Vales Point Battery Energy Storage System

Scoping Report

Final

August 2025

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Prepared by
Umwelt (Australia) Pty Limited

On behalf of
The Proponent (a joint venture between Delta Power & Energy Pty Ltd, and Samsung Construction and Trading (C&T) Corporation)

Project Director:	Lachlan Sweeney
Project Manager:	Jai Roby
Report No.:	32016/R01
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This report was prepared using Umwelt's ISO 9001 certified Quality Management System.

Acknowledgement of Country

Umwelt acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and their continuing values, culture and connection to the land, waters and sky.

We pay our respects to Elders past and present.

The below image is from the artwork *Yapung Maryiyang* (Pathway Forward) by Saretta Fielding.

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Document Status

Rev No.	Reviewer Name	Date	Approved for Issue Name	Date
Final	Jai Roby	27/08/2025	Lachlan Sweeney	27/08/2025

Abbreviations and Key Terms

Abbreviation/Key Terms	Description
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
AC	Alternating Current
ACHA	Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment
ACM	Asbestos Containing Material
AHIMS	Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System
Associated Receiver	Residential or non-residential landowner identified as a potential receiver of impacts during construction or operation of the Project (agreements are in place between Associated Receivers and the Proponent)
BAM	Biodiversity Assessment Method
BC Act	NSW *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*
BDAR	Biodiversity Development Assessment Report
BESS	Battery Energy Storage System
BoM	Bureau of Meteorology
BSAL	Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land
Central Coast CSP	Central Coast Community Strategic Plan 2018–2028
Central Coast LSPS	Central Coast Local Strategic Plan Statement 2036
CIA	Cumulative Impact Assessment
CLM Act	NSW *Contaminated Land Management Act 1997*
Crown Land Act	NSW *Crown Land Management Act 2016*
CSEP	Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan
DC	Direct Current
Commonwealth DCCEEW	Commonwealth Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water
Delta	Delta Power & Energy Pty Ltd
DPHI	NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure
EEAP	NSW Energy Efficiency Action Plan
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EMF	Electromagnetic Fields
EnergyCo	Energy Corporation of NSW
EP&A Act	NSW *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*
EPBC Act	Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*
EPL	Environment Protection Licence
FTE	Full Time Equivalent

Abbreviation/Key Terms	Description
GDEs	Groundwater Dependant Ecosystems
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
Ha	Hectare
Host Landholder	Landholder whose property is proposed to host the Project
ICNIRP	International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection
IPC	Independent Planning Commission
kV	Kilovolt
kVh	Kilovolt hour
LEP	Local Environment Plan
LGA	Local Government Area
LVIA	Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
MAH	Mono-aromatic hydrocarbons
MNES	Matter of National Environmental Significance
MV	Medium Voltage
MW	Megawatt
MWh	Megawatt Hour
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
NEM	National Electricity Market
NEPC	National Environment Protection Council
NEPM	National Environment Protection Measure
NIS	Network Infrastructure Strategy
Non-Associated Receiver	Residential or non-residential landowner identified as a potential receiver of impacts during construction or operation of the Project (no agreements are in place between Non-Associated Receivers and the Proponent)
NSW	New South Wales
NSW EPA	NSW Environment Protection Authority
NTSCORP	Native Title Services
O&M	Operations and Maintenance
OSOM	Over-size, over-mass vehicle
PCT	Plant Community Type
PFAS	Per-and poly-fluoroalkyl substances
PHA	Preliminary Hazard Analysis
POEO Act	NSW *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997*
Project Area	The lot on which the Project is proposed to be developed (i.e., Lot 102, DP 1065718)
Project Footprint	The area encompassing the proposed BESS
Proponent	The Proponent, a joint venture between Delta Power & Energy Pty Ltd, and Samsung Construction and Trading (C&T) Corporation

Abbreviation/Key Terms	Description
PSI	Preliminary Site Investigation
RAP	Registered Aboriginal Party
REAP	Renewable Energy Action Plan
REZ	Renewable Energy Zone
RFS	NSW Rural Fire Service
RNE	Register of the National Estate
Roads Act	NSW *Roads Act 1993*
SAC	Site Assessment Criteria
Samsung	Samsung Construction and Trading (C&T) Corporation
SEARs	Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements
SHR	State Heritage Register
SIA	Social Impact Assessment
SSD	State Significant Development
SSI	State Significant Infrastructure
TI SEPP	State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021
TTIA	Traffic and Transport Impact Assessment
Umwelt	Umwelt (Australia) Pty Ltd
WM Act	NSW *Water Management Act* (2000)
WRIA	Water Resources Impact Assessment
WSP	Water Sharing Plan

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Project Overview

Delta Power & Energy Pty Ltd (Delta) in partnership with Samsung Construction and Trading (C&T) Corporation (Samsung), propose to develop the Vales Point Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) (the Project) to provide increased energy security and strengthen supply reliability as more renewable generation is integrated into the electricity network. The Project is located on part of Lot 102, DP 1065718 (the Project Area) in the Central Coast Local Government Area (LGA), approximately 1 kilometre (km) southeast of Mannering Park town centre, New South Wales (NSW) (refer to **Figure 1.1**). The Project Area is located wholly within the boundary of the existing Vales Point Power Station, which is owned and operated by Delta.

The BESS is proposed to have a capacity of 400 megawatts (MW) / 800-megawatt hour (MWh), connecting to Transgrid's existing Vales Point 330 kilovolt (kV) Substation located directly northwest of the Project Area.

1.2 The Proponent

The Proponent for the proposed development of the Vales Point BESS Project is a joint venture between Delta Power & Energy Pty Ltd (Delta), and Samsung Construction and Trading (C&T) Corporation (Samsung), refer to **Table 1.1** for proponent details.

Delta owns and operates the Vales Point Power Station where the Project is situated. Delta is a key electricity generator in the National Electricity Market (NEM), supplying approximately four percent of the market's total demand and has extensive experience in the development, construction and operation of large-scale electricity generation infrastructure.

Delta is a subsidiary of Sev.en Global Investments Pty Ltd, is an Australian corporation with its office at Level 9, 580 George Street, Sydney, NSW, 2000, Australia (ABN 75 162 696 335).

Samsung is a global corporation with business operations in engineering and construction, trading and investment, fashion, and resorts, operating in over 50 countries. Samsung is an internationally respected technology company and is undertaking the development of several renewable energy and large-scale energy storage projects internationally and across Australia.

Samsung, is a corporation duly organised and existing under the Laws of the Republic of Korea with office at 26, Sangil-ro 6-gil, Gangdong-gu, Seoul, Republic of Korea and its Australian office at Level 2, 44 Market Street Sydney, NSW, 2000, Australia (ABN 49 160 079 470).

Table 1.1 Proponent Details

Requirement	Details
Full Name(s)	Delta Power & Energy Pty Ltd
Postal Address	Level 9, 580 George Street Sydney, NSW, 2000
Lot and Address Details	Lot 102, DP 1065718 200 Vales Road Mannering Park, NSW, 2259
ABN(s)	75 162 696 335
Nominated Contact	Anthony Callen

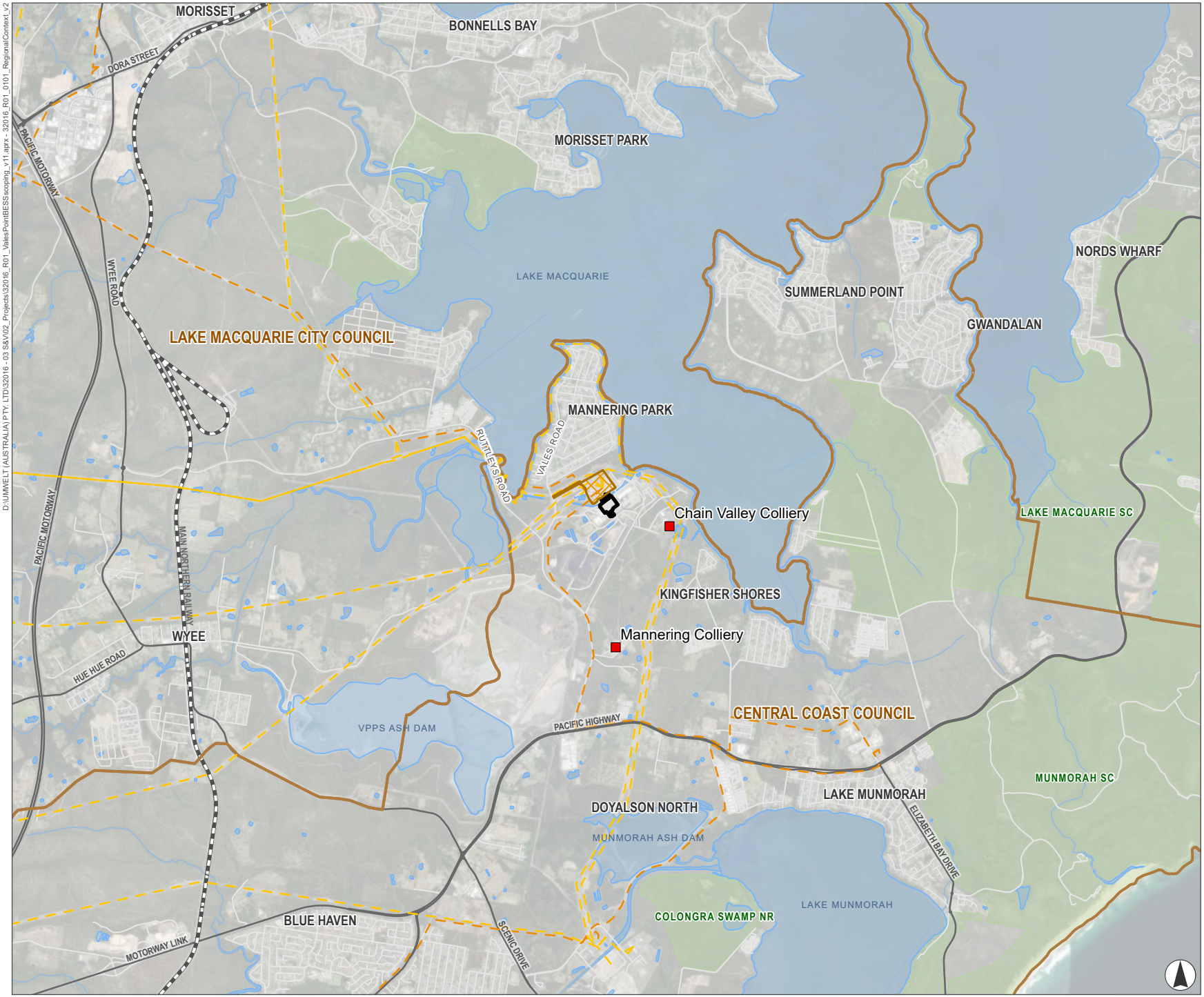

FIGURE 1.1

Regional Context

Legend

- Project Area
- Vales Point 330 kV Substation
- Reserve
- Local Government Area (LGA)
- Waterbody
- Watercourse
- 132 kV Transmission Line
- 330 kV Transmission Line
- Railway
- Main Road
- Local Road

0 1 2

Kilometres

Scale 1:63,760 at A4
GDA2020 MGA Zone 56

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Image Source: ESRI Basemap (2025) | **Data Source:** NSW DFSI (2025)

1.3 Project Objectives

The objectives of the Project are to:

- Contribute to and support the NEM by providing energy storage capacity and improving the security, stability, and resilience of the NEM;
- Avoid, minimise, and mitigate adverse impacts on the environment and community during construction, operation and decommissioning/ repowering phases;
- Maintain a strong network of positive and long-term relationships within the local community and contribute to economic and social growth within the Central Coast LGA and surrounds; and
- Utilise a brownfield site for beneficial purposes and make efficient use of existing electrical infrastructure, notably the Vales Point 330 kV Substation.

1.4 Purpose of this Document

This Scoping Report aims to provide a description of the Project to key regulatory agencies and to identify the key environmental, cultural and social matters of relevance to the Project to inform the preparation of the Planning Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs).

Under the provisions of Clause 4.12(8) of the NSW *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act), an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is required (and would be prepared) to accompany the State Significant Development (SSD) application for the Project, to be lodged with the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI). The SEARs would identify specific assessment considerations relevant to the Project that must be addressed in the EIS.

This Scoping Report has been prepared in accordance with the following guidelines:

- State Significant Development Guidelines – preparing a scoping report (Appendix A) (DPE, 2022a) (SSD Scoping Report Guidelines);
- Social Impact Assessment Guidelines for State Significant Projects (DPE, 2023) (SIA Guidelines);
- Undertaking Engagement Guidelines for State Significant Projects (DPHI, 2024) (Engagement Guidelines); and
- Cumulative Impact Assessment Guidelines (DPIE, 2022) (CIA Guidelines).

1.5 Structure of This Report

As per the SSD Scoping Report Guidelines, this report has the following sections:

- **Section 1.0 (Introduction):** Introduces the Project, the Proponent and provides an outline of the structure of the document.
- **Section 2.0 (Strategic Context):** Outlines the strategic context for the Project, including the justification for the Project, a summary of the locality in which the Project would be undertaken and an overview of the environmental, social, and economic context.

- **Section 3.0 (The Project):** Contains a description of the Project, including an overview of alternatives considered and strategies to avoid and minimise environmental, cultural and social impacts.
- **Section 4.0 (Statutory Context):** Summarises the relevant State and Commonwealth statutory context applicable to the approval process for the Project.
- **Section 5.0 (Stakeholder Engagement):** Describes the stakeholder engagement program for the Project and identifies the environmental, social, and economic matters identified during the scoping phase for further consideration in the EIS.
- **Section 6.0 (Proposed Assessment of Impacts):** Contains analysis of the environmental, cultural and social matters relevant to the Project and the assessments proposed to be completed for the EIS.
- **Section 7.0:** References.
- **Appendix A**: Scoping Summary Table.
- **Appendix B**: Social Impact Scoping Report.
- **Appendix C**: AHIMS Basic Search.
- **Appendix D**: BDAR Waiver.
- **Appendix E**: EPBC Act Protected Matters Search Report.
- **Appendix F**: SIA Worksheet.
- **Appendix G**: Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan.

2.0 Strategic Context

2.1 Project Need

With many of the State's largest coal fired power stations beginning to reach the end of their operational life and set to close by 2035, the need to transform how energy is generated and used throughout the State is apparent. One of the challenges frequently identified in the transition to a renewable energy-based electricity grid is the intermittency of most forms of renewable energy generation. That is; wind and solar, the two most prominent forms of renewable energy in Australia, are strong when weather and climatic conditions are suitable, but during off-peak conditions they are less able to consistently meet demand. As such, a need has been identified for energy storage systems (Suberu, Mustafa, & Bashir, 2014).

As an energy storage facility, the Project as well as other BESS projects, would play an important role in the transition to renewable energy.

2.1.1 Strategic and Regional Context

2.1.1.1 National Policy

The Paris Agreement

Australia is one of 196 parties from around the world that has signed the international climate change agreement (i.e., the Paris Agreement). The Paris Agreement aims to:

- Hold the increase in the global average temperature to below two (2) degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels;
- Increase the ability (of nations) to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change and foster climate resilience and low greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions development, in a manner that does not threaten food production; and
- Make finance flows consistent with a pathway towards low GHG emissions and climate resilient development.

The Paris Agreement seeks to meet its objectives by developing programs and mechanisms that:

- Require participating parties to prepare and communicate GHG mitigation contributions. Parties were expected to set mitigation targets for 2020 and then develop new targets every five years. Each successive target is expected to represent a larger mitigation effort than the previous target.
- Promote climate change resilience and adaptation.
- Provide mitigation and adaptation funding to developing countries.
- Foster mitigation and adaptation technology transfer between Parties.
- Require participating parties to report progress towards their mitigation contributions on an annual basis.

Australia was a signatory to the Paris Agreement on 22 April 2016. The obligations under the Paris Agreement are driving national GHG policy between 2020 and 2030. Australia's commitment includes reducing GHG emissions by 43 per cent below 2005 levels by 2030; and reducing Australia's net greenhouse gas emissions to zero by 2050 (Commonwealth of Australia, 2025). Australia's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) prescribes an unconditional economy-wide target to reduce GHG emissions, and states that future policies would target emissions generated from energy use, industrial processes, agriculture, land-use, land-use change, forestry and waste (Commonwealth of Australia, 2022).

The Project, as an energy storage facility, would contribute to achieving Australia's GHG emission reduction targets by enabling firmed renewable energy in conjunction with renewable energy developments, reducing emissions from energy production in NSW.

Climate Change Act 2022

The *Climate Change Act 2022* is a key piece of legislation aimed at addressing climate change in Australia. Its primary aim is to enshrine Australia's commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and to set targets for emission reductions. The act facilitates Australia in meeting its international obligations under the Paris Agreement and making the transition towards a low-carbon economy.

The objects of the act are:

- To advance an effective and progressive response to the urgent threat of climate change drawing on the best available scientific knowledge; and
- To set out Australia's greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets which contribute to the global goals of:
    - Holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels, and;
    - Pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels; and
- To promote accountability and ambition by requiring the Minister to:
    - Prepare annual climate change statements; and
    - Cause copies of those statements to be tabled in each House of the Parliament; and
- To ensure that independent advice from the Climate Change Authority informs:
    - The preparation of annual climate change statements; and
    - The greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets to be included in a new or adjusted nationally determined contribution.

The Project supports the objects of the *Climate Change Act 2022* by supporting the uptake of renewable energy sources by enabling firmed renewable energy in conjunction with renewable energy developments, reducing the need for fossil fuels and therefore reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Australian Energy Market Operator – Integrated System Plan 2024

The Australian Energy Market Operator's (AEMO) Integrated System Plan (ISP) (AEMO, 2024) is a comprehensive roadmap developed by the AEMO to assist the transition of the NEM, with a clear plan for essential infrastructure that would meet future energy needs. The AEMO updates the ISP every two years and published the 2024 ISP in June 2024.

The ISP has indicated that renewable energy connected by transmission and distribution, firmed with storage and backed up by gas-powered generation is the lowest-cost way to supply electricity to homes and businesses as Australia transitions to a net zero economy (AEMO, 2024). The ISP identified that by 2050, the NEM is likely to require 75 Gigawatt (GW) of energy storage across the network to manage the variability of energy generation from renewable projects.

As an energy storage facility within the Hunter-Central Coast REZ, the Project would support the NEMs transition as key firming technology that would assist in maintaining reliability of supply for NSW consumers.

2.1.1.2 NSW Policy

NSW Climate Change Policy Framework

The NSW Government has developed its NSW Climate Change Policy Framework, which aims to deliver net zero emissions by 2050, and a State that is more resilient and responsive to climate change (NSW Government, 2016). The *Climate Change (Net Zero Future) Act 2023* legislates this approach to deliver net zero by 2050 and sets a clear path to 2050 with emission reduction targets.

Under the *Climate Change (Net Zero Future) Act 2023 and the* NSW Climate Change Policy Framework, the NSW Government has committed to both follow the Paris Agreement and to work to complement national action.

The Policy Framework is being delivered through:

- The Climate Change Fund;
- Developing an economic appraisal methodology to value GHG emissions mitigation;
- Embedding climate change mitigation and adaptation across government operations;
- Building on NSW's expansion of renewable energy; and
- Developing action plans and strategies.

In 2013 the NSW Government released the Renewable Energy Action Plan (REAP) and the NSW Energy Efficiency Action Plan (EEAP). The EEAP aimed to increase the generation, storage, and use of renewable energy in NSW, at least cost to customers and with maximum benefits to NSW. The three core goals of the REAP were to attract renewable energy investment, build community support for renewable energy and attract and grow expertise in renewable energy. Based on the implementation of the REAP, renewable energy is now well-placed to play a leading role in meeting NSW's energy needs into the future.

The Project is consistent with the overarching aim of the REAP as it is development for the purposes of energy storage, assisting NSW to respond to consumer electricity needs by promoting investment in renewable energy and improving the reliability of the State's electricity network.

NSW Electricity Strategy

The NSW Electricity Strategy (the Strategy) was developed by the NSW Government to deliver better outcomes for energy consumers in NSW, and to outline a plan for a reliable, affordable and sustainable electricity future, which supports the growing economy of NSW (NSW Government, 2019).

A multi-layered approach was developed to achieve this plan:

- Support the electricity market to deliver reliable electricity at the lowest price, while protecting the environment;
- Set an energy security target to ensure that NSW has sufficient generation capacity to cope with unexpected generator outages during periods of peak demand; and
- If required, ensure NSW has sufficient powers to deal with an electricity emergency.

The framework set out in the Strategy outlines an integrated approach to all demand and supply options, including action by households and small businesses, demand management and investment in large-scale, affordable and reliable generation. The Strategy also notes that firmed renewables (including batteries) are now the most cost-efficient form of new, reliable energy generation and cost less than the current wholesale electricity price.

The Project is consistent with the objectives of the Strategy as it would help ensure a cheap and reliable electricity supply which minimises harm to the environment, assist NSW to meet periods of peak energy demand, and provide network security to unexpected generator outages.

NSW Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap

The NSW Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap (i.e., the Roadmap) is a 20-year plan to transform the NSW electricity system into one that is cheap, clean and reliable, laying the foundations for future generations to enjoy more secure, reliable and affordable electricity (NSW Government, 2020).
The Roadmap utilises a coordinated framework to modernise the electricity system, underpinned by three key principles:

- New generation to replace retiring coal-fired power stations;
- New network infrastructure to deliver energy to consumers; and
- New storage and firming to better respond to electricity needs and improve the reliability of the grid.

The electricity market is moving towards more sources of generation that rely on variable weather conditions. As such, energy generators are increasingly reliant on long duration storage infrastructure, to ensure power is readily available. Such energy storage infrastructure, such as batteries, allow renewable energy to be stored and then released when required, assisting in the transition to a more secure and reliable electricity system.

The Project is consistent with the principles of the Roadmap by promoting development for the purposes of renewable energy storage and firming, assisting NSW to respond to consumer electricity needs and in turn improving the reliability of the grid.

Network Infrastructure Strategy

EnergyCo NSW has prepared the NSW Network Infrastructure Strategy (NIS) (EnergyCo NSW, 2022) as an important new element of NSW's Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap framework. The NIS provides further information about the delivery and coordination of NSW Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) transmission network infrastructure, downstream network augmentations and network connections for large-scale renewable energy and storage projects.

The NIS is an important new component of the NSW-wide system planning process that in turn sits within the NEM and its processes. Going forward, future editions of the NIS would be prepared every two years to support the Infrastructure Investment Objectives Report and to ensure continuous improvement that reflects changes in the market.

The NIS has been developed to fulfil three key objectives:

- Coordinated NSW-wide electricity infrastructure development;
- Investor guidance; and
- Meaningful engagement.

The NIS provides a clear vision of renewable energy development options in the wider context of a rapidly changing, and at times uncertain, evolution of generation mix and demand.

The Project would be located within the Hunter-Central Coast REZ and would utilise existing network connections as part of the NIS connection. The NIS would be considered during the preparation of the EIS, as required.

Net Zero Plan Stage 1: 2020–2030

The Net Zero Plan Stage 1: 2020–2030 (DPIE, 2020) was developed by the NSW Government to set out the actions to be undertaken over the next decade that would contribute to meeting the ultimate goal of net zero emissions by 2050 for the State. As rapid changes in technology make identifying the lowest cost path to net zero difficult, the Net Zero Plan has been designed to target the current decade until 2030, with subsequent plans developed in the lead-up to the 2030s and 2040s.

The NSW Government has identified four priority areas for action to achieve net zero within the State (DPIE, 2020):

- **Priority 1** – Drive uptake of proven emissions reduction technologies that grow the economy, create new jobs or reduce the cost of living;
- **Priority 2** – Empower consumers and businesses to make sustainable choices;
- **Priority 3** – Invest in the next wave of emissions reduction innovation to ensure economic prosperity from decarbonisation beyond 2030; and
- **Priority 4** – Ensure the NSW Government leads by example.

The Project, as an energy storage facility, is consistent with Priority 1 and Priority 3 of the Net Zero Plan as it would support the uptake of low emission technology, helping enable firmed renewable generation for the State.

2.1.2 Regional and Local Plans

2.1.2.1 Central Coast Regional Plan 2041

The Central Coast Regional Plan 2041 (CCRP) provides a strategic framework for enhancing housing diversity, affordability, and equity, while driving continued economic growth and revitalisation in one of Australia's most diverse and liveable regions. The CCRP principles focus on fostering employment growth while supporting a net zero emissions economy, integration of nature into residential areas for community benefit, enhancing community resilience to shocks and stresses, and ensuring safe, healthy communities with opportunities for economic advancement, housing choices, and secure retirement.

The Project is proposed to connect with existing transmission infrastructure and would therefore contribute to the CCRP principles of supporting the transition to a net zero emissions economy.

2.1.2.2 The Central Coast Community Strategic Plan 2018–2028

The Central Coast Community Strategic Plan 2018–2028 (Central Coast CSP) (Central Coast Council, 2018) outlines a shared vision for the future of the Central Coast community. Informed by community input, it sets a long-term vision for the region through to 2028. The Central Coast CSP aims to enhance the day-to-day lives and opportunities of the community by guiding effective decision-making, planning, and service delivery across government and non-government agencies.

As well as reflecting local community values, the plan is built around five themes aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs): belonging, smart, green, responsible, and liveable, which position the future of the Central Coast within a global context.

The Project would contribute to the UN SDGs themes of smart, green and responsible by facilitating the transition to clean energy to reduce the impacts of climate change.

2.1.2.3 The Central Coast Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) 2036

The Central Coast Council adopted the Central Coast Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) in August 2020. The LSPS includes four pillars of planning for the Central Coast LGA. The four pillars of planning are focussed on improving Place, Environment, Lifestyle and Infrastructure to drive sustainable growth of the Central Coast. The key initiatives of the planning pillars include centres and corridors, housing, economics, environment, agricultural and rural land, open space, community and culture, heritage, transport and water and sewage.

Key initiative four, environment, is applicable to the Project: "Council would work with private industry and the business sector to increase large scale renewable energy generation, foster industrial ecology, and the transition to a circular economy".

The Project is consistent with the planning pillars and key initiatives of the Central Coast LSPS.

2.2 Project Location Context

The Project Area is zoned Infrastructure (SP2) under the Central Coast Local Environment Plan (LEP) 2022 (refer to **Figure 2.1** and **Section 4.1.1**). The area surrounding the Project includes the Transgrid's Vales Point 330 kV Substation, the Vales Point Power Station, Chain Valley Colliery, recreational areas, bushland and residential areas. Surrounding land use zones include Infrastructure (SP2), Public Recreation (RE1), Low Density Residential (R2) and Environmental Conservation (C2), under the Central Coast LEP 2022. The nearest National Parks and Wildlife Service Estate areas are Lake Macquarie State Conservation Area, Munmorah State Conservation Area, and Colongra Swamp Nature Reserve all of which are located more than 2 kilometres (km) from the Project Area. Additional contextual features of the Project Area and surrounds are discussed throughout this Scoping Report and are summarised as follows:

- **Crown land:** There is no Crown land located within the Project Area.
- **Community:** The township of Mannering Park (1 km north of the Project) and the communities of Kingfisher Shore (1.4 km southeast of the Project) and Doyalson North (3.0 km south of the Project) together comprise around 1,500 dwellings. Newcastle is the nearest metropolitan centre located approximately 50 km north of the Project with smaller centres located nearby at Gosford (approximately 32 km southwest), Morisset (approximately 8km northwest) Toronto (approximately 31 km north) and Wyong (approximately 21 km south). Further discussion regarding local community and other stakeholders is provided in **Section 5.0**.
- **Land Use:** The Project Area is zoned Infrastructure (SP2) on land previously used for electricity generation as part of Delta's Vales Point Power Station. The Project Area is situated on the former A-Station footprint, which was decommissioned and demolished with all above ground electricity generating infrastructure removed. The surrounding land uses are consistent with the area's industrial nature and include the Vales Point Power Station and the Chain Valley Colliery.
  There are two current mining or exploration licences covering the Project area (ML1782 held by Delta Power & Energy (Chain Valley) Pty Ltd, and CCL719 held by Centennial Mannering Ptd Ltd). The Project is located within the Swansea North Entrance mine subsidence district.
- **Biodiversity:** All vegetation within the Project Area was cleared in the 1960s/1970s to make way for the construction of the Vales Point Power Station. A review of aerial photography has confirmed the site is entirely cleared of native and exotic vegetation. Further discussion around biodiversity is provided in **Section 6.3.1**.
- **Traffic, Transport and Access:** Vales Road is the primary access road to the Project Area, which deviates from Ruttleys Road, approximately 2.4 km north of the Pacific Highway intersection.
  An alternative site access is provided via Construction Road (off Ruttleys Road), approximately 1.5 km north of the Pacific Highway intersection. The Pacific Motorway, which is connected to the Pacific Highway via Doyalson Link Road, acts as the primary connection between the Sydney and Newcastle Region and would facilitate the transportation of Project-related components.
  The transport route to the Project Area for oversize/over mass (OSOM) vehicle movements along the Pacific Highway from both Port Kembla and the Port of Newcastle would be considered.
  Further discussion around traffic, transport and access is provided in **Section 6.2.3**.
- **Topography:** The topography of the Project Area is relatively flat at an elevation between approximately 5–10 m Australian Height Datum (m AHD).

