for concurrent cumulative waste generation.
Swallow Tail BESS	One km north	SEARs received December 2024. Construction scheduled for 2027, therefore construction periods may overlap	Biodiversity impacts nearby project site.	Cumulative social impacts given cluster of projects.	Cumulative visual impacts from transmission lines.	Potential for cumulative impacts if multiple sites identified in assessment.	Potential for cumulative noise emissions.	Access via Hanworth Road and Bannaby Road.	Potential for concurrent cumulative waste generation.

Key:

Detailed Assessment

Standard Assessment