- **Hydrology:** There are no waterways that run directly through the Project Area. There is a man-made canal directly bordering the northern boundary of the Project Area. This canal flows from Chain Valley Bay in the north to Wyee Bay in a north-south direction. Further discussion around hydrology is provided in **Section 6.2.4**.
- **Heritage:** A review of the State Heritage Register, the Central Coast LEP 2022, the Lake Macquarie LEP 2022, and a search of the Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System (AHIMS) on 28 April 2025 has identified that the Project Area does not contain any items, objects, or artefacts of Aboriginal or historic heritage significance. Heritage items identified in the surrounding area (as described in **Section 6.2.12**) include the 'bulk store building' located on Ruttleys Road approximately 2 km to the south of the Project Area; and four registered Aboriginal sites approximately 550 m northeast of the Project Area adjacent to the Lake Macquarie.
- **Contamination:** The proposed Project site was formerly utilised for the Vales Point A power station. Ongoing monitoring and assessment of potential site contamination is undertaken across the Vales Point Power Station as part of a biennial contamination assessment program. A search of the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) Contaminated Land Record on 20 March 2025 identified no contaminated sites within the suburbs of Mannering Park and Wyee. A search of adjacent suburbs identified:
    - Three current contamination notices issued between Apr 2024 to Mar 2025 at Munmorah Power Station, Scenic Drive, located approximately 5 km to the south-west of the Project Area.

  Further discussion regarding contamination assessment of the Project Area is provided in **Section 6.2.5**.
- **Bushfire:** A review of the NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) Bushfire Prone Land mapping confirms that bush fire prone land of Vegetation Category 1 is located within Lot 102, DP 1065718, but approximately 200 m outside of the Project Area (refer to **Figure 6.6**).

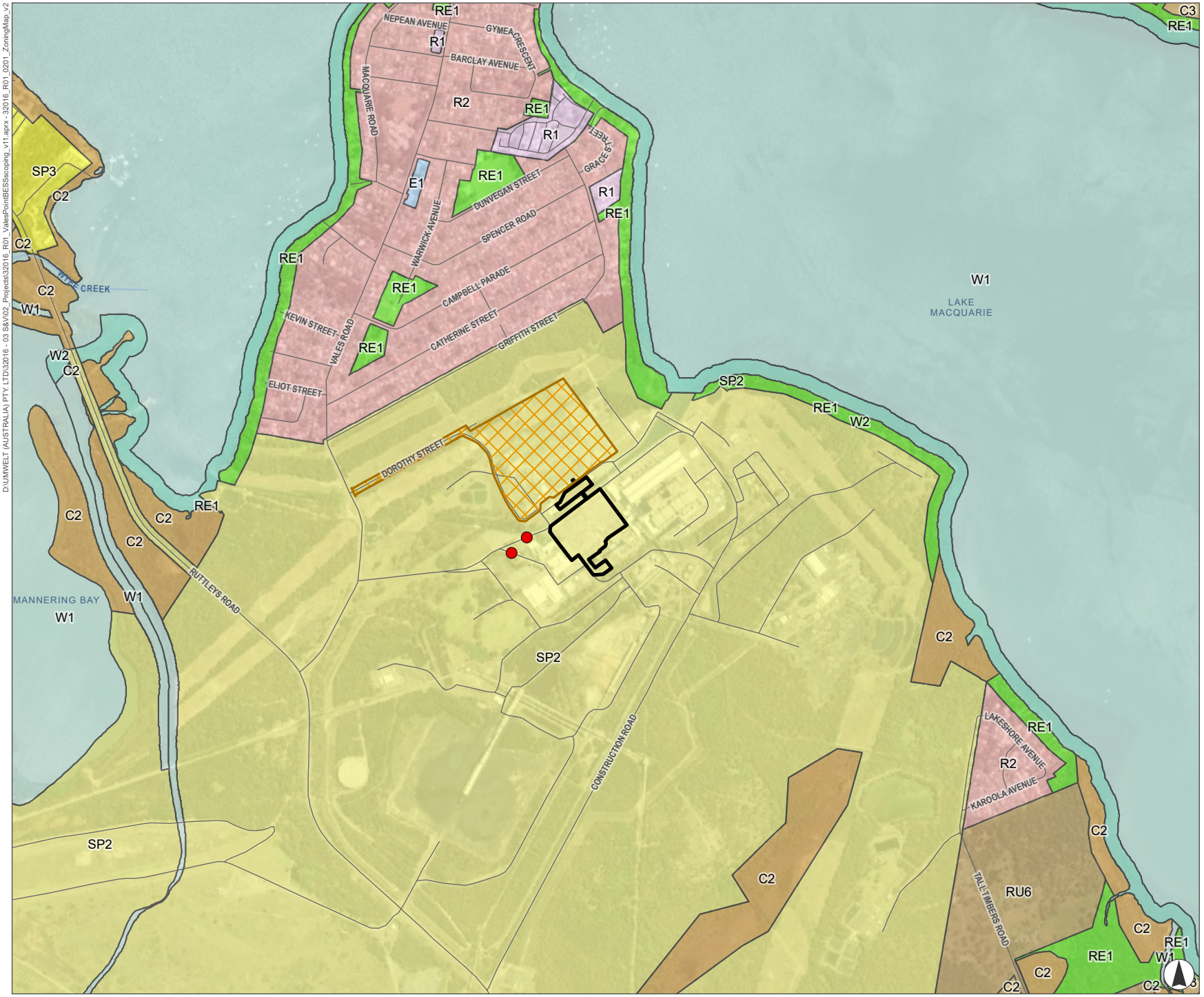

FIGURE 2.1

Zoning Map

Legend

- Project Area
- Vales Point 330 kV Substation
- Vales Point Power Station Security Facilities
- Road

Land Zoning

- C2 - Environmental Conservation; C2, Environmental Management
- C3 - Environmental Management
- E1 - Local Centre
- R1 - General Residential
- R2 - Low Density Residential
- RE1 - Public Recreation
- RU4 - Primary Production Small Lots
- RU6 - Transition
- SP2 - Infrastructure
- SP3 - Tourist
- W1 - Natural Waterways
- W2 - Recreational Waterways

0 250 500

Metres

Scale 1:15,000 at A4
GDA2020 MGA Zone 56

umwelt

Image Source: ESRI Basemap (2025) | **Data Source:** NSW DFSI (2025)

2.3 Cumulative Impact Considerations

A key component of environmental impact assessment is the consideration of cumulative impacts. The *Cumulative Impact Assessment Guideline* (DPIE, 2022) contains requirements for assessing any cumulative impacts of a project with other developments (proposed, approved and operating), relating to noise, visual, socioeconomic and traffic impacts.

A summary of the SSD and State Significant Infrastructure (SSI) projects for consideration of potential cumulative impacts with the Project is provided in **Table 6.4** with project locations shown in **Figure 2.2** below**.** These SSD and SSI projects have been identified from an initial screening considering project locations, the timing of construction and operation periods, as well as other BESS developments within the region.

Cumulative impact consideration would also be required for the existing Vales Point Power Station in relation to outage maintenance periods. During these periods the Vales Point Power Station would experience increased traffic volumes from light vehicles and heavy machinery. Additionally, it is understood that the Vales Point Power Station is projected to operate until 2033 at which point it would be decommissioned, with the decommissioning period coinciding with the operational period of the Project. Potential cumulative impacts related to noise, air quality, and traffic may occur with the decommissioning of the Vales Point Power Station.

The following key matters would require consideration in the cumulative impact assessment (CIA):

- Noise and vibration;
- Traffic, transport and access;
- Landscape and visual amenity; and
- Socio-economic.

Further information regarding CIA required for the EIS is provided in **Section 6.2.14**.

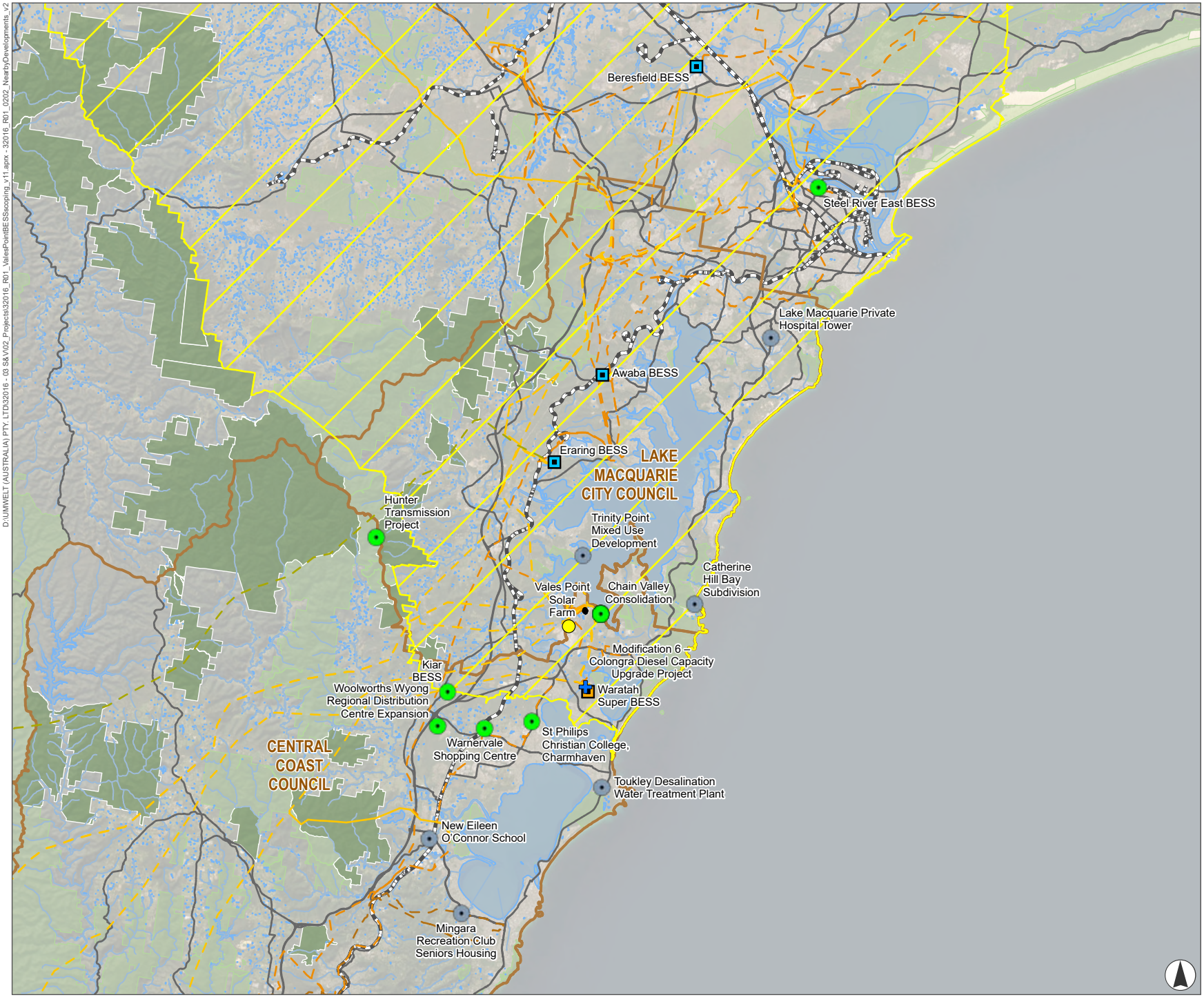

FIGURE 2.2

Nearby Developments

Legend

- Project Area
- Hunter-Central Coast REZ Boundary
- Vales Point 330 kV Substation
- Local Government Area (LGA)
- Reserve
- State Forest
- Waterbody
- Watercourse
- Main Road
- Railway
- 66 kV Transmission Line
- 132 kV Transmission Line
- 330 kV Transmission Line
- 500 kV Transmission Line

Major Proximal Projects

- Open - Assessment
- Other value
- Gas - Approved
- Solar - Approved
- Battery - Approved
- Battery - Under Construction

0 5 10

Kilometres

Scale 1:385,000 at A4
GDA2020 MGA Zone 56

umwelt

Image Source: ESRI Basemap (2025) | **Data Source:** NSW DFSI (2025)

2.4 Planning and Other Agreements

The Proponent is committed to working with neighbouring landholders in relation to Project design and potential impacts associated with the Project. At this stage no agreements have been entered into with neighbouring properties or other groups. The Proponent would continue to engage with Central Coast Council during preparation of the EIS.

Delta has an existing agreement (referred to as the Handback Deed) with NSW Treasury that governs Delta's responsibilities with respect to land tenure and the operation eventual closure and decommissioning of Vales Point Power Station. Delta has consulted with NSW Treasury in March 2025 regarding the proposed Project and further consultation would be undertaken during the EIS as a key stakeholder.

2.5 Project Justification

As identified in previous sections, the NEM is transitioning to support a renewable energy-based electricity grid that aligns with both Commonwealth and NSW Government commitments. Wind and solar generation are variable in their output and need to be supported by firm and flexible technologies such as batteries, concentrated solar power, hydro and gas fired generators to help firm variable renewable energy generation.

The Project would provide energy generation storage to stabilise the power system against rapid movements in the supply-demand balance. Furthermore, the Project would contribute capital investment, generate jobs during the construction and operational phases and provide indirect benefits to local services throughout the life of the Project.

Further details regarding Project benefits are provided in **Section 2.6** below.

2.6 Project Benefits

The Project would provide long-term, strategic benefits to the state of NSW. The Project would:

- Support the NEM by providing up to 400 MW of power supply during peak periods;
- Provide essential energy storage capacity to help keep NSW's electricity network stable and reliable as more renewable energy, including solar and wind, is added to the network;
- Support renewables integration and provide network stability by storing excess electricity from the grid during periods of over-supply and providing additional energy when needed; and
- Benefit local and regional economies through creating construction jobs and operating and maintenance roles, as well as opportunities for local suppliers.

3.0 The Project

3.1 Project Overview

The Project Area is located at 200 Vales Road Mannering Park within the existing Vales Point Power Station site, approximately 1 km southeast of Mannering Park Town centre. The Project Area is approximately 2.2 ha in size with cadastral details provided in **Table 3.1**.

Table 3.1 Lot and Deposited Plan

Lot	Deposited Plan (DP)	LEP Zoning
Part of Lot 102	DP 1065718	SP2 – Infrastructure

The Project would comprise the installation, operation, maintenance and decommissioning/re-powering of a BESS, supported by ancillary infrastructure. The Project would have a capacity of approximately 400 MW and a storage capacity of 800 megawatt hours (MWh). The BESS would require a Project Area of 2.2 ha (refer to **Figure 3.1**).

Subject to detailed design, the key components of the Project would include:

- **Batteries:** Most likely a lithium-ion technology;
- **Inverters:** Bi-directional inverters to convert direct current (DC) to alternating current (AC) (when exporting electricity) and vice-versa (when importing electricity);
- **Medium-Voltage (MV) Transformers:** Skid-mounted transformers would be installed adjacent to each inverter to step up the voltage to the internal reticulation voltage of the plant;
- **Switching Equipment:** To allow for switching current to back-up lines or for parallelizing circuits;
- **Harmonic Filters**: To mitigate the effects of harmonic distortion;
- **Transmission Connection:** Includes high-voltage (HV) transformers and high voltage electrical equipment with an overhead connection of the BESS to the existing adjacent Transgrid Vales Point 330 kV Substation;
- **Ancillary Infrastructure:** Including temporary construction facilities, security fencing, permanent site office and operations and maintenance (O&M) buildings, internal access tracks, parking areas, hardstands, and Project signage;
- **Minor Upgrades:** To the access and egress point off the internal Vales Point Power Station access road; and
- **Demolition and Removal** of an existing workshop building within the Project Area.

The preliminary layout of the BESS and ancillary infrastructure is shown in **Figure 3.1** and would be further refined during the detailed design stage and in the EIS process. **Photo 3.1** shows the current view of the Project Area.

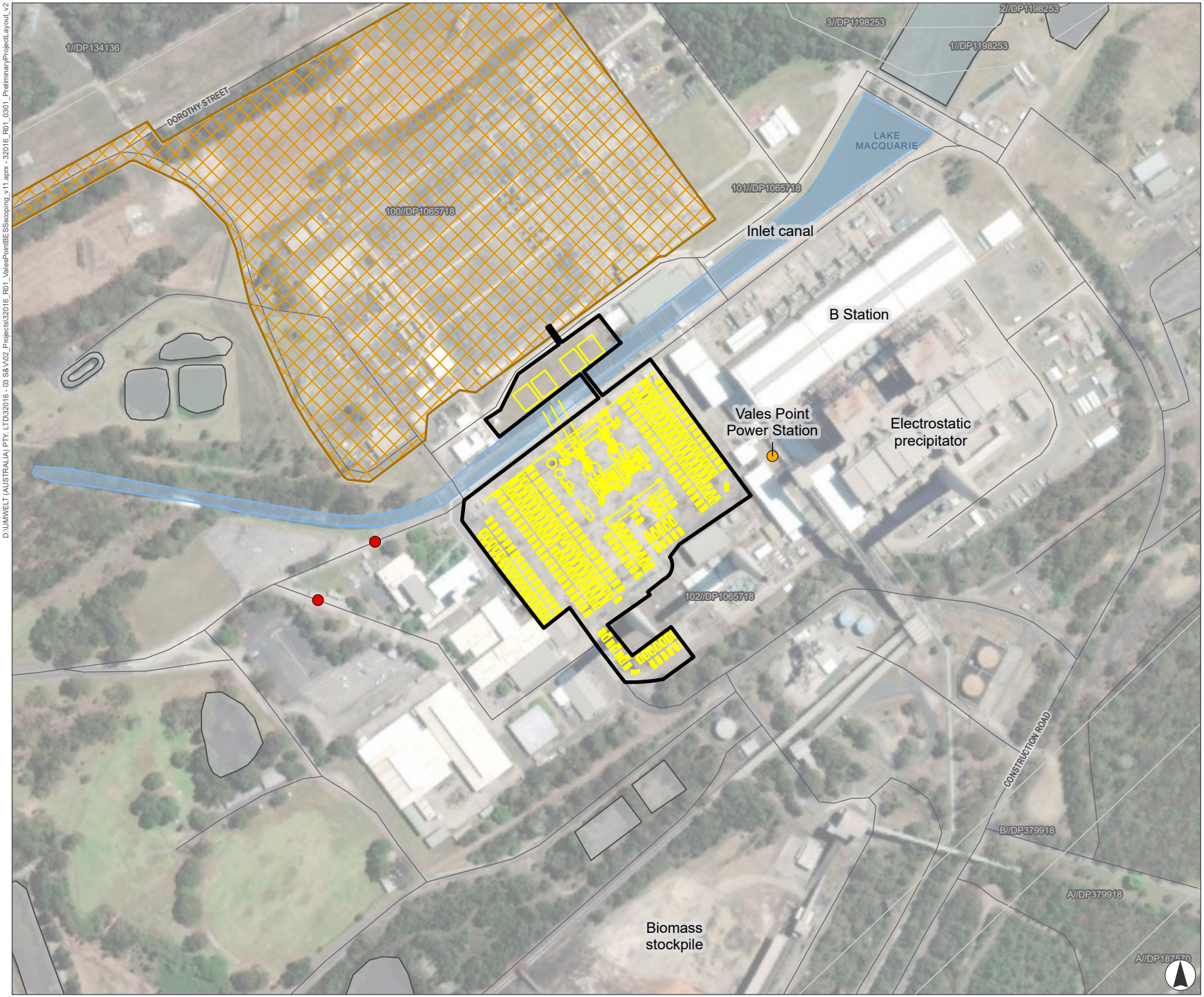

FIGURE 3.1

Preliminary Project Layout

Legend

- Major Power Stations
- Vales Point Power Station Security Facilities
- Project Area
- Vales Point 330 kV Substation
- Lot
- Man made waterbody
- Waterbody
- BESS Layout
- Local Road

0 50 100

Metres

Scale 1:4,000 at A4
GDA2020 MGA Zone 56

Image Source: ESRI Basemap (2025) | **Data Source:** NSW DFSI (2025)

Photo 3.1 Vales Point Power Station Site and Project Area

3.2 Electrical Energy Storage System and Transmission Connection

Lithium-ion batteries in containerised or enclosed unit arrangements are the most feasible technology option available for the Project. The battery modules will be connected to power conversion systems (PCS) such as power inverters, medium voltage (MV) transformers and electrical switchgear equipment. Ventilation, heating, battery control management and safety and fire-protection systems will be included in the design. However, the preferred battery technology and layout of equipment will be confirmed during the detailed design process. Power, earthing, and communications cables would be installed across the Project Area between electrical devices. Electrical cabling will be installed either above ground or below ground using pre-cast invert culverts with the reticulation system to be determined during the detailed design phase.

The Project would include an overhead 330 kV transmission connection between the BESS and the adjacent Transgrid Vales Point 330 kV substation. Consultation between TransGrid and The Proponent is ongoing in relation to options for the transmission connection point and preferred connection route, with the most recent discussions occurring on 25 June 2025. The proposed transmission connection arrangement would be subject to Transgrid's detailed requirements and would be further refined during the EIS.

3.3 Ancillary Infrastructure

Ancillary infrastructure required to support the construction and operation of the Project would include:

- Temporary construction facilities, including:
  - Construction compound(s);
  - Site office buildings;
  - Laydown areas;
  - Construction materials storage; and
  - Parking at the existing Vales Point Power Station.
- Permanent site office and O&M buildings (including amenities, maintenance shed, and equipment storage sheds) with parking areas catering for operations including:
  - Hardstands and new internal access tracks; and
  - Project signage at the main site entrance.

These would be considered and further refined during the later stages of Project design.

3.4 Access and Transportation Route

Access to the Project Area is expected to be from Vales Road via an internal access road of Vales Point Power Station, refer to **Figure 2.1**. An alternative access route is available via Construction Road (off Ruttleys Road). Upgrades to Vales Road or internal access roads are not anticipated to be required.

Deliveries of construction materials and equipment may use over-size, over-mass (OSOM) vehicles. It is expected that some equipment and materials would be transported to the Project location via Port of Newcastle or Port Kembla. Other construction materials would be sourced from within Central Coast LGA or City of Lake Macquarie LGA where practicable. Existing workforce parking areas of Vales Point Power Station would be utilised for light vehicles. Laydown areas would be located within the Project Area or near surrounds within the Vales Point Power Station footprint.

The transportation route to the Project Area would be confirmed and detailed further in the EIS.

3.5 Economic Investment and Employment

The Project has an estimated development cost (EDC) of more than $30 million. The Project is anticipated to generate employment opportunities during both the construction phase and operation phase. The specific Full Time Equivalent (FTE) employment opportunities for the Project would be defined during the EIS phase.

3.6 Construction Timing, Staging and Duration

3.6.1 Overview

Construction of the Project is anticipated to commence from July 2026 and is expected to be completed over a single construction phase of an approximately 12-to-18-month period. The Project Area consists of a concrete footing foundation from the former A Station site of the Vales Point Power Station.

The key construction activities are listed below:

- Minor civil works to prepare the Project area for installation of battery enclosures and electrical equipment;
- Construction of concrete footings (steel or concrete piers or concrete slabs) on which the battery enclosures and electrical equipment would be installed;
- Temporary security fencing (during construction period);
- Preparation of a temporary construction laydown area;
- Installation of battery containers, medium voltage stations and associated electrical equipment;
- Installation of high-voltage electrical equipment such as circuit breakers, transformers, switching equipment, auxiliary power equipment and control systems;
- Installation of electrical earthing system;
- Installation of area lighting for operations;
- Replacement of temporary fencing with permanent fencing and reinstatement of laydown areas; and
- Demolition and removal of an existing workshop building within the Project Area.

Construction activities would be undertaken during recommended standard hours identified in the *Interim Construction Noise Guideline* (DECC, 2009):

- 7 am–6 pm Monday to Friday;
- 8 am–1 pm Saturdays; and
- No work during Sunday or Public Holidays.

However, it is noted that the Vales Point Power Station located adjacent to the Project site operates on a continuous basis.

3.6.2 Construction Workforce

The Project would generate employment opportunities during the construction period with details to be provided during the EIS stage. Potential cumulative impacts on employment, accommodation, infrastructure, and services would be considered in the EIS as part of the social impact assessment.

3.7 Operations

The Project would be operational 24 hours a day, seven days a week, with electrical power storage and export activities occurring as required. The operational lifespan of the Project is expected to be approximately 30 years. Operational employment opportunities would be defined in the EIS.

Battery and electrical equipment operations and maintenance tasks would be typically undertaken during standard working hours. These tasks would also be supported by contractor roles for weed and pest management, cleaning and equipment calibration, access track and internal track maintenance and facility cleaning. However, it should be noted that emergency responses, inspections, and maintenance may need to be conducted outside standard hours.

3.8 Decommissioning/Re-powering

Once the Project reaches the end of its operational life, a decision would be made to either decommission or re-power the facility, subject to planning approval requirements.

If the Project is decommissioned, all above ground infrastructure would be removed. Batteries would either be disposed of and recycled at a suitably approved disposal facility, or subject to confirmation, be returned to the original equipment manufacturer for refurbishment and recycling. The Project Area would be rehabilitated to return the site to as close to its pre-development condition as possible.

If re-powering is proposed, an appropriate stakeholder consultation process would be undertaken, and all necessary approvals would be obtained at the time. If re-powering is proposed, further development approval would be required and would be assessed separately to the BESS construction and operation phases.

3.9 Project Alternatives

3.9.1 'Do nothing' Scenario

The 'do nothing' option would not deliver the potential benefits of the Project and would be inconsistent with the objectives outlined in the NSW Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap (NSW Government, 2020):

- Supporting investment in new energy infrastructure in regional NSW;
- Delivering long-term energy storage infrastructure in NSW; and
- Keeping the grid secure and reliable.

3.9.2 Alternative Project Locations

The Project location was selected due to:

- The site being located wholly within the Vales Point Power Station boundary and previously utilised for power generation;
- Proximity to the existing Vales Point 330 kV Substation;
- Proximity to the existing public road network; and
- The Project Area is not currently utilised for any purpose. The closest dwelling is located approximately 600 m northwest of the Project Area.

The Vales Point 330 kV Substation is located directly adjacent to the northwest of the Project Area, providing a direct and short distance for grid connection. This would minimise disruption, construction, social and environmental impacts when compared to a Project location with a longer distance to the grid connection point.

4.0 Statutory Context

4.1 NSW Approval Pathway

The NSW *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act) is the primary instrument which regulates the environmental impact assessment and approval process for development in NSW. Part 4 of the EP&A Act relates to development assessment and consent. Part 4, Division 4.7 relates to the assessment of development deemed to be significant to the State (or SSD). Section 4.36(2) of the EP&A Act states that:

> *'a State environmental planning policy may declare any development, or any class or description of development, to be State significant development'.*
>
> *State Environmental Planning Policy (Planning Systems) 2021 (Planning Systems SEPP) identifies development that is SSD. Section 2.6(1) of the Planning Systems SEPP states:*
>
> *(1) Development is declared to be State significant development for the purposes of the Act if:*
>
> *(a) the development on the land concerned is, by the operation of an environmental planning instrument, not permissible without development consent under Part 4 of the Act, and*
>
> *(b) the development is specified in Schedule 1 and 2.'*

The Project meets both these requirements; it requires development consent, and is a development specified in Schedule 1 of the Planning Systems SEPP. Schedule 1 of the Planning Systems SEPP defines the following as SSD:

> *Development for the purpose of electricity generating works or heat or their co-generation (using any energy source, including gas, coal, biofuel, waste, hydro, wave, solar or wind power) that:*
>
> *(a) has a capital investment value of more than $30 million, or*
>
> *(b) has a capital investment value of more than $10 million and is located in an environmentally sensitive area of State significance.*

The Project is development for the purpose of electricity generation and will have a capital investment value of more than $30 million. Consequently, the Project is SSD and will require development consent under Part 4 of the EP&A Act.

Section 4.15 of the EP&A Act describes the matters for consideration in assessing SSD, which includes the provisions of relevant environmental planning instruments, proposed instruments that have been the subject of public consultation, development control plans, and statutory regulations. The assessment of SSD must also consider the likely impacts of the development, suitability of the site, any submissions received and the public interest.

4.1.1 Permissibility

The Project Area is located on land zoned Infrastructure (SP2) under the *Central Coast LEP 2022* (refer to **Figure 2.1**). The Land Zoning Map in the area encompassing the Project Area identifies that development for the purposes of electricity generating works is a permissible development within the SP2 zone at this location. The Project is therefore permissible with development consent.

4.1.2 Power to Grant Consent

The Project would require development consent under Part 4 of the EP&A Act. Being development for the purpose of electricity generation with a capital investment value of more than $30 million, the Project is declared to be SSD under the provisions of the Planning Systems SEPP. The development application would be lodged with DPHI.

4.1.3 Consent Authority

Under Section 4.5(a) of the EP&A Act the consent authority for SSD is the Independent Planning Commission (IPC) (if the development is of a kind for which the IPC is declared the consent authority by an environmental planning instrument) or the Minister (if the development is not of that kind). In accordance with clause 2.7(1) of the Planning Systems SEPP if any of the criteria identified below are exceeded the IPC is the consent authority:

- Central Coast Council object to the application;
- 50 objecting submissions (other than from Central Coast Council) are made to the Project; and
- The Proponent discloses a reportable political donation.

If none of the above criteria are triggered, DPHI would determine the development application on behalf of the Minister.

4.1.4 Other Approvals

In addition to development consent under the EP&A Act, a number of other NSW Acts or planning policies are applicable or potentially applicable to the Project. **Table 4.1** identifies the other NSW legislation and policies and their applicability to the Project.

Table 4.1 NSW Legislation

State Legislation	Description
Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 (BC Act)	Under the BC Act, biodiversity assessment in accordance with the Biodiversity Assessment Method (BAM) is required for SSD projects with the BAM outcomes documented in a Biodiversity Development Assessment Report (BDAR). As the Project Area is situated on a former power station site and entirely cleared of vegetation, the Project is considered unlikely to have any significant impact on biodiversity values. As such, an application for a BDAR waiver is included in this Scoping Report (refer to **Section 6.2.13** and **Appendix E**).
Biosecurity Act 2015	The objectives of the *Biosecurity Act 2016* are to manage diseases and pests that may cause harm to human, animal or plant health or the environment and to give effect to Australia's international rights and obligations. The Project is within the Greater Sydney Local Land Services Region where a number of priority weeds species exist. Refer to **Section 6.2.13** for further detail.
Coastal Management Act 2016	The objectives of the *Coastal Management Act 2016* are to manage the coastal environment of New South Wales in a manner consistent with the principles of ecologically sustainable development for the social, cultural, and economic well-being of the people of the State. The Project is within a Coastal Environment Area under the Act and the *State Environmental Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards) 2021*, refer to **Section 6.2.6** for further detail.
Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997 (POEO Act)	The POEO Act regulates pollution to the environment and requires licences for environment protection including waste, air, water and noise pollution control. Section 48 requires an Environment Protection Licence (EPL) for Schedule 1 activities. Schedule 1, Clause 17 General electricity works requires an EPL where the activity generates more than 30 MW of electrical power. The Project is wholly within the existing Vales Point Power Station boundary and is currently situated within the premises where EPL 761 applies. The Project would store electrical power, not generate electrical power, and is therefore not a scheduled activity. Therefore, an EPL application is not required.
Water Management Act 2000 (WM Act)	A SSD Project that is authorised by a development consent under the *EP&A Act 1979* is not required to obtain 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 *Water Management Act 2000*. However, any water extractions (take) from water sources (surface and groundwater) regulated by a Water Sharing Plan (WSP) required for construction or operational purposes would require licensing under the WM Act. The potential water requirements during construction and operation would be assessed as part of the Water Resources Impact Assessment (WRIA) prepared as part of the EIS. Any necessary licences would be obtained for the Project.

State Legislation	Description
Roads Act 1993 (Roads Act)	A consent is required under section 138 to erect a structure or carry out work on or above a public road, dig up or disturb the surface of a public road, remove or interfere with a structure, work or tree on a public road, pump water into a public road from any land adjoining the road, or to connect a road to a classified road. Should the Project require works to a public road such as Vales Road, a consent under section 138 would be required to be obtained from the road authority.
Mining Act 1992 (Mining Act)	The Mining Act regulates mining activities within NSW to protect the environment and the rights of landowners and indigenous communities. The Act requires mining leases and exploration licences for any mining or prospecting activities. The Project does not involve the extraction of mineral resources and therefore no mining lease or exploration licence is required. The Project Area is within ML1782 and CCL719, refer to **Section 2.2**.
National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 (NPW Act)	The NPW Act provides for the protection of Aboriginal sites and designated conservation areas as well as the flora and fauna within conservation areas. There are no conservation areas declared under the NPW Act that are within or immediately adjoining the Project Area. An Aboriginal heritage impact permit under Section 90 of the NPW Act would not be required for the Project, in accordance with Section 4.41 of the EP&A Act, as the Project is SSD. No Aboriginal sites have previously been recorded within the Project Area. Further information regarding Aboriginal heritage is detailed in **Section 6.2.11**.
Heritage Act 1977	An approval under Part 4, or an excavation permit under Section 139, of the *Heritage Act 1977* would not be required for the Project pursuant to Section 4.41 of the EP&A Act. A desktop review of historic heritage found that there are no listed heritage items within the Project Area. Further information regarding Historic heritage is detailed in **Section 6.2.12**.
Fisheries Management Act 1994 (FM Act)	A permit under the FM Act to dredge or carry out reclamation work (section 201) or block fish passage (section 219) would not be required for the Project pursuant to Section 4.41 of the EP&A Act. The Project does not involve any dredging or reclamation works and would not result in the block of any fish passage.
Rural Fires Act 1997	A bush fire safety authority under section 100B would not be required for the Project pursuant to Section 4.41 of the EP&A Act. A bushfire threat assessment would be completed during the EIS as discussed in **Section 6.2.6**. Consultation with NSW Rural Fire Services (RFS) and Fire and Rescue NSW would be conducted during the preparation of the EIS.

State Legislation	Description
Crown Land Management Act 2016 (Crown Land Act)	The Crown Land Act provides for the administration and management of Crown Land in NSW. Crown land may not be occupied, used, sold, leased, licensed, dedicated, reserved, or otherwise dealt with unless authorised by the Crown Land Act. There are no areas of Crown land near the Project Area. Classification under the Crown Land Act would not be required for the Project.
Contaminated Land Management Act 1997 (CLM Act)	The CLM Act establishes the process for investigating and if required, remediating land that the NSW EPA considers to be contaminated significantly enough to require regulation. The Project Area does not contain land listed on the Contaminated Lands Register. Relevant mitigation and management measures would be incorporated as part of the Project to address potential contamination issues.

4.2 Commonwealth Legislation

4.2.1 Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999

The *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) provides a framework for protection of the Australian environment, including its biodiversity and its natural and culturally significant places. The protected matters that the EPBC Act applies to includes:

- Matters of National Environmental Significance (MNES);
- Commonwealth land; and
- Actions undertaken by Commonwealth agencies.

The EPBC Act requires a referral to the Commonwealth Minister for the Environment for any action which would or is likely to have a significant impact on a matter protected by the EPBC Act. As the Project is not on Commonwealth land and is not proposed by a Commonwealth agency, it is the MNES that are relevant to the Project. MNES includes:

- World heritage properties;
- National heritage places;
- Wetlands of international importance (listed under the Ramsar Convention);
- Listed threatened species and ecological communities;
- Listed migratory species (protected under international agreements);
- Commonwealth marine areas;
- The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park;
- Nuclear actions (including uranium mines); and
- Water resources (that relate to coal seam gas development and large coal mining development).

A search of the Commonwealth Protected Matters Search Tool (PMST) on 23 April 2025 indicates that the Project Area is not within a world heritage property or place, does not contain wetlands of international importance, is not within either a Commonwealth marine area or the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, and does not relate to a nuclear action, coal seam gas or coal mining development (refer to **Section 6.3.1** and **Appendix E**).

A search of the Commonwealth PMST identified a number of listed threatened species and ecological communities and migratory species have the potential to occur within the local area. However, the Project Area contains no native vegetation, habitat for threatened species or ecological communities (refer to **Section 6.3.1** and **Appendix E**). As a result, there is negligible potential for the Project to impact on listed threatened species and ecological communities, migratory species, and endangered and critically endangered fauna species under the BC Act and the EPBC Act.

An EPBC Act Referral would not be required to be lodged to the Commonwealth Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (Commonwealth DCCEEW) due to the negligible potential for impacts on threatened and migratory species, ecological communities and their habitats. Further discussion around biodiversity values is provided in **Section 6.3.1**.

4.2.2 Heavy Vehicle National Law

Approvals may be required from the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator for the transport of BESS components and associated infrastructure by oversize and/or over mass (OSOM) vehicles.
The requirements for such OSOM transport would be assessed via a route analysis study as part of the EIS.

4.2.3 Native Title Act 1993

The Commonwealth *Native Title Act 1993* provides a framework for recognising the rights and interests of Aboriginal and Torres Start Islander people in land and waters and aims to provide recognition and protection of common law native title rights. Section 3 of the *Native Title Act 1993* sets out the main objects of the Act as follows:

a. *To provide for the recognition and protection of native title;*
b. *To establish ways in which future dealings affecting native title may proceed and to set out standards for those dealings;*
c. *To establish a mechanism for determining claims to native title; and*
d. *To provide for, or permit, the validation of past acts, and intermediate period acts, invalidated because of the existence of native title.*

Searches of the National Native Title Register, the Register of Native Title Claims, and Native Title Applications Registration Decisions and Determinations, has not identified the Project Area as within a registered or determined native title claim.

4.3 Statutory Requirements Summary

This section provides an overview of the key statutory requirements for the Project. The statutory requirements addressed in **Table 4.2** are categorised as per the SSD Scoping Report Guideline.

Table 4.2 Statutory Requirements Summary

Matter	Detail	Comment
Power to Grant Consent	The legal pathway under which consent is to be sought, why the pathway applies, and who the consent authority is likely to be.	As outlined in **Section 4.1.2**, the Project requires approval under Part 4 of the EP&A Act being SSD. The consent authority would be the IPC or DPHI based on the number and type of any objections to the Project, or any political donations made by The Proponent or related entities.
Permissibility	The relevant provisions affecting the permissibility of the Project, including any land use zones. Any provisions or actions being taken that would allow the Project to be considered on its merits, where the Project would otherwise be partly or wholly prohibited.	As outlined in **Section 4.1.1**, the Project Area is zoned SP2 Infrastructure within the Central Coast LEP 2022. Electricity generating works is a permissible development within the SP2 zoning under the Central Coast LEP 2022. The Project is therefore permissible with development consent.
Other Approvals	Other approvals that are required to carry out the Project and why they are required.	**Section 4.1.4** provides a list of other NSW approvals required or that may be required for the Project. **Section 2.1.1.1** discusses potential Commonwealth approvals that may be required for the Project.
Pre-conditions to Exercising the Power to Grant Consent	Pre-conditions to exercising the power to grant consent for the Project that may be relevant to setting the SEARs.	An EIS would be prepared in accordance with relevant legislative requirements and guidelines. No pre-conditions to exercising the power to grant consent for the Project are currently envisaged.
Mandatory Matters for Consideration	Matters that the consent authority is required to consider in deciding whether to grant consent to any development application for the Project that may be relevant to setting the SEARs.	As outlined in **Section 4.1, Section 4.15** of the EP&A Act describes the matters for consideration in assessing SSD, which includes the provisions of relevant environmental planning instruments, proposed instruments that have been the subject of public consultation, development control plans, and statutory regulations. The assessment of SSD must also consider the likely impacts of the development, suitability of the Project Area, any submissions received and the public interest. All relevant mattes would be addressed in the EIS based on the outcomes of environmental assessments to be undertaken (refer to **Section 6.0**).

5.0 Stakeholder Engagement

The Proponent recognises and advocates that respectful, inclusive, and meaningful engagement is fundamental to the development of all projects, and that effective engagement is a key component of the SSD process, in line with the *Undertaking Engagement Guidelines for State Significant Projects* (DPHI, 2024) (Engagement Guidelines).

The Proponent prepared a Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan (CSEP) for the delivery of the Project to outline the objectives and approach to community engagement. The following sections provide a summary of the CSEP and the public and agency consultation undertaken to date. These are further detailed in **Appendix B**. Following the engagement activities undertaken to date for the Project, the CSEP was then further refined by the Proponent which aims to seek broader involvement across each of the stakeholder groupings identified and include consultation with community groups, service providers and residents more broadly. The revised CSEP is provided in **Appendix G**.

5.1 Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan

The CSEP identifies the stakeholder engagement approach and objectives for the Project scoping phase and aims to:

- Identify ways to facilitate engagement and collaborate with community and relevant stakeholders including for input into the assessment process and ongoing project design and planning including the development of community benefit sharing programs;
- Identify social impacts associated with the Project (both positive and negative) to key stakeholders and local community members, in line with the SIA Guideline (DPE, 2023);
- Identify effective avenues for community members to communicate any concerns and provide valuable feedback and identify future engagement preferences in the assessment phase;
- Identify preliminary strategies to avoid or mitigate negative impacts and enhance positive impacts; and
- Ensure the commitments made to the community during the Project development stage are being met.

The Proponent further revised the CSEP for the broader Project with the following key objectives:

- Build awareness and understanding of the project and relationships with stakeholders;
- Introduce the project team and provide a central point of contact;
- Explain the need for the project including scope, benefits, impacts and mitigation;
- Keep stakeholders and the community informed and provide opportunities for feedback;
- Understand and consider community and stakeholder values, aspirations and concerns;
- Explain the parameters for engagement including what is and isn't negotiable;
- Ensure issues and concerns are identified early and effectively managed;
- Manage enquiries and feedback in a timely, respectful way; and
- Monitor and evaluate feedback and adjust planning and delivery as necessary.

The CSEP provides an overview of The Proponents approach to stakeholder engagement. It identifies the relevant stakeholders and provides an overview of the engagement mechanisms utilised and the activities undertaken. The CSEP would be undertaken in accordance with the Engagement Guidelines.

5.2 Community and Stakeholder Engagement Activities

Engagement commenced in 2025 and has been undertaken by The Proponent and Umwelt as part of the development of the Project. Engagement has been built on Delta's ongoing long-standing relationships with the community and various stakeholders, which they have developed during their existing operations. An overview of the key stakeholder groups identified for the Project are provided in **Figure 5.1**.

In the Scoping phase, a focus was placed on those stakeholders who may be most impacted by the Project – that is, closest residential areas, nearby neighbours, local governments, emergency service providers and First Nations. Subsequent phases in the delivery of the Project including as part of the Social Impact Assessment (SIA) would seek further engagement from residents in the wider Mannering Park township and broader geographical area surrounding the Vales Point Power Station, including the communities of Wyee Point, Chain Valley Bay, Gwandalan and Summerland Point.

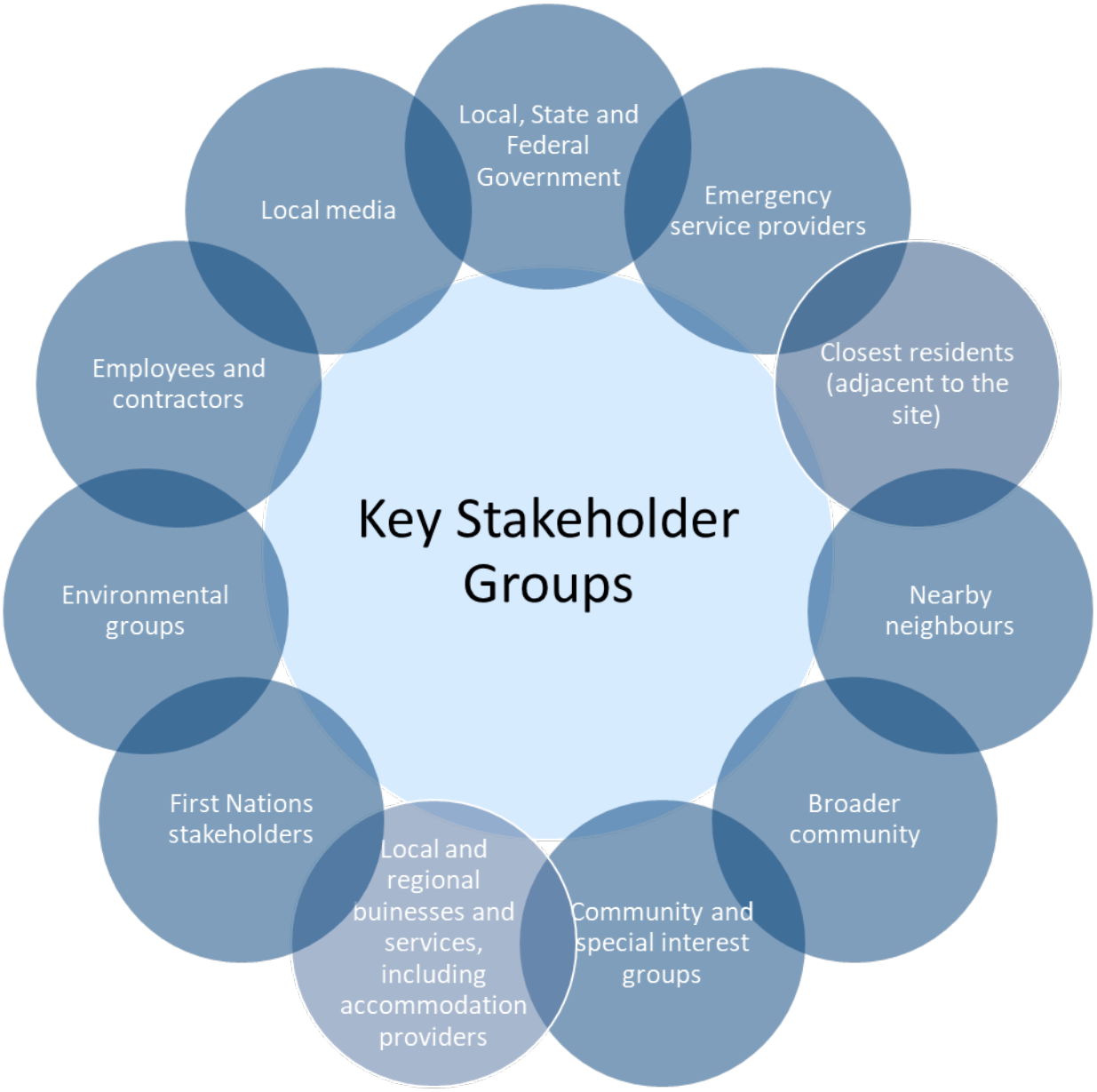

Figure 5.1 Key Stakeholder Groups

Table 5.1 outlines the engagement activities that have been undertaken to inform the Scoping Phase of the Project. This summary is categorised by mechanism and stakeholder group to illustrate the number of individuals engaged, the methods of engagement and the respective stakeholder groups.

Table 5.1 Stakeholder Engagement

Mechanism	Description	Targeted Stakeholder Group	Engagement Undertaken and Timing
Media Release and Social Media	The media release announced the Project to the community. It was issued to local and statewide media and published on Delta's website. The information was also shared in Delta's social media channels.	• Media; and • Broader Community.	The media release was issued on 27 February 2025.
Project Information Sheet	The Information Sheet provided a Project overview and outlined the SSD process including the elements of the SIA scoping phase. A QR code linked the reader to the Online Community Scoping Survey.	• Closest residents and nearby neighbours via letter box drop: ○ Mannering Park Peninsular: Griffith St, Kenneth St, Dunvegan St, Spencer Rd, Campbell Parade, Catherine St, Harwood Cl, Kevin St, Halcyon St, Eliot St, Kenneth Pl, Vales Rd/Warwick Ave; ○ Kingfisher Shores: Tall Timbers Rd, Lakeshore Ave, Morotai Ave, Karoola Ave; and ○ Macquarie Shores – Over 50s Lifestyle Community. • Local Community and Special Interest Groups: the CARE Forum; and • Broader community: Central Coast and Lake Macquarie LGAs via the Project webpage.	In total 785 Project Information Sheets were distributed to closest residents and nearby neighbours through a letter box drop that was undertaken in April 2025. The Project Information Sheet was also sent to the CARE Forum via email and uploaded onto the Project website so that it could be accessed by the broader community.

Mechanism	Description	Targeted Stakeholder Group	Engagement Undertaken and Timing
Online Community Scoping Survey	The Online Community Scoping Survey provided an opportunity for the community to provide input in the scoping phase of the Project, including obtaining specific information about community needs and values, potential impacts of the Project on stakeholders in relation to the Project and to inform potential mitigation and enhancement measures. A survey link was also included in the Project Information Sheet published on the Project website.	• Closest residents and nearby neighbours as noted above; • Local Community and Special Interest Groups: the CARE Forum; and • Broader community via the Project webpage.	The online survey was open for two weeks in April 2025 and reopened temporarily following the Project briefing and feedback session at the CARE Forum in May 2025. In total, 21 responses were collected.
Personal / Phone Interviews	Online and over the phone interviews with key stakeholders were used to gather information to inform the assessment of social impacts and discuss potential mitigation and enhancement measures.	• Local Government: Central Coast Council and Lake Macquarie Council; • Local Community and Special Interest Groups via the CARE Forum; • Emergency Services: Rural Fire Service; and • First Nations stakeholders: Darkinjung Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC).	In total, six interviews were held across April and May 2025. One interview was held with three members of the Lake Macquarie City Council and one written response to interview questions was completed by the Central Coast Council. One interview was held with the NSW Rural Fire Service. One interview was held with a present member of the CARE Forum and one with a former member. An interview was also held with a member of the Delta Coal Consultative Committee. Altogether, three contact attempts via email and phone were made to Darkinjung LALC with no response Further attempts would be made to engage the LALC at the SIA phase.

Mechanism	Description	Targeted Stakeholder Group	Engagement Undertaken and Timing
Project briefing and feedback session	Presentations to stakeholders to provide a Project briefing, outline the SIA process and present the findings of the Scoping phase to obtain stakeholder input.	• Local Community and Special Interest Groups: the CARE Forum; and • DPHI.	An introductory Project presentation was provided to the quarterly CARE Forum in a meeting held in February. A further presentation was provided at the May quarterly meeting. In May, a total of seven members were invited and six attended and provided feedback. A scoping meeting was held with DPHI in July 2025 to provide an overview of the Project, outline the assessments proposed during the EIS stage, and provide the opportunity for feedback.
Meetings and email correspondence	To seek advice from stakeholders regarding connection details, to confirm connection capacity to substation and discuss land tenure of the Project Area.	• Local, State and Federal government agencies: NSW Treasury; and • Regional businesses – TransGrid.	The Proponent has engaged Transgrid ongoing throughout August 2024 to April 2025 regarding the electricity transmission and grid connection activities in the development of the project. Consultation with Transgrid would continue to be undertaken as the project progresses. In addition, ongoing email correspondence with NSW Treasury has been undertaken during March and June 2025.
Project Website	To provide information about the proposed Project, the scoping and assessment phase. A link to the Project Information Sheet and the community scoping survey was provided on the website.	• Broader community: Central Coast and Lake Macquarie LGAs.	A dedicated page on the Delta website was established in April 2025.

5.2.1 Community Views

The engagement activities undertaken to support the SIA Scoping Report focussed on the nearby neighbours who are more likely to be impacted by the Project. The views of the community represented in the Social Impact Scoping Report (refer to **Appendix B**) are based on the sample of community members and stakeholders engaged and do not represent the views of the entire community and broader regions. Subsequent phases of the SIA would seek broader involvement across each of the stakeholder groupings identified, including the wider communities of Wyee Point, Chain Valley Bay, Gwandalan and Summerland Point.

When asked directly about potential positive impacts of the Project, the most frequently cited responses from stakeholders and community members included:

- Enhanced livelihoods and human capital development due to the provision of employment and procurement opportunities associated with the Project; and
- Increased energy security for local residents during peak times.

When asked directly about potential negative impacts of the Project, the top issues raised by stakeholders and community members included:

- Potential environmental and health impacts associated with leaching of chemicals from Project infrastructure and fire suppression water (e.g., surface and groundwater contamination); and
- Delays in travel times for road users associated with construction vehicle traffic.

Key issues raised by stakeholders and community members are discussed in detail in **Section 4.1.1** in **Appendix B**. Further information about the likely level of interest and elements of the Project that can be influenced and shaped by the community is discussed in **Section 6.2.2**.

5.2.2 Agency and Stakeholder Views

Prior to and during the scoping phase, Delta and Samsung engaged with Transgrid and NSW Treasury. Consultation with Transgrid focused on the grid connection details and informed the Project design as presented in this Scoping Report. It is acknowledged that consultation with Transgrid is ongoing and will continue to inform the Project design into the EIS phase. Consultation with NSW Treasury has focused on the ongoing land use of the Project Area in the context of the existing land tenure agreement (Handback Deed) between the parties. NSW Treasury has provided conditional support for the Project, with the understanding that formal project approval will require Delta and NSW Treasury agreeing to commercial arrangements required under the Handback Deed throughout the duration of the BESS lifecycle. Treasury will continue to be engaged as a key stakeholder throughout the EIS.

At the scoping meeting with DPHI in July 2025, DPHI asked for clarification of some Project details and the proposed assessments, such as biodiversity. The outcome of these discussions helped inform the details provided in the relevant sections of this Scoping Report and identification of studies to be prepared as part of the EIS.

The RFS has a longstanding relationship with Delta and during engagement raised that the Project poses no additional danger than what currently exists at the Vales Point Power Station site. Further assessments will be undertaken during the EIS phase to inform the level of risk including a Preliminary Hazard Analysis and Bushfire Risk Assessment.

Lake Macquarie City Council identified potential community concern around a change to the sense of place and also noted there is high car dependency and a lack of public transport. These issues and potential mitigation measures will be addressed during the EIS phase through assessments including a Landscape and Visual Assessment, Noise and Vibration Assessment and Traffic and Transport Assessment.

Central Coast Council identified environmental impacts associated with potential remediation as being a possible concern. The EIS will include a Preliminary Site Investigation to inform the potential for contamination risks, as well as present further details around the options for repowering or decommissioning of the Project at the end of its operational life.

5.3 Continued Engagement

The Proponent would continue to engage with the community and key stakeholders throughout the Project assessment phases. The CSEP will seek broader involvement across each of the stakeholder groupings identified and would include consultation with community groups, service providers and residents more broadly. The CSEP is provided at **Appendix G**. The SIA would revise the CSEP to seek broader involvement across each of the stakeholder groupings identified and would include consultation with community groups, service providers and residents more broadly.

5.3.1 Monitoring and Evaluation

A dedicated Stakeholder Database has been developed in Microsoft Excel format to record stakeholder interactions and related information provision throughout the Project's planning and assessment phase. The implementation of the CSEP would be monitored and evaluated on an ongoing basis to ensure effectiveness. The Proponent would adjust activities if feedback suggests changes are required based on this monitoring program.

6.0 Proposed Assessment of Impacts

6.1 Key Environmental and Social Matters

The identification of the environmental, social, and economic matters pertaining to the Project has been undertaken through a risk based approach to determine which issues need to be assessed as part of the EIS and the level of assessment that is required. This review has been undertaken with reference to the categories of assessment matters identified in the SSD Scoping Report Guideline, with the key issues and the proposed level and scope of assessments discussed in the following sections.

The environmental and social matters relevant to the Project are identified and have been characterised (in accordance with the SSD Scoping Report Guideline) as follows:

- Matters requiring further assessment in the EIS (refer to **Section 6.2**); and
- Matters requiring no further assessment in the EIS (refer to **Section 6.3**).

For the matters requiring further assessment in the EIS, **Section 6.2** identifies whether detailed or standard assessment is required (as defined by Appendix D of SSD Scoping Report Guideline).
A summary of the key environmental matters identified, and the level of assessment proposed for the EIS, appears in **Table 6.1**.

Table 6.1 Level of Assessment to be Undertaken in EIS

Level of Assessment	Assessment Matter
Detailed	Noise and Vibration
Detailed	Social
Standard	Traffic, Transport and Access
Standard	Water and Soil Resources
Standard	Contamination
Standard	Hazards and Safety Risks
Standard	Mine Subsidence
Standard	Waste Management
Standard	Air Quality
Standard	Landscape and Visual Amenity
Standard	Aboriginal Cultural Heritage
Standard	Historic Heritage
Standard	Biosecurity
Standard	Cumulative Impacts

Appendix A presents a Scoping Table Summary as required by DPHI.

6.2 Matters Requiring Further Assessment in the EIS

The environmental, social, and economic matters discussed in this section have been identified as key issues requiring further assessment as part of the EIS to fully understand the potential impacts and identify project-specific mitigation measures and/or alternatives.

6.2.1 Noise and Vibration

6.2.1.1 Existing Environment

The primary sources of noise and vibration in the vicinity of the Project Area originate from the operation of the existing Vales Point Power Station infrastructure, Transgrid's Vales Point 330 kV substation, neighbouring mining/industrial uses as well as roads and residential activities. Within an approximate 1 km buffer around the Project Area, there are approximately 693 potential non-associated residential receivers (refer to **Figure 6.1**).

6.2.1.2 Potential Impact

Construction

During the construction phase of the Project, the proposed activities may generate noise and vibration impacts for proximate potential receivers.

Operation

Noise emissions during the operational phase of the Project would primarily include the inverters and transformers. However, noise emissions from the Project infrastructure are expected to be minimal in comparison to the existing Vales Point Power Station and the adjacent Transgrid Vales Point 330 kV substation. Conceptual BESS layout designs would prioritise location and orientation of BESS equipment and ancillary infrastructure away from potential receivers where feasible.

6.2.1.3 Assessment Approach

As part of the EIS, a comprehensive Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment (NVIA) would be conducted. The NVIA would include baseline noise monitoring to characterise the existing acoustic environment of the area, and an assessment of cumulative noise emissions including other local noise sources such as Vales Point Power Station and the existing Vales Point 330 KV Substation. The NVIA would also take into consideration the acoustic environment of the area post-closure of the Vales Point Power Station. The NVIA would be completed in accordance with the following:

- Interim Construction Noise Guideline (DECC, 2009);
- NSW Road Noise Policy (DECCW, 2011);
- Noise Policy for Industry (EPA, 2017); and
- Assessing Vibration: A Technical Guideline (DEC, 2006).

Mitigation measures to minimise noise and vibration impacts for potential receivers would be developed as part of the NVIA and incorporated into the EIS.

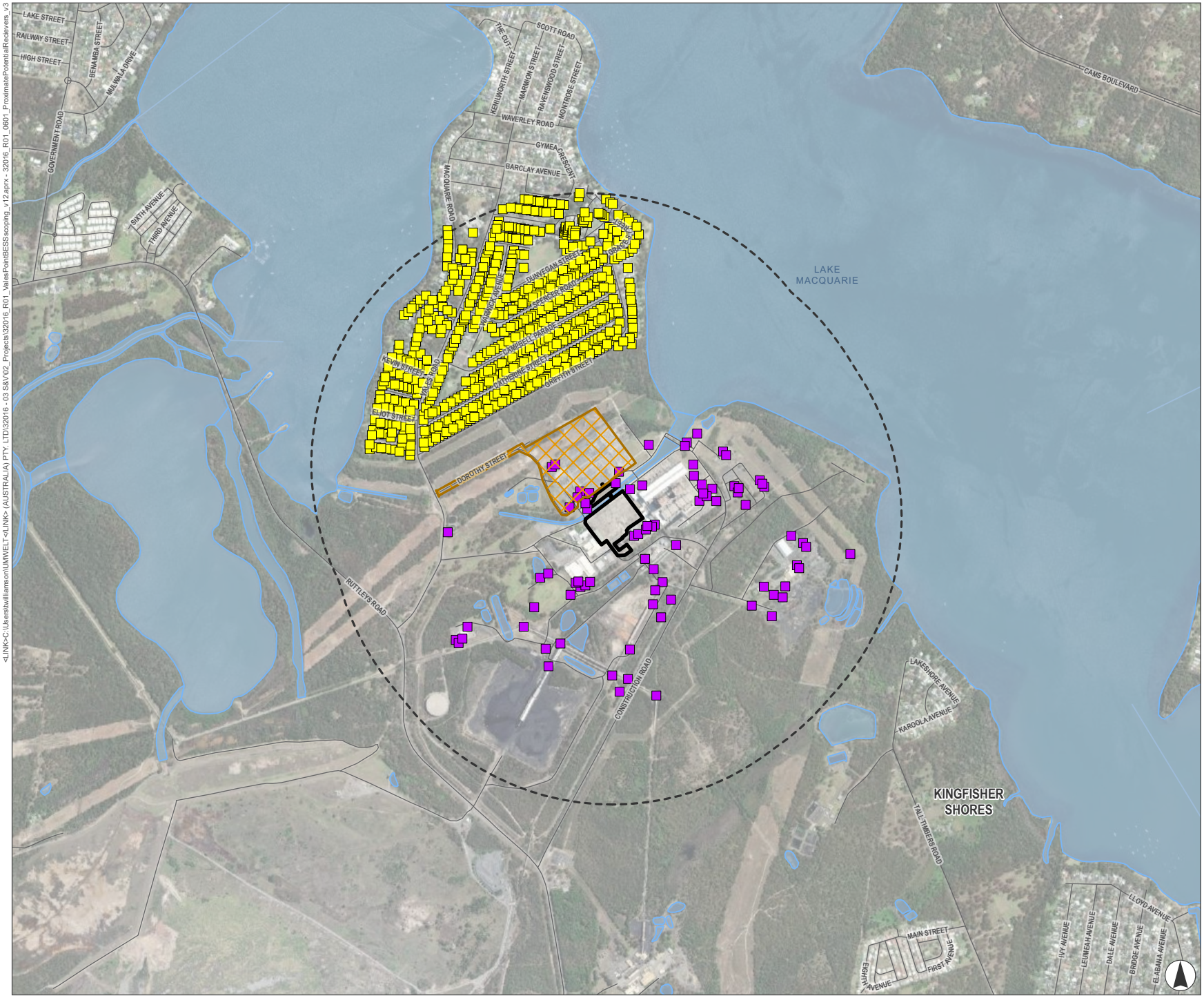

FIGURE 6.1

Proximate Potential Receivers

Legend

- Project Area
- Vales Point 330 kV Substation
- 1km Buffer
- Local Road
- Watercourse
- Waterbody

Potential Receiver

- Non-associated Industrial Buildings (substation, power station and mining infrastructure)
- Non-Associated Residential Receivers

0 0.25 0.5

Kilometres

Scale 1:20,000 at A4
GDA2020 MGA Zone 56

umwelt

Image Source: ESRI Basemap (2025) | **Data Source:** NSW DFSI (2025)

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6.2.2 Social

A Social Impact Scoping Report (SISR) has been prepared by Umwelt in accordance with the NSW Social Impact Assessment Guideline for State Significant Projects (DPIE, 2023). The SISR appears in full in **Appendix B** and this section provides a summary of the key findings. The Project CSEP can be found in **Appendix G**.

6.2.2.1 Existing Environment

The Project is located within the Central Coast LGA in NSW, approximately 1 km south of Mannering Park, and in proximity to the localities of Doyalson North and Kingfisher Shores. The Social Locality, including the geographic extent for the SISR, is identified on **Figure 6.2**.

The Project is bordered by some 1,500 homes in Mannering Park (1 km north), Kingfisher Shore (1.4 km southeast), and Doyalson North (3 km south). Newcastle sits 50 km to the north, with Toronto 31 km north and Wyong 21 km south. The Project Area is located near the M1 Pacific Motorway linking Sydney through the Central Coast, Newcastle, and Hunter regions to northern NSW and on to Brisbane.

The Project falls entirely within the Central Coast LGA with a population size of 346,596 (ABS, 2021a). The Project is close the southern extent of the Lake Macquarie LGA which has 213,845 residents, and surrounds Australia's largest saltwater lake, Lake Macquarie (ABS, 2021b). These LGAs feature significant coal, power generation, agriculture, and manufacturing industries.

As outlined in **Section 2.2** and **Section 3.9.2**, land within and surrounding the Project Area has been historically cleared as part of establishing the existing infrastructure.

6.2.2.2 Potential Impact

The SISR identified potential social impacts (both positive and negative) and potential mitigation and enhancement measures. A summary of the potential social impacts and potential mitigation and enhancement measures appear in this section and a preliminary social impact evaluation appears in Section 5.0 of the SISR (refer to **Appendix B**).

Potential social impacts (both positive and negative) and the likely level of community interest related to the Project, as identified in the SISR, include:

- Increased energy security for local residents during peak times;
- Enhanced livelihoods and human capital development due to the provision of employment and procurement opportunities associated with the Project;
- Intergenerational equality associated with potential reduced reliance on fossil fuels through the facilitation of renewable energy usage;
- Increased livelihood benefits to local businesses due the presence of the temporary construction workforce;
- Potential decrease in public safety due to increased construction vehicle activity;
- Potential environmental and health impacts (e.g., surface and groundwater contamination) associated with leaching of chemicals from Project infrastructure or fire suppression water run-off;

- Increased public safety risk associated with potential battery fire;
- Delay in travel times for road users associated with construction vehicle traffic;
- Inequitable distribution of positive and negative impacts for the community;
- Decreased social amenity due to noise; and
- Intergenerational equality associated with managing waste associated with decommissioning.

6.2.2.3 Assessment Approach

A SIA would be developed as part of the EIS in accordance with the *Social Impact Assessment Guidelines for State Significant Projects* (DPE, 2023) and would include a comprehensive assessment and prediction of social impacts and the development of relevant management and enhancement measures. Further SIA and technical environmental impact studies would address perceptions of impacts raised by key stakeholders during this phase.

The SIA would involve the following key activities:

- An update of the baseline social profile so that any further baseline data relevant to key social impact matters is identified and analysed.
- Further validation of the social locality and identification of affected communities and vulnerable groups.
- Provision of feedback to community members and key stakeholders on the outcomes of the issues raised in the scoping phase and communication of the Project's SEARs (once issued), including an outline of the next steps in the assessment process and further opportunities for community engagement and input to inform project design and planning.
- Update of the Project CSEP and further engagement with community members and other key stakeholders on key social impact areas. This would involve feedback on the outcomes of EIS technical studies and would provide opportunities for input to the development of appropriate management and enhancement measures to address social impacts and any residual social effects.
- A comprehensive assessment and evaluation of social impacts against existing baseline conditions.

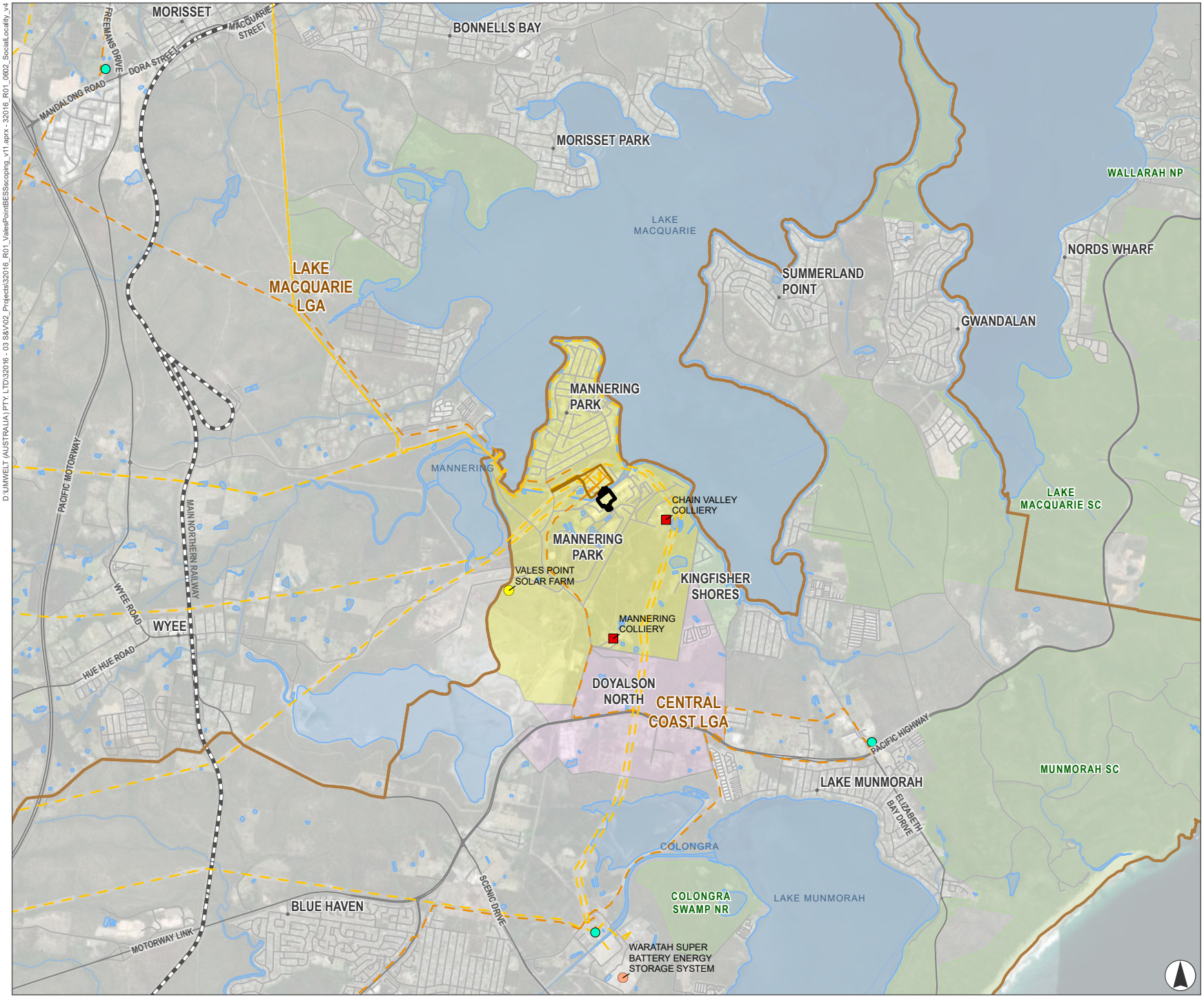

FIGURE 6.2

Social Locality

Legend

- Substation
- Project Area
- Vales Point 330 kV Substation
- Local Government Area (LGA)
- Doyalson North
- Kingfisher Shores
- Mannering Park
- Reserve
- Waterbody
- Watercourse
- 132 kV Transmission Line
- 330 kV Transmission Line
- Local Road
- Main Road
- Railway

Proximal projects

- Coal Mine
- Battery
- Solar

0 1 2

Kilometres

Scale 1:65,000 at A4
GDA2020 MGA Zone 56

umwelt

Image Source: ESRI Basemap (2025) | **Data Source:** NSW DFSI (2025)

6.2.3 Traffic, Transport and Access

6.2.3.1 Existing Environment

Access to the Project Area is proposed via the existing road network. The primary access route would be via the Pacific Highway, Ruttleys Road, Vales Road to the Project Area access point. The Pacific Motorway acts as a primary connection between Sydney and the Newcastle Region and would facilitate the transportation of Project-related components. An alternative site access is available via Construction Road (off Ruttleys Road).

6.2.3.2 Potential Impact

Construction

The construction phase of the Project would result in increased traffic movements from both light vehicles transporting construction personnel and minor light construction materials, heavy vehicles, and potentially some OSOM vehicle movements transporting the heavy-duty equipment required for construction purposes. If required, the Project Area access point on Vales Road would be upgraded to provide suitable access to the proposed BESS location (refer to **Section 3.3** and **Figure 3.1**). Upgrades to local roads may also be required to allow access for OSOM vehicles (where considered suitable) prior to any deliveries occurring as part of the construction phase of the Project. The proposed access route and any construction/maintenance required would be confirmed and assessed during the preparation of the EIS.

Operation

Traffic increases associated with the operational phase of the Project would be minimal and would generally only involve the movement of light vehicles transporting operational staff to the Project Area. Operational traffic movements would be defined in a Traffic and Transport Impact Assessment (TTIA) in the EIS.

6.2.3.3 Assessment Approach

A TTIA would be undertaken as part of the EIS to assess the potential transport routes required for the construction of the Project and any potential impact to the road network. The assessments would be undertaken following relevant NSW Government guidelines and assessment standards, including the *Guide to Traffic Generating Developments* (RTA, 2002), *Road Design Guide* and relevant Austroads standards and *Austroads Guide to Traffic Management guidelines*.

6.2.4 Water and Soil Resources

6.2.4.1 Existing Environment

Surface Water

There are no waterways that run directly through the Project Area. A man-made canal is located directly to the north of the Project Area. The closest natural watercourse to the Project Area is Lake Macquarie, located approximately 200 m northeast. **Figure 6.3** shows the hydrological and topographic context of the Project Area, including wetlands, Strahler stream orders and groundwater dependant ecosystems.

Flooding

A review of the Central Coast Council online flood planning map indicates that the Project Area is not mapped within a high hazard or flood storage area. The Project Area is within the flood planning level which is the area affected by the 1 in 100 year flood plus an additional 0.5 m of freeboard. Within the flood planning level development controls apply to residential developments. The Project will be designed taking into consideration the outcomes of the flooding assessment to be undertaken as part of the EIS and any relevant recommendations of the *Flood Risk Management Manual* (NSW Government 2023).

Groundwater Vulnerability

Under the NSW Groundwater Vulnerability mapping sourced from the Seed Dataset (DPE, 2014), the Project Area is not within a groundwater vulnerability area.

Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems

A review of the Groundwater Dependant Ecosystems (GDEs) Atlas (BoM, 2017) indicated that the Project Area is not located within a GDE. There are small areas of aquatic GDEs mapped in the vicinity of the Project Area approximately 200m north, 200m south, and 200m west of the Project Area (refer to **Figure 6.3**). These are mapped as medium ecological value aquatic ecosystem GDEs.

Water Storage and Usage

Water Sharing Plans (WSPs) have been developed under the NSW *Water Management Act 2000* to protect the environmental health of water sources, whilst securing sustainable access to water for all users. WSPs specify maximum water extractions and allocations and provide licensed and unlicensed water users with a clear picture of when and how water would be available for extraction. The Project Area is subject to the WSPs of the Hunter Region.

The Project Area is located within the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources WSP, which commenced in 2022 (DPE, 2022b). The WSP is divided into 42 water source boundaries. The Project Area is located within the South Lake Macquarie Water Source.

With respect to groundwater, the Project Area is located within the Lake Macquarie Coastal Floodplain Alluvial Groundwater Source which is also regulated under the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources WSP, which commenced in 2022 (DPE, 2022b).

Australian Soil Classification

The Project Area is mapped as kurosols under the Australian Soil Classification mapping for the site. Kurosols are typically characterised by strong acidity and sodicity, which can influence soil stability, nutrient availability, and water movement.

Acid Sulfate Soils

The Project Area is identified as X4 Disturbed Terrain, refer to **Figure 6.4**. X4 Disturbed Terrain is land where no assessment of acid sulfate soils is possible, presumably because it was previously part of the larger Vales Point Power Station site.

There are no mapped acid sulfate soil risk areas within the Project Area, although the man-made canal directly to the north has been mapped, as 'high probability of occurrence' for acid sulfate soils.

Soils and Land Capability

The Land and Soil Capability Assessment Scheme (LSC) identifies the capability of the land to sustain land use, ranging between Class 1 to Class 8. Class 1 is land capable of high soil impact and Class 8 represents land that is only capable of sustaining low impact.

The land surrounding the Project Area has a LSC of 4 (refer to **Figure 6.5**). The LSC identifies Class 4 land as having moderate to severe limitations for grazing and other land uses (OEH, 2012). The Project Area itself is identified as land 'Not assessed', presumably because it was previously part of the larger Vales Point Power Station site.

6.2.4.2 Potential Impacts

Construction

The potential for impacts to soils during construction would be minimal as the Project Area consists of an existing concrete footing with Project infrastructure generally to be established with minimal impact to the concrete surface. There would be minimal risk for potential surface and groundwater impacts due to the relatively small surface areas potentially disturbed during construction and the Project transmission connection proposed to be an overhead transmission line. Mitigation and management measures would be implemented during construction to reduce the risk for soil, surface and groundwater impacts.

Construction activities would not increase the risk of flooding for the Project Area or surrounds.

Operation

The establishment of Project infrastructure may alter existing surface runoff patterns but any change is considered negligible as the Project Area currently consists of a concrete slab. Potential operational impacts include accidental spillage or discharge through the use and storage of chemicals; however, these would be effectively managed by the implementation of standard management measures.

6.2.4.3 Assessment Approach

A Water Resources Impact Assessment (WRIA) would be prepared for the EIS to provide a detailed review and assessment of the surface and groundwater characteristics of the Project Area, including flooding, and potential impacts that may result from the Project. This would include a detailed review of the relevant WSPs, water users, and Project water requirements and supply during construction and operation phases.

As the Project Area has been subject to previous extensive disturbance when part of the Vales Point Power Station and now largely consists of a concrete slab, the EIS would include a desktop assessment of soils and related impacts. The potential for soil contamination is discussed in **Section 6.2.5**.

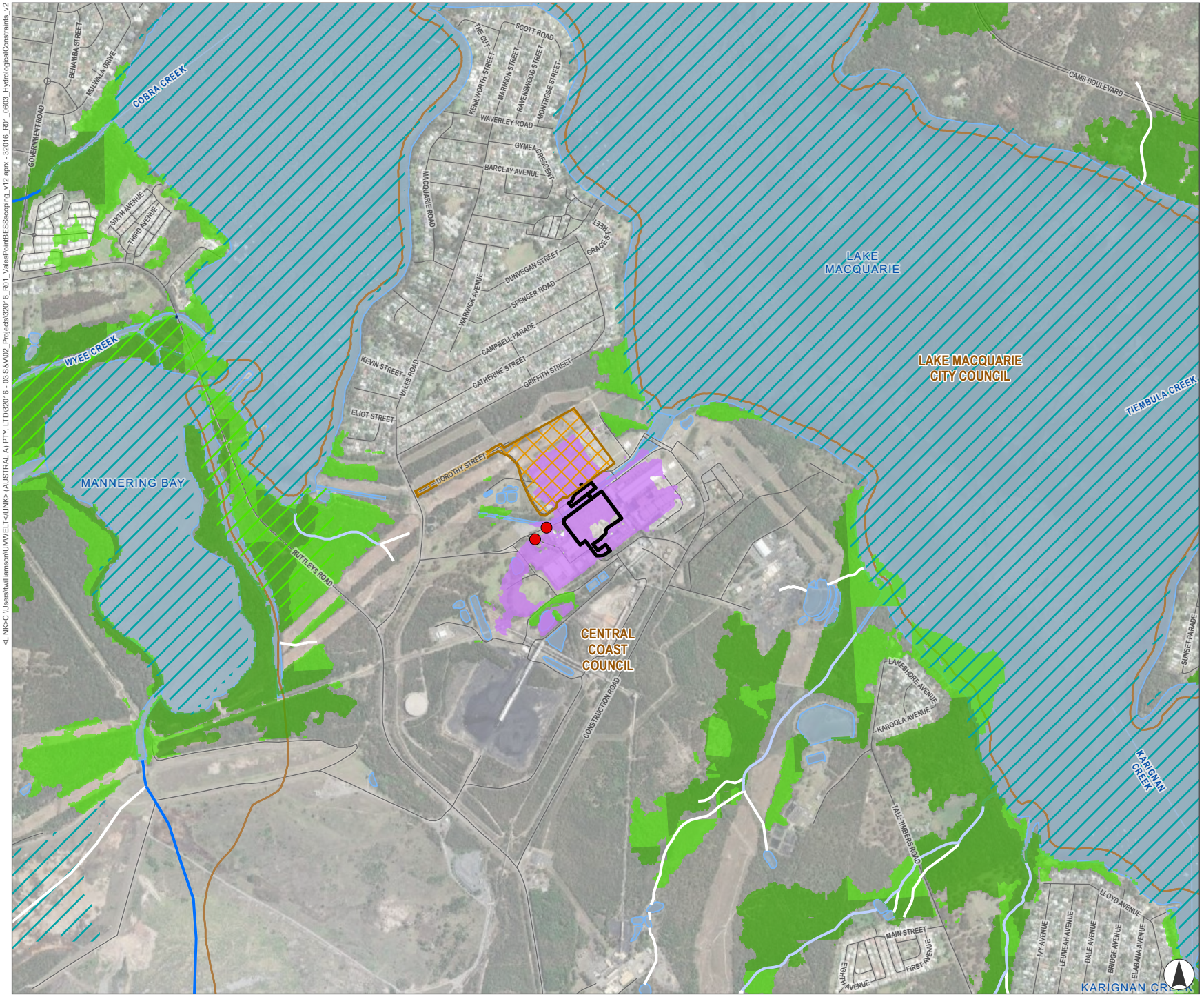

FIGURE 6.3

Hydrological Constraints

Legend

- Vales Point Power Station Security Facilities
- Project Area
- Vales Point 330 kV Substation
- Local Government Area (LGA)
- Indicative Flood Planning Level in Immediate Vicinity of the Project Area
- Waterbody
- Road
- Watercourse

Strahler Stream Order

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4

Wetlands

- Coastal lagoons and lakes
- Estuarine Wetland

GDE - High Ecological Value Aquatic Ecosystems

- High
- Medium

0 250 500

Metres

Scale 1:20,000 at A4
GDA2020 MGA Zone 56

umwelt

Image Source: ESRI Basemap (2025) | **Data Source:** NSW DFSI (2025)

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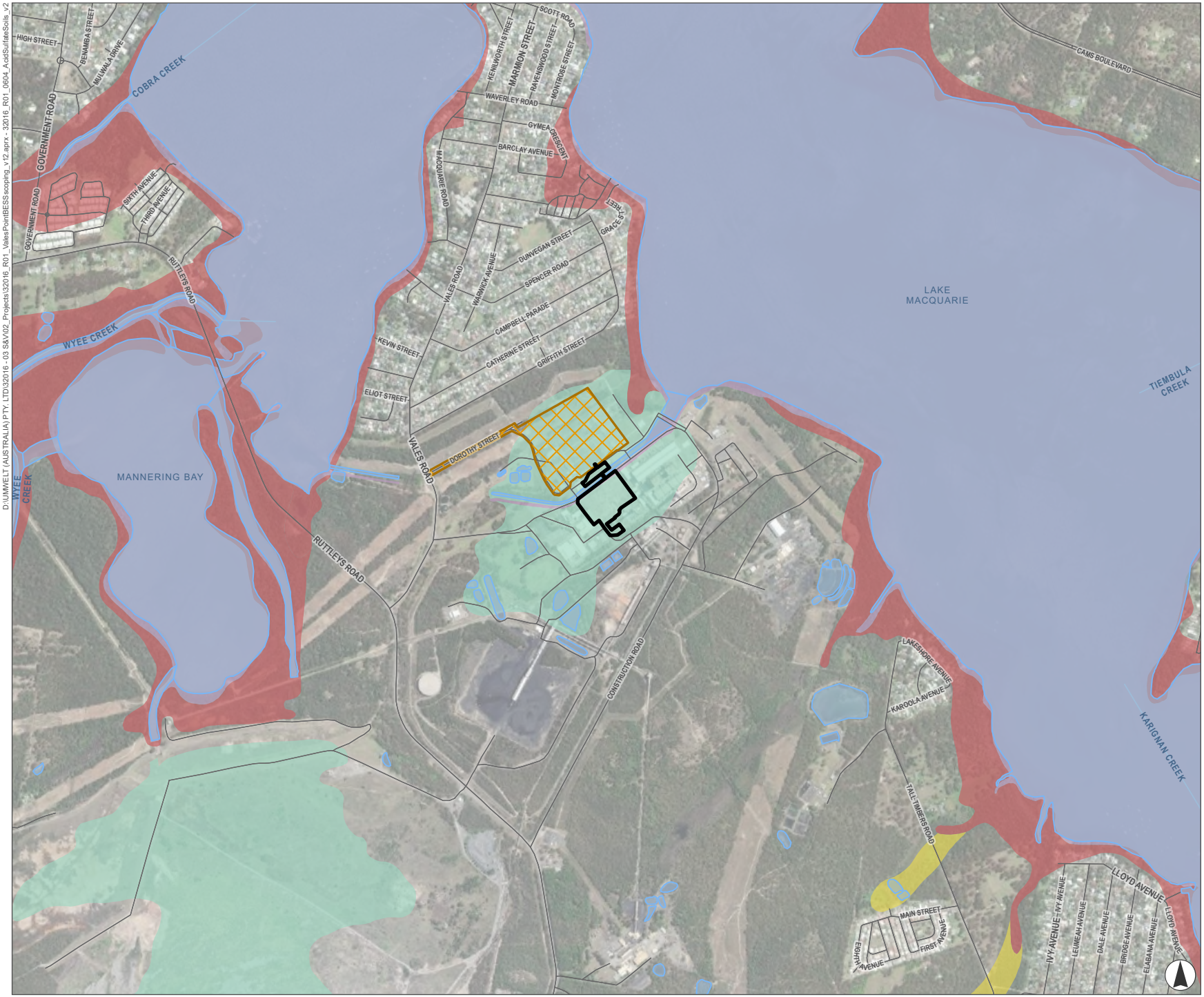

FIGURE 6.4

Acid Sulfate Soils

Legend

- Project Area
- Vales Point 330 kV Substation
- Waterbody
- Watercourse
- Local Road

Acid Sulfate Soils

- Hm: High probability in bottom sediments
- H1: High probability <1 m below ground surface
- L2: Low probability 1 - 3 m below ground surface
- X4: Disturbed terrain, elevation >4 m AHD

0 250 500

Metres

Scale 1:20,000 at A4
GDA2020 MGA Zone 56

umwelt

Image Source: ESRI Basemap (2025) | **Data Source:** NSW DFSI (2025)

FIGURE 6.5

Land and Soil Constraints

Legend

- Project Area
- Vales Point 330 kV Substation
- Local Road

Land and Soil Capability (LSC)

- 1 - Very slight to negligible limitations
- 2 - Slight but significant limitations
- 3 - Moderate limitations
- 4 - Moderate to severe limitations
- 5 - Severe limitations
- 6 - Very severe limitations
- 7 - Extremely severe limitations
- 8 - Extreme limitations
- Not assessed
- Water

0 250 500

Metres

Scale 1:20,000 at A4
GDA2020 MGA Zone 56

umwelt

Image Source: ESRI Basemap (2025) | **Data Source:** NSW DFSI (2025)

6.2.5 Contamination

6.2.5.1 Existing Environment

Contaminated land presents a risk to human health and the environment and is regulated under the NSW *Contaminated Land Management Act 1997*. A search of the NSW EPA Contaminated Land Record on 20 March 2025 identified no contaminated sites within the suburb of Mannering Park. No record of notice or list of notified sites were identified within the Project Area.

As part of the broader Vales Point Power Station, the Project Area is subject to ongoing site wide due diligence contamination assessments. These regular and targeted assessments have identified some contaminants of concern within the Project Area with concentrations detected in soil and groundwater generally below screening criteria and commensurable with previous land use activities associated with the former power station.

Metal concentrations in soil samples have been identified within sections of the Project Area above ecological criteria for commercial/industrial land use but are below the relevant health-based criteria.

Soil samples with chrysotile asbestos above site-based criteria have been identified within a small portion of the Project Area and are associated to a known proximal Asbestos Containing Material (ACM) outside the Project Area.

Groundwater investigations across the Project Area have identified some metal concentrations exceeding aquatic ecosystem site assessment criteria. These exceedances are associated with legacy fill material utilised across the broader Vales Point Power Station and is not considered to pose health risks during construction and operation phases of the Project.

The presence of per-and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) has been identified at locations within the Project Area and is associated with historical use of aqueous film forming foam in fire-fighting training and fire incidents. PFAS concentrations have been observed above practical quantitation limits (PQL) and require further assessment in the EIS.

6.2.5.2 Potential Impact

Construction

There is a potential risk to human health from asbestos via dust inhalation pathways. As construction of the Project is to occur on the existing concrete footing within the Project Area, minimal civil works to prepare the Project Area for installation of the BESS equipment would be required.
During construction asbestos would be managed in accordance with the *Code of Practice how to safely remove asbestos* (Safework NSW, 2022) and the *Code of Practice How to manage and control asbestos in the workplace* (Safework Australia, 2020).

Potential contamination impacts during construction include the spills of fuels, chemicals or other hazardous materials. This would be managed by standard measures and procedures for storage, handling and clean up of potentially contaminating materials.

Operation

Potential contamination risks during operation are considered minimal due to the inbuilt safety systems of BESS such as for fire suppression. While there is a low risk of fire from BESS, if fire suppression was required there would be potential for contamination if there was surface runoff to pervious surfaces or off-site drainage.

6.2.5.3 Assessment Approach

Investigations undertaken have identified the presence of contaminants of potential concern within and in the vicinity of the Project Area. A Preliminary Site Investigation (PSI) would be prepared as part of the EIS to further characterise identified contaminants and inform the potential risks of contaminants migrating during the construction and operation phases of the Project. Impacts to surface water run-off and drainage of the Project Area would be assessed in the WRIA, refer to **Section 6.2.4**. The PSI will be undertaken in accordance with and consider the *National Environment Protection (Assessment of Site Contamination) Measure 1999* (NEPC, 2013), and *Contaminated Land Guidelines: Consultants Reporting on Contaminated Land* (EPA, 2020).

6.2.6 Hazards and Safety Risks

This section addresses potential hazards and safety risks associated with the Project including, bushfire, electromagnetic fields, hazardous goods, and coastal management risk.

6.2.6.1 Existing Environment

Bushfire

A review of NSW RFS Bushfire Prone Land confirms that the Project is not within bush fire prone land. The nearest bushfire prone land is approximately 200 m east of the Project Area (refer to **Figure 6.6**).

Electromagnetic Fields

Electromagnetic fields (EMF) are present where electric current flows, including overhead and underground transmission lines, substations and electrical appliances. The Project Area does not currently contain any key sources of EMF. Areas surrounding the Project Area contain EMF generating equipment such as high voltage equipment including transformers, switchyard, and overhead and underground cabling.

Hazardous Materials and Dangerous Goods

The Project Area consists predominantly of a concrete slab that has been cleared of other infrastructure. There are no known hazardous materials or dangerous goods within the Project Area. Chemical Depots are present east of the Project Area and are associated to the existing Vales Point Power Station water treatment process.

Coastal hazards

Coastal hazards are defined under the NSW *Coastal Management Act 2016* as:

- Beach erosion;
- Shoreline recession;
- Coastal lake or watercourse entrance instability;
- Coastal inundation;
- Coastal cliff or slope instability;
- Tidal inundation; and
- Erosion and inundation of foreshores caused by tidal waters and the action of waves, including the interaction of those waters with catchment floodwaters.

The Project Area is separated from Lake Macquarie by approximately 330 m and is identified within a 'coastal environment area' as defined under the NSW *Coastal Management Act 2016*.

6.2.6.2 Potential Impacts

The Project would be designed to include safety features to minimise ignition risks that could led to bushfire and would incorporate appropriate asset protection zones. The existing cleared areas of Vales Point Power Station would help to reduce the risk of bushfire spread to the Project Area. Additional design considerations will ensure that any potential fire risk to existing site infrastructure is mitigated.

The Project would likely produce EMF when operational. Once the BESS has been commissioned, on-site personnel would be exposed to EMF radiation, though unlikely at levels that pose a hazard to human health.

The Project Area is considered unlikely to be impacted by, or contribute to, coastal hazards described in **Section 6.2.6.1** as the Project Area is approximately 330 m inland from Lake Macquarie, away from any beaches, shorelines or watercourse entrances.

The Project may result in the introduction of a number of hazardous materials that present potential risks to the environment and public safety. Hazardous materials that may be transported to the Project Area, stored, and used within the Project Area and transported from the Project Area are presented in **Table 6.2**, with reference to the *Australian Code for the Transport of Dangerous Goods by Road and Rail* (NTC, 2022).

Table 6.2 Project Hazardous Materials

Material	Dangerous Goods Class/ Division and (Packing Group)	Phase(s) of Project
Unleaded Petrol	3 (II)	Construction, Operations and Decommissioning
Diesel Fuel	C1	Construction, Operations and Decommissioning
Herbicides	9 (II)	Operations
Sulfur Hexafluoride (SF_6)	Class 2.2	Operations and Decommissioning

Material	Dangerous Goods Class/ Division and (Packing Group)	Phase(s) of Project
Transformer Oil	-	Construction, Operations and Decommissioning
Aerosols	Class 2.1	Construction, Operations and Decommissioning
Solvents	3 (II)	Construction, Operations and Decommissioning
Lithium	9 (II & III)	Operations and Decommissioning

Lithium-Ion Batteries

Lithium-Ion batteries typically comprise of:

- An anode (typically graphite) with a copper current collector;
- A cathode (e.g. LiFePO4) with an aluminium current collector;
- A porous separating layer between the anode and cathode; and
- An electrolyte comprised of a lithium salt dissolved in a flammable hydrocarbon solvent.

During normal use Lithium-Ion batteries are sealed and do not vent to the atmosphere during normal operation. However, if subject to abnormal heating (external or internal) or other abuse, flammable electrolyte and electrolyte decomposition products can vaporise, rupture the battery cell and be vented (NFPA, 2023). Vented electrolyte and electrolyte decomposition products may ignite if exposed to an ignition source including sparks, open flames and Lithium-ion cells undergoing thermal runaway.

Thermal runaway occurs when the internal temperature of a Lithium-ion battery cell increases beyond its operating range leading to exothermic decomposition reactions generating additional heat. If the additional heat is not dissipated, the cell temperature is further elevated accelerating the process of decomposition and heat generation. Lithium-Ion batteries are susceptible to thermal runaway which can be initiated by a range of mechanisms including electro-chemical abuse (e.g. from overcharging, over-discharging and over voltage charging), mechanical abuse (e.g. physical damage to cell causing a short circuit), thermal abuse (overheating from an external source), manufacturing defects (e.g. internal short circuits) and design faults (e.g. inadequate clearance between cells or modules to allow heat dissipation).

6.2.6.3 Assessment Approach

The EIS would include the preparation of a Preliminary Hazard Analysis (PHA) including a Bushfire Risk Assessment to provide sufficient information and assessment of the identified risks described above. The Bushfire Risk Assessment would aim to demonstrate that the Project can be designed, constructed, and operated to minimise ignition risks and provide for asset protection consistent with the *NSW RFS Planning for Bushfire Protection 2019* (RFS, 2019).

The PHA would consider the potential health issues and risks associated with EMF produced by the Project and surrounding electrical infrastructure such as the Transgrid Vales Point 330 kV Substation and Vales Point Power Station, in accordance with the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) *Guidelines for Limiting Exposure to Time-varying Electric, Magnetic and Electromagnetic Fields* (ICNIRP, 1998). The PHA would also consider potential coastal hazards for the Project and would be assessed in accordance with the *Coastal Management Act 2016* and St*ate Environmental Planning Policy (Coastal Management) 2018*.

A preliminary risk screening for all hazardous materials and dangerous goods to be stored and transported to/from the Project Area would also be undertaken in accordance with Chapter 3 (Hazardous and Offensive Development) of *State Environment Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards) 2021* (Resilience and Hazards SEPP). However, the quantities of hazardous materials to be stored at the Project Area would be limited and are not expected to exceed either storage or transport screening thresholds in the Resilience and Hazards SEPP.

FIGURE 6.6

Bushfire Prone Land

Legend

- Site Access
- Project Area
- Vales Point 330 kV Substation
- Road
- Watercourse

Bush Fire Prone Land

- Category 0 - Vegetation Buffer: 100m for category 1 and 30m for category 2 and 3
- Vegetation Category 1 - Highest Risk
- Vegetation Category 2 - Lower risk than Category 1 and Category 3 but higher than the excluded areas
- Vegetation category 3 - Medium Risk

0 250 500

Metres

Scale 1:20,000 at A4
GDA2020 MGA Zone 56

Image Source: ESRI Basemap (2025) | **Data Source:** NSW DFSI (2025)

6.2.7 Mine Subsidence

6.2.7.1 Existing Environment

Under the NSW *Coal Mine Subsidence Compensation Act 2017*, surface development within a mine subsidence district requires the approval of Subsidence Advisory NSW. The Project Area is wholly within the Swansea North Entrance mine subsidence district.

6.2.7.2 Potential Impact

Impacts to the Project Area from mine subsidence are considered unlikely as there are no known historical underground activities beneath the Project Area.

6.2.7.3 Assessment Approach

An assessment of mine subsidence would be provided in the EIS in consultation with Subsidence Advisory NSW.

6.2.8 Waste Management

6.2.8.1 Existing Environment

No waste is currently generated within the Project Area.

6.2.8.2 Potential Impact

Construction

The majority of waste associated with the Project would be generated during the construction phase, potentially including liquid waste, hazardous waste and general solid waste.

Operation

Wastes generated during the operational phase of the Project are expected to be minimal, with most battery components expected to be readily recyclable at the end of the Project life.

6.2.8.3 Assessment Approach

The EIS would include an assessment of waste streams associated with the construction and operation of the Project as well as identifying mitigation measures to manage any potential waste impacts. Potential waste streams would be identified in accordance with the *NSW Waste Classification Guidelines* (NSW EPA, 2014) with management practices identified in line with the NSW *Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Act 2001* and other relevant policies and guidelines. The EIS would outline strategies to minimise waste and identify registered facilities for recycling and disposal.

6.2.9 Air Quality

6.2.9.1 Existing Environment

The primary source of air pollutants and emissions surrounding the Project Area would be from industrial activities, such as the operation of the existing Vales Point Power Station, Chain Valley Colliery and Mannering Colliery. Air pollutants and emissions from these developments are managed under their respective Environmental Protection Licences (EPLs).

6.2.9.2 Potential Impacts

Construction/ Decommissioning

Construction and decommissioning activities, such as ground disturbance and vehicle movements, can generate dust and emissions that may impact local air quality. As the Project would be located on a concrete footing from the former A Station, only minor civil works would be required to prepare the Project Area. Additionally, the internal Vales Point Power Station access roads to be used for project access are bitumen sealed roads. Because of this, emissions from the Project are anticipated to be minimal and localised to the site and the immediate surroundings.

Operation

During operations, air quality impacts are minimal since BESS facilities do not produce air emissions. It is anticipated decommissioning and rehabilitation of the Vales Point Power Station would occur during the operational period of the Project. Cumulative impacts due to the emissions related to the decommissioning of the power station would be considered in the EIS.

6.2.9.3 Assessment Approach

Overall, potential air quality impacts from the Project are low and would be mitigated by standard dust suppression measures. A desktop assessment of air quality impacts would be provided in the EIS.

6.2.10 Landscape and Visual Amenity

6.2.10.1 Existing Environment

The Project is located on flat, level land that previously contained infrastructure associated with the former A Station area of Vales Point Power Station. The Project Area is immediately surrounded by infrastructure associated with Vales Point Power Station, Vales Point 330 kV Substation and Chain Valley Colliery. Further from the Project Area but within the local area is bushland, roads, residential areas associated with Mannering Park and Kingfisher Shores as well as Lake Macquarie.

6.2.10.2 Potential Impacts

The Project would consist of electricity storage infrastructure and would be largely surrounded by existing electricity generation and transmission infrastructure and therefore, would not result in a significant change to the landscape and visual amenity of the local area.

6.2.10.3 Assessment Approach

As part of the EIS, a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) would be prepared to evaluate the visual and landscape impacts of the Project including potential for any night lighting to impact nearby residences. The assessment would also consider the cumulative visual impact of the proposed BESS with surrounding developments. Where relevant, it would include mitigation measures to help reduce any impacts on visual amenity.

6.2.11 Aboriginal Cultural Heritage

6.2.11.1 Existing Environment

The Project Area is on Darkinjung Country in the Central Coast District Local Aboriginal Land Council area. The Project Area has been subject to significant historical disturbance as it formerly consisted of the A Station component of Vales Point Power Station. A search of the AHIMS database undertaken on 24 July 2025 identified no known Aboriginal sites and/ or places within or immediately surrounding the Project Area (refer to **Appendix C**). Four registered Aboriginal sites have been recorded approximately 550 m northeast of the Project Area adjacent to the Lake Macquarie.

6.2.11.2 Potential Impact

Due to the extensive historical disturbance of the Project Area and immediate surrounds, no impact to items or places of Aboriginal significance is anticipated during construction and operational phases of the Project.

6.2.11.3 Assessment Approach

In consideration of the existing disturbance and the absence of recorded Aboriginal sites, a detailed Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment (ACHA) is not proposed for the EIS. In lieu of a detailed assessment, a desktop review of Aboriginal Heritage detailing the extent of historic disturbance would be prepared.

6.2.12 Historic Heritage

6.2.12.1 Existing Environment

A review of the Register of the National Estate (RNE) and the State Heritage Register (SHR) was conducted on 17 April 2025 which did not identify any State listed heritage items, or items listed on the RNE, within the vicinity of the Project Area. A search of the PMST on 23 April 2025 did not identify any world heritage properties, National heritage places, or Commonwealth Heritage Places within the vicinity of the Project Area. The nearest listed heritage item is the 'bulk store building' identified in the Central Coast LEP 2022 located approximately 1.8 km south of the Project Area. Additionally, there is one state heritage listed item 'Morisset Hospital Precinct' located approximately 3.6 km northwest of the Project Area (refer to **Figure 6.7**). No heritage items were listed on any Section 170 Heritage and Conservation registers within the Project Area.

6.2.12.2 Potential Impact

The Project would not result in impacts to any known items of historic heritage within or in vicinity of the Project Area during construction or operation.

6.2.12.3 Assessment Approach

Based on the absence of historic heritage items within or adjoining the Project Area, a desktop assessment of Historic heritage items would be provided in the EIS.

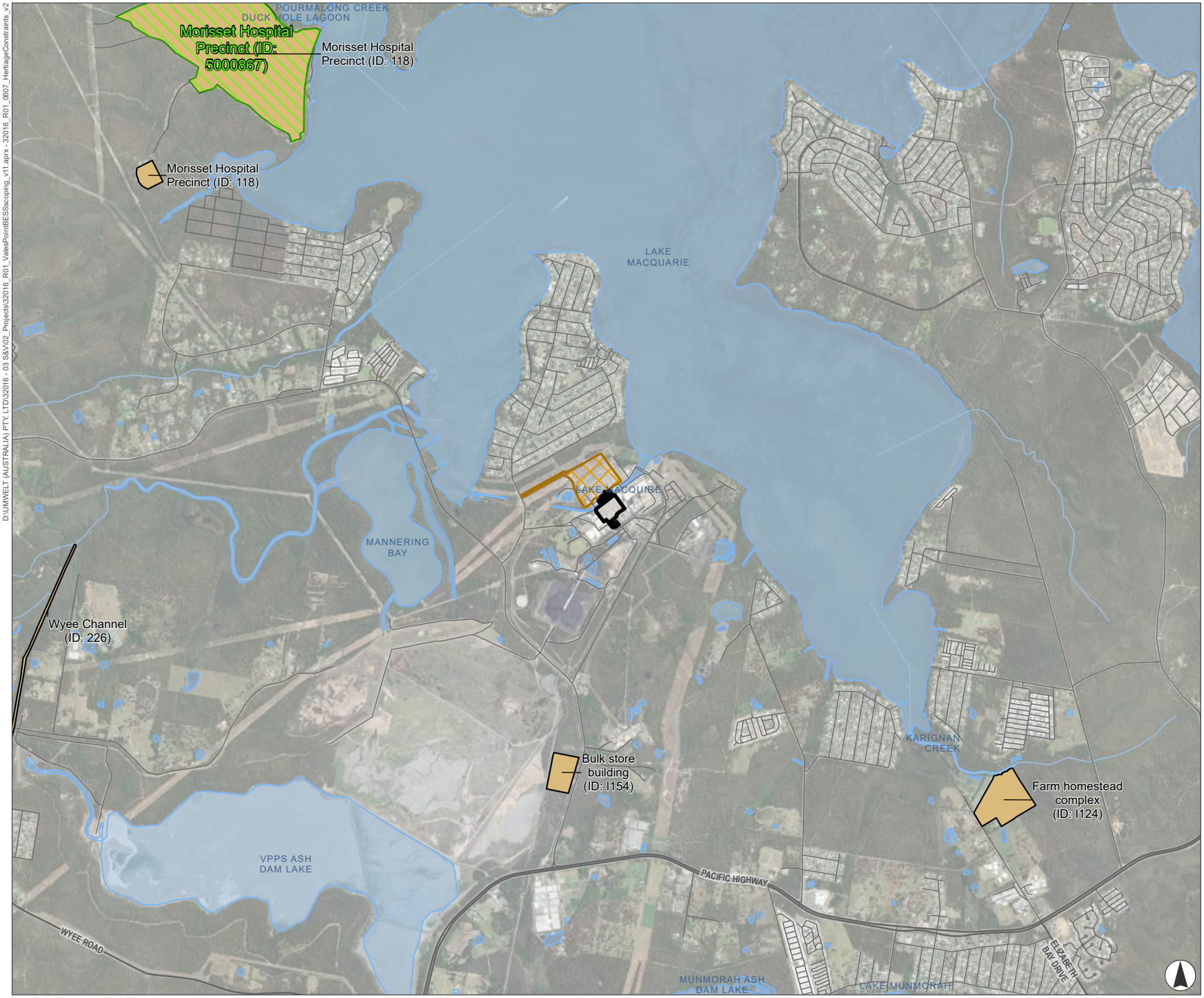

FIGURE 6.7

Listed Heritage Items

Legend

- Project Area
- Vales Point 330 kV Substation
- Main Road
- Local Road
- Watercourse
- Waterbody

Heritage Items

- Central Coast LEP Listing
- State Heritage Register

0 0.5 1

Kilometres

Scale 1:40,000 at A4
GDA2020 MGA Zone 56

umwelt

Image Source: ESRI Basemap (2025) | **Data Source:** NSW DFSI (2025)

6.2.13 Biosecurity

6.2.13.1 Existing Environment

A review of NSW WeedWise database, undertaken on 31 March 2025, identified a total of 143 priority weeds for the Greater Sydney Local Land Services Region. **Table 6.3** summarises the identified priority weeds.

Table 6.3 Priority Weeds within the Central Coast Region

Duty	Number of Weeds
Regional Recommended Measures	47
Prohibition on Certain Dealings	57
Prohibited Matter	32
Control Order	4
Biosecurity Zone	3

The Project is within the following three weed biosecurity zones:

- Alligator weed (*Alternanthera philoxeroides*);
- Bitou Bush (*Chrysanthemoides monilifera* subsp. *rotundata*); and
- Water hyacinth (*Eichhornia crassipes*).

6.2.13.2 Assessment Approach

Biosecurity risks from the Project can be managed through standard plant, equipment, and vehicle cleaning protocols. A desktopassessment of biosecurity risks would be undertaken for the EIS.

6.2.14 Cumulative Impacts

The *Cumulative Impact Assessment Guidelines for State Significant Projects* (the CIA Guidelines) (DPIE, 2022) identifies the requirement to address cumulative impacts in relation to any other proposed, approved, or operating projects in the vicinity.

As discussed in **Section 2.3**, a number of SSD and SSI projects, at different stages of the approval process, which require cumulative impact consideration with the Project. The potential cumulative impacts of these projects appear in **Table 6.4**.

Table 6.4 Cumulative Impacts Scoping Table

Project	Approximate Distance to Project	Status	Generation Capacity (MW)	Potential Construction Start Date	Potential Cumulative Impacts
Chain Valley Colliery Consolidation Project	750 m southeast	Proposed	N/A	2025	Noise and Vibration Traffic, transport and access Landscape and visual amenity
Vales Point Solar Farm	1.5 km southeast	Approved	55 MW	Unknown	Noise and Vibration Traffic, transport and access Landscape and visual amenity Socio-economic
Trinity Point Mixed Use Development	5 km north	Approved	N/A	2023	Traffic, transport and access
Waratah Super BESS	6 km southeast	Approved	850 MW / 1,680 MWh	2025	N/A
Modification 6 - Colongra Diesel Capacity Upgrade Project	6 km southeast	Approved	NA	2025	Traffic, transport and access
Catherine Hill Bay Subdivision	8 km east	Approved	N/A	2025	Traffic, transport and access
St Philip's Christian College, Charmhaven	10 km southwest	Proposed	N/A	2026	N/A
Hunter Transmission Project	20 km west*	Proposed	N/A	2026	N/A
Warnervale Shopping Centre	11 km southwest	Proposed	N/A	2025	N/A
Eraring BESS	11 km northwest	Approved	700 MW / 2,800 MWh	2026**	Traffic, transport and access Socio-economic
Toukley Desalination Water Treatment Plant	13 km southeast	Prepare EIS	N/A	2026	Traffic, transport and access
Woolworths Wyong Regional Distribution Centre Expansion	14 km southwest	Proposed	N/A	2025	N/A

Project	Approximate Distance to Project	Status	Generation Capacity (MW)	Potential Construction Start Date	Potential Cumulative Impacts
Awaba BESS	18 km north	Approved	50 MW / 100 MWh	2023	Traffic, transport and access Socio-economic
New Eileen O'Connor School	20 km southwest	Proposed	N/A	2025	N/A
Lake Macquarie Private Hospital Tower	25 km northeast	Proposed	N/A	2025	N/A
Mingara Recreation Club Seniors Housing, Tumbi Umbi	25 km southwest	Proposed	N/A	2026	N/A
Steel River East BESS	35 km north	Exhibition	200	2025	Socio-economic
Beresfield BESS	41 km north	Approved	100	2024	
Kiar BESS	15 km south	Proposed	1000 MW / 4000 MWh	2027 / 2028	Traffic, transport and access Socio-economic

*Distance to the southern most extent of the Hunter Transmission Project.

**Project progressively constructed with Stage 3 construction to commence in 2026.

Several SSD and SSI projects within the region have the potential for cumulative impacts with the Project. BESS components would be delivered via either Port Kembla or the Port of Newcastle, using the Pacific Motorway between either point of origin. The Pacific Motorway and Pacific Highway provide key transport links for a number of projects in the region, which may lead to an increase in cumulative traffic impacts in areas where these projects are located. Although traffic and transport impacts may occur, it is unlikely that these impacts would be significant due to the construction timing/staging and the geographical location of each of the Projects.

As highlighted in **Section 2.3**, potential cumulative impacts related to noise, air quality, and traffic may also occur with station outage maintenance periods and the eventual decommissioning period of the existing Vales Point Power Station.

There are several projects and key industries located near the Project that may contribute to cumulative social impacts. In particular, competition for workers, contractors, and construction materials or supplies could place additional pressure on local resources. The presence of multiple developments in the area is likely to amplify impacts such as increased demand for accommodation, workforce availability challenges, and greater strain on local infrastructure and services.

Landscape and visual, and noise impacts from other nearby projects may also contribute to cumulative impacts. However, given that much of the surrounding land is owned or operated by Delta or already comprises existing industrial land, these impacts are expected to be minimal.

A CIA would be completed as part of the EIS in accordance with the CIA Guidelines. **Table 6.5** includes considerations that would be taken into account when preparing the CIA for the EIS.

Table 6.5 Cumulative Impact Assessment Considerations

Cumulative Impact Assessment	Detail
What to Assess?	The following matters would require consideration in the CIA: • Noise and vibration; • Traffic, transport and access; • Landscape and visual amenity; and • Socio-economic.
What Study Area?	The study area would vary depending on the specific characteristics of the assessment matter and the scale and nature of the potential impacts on the matter resulting from the Project with other relevant future projects. The CIA would be undertaken in accordance with the relevant guidelines, where applicable, and broad enough to capture all relevant cumulative impacts.
Over What Time Period?	Life of the relevant projects including construction, operation, and decommissioning.
What Projects to Include?	The effects of past developments and actions, as well as currently operating projects would be captured in the baseline environmental studies for the Project. The CIA would consider the cumulative impacts of the relevant projects on key matters with other proposed developments, including those outlined in **Table 6.4**, as relevant. This includes changes to existing projects, approved projects, or projects under assessment.

Cumulative Impact Assessment	Detail
What is the Approach to Assessment?	The CIA would be undertaken in accordance with approved assessment methods for relevant matters (i.e., the BAM). Assessments would be qualitative or quantitative, based on (but not limited to) the availability of relevant data.
What are the Key Uncertainties?	Key uncertainties to undertaking the CIA would include availability and quality of data on proposed future projects at the time of preparation of assessments. Relevant CIAs would identify realistic development scenarios with the relevant future projects over the life of the Project.

6.3 Matters Requiring No Further Assessment in the EIS

6.3.1 Biodiversity

6.3.1.1 Existing Environment

The Project Area is cleared of native and exotic vegetation and contains no habitat for threatened species or ecological communities. The Project Area previously consisted of the A Station component of the Vales Point Power Station which has had the above ground infrastructure removed and consists of a flat concrete foundation. There is some native vegetation and aquatic environments within the areas surrounding the Project Area and Vales Point Power Station.

A search of the Commonwealth PMST indicates the Project Area does not contain wetlands of international importance. The Project Area is not within a Commonwealth marine area and does not form part of the Great Barrier Reef. A number of listed threatened species and ecological communities and migratory species were identified in the search to have the potential to be present within the Project Area, as outlined in **Table 6.6** (refer to **Appendix E**). However, a desktop review undertaken confirmed the Project Area was cleared of all native and exotic vegetation during the construction of the Vales Point Power Station over 45 years ago, and contains no native vegetation or habitat for threatened species or ecological communities. There is native vegetation and aquatic environments present within 1.5 km of the Project Area, however, mitigation measures would be proposed to minimise risks to nearby terrestrial and aquatic habitat areas.

Table 6.6 Matters of National Environmental Significance

MNES	Relevance to Project Area (with 1 km buffer applied)
World Heritage Properties	None
National Heritage Places	None
Wetlands of International Importance	None
Listed Threatened Ecological Communities	3
Listed Threatened species	80
Listed Migratory species	44
Commonwealth Marine Area	None
The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park	None

6.3.1.2 Assessment

A desktop assessment has been undertaken to determine the potential of the Project to impact biodiversity (refer to **Appendix D**). An SSD project automatically triggers the NSW Biodiversity Offset Scheme (BOS) established under the NSW *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* (BC Act) which requires the submission of a BDAR to assess potential impacts on native biodiversity. However, if a proponent believes that their SSD project is unlikely to have a significant impact on biodiversity values, they can apply for a BDAR waiver.

To decide whether the requirement for a BDAR can be waived, the Project could be considered as unlikely to have any significant impact on biodiversity values if it:

- Would not clear or remove native vegetation other than:
    - A few single trees with no native understorey in an urban context; and
    - Planted native vegetation that is not consistent with a Plant Community Type (PCT) known to occur in the same Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation of Australia (IBRA) subregion (e.g., street trees, trees in carparks, landscaping).
- Would have negligible adverse impacts on threatened species or ecological communities, considering habitat suitability, abundance and occurrence, habitat connectivity, movement and water sustainability including consideration of any non-natural features, non-native vegetation and human-built structures; and
- Would have negligible adverse impacts on protected animals because of impacts to flight path integrity (OEH, 2025).

A BDAR Waiver request has been prepared by Umwelt accredited assessors under the BAM on behalf of The Proponent in accordance with the biodiversity development assessment report waiver determinations for SSD and SSI applications fact sheet prepared by DPE (DPE, 2018) (refer to **Appendix D**). The Accredited Assessors that prepared this BDAR Waiver are identified in Table 1 of **Appendix D**.

It has been determined that the Project is unlikely to significantly impact biodiversity, and the requirements for a BDAR should be waived.

6.3.2 Other Matters

Table 6.7 outlines other matters that are considered to not require further assessment in the EIS based on the scoping phase assessment along with a comment justifying why no further assessment is required.

Table 6.7 Other Matters Requiring No Further Assessment in the EIS

Issue	Comment
Greenhouse Gas and Energy	As the Project is an energy storage facility, greenhouse gas emissions would be largely associated to the construction phase of the Project, occurring from the operation of construction machinery. These emissions would be considered negligible. As the Project would store energy, the emissions resulting from the construction, operation or decommissioning would be likely offset by the reduction in energy generation emissions. GHG emissions would be addressed in the justification for the Project as part of the EIS.

Issue	Comment
Port Facilities	The Project would not result in any change to port facilities. The delivery of Project components via the relevant port and the transportation of Project components to the Project Area would be assessed as part of the TTIA.
Odour	The Project is not anticipated to cause any odour.
Dam Safety	The Project would not require the construction or maintenance of a dam.

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Appendix A

Scoping Summary Table

Table A.1 Scoping Table Summary

Level of Assessment	Matter	CIA	Engagement	Relevant Government Plans, Policies and Guidelines	Scoping Report Reference
Detailed	**Noise and Vibration**	Yes	Specific	*EPA Noise Policy for Industry*, dated 2017. *DECC Interim Construction Noise Guidelines*, dated 2009. *DECCW Road Noise Policy*, dated 2011. *DEC Assessing Vibration: A Technical Guideline*, dated 2006.	**Section 6.2.1**
Detailed	**Social**	Yes	Specific	DPHI *Social Impact Assessment Guideline for State Significant Projects*, dated 2023. DPHI *Undertaking Engagement Guidelines for State Significant Projects*, dated 2024.	**Section 6.2.2**
Standard	**Traffic, Transport and Access**	Yes	General	Austroads *Guide to Road Design – Part 1 to 7*, dated 2021. Austroads *Guidelines for Traffic Management*, dated 2020. Austroads *Guide to Traffic Management – Part 3: Traffic Studies and Analysis*, dated 2017. Austroads *Guide to Traffic Management – Part 12: Integrated Transport Assessments for Developments*, dated 2020.	**Section 6.2.3**
Standard	**Water and Soil Resources**	No	General	*Australian and New Zealand Guidelines for Fresh and Marine Water Quality*, dated 2018. NSW Government NSW *Water and River Flow Objectives*, dated 2006. DECC *Floodplain Risk Management Guidelines*, dated 2016. NSW *Government Flood risk management manual: The policy and manual for the management of flood liable land*, dated 2023. Landcom *Managing Urban Stormwater: Soils and Construction Volume 1*, dated 2004.	**Section 6.2.4**

Level of Assessment	Matter	CIA	Engagement	Relevant Government Plans, Policies and Guidelines	Scoping Report Reference
				DECC *Managing Urban Stormwater: Soils and Construction Volume 2*, dated 2008. Department of Land, Water and Climate NSW State *Groundwater Dependent Ecosystem Policy*, dated 2002.	
Standard	**Contamination**	No	General	Australian Standard 4482.1,2005. *Guide to the Sampling and Investigation of Potentially Contaminated Soil*. NEPM, 2013. *Assessment of Site Contamination, National Environmental Protection (Assessment of Site Contamination) Measure*. DoH, 2009. *Guidelines for the Assessment, Remediation and Management of Asbestos Contaminated Sites in Western Australia*. NSW Government – DECCW – *Waste Classification Guidelines*, dated 2009.	**Section 6.2.5**
Standard	**Hazards and Safety**	No	General	NSW RFS *Planning for Bushfire Protection*, dated 2019. National Health and Medical Research Council advice, as updated from time to time. ICNIRP *Guidelines for Limiting Exposure to Time-varying Electric, Magnetic and Electromagnetic Fields*, dated 1998. *State Environment Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards),* dated 2021. Department of Planning *Hazardous and Offensive Development Application Guidelines: Applying SEPP 33,* dated 2011. DPI *Assessment Guideline: Multi-level Risk Assessment*, dated 2011. DOP *Hazardous Industry Planning and advisory Paper No 4 Risk Criteria for Land Use Planning*, dated 2011. DOP *Hazardous Industry Planning Advisory Paper No 6: Hazard Analysis*, dated 2011.	**Section 6.2.6**

Level of Assessment	Matter	CIA	Engagement	Relevant Government Plans, Policies and Guidelines	Scoping Report Reference
Standard	**Mine Subsidence**	No	General	*Coal Mine Subsidence Compensation Act*, dated 2017.	**Section 6.2.7**
Standard	**Waste Management**	No	General	DECCW *Waste Classification Guidelines*, dated 2014.	**Section 6.2.8**
Standard	**Air Quality**	No	General	OEH NSW *Climate Change Policy Framework*, dated 2016. *Australian Government National Greenhouse Accounts Factors*, dated 2021.	**Section 6.2.9**
Standard	**Landscape and Visual Amenity**	Yes	General	Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment* – 3rd Edition, dated 2013.	**Section 6.2.10**
Standard	**Aboriginal Cultural Heritage**	No	General	OEH *Guide to Investigating, Assessing and Reporting on Aboriginal Cultural Heritage in NSW*, dated 2011. DECCW *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Consultation Requirements for Proponents*, dated 2010. DECCW *Code of Practice for Archaeological Investigation of Aboriginal Objects in NSW*, dated 2010.	**Section 6.2.11**
Standard	**Historic Heritage**	No	General	Local and State heritage registers. DPIE *Assessing Heritage Significance*, dated 2022.	**Section 6.2.12**
Standard	**Biosecurity**	No	General	*State Environmental Planning Policy (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021*. *Greater Sydney Regional Strategic Weed Management Plan 2023-2027*. *NSW Invasive Species Plan 2013-2028*.	**Section 6.2.13**
Standard	**Cumulative Impacts**	N/A	General	DPE *Cumulative Impact Assessment Guidelines for State Significant Projects*, dated 2022.	**Section 6.2.14**

Appendix B

Social Impact Scoping Report

Vales Point Battery Energy Storage System (BESS)

Social Impact Scoping Report

Final

July 2025

Vales Point Battery Energy Storage System (BESS)

Social Impact Scoping Report

Final

Prepared by
Umwelt (Australia) Pty Limited

On behalf of
Delta Power & Energy Pty Ltd (Delta) and Samsung Construction and Trading (C&T) Corporation (Samsung),

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Project Manager:	Jai Roby
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Report No.:	32016/R02
Date:	July 2025

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This report was prepared using Umwelt's ISO 9001 certified Quality Management System.

Acknowledgement of Country

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Document Status

Rev No.	Reviewer Name	Date	Approved for Issue Name	Date
V1	Sheridan Coakes	13/05/2025	Sheridan Coakes	20/05/2025
V2	Sheridan Coakes	06/06/2025	Sheridan Coakes	06/06/2025
V3	Sheridan Coakes	19/06/2025	Sheridan Coakes	23/06/2025
V4	Sheridan Coakes	01/07/2025	Sheridan Coakes	03/07/2025
V5	Sheridan Coakes	31/07/2025	Sheridan Coakes	31/07/2025

Executive Summary

Delta Power & Energy Pty Ltd (Delta) and Samsung Construction and Trading (C&T) Corporation (Samsung) (joint venture) propose to develop the Vales Point Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) (the Project). The Project is located on part of Lot 102, DP 1065718 wholly located within the Central Coast Local Government Area (LGA) approximately 1 kilometre southeast of Mannering Park town centre, New South Wales.

The Project comprises the installation, operation, maintenance and decommissioning/re-powering of a BESS, supported by ancillary infrastructure. The Project would have a capacity of approximately 400 megawatts (MW) and a storage capacity of 800 megawatt hours (MWh) for two hours duration.

The Proponent engaged Umwelt to undertake a Social Impact Scoping Report (SISR) in relation to the development of the Project. The Project is State Significant Development (SSD) as defined under the NSW *State Environmental Planning Policy (Planning Systems) 202*1 and requires development consent under Part 4 of the NSW *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.

Methodology

This SISR has been prepared in accordance with the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) Social Impact Assessment (SIA) Guideline for State Significant Projects (the SIA Guideline).

This SISR has involved the following key methodological steps:

- Definition of the social locality;
- Stakeholder analysis and mapping to ascertain those likely most impacted by the Project;
- Development of a social baseline profile, including compilation of community characteristics, and analysis of existing social conditions and trends, including relevant opportunities and challenges across the social locality;
- Community and stakeholder consultation to ensure participatory social assessment methods; and
- Preliminary impact identification and evaluation, including an impact significance assessment to determine the level of assessment in the next phase.

Stakeholder Engagement

Engagement undertaken for the scoping phase focused on the stakeholders who may be most impacted by the Project to enable preliminary identification of social impacts and the level of assessment required moving forward.

Consultation was undertaken with 799 stakeholders, including closest residents and nearby neighbours, the Vales Point Power Station Community and Regional Environment (CARE) Forum, local and state government agencies, and emergency services. Key activities included distribution of project information sheets to 785 nearby properties and businesses, an online community survey, and interviews and project briefings with key stakeholders.

This engagement aimed to gather input on potential social impacts, which will be further considered in the Project's technical and environmental assessments and the development of appropriate mitigation measures. The findings from this phase will guide broader stakeholder involvement and detailed social impact analysis in subsequent stages.

Community members and stakeholders engaged expressed high levels of support for BESS technology and high level of acceptance of the Project.

Social Baseline Summary

The social baseline provides a comprehensive overview of existing social conditions and historical development within the Central Coast and nearby Lake Macquarie LGAs, drawing on a range of data sources to characterise local communities. While the region is navigating changing demographics and an aging population, varying access to economic and educational opportunity, workforce pressures and infrastructure constraints, there are significant strengths and opportunities to build on. These include a resilient and highly connected community, skilled workforce with strong trade certification and strategic transport links that support future development. The region's growing renewable energy sector and infrastructure investments offer pathways to explore new economic opportunities and further enhance the area's liveability. The area's natural environment is also highly valued by the community.

Outcomes of Assessment

The SISR has identified and assessed preliminary impacts of the Project, using engagement inputs and primary and secondary data sources.

Positive social impacts identified as being of medium to high significance include:

- Increased energy security for local residents during peak times;
- Intergenerational equity associated with potential reduced reliance on fossil fuels; and
- Enhanced livelihoods and human capital development due to the provision of employment and procurement opportunities associated with the Project.

Negative social impacts identified as being of medium to high significance include:

- Reduced public safety and delay in travel times due to increased construction vehicle activity;
- Public safety risk associated with potential battery fire event;
- Potential environment and health impacts associated with battery chemical leaching and fire suppression water run-off;
- Inequitable distribution of Projects benefits and impacts and how they are experienced by different groups, particularly vulnerable groups; and
- Intergenerational equality associated with managing waste associated with decommissioning.
- The impacts identified as requiring detailed assessment at the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) phase are:
- Potential environment and health impacts associated with battery chemical leaching and fire suppression water run-off;
- Public safety and environmental pollution risk associated with potential battery fire event; and

- Reduced public safety along the main arterial roads may be anticipated due to increased construction vehicle activity.

As part of the EIS, subsequent stages of the SIA for the Project would include a comprehensive assessment and prediction of social impacts and the development of relevant management and enhancement measures to mitigate the negative impacts and enhance the positive impacts associated with the Project.

Abbreviations

Term	Definition
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
AEMO	Australian Energy Market Operator
BESS	Battery Energy Storage System
CVC	Chain Valley Colliery
CSEP	Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan
Delta	Delta Power & Energy Pty Ltd
DPE	NSW Department of Planning and Environment (previously DPIE)
DPHI	NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (previously DPE)
DPIE	NSW Department of Infrastructure and Environment
EP&A Act	*Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (NSW)
ha	Hectare
IEO	Index of Education and Occupation
km	Kilometres
LALC	Local Aboriginal Land Council
LGA	Local Government Area
O&M	Operations and maintenance
MC	Mannering Colliery
MV	Medium-Voltage
MWh	Megawatt hours
NSW	New South Wales
PHIDU	Public Health Information Development Unit's
Samsung	Samsung Construction and Trading (C&T) Corporation
SIA	Social Impact Assessment
SIA Guidelines	NSW SIA Guideline for State Significant Projects (DPIE, 2023)
SISR	Social Impact Scoping Report
SEARs	Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements
SSD	State Significant Development
State	New South Wales (unless otherwise stated)
SAL	Suburb and Local
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
Umwelt	Umwelt (Australia) Pty Limited

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Appendices

1.0 Introduction

This Social Impact Scoping Report (hereafter referred to as the SISR) documents the process and outcomes of the scoping phase of the Social Impact Assessment (SIA) undertaken by Umwelt for the Vales Point Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) (hereafter referred to as the Project).

The Project is considered a State Significant Development (SSD) requiring consent under Part 4 of the NSW *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*. The SISR forms part of the Project's application for the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) to be lodged with the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) by the Proponent. The report has been prepared in accordance with the scoping phase requirements of the NSW SIA Guideline for State Significant Projects (DPIE, 2023) or 'the SIA Guideline'.

Following provision of SEARs, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) would be prepared for the Project, which would include a more detailed SIA.

1.1 Project Overview

The Proponent, a joint venture between Delta Power & Energy Pty Ltd (Delta) and Samsung Construction and Trading (C&T) Corporation (Samsung), propose to develop the Vales Point n Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) (the Project) to provide increased energy security and strengthen supply reliability as more renewable generation is integrated into the electricity network.

The Project is located on part of Lot 102, DP 1065718 (the Project Area), which is wholly located within the Central Coast Local Government Area (LGA), approximately 1 kilometre (km) southeast of Mannering Park town centre, New South Wales (NSW) (refer to **Figure 1.1**). The Project Area is located within the boundary of the existing Vales Point Power Station.

The BESS is proposed to have a capacity of 400 megawatts (MW) / 800-megawatt hour (MWh), connecting to Transgrid's existing 330 kV Vales Point Substation located directly northwest of the Project Area.

The Project comprises the installation, operation, maintenance and decommissioning/re-powering of a BESS, supported by ancillary infrastructure. The BESS would require a Project Area of approximately 2.2 ha (refer to **Figure 1.1**).

The key components of the Project include:

- **Batteries:** Most likely a lithium-ion technology;
- **Inverters:** Bi-directional inverters to convert direct current (DC) to alternating current (AC) (when exporting electricity) and vice-versa (when importing electricity);
- **Medium-Voltage (MV) Transformers:** Skid-mounted transformers would be installed adjacent to each inverter to step up the voltage to the internal reticulation voltage of the plant;
- **Switching Equipment:** To allow for switching current to back-up lines or for parallelising circuits;
- **Harmonic Filters**: To mitigate the effects of harmonic distortion;
- **Transmission Connection:** Overhead connection of the BESS to the adjacent Transgrid Vales Point 330 kV Substation;

- **Ancillary Infrastructure:** Including temporary construction facilities, security fencing, permanent site office and operations and maintenance (O&M) buildings, internal access tracks, parking areas, hardstands, and Project signage; and
- **Removal** of existing workshop building within the Project Area.

The preliminary layout of the BESS and ancillary infrastructure is shown in **Figure 1.1** and will be further refined during the detailed design stage and in the EIS process.

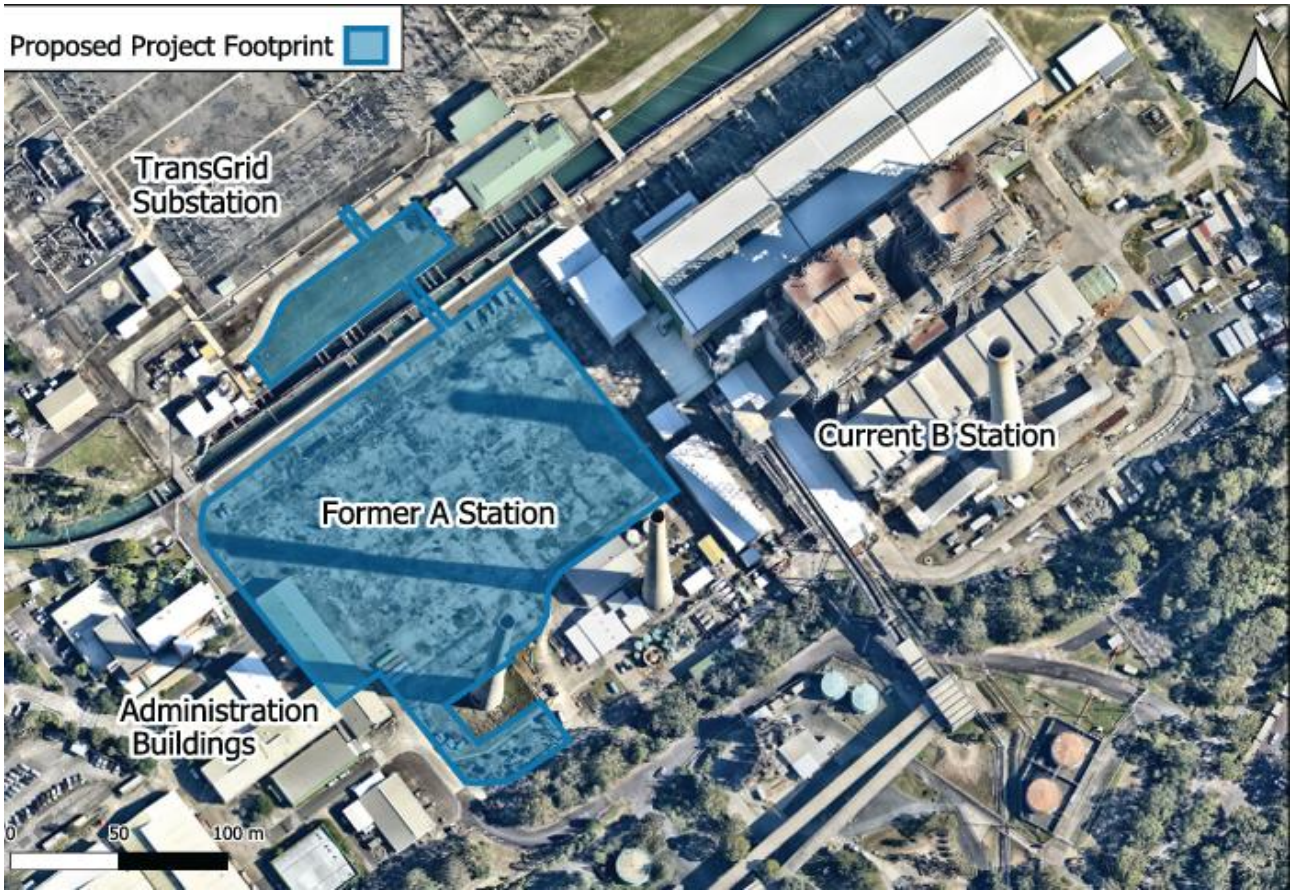

Figure 1.1 Proposed Project Area

Source: Delta Power et al, 2025.

The Project Area is well placed for a BESS, as it is an existing (brownfield) industrial site located in close proximity to Transgrid's existing 330 kV Vales Point Substation, which is situated directly northwest of the site. The Project would include a transmission connection between the BESS and the Substation. Options for the connection point for the BESS are under investigation in consultation with Transgrid and will be refined during the detailed design activities and the EIS.

Once complete, the Project would provide energy security and strengthen supply reliability as more renewable generation is integrated into the electricity network.

1.1.1 Vales Point Power Station Closure Process

Delta has advised the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) of a 2033 technical life assessment of the Vales Point Power Station Delta has an agreement with the NSW Government that governs Delta's responsibilities with respect to the operation and eventual closure of Vales Point Power Station (Vales Point Closure and Put and Call Deed, the Handback Deed). Under the Handback Deed, on closure and completion of decommissioning activities, Vales Point Power Station site ownership transfers to the State.

The Project and associated infrastructure is expected to operate beyond the Vales Point Power Station closure date. Ongoing site access arrangements for the Project operation and maintenance activities, decommissioning works, closure and post-closure activities such as remediation and rehabilitation of the Project site will be negotiated with the State under the terms and conditions of the Handback Deed.

1.2 The Proponent

The Proponent for the proposed development of the Vales Point BESS Project, is a joint venture between Delta Power & Energy Pty Ltd (Delta), and Samsung Construction and Trading Corporation (Samsung).

Delta owns and operates the Vales Point Power Station. Delta is a key electricity generator in the National Electricity Market (NEM), supplying approximately four percent of the market's total demand and has extensive experience in the development, construction and operation of large-scale electricity generation infrastructure.

Delta, a subsidiary of Sev.en Global Investments Pty Ltd, is an Australian corporation with its office at Level 9, 580 George Street, Sydney, NSW, 2000, Australia (ABN 75 162 696 335).

Samsung is a global corporation with business operations in engineering and construction, trading and investment, fashion, and resorts, operating in over 50 countries. Samsung is an internationally respected technology company and is undertaking the development of several renewable energy and large-scale energy storage projects internationally and across Australia.

Samsung, is a corporation duly organised and existing under the Laws of the Republic of Korea with office at 26, Sangil-ro 6-gil, Gangdong-gu, Seoul, Republic of Korea and its Australian office at Level 2, 44 Market Street Sydney, NSW, 2000, Australia (ABN 49 160 079 470).

2.0 Method

2.1 Social Impact Assessment Requirements

The SISR has been prepared in accordance with the SIA Guideline (DPIE, 2023) in addressing the requirements of the scoping phase, as illustrated in **Figure 2.1**.

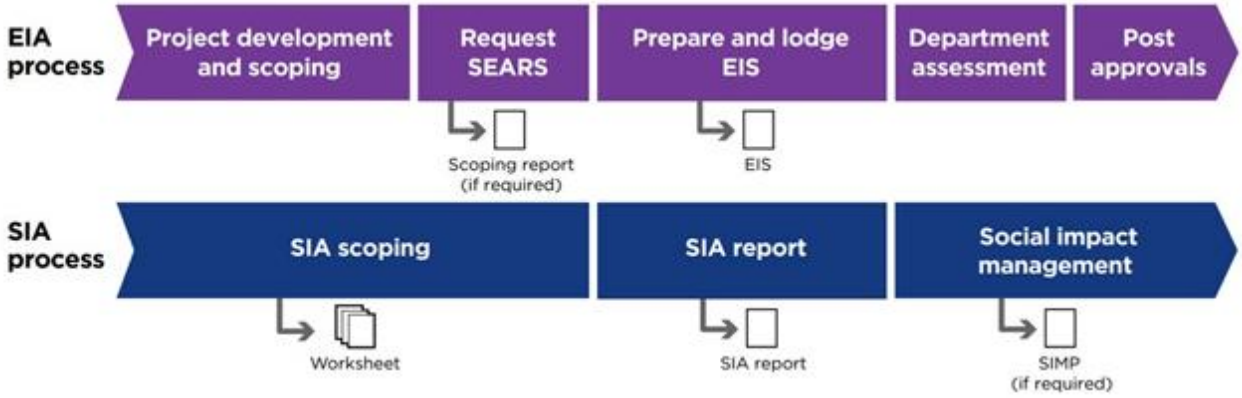

Figure 2.1 NSW SIA Requirements

Source: (DPIE, 2023).

According to the SIA Guideline, as outlined in **Figure 2.2**, social impacts can be grouped into several categories and may involve changes to people's way of life, community, accessibility, culture, health and wellbeing, surroundings, livelihoods, and decision-making systems.

Figure 2.2 Social Impact Categories

Source: DPIE, 2023.

While some social impacts may directly occur because of the Project, others may be indirectly caused by changes in the biophysical environment, as outlined in **Figure 2.3**. Consequently, both direct and indirect social impacts are equally valid and should be considered.

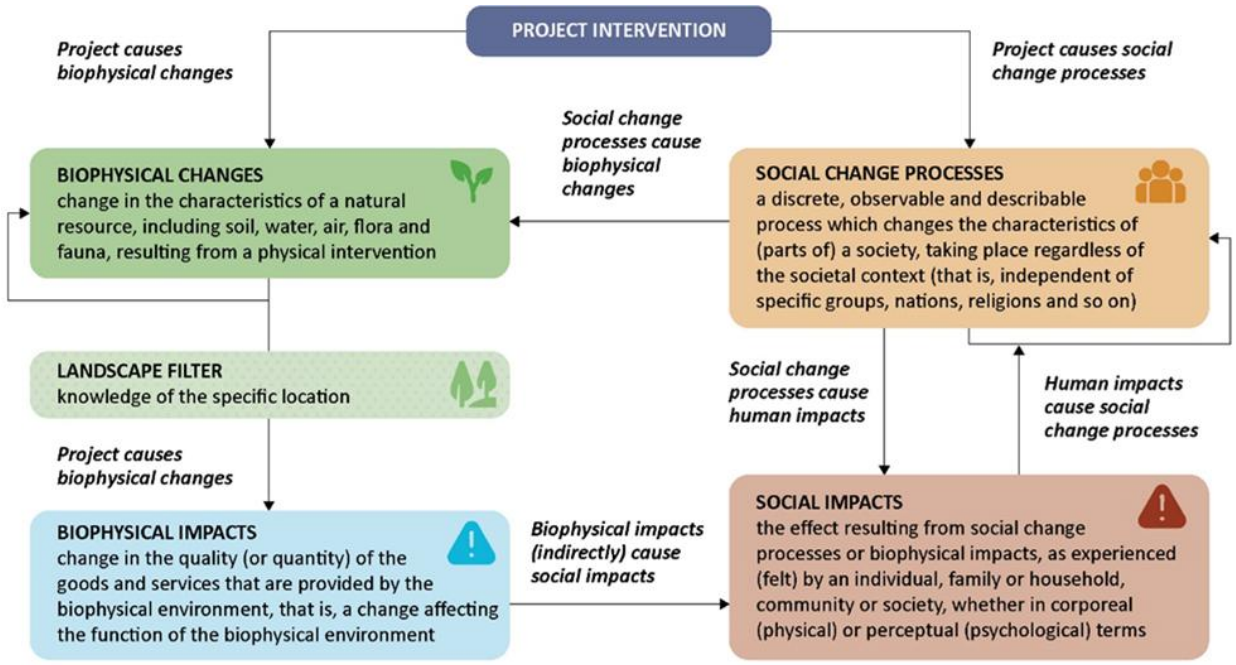

Figure 2.3 Direct and Indirect Social Impacts

Source: Umwelt, 2023, Adapted from Slootweg et al, 2013 (p.28).

As is the case with any type of change, some individuals or groups within the community may be positively impacted as a result of the Project, while others may experience negative impacts. Social impacts may also manifest as *tangible* impacts, these being impacts that may have a material outcome on the lives of individuals and communities, and/or more *intangible* impacts, such as justified fears or aspirations associated with a project. As noted in the guideline:

'Social impacts may be physically observable or may manifest as rational or justified fears or aspirations; may be experienced positively and negatively by different stakeholders; and may be tangible or more tangible' (DPIE, 2023).

2.2 Social Locality Definition and Baseline Profile

The term 'social locality' commonly used in SIA practice refers to the geographies included within the SIA. There is no fixed meaning or predefined geographic boundary to determining a social locality, instead, the scale of the social locality should be established on a case-by-case basis, having regard to the nature of the project, and its impacts.

Determining the social locality should consider where people are located in relation to the Project and how groups of people interact with the Project Area and any associated features. For further direction, the SIA Guideline states that the social locality should be defined by:

- The scale and nature of the Project;
- Who may be affected, including any vulnerable or marginalised groups;
- Any built or natural features on or near the Project;
- Relevant social, cultural, and demographic trends and other change processes; and
- The history of the proposed Project and/or development in the area, including community response to previous change.

To better understand the communities of interest within the social locality, and to evaluate their resilience and adaptive capacity to project change, the social baseline profile has utilised the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (DFID, 1999) or community capitals framework.

This approach draws on broad categories of community capitals as a fundamental basis in identifying and further enhancing community capacity and resilience (IAIA, 2015). This methodology has been further developed by Coakes and Sadler (2011) to reflect the following key capitals– human, social, natural, physical, economic, cultural, and political. Vulnerability, or conversely adaptive capacity, can be assessed through the selection of a suite of indicators specific to each capital area (Vanclay, Esteves, Aucamp, & Franks, 2015) (IAIA, 2015). Elements of each capital area are further outlined in **Figure 2.4**.

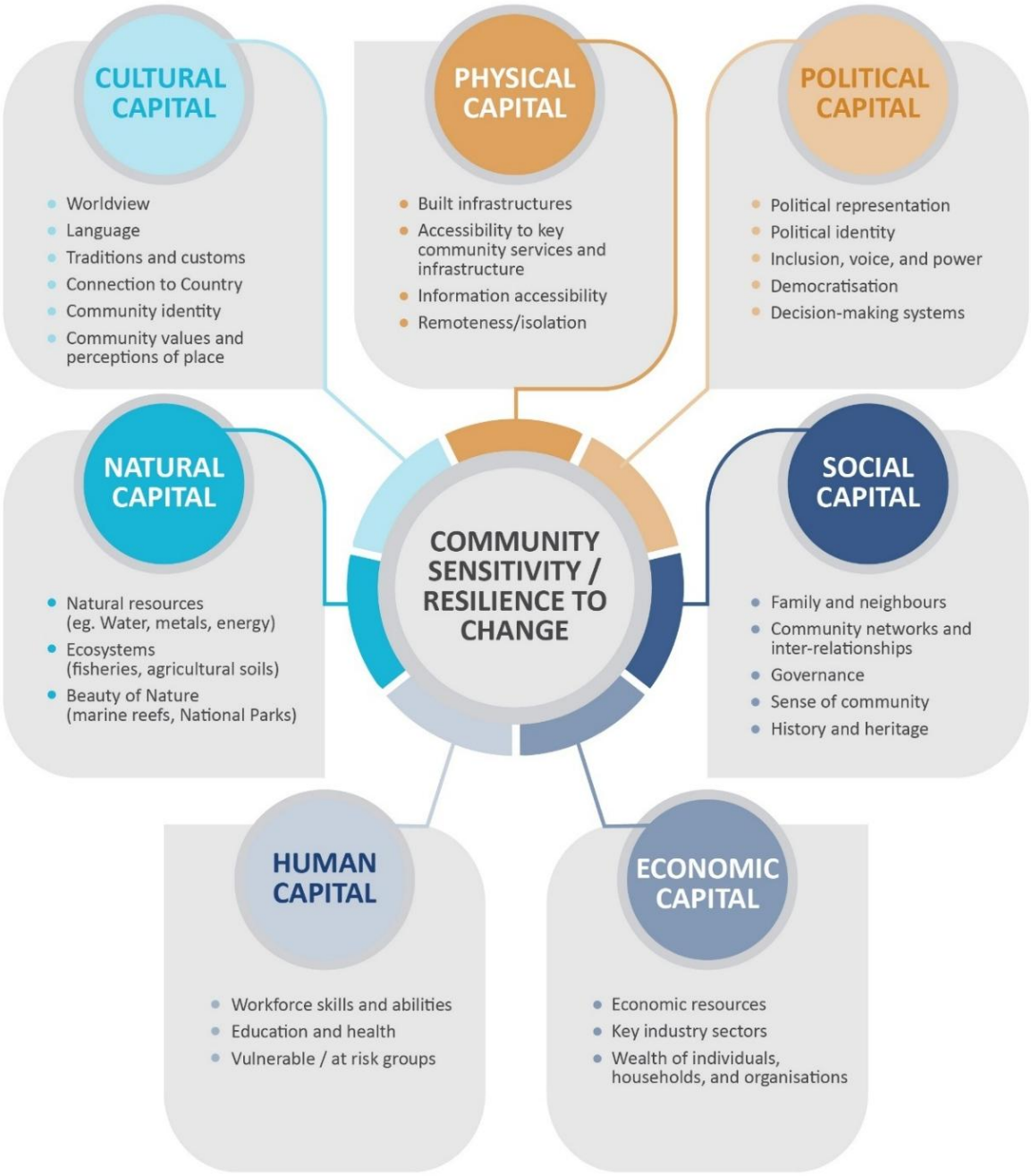

Figure 2.4 Community Capitals Framework

Source: Adapted from (Coakes & Sadler, 2011).

To gain an understanding of the demographic characteristics/composition of communities within the social locality, socio-economic and demographic data has been gathered and summarised from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Census (2021), the Public Health Information Development Unit's (PHIDU), the Social Health Atlases Of Australia (2023), and other relevant datasets as listed in Table A1 in **Appendix A**. A review of local media, relevant literature and regional and local government strategic plans. The social baseline profile is provided in **Appendix A** and summarised in **Section 3.2**.

2.3 Stakeholder Identification and Engagement

SIA involves the participation and collaboration of people who have an interest in, or those that are affected by, a project including groups or individuals that:

- Live, work, or recreate near the Project;
- Have an interest in the proposed action or change;
- Use or value a resource associated with the Project; and
- Are directly affected by the Project.[1]

Stakeholders for the Project were identified in the early stage of planning, including the identification of any potentially vulnerable or marginalised groups. **Figure 2.5** provides an overview of the stakeholder groups who may have an interest or may be potentially impacted by the Project.

The engagement activities undertaken to support the SIA scoping focussed on those stakeholders who may be most impacted by the Project – that is, closest residential areas, nearby neighbours, local governments, emergency service providers and First Nations groups. Feedback from these stakeholders has informed the preliminary identification of social impacts and the level of assessment required moving forward. The Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan (CSEP) and engagement materials that were developed for SISR are provided in **Appendix B**.

Delta through their ongoing CARE Forum has developed a longstanding community reference group by which members from the different communities around the site are represented. A presentation regarding the Project was provided at the CARE Forum in May 2025 as part of the Scoping phase. Subsequent phases of the SIA will seek further engagement from residents in the wider Mannering Park township and broader geographical area surrounding the Vales Point Power Station, including the communities of Wyee Point, Chain Valley Bay, Gwandalan and Summerland Point. The Proponent have revised the CSEP for continued engagement which aims to seek broader involvement across each of the stakeholder groupings identified and include consultation with community groups, service providers and residents more broadly. The revised CSEP is provided at Appendix G of the Vales Point BESS Project Scoping Report.

[1] Burdge (2004).

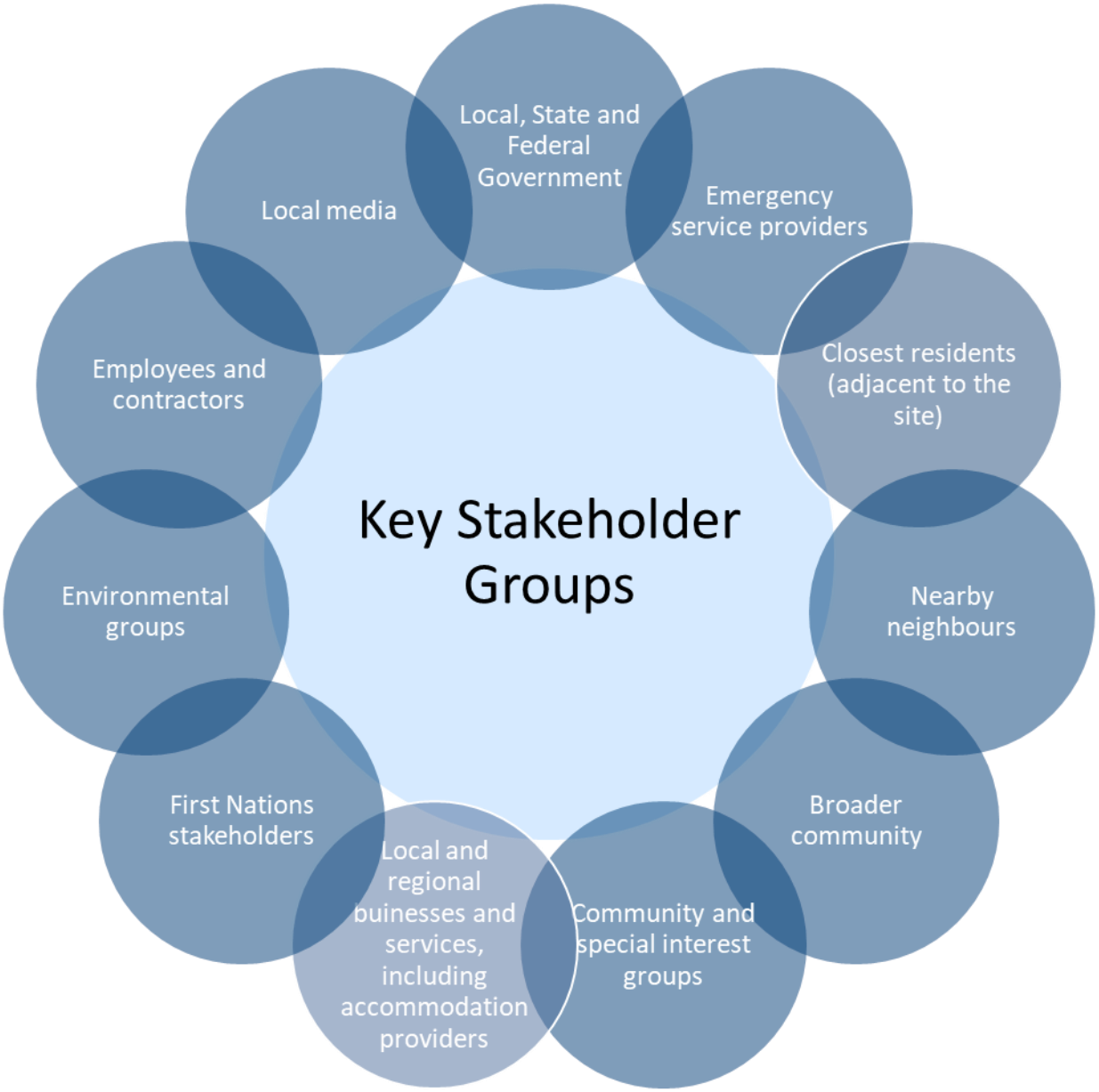

Figure 2.5 Key Stakeholder Groups

2.3.1 Engagement Activities

Consultation undertaken to inform the SISR focused on providing information on the Project and planning process, understanding the social context within which the Project is being proposed, identifying the social impacts (positive and negative) and gathering community feedback which will be further considered in the technical and environmental assessments in subsequent SIA and EIS phases and will assist in identifying potential mitigation and management measures that would be applied to address social impacts.

Table 2.1 outlines engagement activities that have been undertaken to inform the SISR and broader scoping report. This summary is categorised by mechanism and stakeholder group to illustrate the number of individuals engaged, the methods of engagement and the respective stakeholder groups. Engagement for this SISR has built on Delta's long-standing relationships with the community and various stakeholders developed during their existing operations.

Quantitative and qualitative information collected through the engagement activities in the scoping phase have been analysed to inform the preliminary analysis of social impacts associated with the Project, as outlined in **Section 4.0**.

Subsequent phases of the SIA will seek broader involvement across each of the stakeholder groupings identified, including wider communities Wyee Point, Chain Valley Bay, Gwandalan and Summerland Point.

Table 2.1 Summary of Engagement

Mechanism	Description	Targeted stakeholder group	Engagement Undertaken and Timing
Media Release and Social Media	The media release announced the project to the community. It was issued to local and statewide media and published on Delta's website. The information was also shared in Delta's social media channels.	• Media; and • Broader community.	The media release was issued on 27 February 2025.

Project Information Sheet	The Information Sheet provided a Project overview and outlined the SSD process including the elements of the SIA scoping phase. A QR code linked the reader to the Online Community Scoping Survey.	• Closest residents and nearby neighbours via letter box drop:
		  ○ Mannering Park Peninsular: Griffith St, Kenneth St, Dunvegan St, Spencer Rd, Campbell Parade, Catherine St, Harwood Cl, Kevin St, Halcyon St, Eliot St, Kenneth Pl, Vales Rd/Warwick Ave;
		  ○ Kingfisher Shores: Tall Timbers Rd, Lakeshore Ave, Morotai Ave, Karoola Ave; and
		  ○ Macquarie Shores - Over 50s Lifestyle Community.
		• Community Reference Group: the CARE Forum; and
		• Broader community: Central Coast and Lake Macquarie LGAs via the Project webpage.
			In total 785 Project Information Sheets were distributed to closest residents and nearby neighbours through a letter box drop that was undertaken in April 2025. The Project Information Sheet was also sent to the CARE Forum via email and uploaded onto the Project website so that it could be accessed by the broader community.

Mechanism	Description	Targeted stakeholder group	Engagement Undertaken and Timing
Online Community Scoping Survey	The Online Community Scoping Survey provided an opportunity for the community to provide input in the scoping phase of the Project, including obtaining specific information about community needs and values, potential impacts of the Project on stakeholders in relation to the Project and to inform potential mitigation and enhancement measures. A survey link was also included in the Project Information Sheet published on the Project website.	• Closest residents and nearby neighbours as noted above; • Community Reference Group: the CARE Forum; and • Broader community via the Project webpage.	The online survey was open for two weeks in April 2025 and reopened temporarily following the Project briefing and feedback session at the CARE Forum in May 2025. In total, 21 responses were collected.
Personal/ Phone Interviews	Online and over the phone interviews with key stakeholders were used to gather information to inform the assessment of social impacts and discuss potential mitigation and enhancement measures.	• Local Government: Central Coast Council and Lake Macquarie Council; • Community Reference Group: the CARE Forum; • Emergency Services: Rural Fire Service; and • First Nations stakeholders: Darkinjung Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC).	In total, six interviews were held across April and May 2025. One interview was held with three members of the Lake Macquarie City Council and one written response to interview questions was completed by the Central Coast Council. One interview was held with the NSW Rural Fire Service. One interview was held with a present member of the CARE Forum and one with a former member. An interview was also held with a member of the Delta Coal Consultative Committee. Altogether, three contact attempts via email and phone were made to Darkinjung LALC with no response. Further attempts will be made to engage the LALC as part of the SIA phase.

Mechanism	Description	Targeted stakeholder group	Engagement Undertaken and Timing
Project briefing and feedback session	Presentations to the quarterly CARE Forum to provide a Project briefing, outline the SIA process and present the findings of the SISR to obtain members' input as representatives of their communities.	• Community Reference Group: the CARE Forum.	An introductory Project presentation was provided to the CARE Forum in a meeting held in February. A further presentation was provided at the May quarterly meeting. In May, a total of seven members were invited and six attended and provided feedback.
Meetings and email correspondence	To seek advice from stakeholders regarding connection details, to confirm connection capacity to substation and discuss land tenure of the Project Area.	• Local, State and Federal government agencies: NSW Treasury; and • Regional businesses – TransGrid.	The Proponents has engaged Transgrid ongoing throughout August 2024 to April 2025 regarding the electricity transmission and grid connection activities in the development of the project. Consultation with Transgrid would continue to be undertaken as the project progresses. In addition, ongoing email correspondence with NSW Treasury has been undertaken during March and June 2025.
Project Website	To provide information about the proposed Project, the scoping and assessment phase. A link to the Project Information Sheet and the community scoping survey was provided on the website.	• Broader community.	A dedicated page on the Delta website was established in April 2025.

Source: Umwelt, 2025.

Table 2.2 summarises the number of stakeholders engaged during the scoping phase informing the SISR.

Table 2.2 Consultation Statistics

Stakeholder Group	Number Engaged
Closest residents and nearby neighbours	785
Local, State and Federal government agencies	3
Regional businesses – TransGrid	1
Emergency services	1
Local community and special interest groups	9
Total	**799**

Source: Umwelt, 2025.

2.3.2 Engagement Roles and Responsibilities

Umwelt and the Proponent were jointly responsible for the delivery of the SISR consultation programs. **Table 2.3** provides a summary of the key engagement responsibilities of both parties.

Table 2.3 Engagement Responsibility

Organisation	Responsibility
The Proponent	• Project briefings to CARE Forum, NSW RFS, and Lake Macquarie City Council. • Initiating contact with community group representatives and members for the key stakeholder interviews. • Undertaking engagement with TransGrid and NSW Treasury. • Providing content for the Project Information Sheet. • Undertook a media release to announce the Project to the community. It was issued to local and statewide media and published on Delta's website. The information was also shared in Delta's social media channels. • Developing and hosting the Project webpage. • Distributing Project Information Sheet to the CARE Forum members via email.
Umwelt	• Targeted interviews with key stakeholder representatives and community members to understand significant Project impacts; • Design and delivery of an online SIA survey for the local community and stakeholders to provide feedback and to evaluate Project opportunities and challenges; • Design and delivery of a Project Information Sheet distributed to nearest neighbours and uploaded to the Project webpage; and • Delivery of a presentation to the CARE Forum at the May meeting.

2.4 Preliminary Impact Evaluation

As undertaken in **Section 5.0**, a key objective of the SIA scoping phase is to identify the level of assessment required for each impact in the assessment phase (refer to **Table 2.4**), with the level of assessment determining the extent of effort and data required to assess the impact in the subsequent SIA phase (refer to **Table 2.5**).

Table 2.4 Guide to Determining Levels of Assessment for Each Social Impact

Level of assessment of the impact	Meaning
Detailed Assessment	The project may result in significant social impacts, including cumulative impacts.
Standard Assessment	The project is unlikely to result in significant social impacts, including cumulative impacts.
Minor Assessment	The project may result in minor social impacts.
Not Relevant	The project will have no social impact, or the social impacts of the project will be so small that they do not warrant consideration.

Source: (DPIE, 2023).

Table 2.5 Data Requirements for Different Levels of Assessment

	Secondary data	Primary data	Research
Minor assessment	Required	Limited if required (e.g. local council)	Not required
Standard assessment	Required	Targeted consultation	Potentially targeted research
Detailed assessment	Required	Broad consultation	Targeted research

Source: (DPIE, 2023).

Each Project activity is assessed in relation to its potential impacts on people, whether previous investigation of the impact has been undertaken, the potential for cumulative impacts, and with consideration of whether project design changes or mitigation and enhancement measures may reduce negative impacts and enhance positive impacts of the Project.

The social impact characteristics (magnitude and likelihood) that have been considered in the preliminary evaluation of social impacts are consistent with those documented in the SIA Guideline (refer to **Table 2.6** and **Table 2.7**).

Table 2.6 Dimensions of Social Magnitude

Dimensions		Details needed to enable assessment
Magnitude	**Extent**	Who specifically is expected to be affected (directly, indirectly, and/or cumulatively), including any vulnerable people? Which location(s) and people are affected? (e.g. near neighbours, local, regional, future generations).
	Duration	When is the social impact expected to occur? Will it be time-limited (e.g. over particular project phases) or permanent?
	Severity or scale	What is the likely scale or degree of change? (e.g. mild, moderate, severe).
	Intensity or importance	How sensitive/vulnerable (or how adaptable/resilient) are affected people to the impact, or (for positive impacts) how important is it to them? This might depend on the value they attach to the matter; whether it is rare/unique or replaceable; the extent to which it is tied to their identity; and their capacity to cope with or adapt to change.
	Level of concern/ interest	How concerned/interested are people? Sometimes, concerns may be disproportionate to findings from technical assessments of likelihood, duration and/or intensity.

Source: (DPIE, 2023).

Table 2.7 Defining likelihood levels of Social Impacts

Likelihood level	Meaning
Almost certain	Definite or almost definitely expected (e.g. has happened on similar projects)
Likely	High probability
Possible	Medium probability
Unlikely	Low probability
Very unlikely	Improbable or remote probability

Source: (DPIE, 2023).

Based on the consideration of these impact characteristics, the significance of the potential impact (positive or negative) and its likely effect on differing stakeholder groups is determined, using the impact significance matrix outlined in **Table 2.8**.

Table 2.8 Social Impact Significance Matrix

	Magnitude level				
	1	2	3	4	5
Likelihood level	Minimal	Minor	Moderate	Major	Transformational
A Almost certain	Low	Medium	High	Very High	Very High
B Likely	Low	Medium	High	High	Very High
C Possible	Low	Medium	Medium	High	High
D Unlikely	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High
E Very unlikely	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium

Source: (DPIE, 2023).

Section 5.0 provides a summary of preliminary social impacts identified in relation to the Project, including consideration of the:

- Project aspect/component;
- Social impact category and social impact;
- Extent of the impact;
- Likely affected stakeholders, and the sensitivity/vulnerability of these individuals and groups and their perceived level of concern/interest (based upon similar projects and projects in the social locality);
- Duration and/or timing of the impact; and
- Severity of the impact, with consideration of the relevant mitigation and enhancement measures to be put in place.

2.5 Assumptions and Limitations

The following outline assumptions of importance in the development of the SISR and any limitations in approach at this stage of the Project. Assumptions:

- The views of the community represented throughout the report are based on the sample of community members and stakeholders consulted as outlined above, and do not represent the views of the entire community.
- The SISR has been informed by information collected from secondary data sources and community consultation. It is assumed that secondary data sources contain valid, representative data and have not been misconstrued.
- The Proponent is aware that ongoing consultation with all relevant stakeholders is required as part of ongoing Project planning.

Limitations:

- Three contact attempts via email and phone were made to Darkinjung LALC with no response and as such no cultural impacts have been identified. Further engagement will be initiated in the next phase.
- The timing of the online survey during the Easter/school holiday period may have inhibited the ability of some stakeholders/community members to participate.

3.0 Social Locality Definition and Baseline Profile

3.1 Social Locality Definition

In defining the social locality for the Project, statistical areas prescribed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), as well as land tenure and use in, or nearby the Project Area have also been considered. From a geographic perspective, the primary communities of interest that comprise the social locality, as defined by ABS, are outlined in **Figure 3.1**.

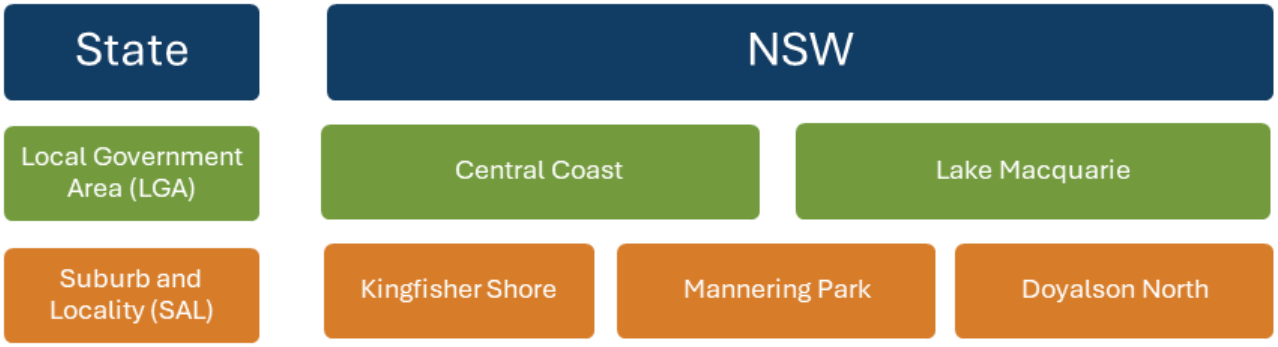

Figure 3.1 Geographic Communities Relevant to the Social Locality

Figure 3.2 provides a visual map of the social locality for the Project, with **Figure 3.3** providing a zoomed in map of the site to illustrate the proximity to the closest residents/nearby neighbours.

Table 3.1 outlines the key aspects of the social locality and justification for inclusion. In the scoping phase, engagement focused on stakeholders who may be most impacted by the Project – that is, closest residential areas, nearby neighbours, local governments, emergency service providers and First Nations groups. Subsequent phases of the SIA will seek broader involvement across each of the stakeholder groupings identified, including wider communities Wyee Point, Chain Valley Bay, Gwandalan and Summerland Point.

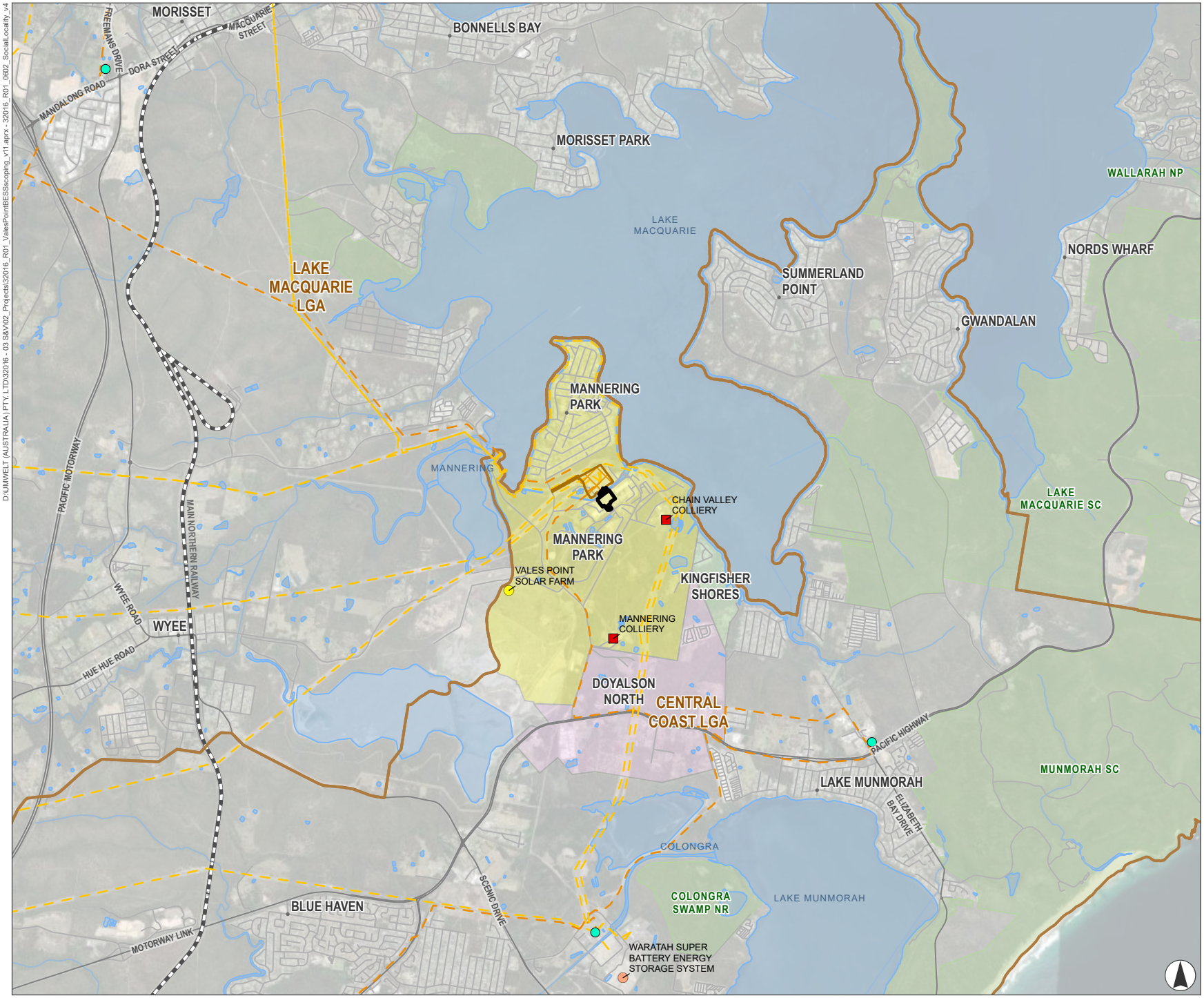

FIGURE 3.2

Social Locality

Legend

- Substation
- Project Area
- Vales Point 330 kV Substation
- Local Government Area (LGA)
- Doyalson North
- Kingfisher Shores
- Mannering Park
- Reserve
- Waterbody
- Watercourse
- 132 kV Transmission Line
- 330 kV Transmission Line
- Local Road
- Main Road
- Railway

Proximal projects

- Coal Mine
- Battery
- Solar

0 1 2

Kilometres

Scale 1:65,000 at A4
GDA2020 MGA Zone 56

Image Source: ESRI Basemap (2025) | **Data Source:** NSW DFSI (2025)

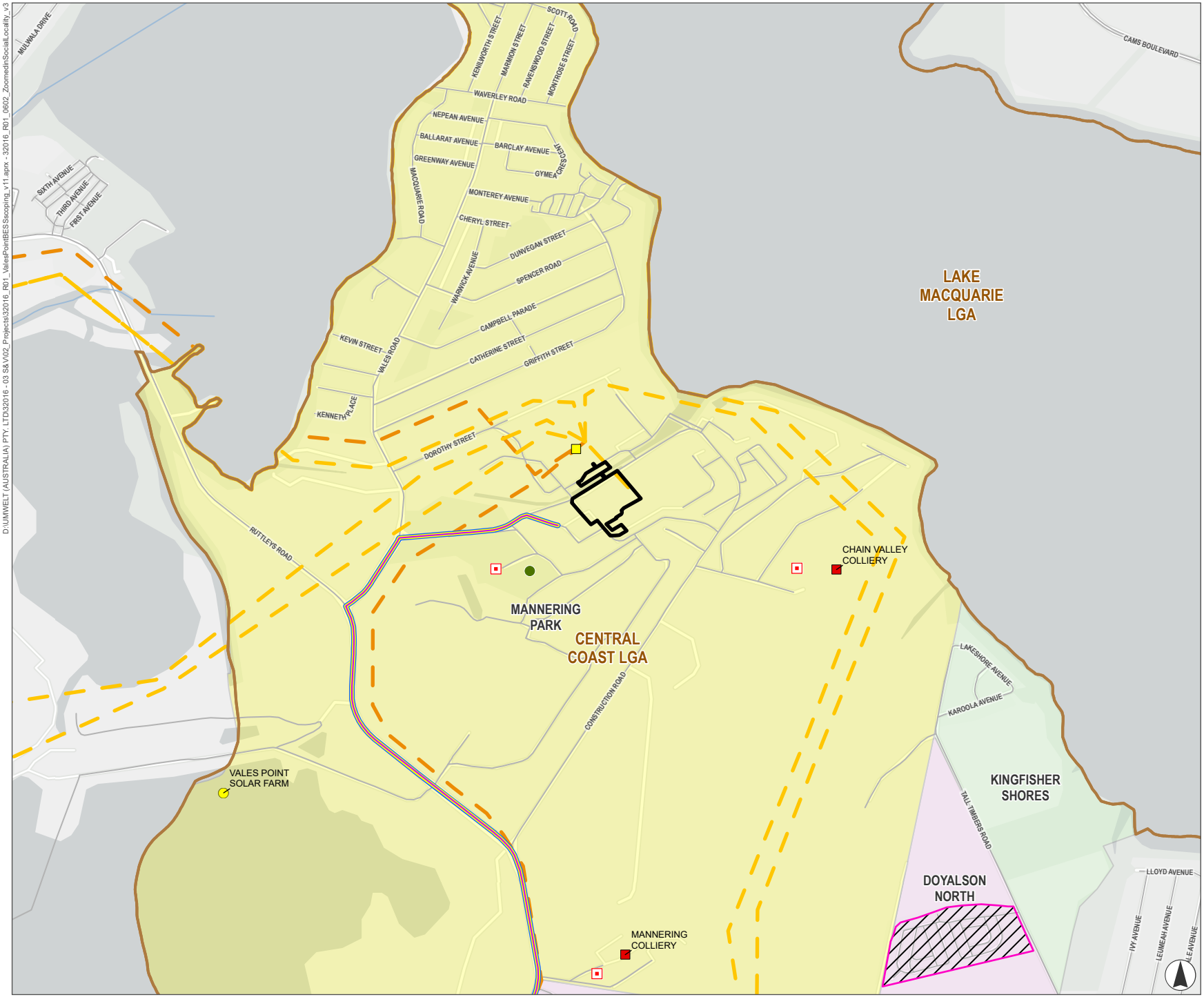

FIGURE 3.3

Social Locality - Zoomed

Legend

- Project Area
- Local Government Area (LGA)
- Macquarie Shores - Over 50s LifeStyle Community
- Doyalson North
- Kingfisher Shores
- Mannering Park
- Watercourse
- Local Road
- 132 kV Transmission Line
- 330 kV Transmission Line
- Route A43
- Route M1
- Route Pacific Hwy
- Tom Barney Oval
- Helipad
- Transgrid 330kV VP Switchyard

Proximal projects

- Coal Mine
- Solar

0 200 400

Metres

Scale 1:20,000 at A4
GDA2020

umwelt

Image Source: ESRI Basemap (2025) | **Data Source:** NSW DFSI (2025)

Table 3.1 Social Locality Inclusion and Justification

Stakeholder group	Stakeholders/Geographic Feature or Community	Reasons for inclusion / Likely social impact
Host Landholders / Proponents	Delta/Joint venture between Delta and Samsung	• The BESS is proposed to be located on existing concrete foundations on the former Vales Point A-Station footprint which reduces the need for land disturbance and associated environmental impacts.
Closest residents (adjacent to the site)	Mannering Park Peninsular: Griffith St, Kenneth Pl	• Closest landholders are situated approximately 500 m to the north of the Project Area which may be impacted or have an interest in the Project. • The only access to Mannering Park is via Vales Road (off Ruttleys Road) which is part of the Project's transport route. Closest residents could be affected by traffic and road safety related social impacts temporarily during the Project construction phase. • Closest residents may experience social amenity related impacts during construction and operation.
Nearby neighbours	Mannering Park Peninsular: Catherine St, Eliot St, Campbell Parade, Halcyon St, Rupert Street, Kevin St, Harwood Cl, Spencer Rd, Vales Road, Warwick Ave	• Landholders located approximately 1.8 km north of the Project Area which may by impacted or have an interest in the Project; • Residents and road users could be affected by traffic and road safety related social impacts temporarily during the Project construction phase; and • Nearby neighbours may experience social amenity related impacts e.g. noise and traffic during construction and operation.
	Macquarie Shores – Over 50s Lifestyle Community	• The Over 50s village is located 4 km southeast of the Project Area; • The residents have previously voiced their concerns about social amenity impacts related to noise from Vales Point Power Station; and • As a vulnerable group, residents may be more sensitised to Project impact.
	Kingfisher Reserve: Tall Timbers Rd, Lakeshore Ave, Morotai Ave, Karoola Ave	• Landholders located approximately 1.3 km southeast of the Project Area and therefore likely to have an interest or may be impacted by the Project.
Broader community	Central Coast LGA and Lake Macquarie LGA, including the residents of Chain	• The Project is wholly located in the Central Coast LGA, though is close to the boundary of the Lake Macquarie LGA. The communities of these LGAs may have interest in the Project given the history of mining and power generation in the area.

Stakeholder group	Stakeholders/Geographic Feature or Community	Reasons for inclusion / Likely social impact
	Valley Bay North and South, Gwandalan, Summerland Point and Wyee Point	• Community representatives from Chain Valley Bay North and South, Gwandalan, Summerland Point and Wyee Point are active participants in the CARE Forum and have a relationship with Delta through Vales Point Power Station and Chain Valley Colliery (CVC). • Representatives of these communities were engaged for this SISR via the CARE Forum. The SIA phase will seek broader involvement of members of these communities. Delta values its longstanding relationships and engagement with these surrounding communities and will engage with these communities through the SSD assessment process. • Residents may experience economic benefits from the Project through employment opportunities.
	Users and visitors to Tom Barney Oval and Mannering Park Community Garden	• The facility is located adjacent to the Project Area (west) and is separated from Vales Point Power Station inner perimeter area and the coal plant by alarmed fencing. • The facility is owned and maintained by Delta who provide community access to the area. Multiple sports groups use the oval. • There is a newly constructed community garden located next to Tom Barney Oval. • The area will not be impacted by the Project and access would unlikely need to be restricted during construction.
	Lake Macquarie, Lake Macquarie State Conservation Area, Awaba Bay, Munmorah State Conservation Area Colongra and Swamp Nature Reserve	• The Project is located in proximity to several Reserves and State Conservation Areas that have high environmental and recreational value for the community. • The Project Area is located entirely within the Vales Point Power Station and approximately 200 m from Lake Macquarie. Lake Macquarie has high recreational value and is used by the local community and visitors for activities including swimming, fishing, boating, kayaking and stand-up paddle boarding. The lake foreshore areas also have picnic areas and walking and cycling trails although public access to the foreshore area near the Power Station is limited.

Stakeholder group	Stakeholders/Geographic Feature or Community	Reasons for inclusion / Likely social impact
Community and special interest groups	Community and special interest groups in the broader community.	• These groups may have an interest in areas or activities of high value to local communities such as Lake Macquarie that may be impacted by Project construction or operational activities.
Community reference group	Vales Point Power Station Community and Regional Environment (CARE) Forum: Membership includes Gwandalan Progress Association, Chain Valley Bay Progress Association, Mannering Park Progress Association, Mannering Park Tidy Towns, and Lake Munmorah Progress Association	• The CARE Forum consists of seven individuals representing six local community groups; • CARE Forum members will likely have an interest in the Project and the potential impacts on surrounding communities; and • The members may have suggestions for how to mitigate or enhance potential social impacts to address community need/resilience.
Vulnerable Groups	Macquarie Shores - Over 50s Lifestyle Community, people with disability, elderly people, children, pregnant women and parents of young children.	• These groups are more vulnerable within the general population and, therefore, may be disproportionately impacted by the Project during construction.
Regular users of the transport route	Ruttleys Road, Pacific Highway (A43), M1 from Sydney and Newcastle and Port Kembla	• The indicative transport route to deliver BESS components to the site is likely to be Vales Road (off Ruttleys Road), Pacific Highway (A43), M1 from Sydney and Newcastle and Port Kembla.[2] An alternative site access is provided via Construction Road (off Ruttleys Road). • Regular users of the transport route could be affected by traffic and road safety related impacts temporarily during Project construction.

[2] Confirmation of the actual access roads to be utilised would be dependent on the sourcing of the BESS components confirmed as part of detailed design engineering.

Stakeholder group	Stakeholders/Geographic Feature or Community	Reasons for inclusion / Likely social impact
Industry and business	Suppliers, local industries and businesses and proximal projects Accommodation providers	• Suppliers who provide services to Delta and Vales Point Power Station and access the site may be impacted during Project construction; • There are a number of proximal projects and key industries in close proximity to the Project that have the potential to result in cumulative impacts; • There are a number of small businesses in Mannering Park which may experience livelihood and economic benefits from the presence of the Project workforce during construction and operation; and • Local accommodation providers located nearby may potentially host Project construction workers, if required.
First Nations stakeholders	Darkinjung Local Aboriginal Land Council (DLALC)	• Aboriginal groups have a connection to Country and cultural values associated with the surrounding area. The Project is located on Darkinjung LALC land and has strong connections to the Awabakal and Guringai Peoples. The Darkinjung people are the traditional custodians of the territory that extend from the Hawkesbury River in the south, Lake Macquarie in the north, the McDonald River and Wollombi up to Mt Yengo in the west and the Pacific Ocean in the east (Darkinjung LALC, n.d.). The Awabakal and Guringai presence in the Chain Valley area and Lake Macquarie, in general, extends from the present day back many thousands of years and is reflected by many culturally significant sites in the broader area. • As the Project is located on an existing operational brownfield site, there is unlikely to be impacts to aboriginal cultural heritage. A search of the AHIMS database, undertaken on 24 July 2025, identified no known Aboriginal sites or places within the specific Project Area. Four registered Aboriginal sites have previously been recorded approximately 550 m northeast of the Project Area adjacent to the Lake Macquarie and will not be impacted by the Project.

Stakeholder group	Stakeholders/Geographic Feature or Community	Reasons for inclusion / Likely social impact
Environmental Groups	Hunter Community Environment Centre, Hunter Central Coast Coal Ash Community Alliance, Community Environment Network (Lake Macquarie), Future Sooner	• Local environmental groups may have an interest in the positive impacts of the Project on the environment given their historical concerns associated with the presence of Vales Point Power Station and coal mining; and • Such groups may also likely to be interested in the environmental impacts of the Project.
Local Government Representatives	Central Coast Council and Lake Macquarie Council	• The Councils are the government representatives of the social locality. The Councils provide long-term planning goals for their respective LGAs, advocate for their local communities, and work to address community needs and aspirations.
Emergency service providers	• Helipad users; • Fire and Rescue NSW, including Doyalson Fire and Rescue Services; • NSW Rural Fire Services including Mannering Park Rural Fire Brigade, Lake Munmorah Rural Fire Brigade, Wyee Rural Fire Brigade; • NSW Ambulance; • NSW Police; • NSW Health; • Central Coast Local Emergency Management Committee; and • NSW State Emergency Service – Wyong Unit.	• The Helipad is located adjacent to the Project Area and owned by Delta and maintained for emergencies. The Project Area is in the NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) jurisdiction and within the call out area of the Mannering Park, Wyee and the Lake Munmorah brigades. The RFS has a longstanding relationship with Delta. • These stakeholders are likely to have an interest in the Project due to any potential fire and contamination risk of the BESS and in case of an emergency at the Vales Point Power Station site. • As the Project progresses to the EIS phase, engagement with a wider range of emergency responder services and the Central Coast Local Emergency Management Committee will be required.
Employees / Contractors	Proponent employees and contractors	• Those who access and work on the site may be impacted during Project construction.

Source: (EnergyCo, n.d.; ABS, 2021; Umwelt, 2025).

3.2 Social Baseline Profile

The social baseline profile has been compiled based on the definition of the Project's social locality outlined in the section above and provides an overview of the baseline social context to provide a foundation from which impacts can be predicted and analysed.

The following components have been considered in the development of the social baseline for this Project:

- **Development context** – a review of recent development history in the local community, including how people have felt or experienced these changes, and different issue trends or patterns;
- **Geographic and spatial** – identification of communities of interest and relevant stakeholders;
- **Socio-political setting** – an understanding of the relevant governance structures, including those of Traditional Owners and the Local Aboriginal Land Council, and government authorities;
- **Community capital/assets** – an assessment of the social, cultural, and demographic characteristics of the identified communities and their resilience and adaptive capacity; and
- **Key community values, issues, and concerns** – documentation of current community issues and values, as identified in key strategic planning documents, regional plans and/or community studies, as well as through analysis of local and regional media sources.

3.2.1 Local and Regional Context

The site is located on the southern shores of Lake Macquarie on an isolated peninsular in the Central Coast LGA, close to the Lake Macquarie LGA boundary.

The Project area is located on the site of Vales Point Power Station and near Chain Valley Colliery and Mannering Colliery (MC) which were developed in 1960 to provide coal for the Vales Point Power Station. The Vales Point Power Station is one of two operating coal fired power stations on the shores of Lake Macquarie, with the Eraring Power Station located approximately 20 km north of the Project Area.

The township of Mannering Park (1 km north of the Project) and the communities of Kingfisher Shore (southeast) and Doyalson North (south) neighbour the site and together comprise around 1,500 dwellings. Newcastle is the nearest metropolitan centre located approximately 50 km north of the Project, with Morisset being the closest main urban centre. The Project Area is also located in proximity to the M1 Pacific Motorway, which links Sydney to the Central Coast, Newcastle, and Hunter Regions. The M1 also forms part of the main transportation and freight route corridor between Sydney and Brisbane.

The Central Coast LGA has a total population of 346,596 and contains numerous towns and villages with the main urban centres being Gosford and Wyong. Geographically, the LGA covers an area of 1,651 square kilometres and is bordered to the east by the Pacific Ocean, bound by the Hawkesbury River in the south, the Watagan Mountains in the west and the southern end of Lake Macquarie in the north. Traditionally a holiday and retirement area, the LGA has experienced rapid population growth over the last 30 years and is now established as a popular coastal urban fringe area.

The southern section of the Vales Point Power Station property extends across the Lake Macquarie LGA boundary. Lake Macquarie LGA is home to approximately 213,845 people and is situated north of the Central Coast Council area, south of and adjacent to the city of Newcastle and is part of the Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Area. The LGA's centrepiece is Lake Macquarie which is the largest saltwater lake in the southern hemisphere. The region has a significant coal mining and power generation industry presence as well as smaller agriculture and manufacturing industries.

The two LGAs were categorised as a Functional Economic Region in 2018 by the NSW Government along with 38 others across the state. The functional economic region concept was developed to more accurately define regions that are relatively self-contained for economic purposes and thus to reflect the boundaries of economic interaction across the state. Additional information about the economic and strategic area of focus both areas as outlined in **Appendix A**.

3.3 Development Context

This section draws on several data sources to build an understanding of the development context within the region, and the social locality relevant to the Project, to better understand the potential for cumulative impacts.

3.3.1 Development History

Mining and the Vales Point Power Station have played an important role in the development of the area. The first official recording of European coal discovery in Australia in 1791 was speculated to be at Glenrock Lagoon which is 30 km north of Project Area. Coal was subsequently found at Lake Macquarie in 1800 leading to mining developments occurring throughout the century and expanding into the Hunter Valley. The richness of the mineral resources informed the decision to commission the Vales Point Power Station near Mannering Park, making it the first major power station in New South Wales to be located near its fuel source (Mannering Park Community, n.d.). The CVC and MC began operations to supply Vales Point Power Station in the 1960s (Delta Electricity, n.d.). The development of the area, particularly of Mannering Park, was closely linked to the influx of people to staff the Vales Point Power Station and the mines. In 1978, the Vales Point was the largest power station in Australia, consisting of six units (4 at 'A' Station and 2 at 'B' Station) with a combined capacity of 2195 MW (Delta Electricity, n.d.).

Delta is a key employer in the region/local area and has a current workforce of over 500 across the station and mine. As new residents have moved into the area, however, the community has become less tied to the coal industry. For example, Mannering Park's top industries of employment at the time of the last census (2021) included supermarket and grocery stores and social assistance services, and in Kingfisher Shores, concreting services and real estate services. The local area is also popular for retirees due to its tranquillity and proximity to health services, illustrated by the larger proportion of older people resident in the social locality and the presence of several Lifestyle Villages, including the Macquarie Shores Over 50s Lifestyle village (additional information provided in **Appendix A**).

There have been several significant community and industry related events that have occurred in the past decade (2015–2025). Recent community events that were highlighted during engagement as being of significance to the community are the commitment by the Federal Community Infrastructure Program and the Central Coast Council to build a shared pedestrian and cycle pathway connecting Mannering Park, Kingfisher Shores and Chain Valley Bay, and the opening of an IGA supermarket in Mannering Park. Both events were identified as being important to community cohesion and to attracting people to the area. In addition, the community also raised the 2019/20 bushfire season which saw approximately 10% of bushlands across the Central Coast and Lake Macquarie region impacted by fires and the environmental incident that resulted in marine wildlife impacts in Lake Macquarie (Coast Communtiy News, 2024; ABC News, 2025).

Regarding local industrial development, the trend can be understood in the context of the evolving energy market and the growing demand for electricity reliability – an issue that has gained prominence amid the national energy transition from fossil-fuel generation to renewable energy sources.

The Vales Point Power Station continues to be a key asset in the transitioning energy market by providing essential firming capacity to support the growing integration of renewable energy and ensuring a reliable and secure source of electricity. Currently the Vales Point Power Station generates approximately 10% of NSW's electricity needs. Delta has advised the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) of a 2033 technical life assessment of Vales Point Power Station but notes that this is not a commercial commitment to operate to this date. The closure date will be dependent upon whole-of-system factors including early closure of other network generation assets, system security requirements and the building of replacement capacity and transmission infrastructure.Delta has also submitted an EIS for the Chain Valley Colliery Consolidation Project which aims to consolidate approvals for Chain Valley and Mannering collieries into a single development and provide for extended mining into the Eastern Mining Area resulting in an extension of mine life from 2027 to 2029.

The proposed Vales Point Power Station closure is in line with the trend across NSW, with Liddell Power Station closing in April 2023, Eraring scheduled for closure in August 2027 and Bayswater between 2030 and 2033 (Renew Economy, 2025). The local opinion regarding the closure of the Vales Point Power Station is divided. During community engagement, some residents expressed the expectation that the power station would remain operational for a longer period than initially anticipated. Others highlighted the positive role of the power station in contributing to a diverse and well-resourced network. However, there were also residents who voiced opposition to the continued operation of the facility and advocated for its closure at an earlier date.

There has been some community concern and opposition by Environmental groups in relation to Vales Point Power Station and mining in the area on issues such as noise, air quality, water impacts, biodiversity impacts, greenhouse gas emissions and health and wellbeing impacts. Additional details are outlined in **Appendix A**.

Delta has emphasised that the Vales Point Power Station site is strategically positioned to play a significant role in the energy transition, both during the shift toward a diversified energy grid and beyond the closure of the coal-fired units. The company has taken proactive steps to diversify the site's energy resources, obtaining approval for the construction of the Vales Point Solar Farm.

3.3.2 Energy Policy in NSW

Australia's commitment at the international level to the Paris Climate Accord has influenced the growth of and investment in the renewable energy sector across the country. The NSW Government's current energy security policy and approach to a clean energy transition is being delivered through the strategic development of the renewable energy sector, as outlined through the NSW Government's Renewable Energy Action Plan (2013) and Energy Efficient Action Plan (2018), Electricity Strategy (2019), the Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap (2020), Network Infrastructure Strategy (2022) and Net Zero Plan Stage 1: 2020–2030 (NSW Climate and Energy Action, 2023).

The NSW Government's 'Electricity Strategy', 'Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap' and 'Network Infrastructure Strategy' sets out a plan to deliver the state's first five (5) Renewable Energy Zones (REZs) in the Central-West Orana, New England, South-West, Hunter-Central Coast and Illawarra regions. This builds on the 'NSW Transmission Infrastructure Strategy' and supports the implementation of the Australian Energy Market Operator's (AEMO) 'Integrated System Plan'. The Project is within the Hunter-Central Coast REZ and will utilise existing network connections as part of the Network Infrastructure Strategy connection, which has an intended capacity of one gigawatt of renewable energy generation (EnergyCo, n.d.).

The NSW Government has developed the NSW Energy Policy Framework which provides a framework to support timely and consistent decision-making and enable increased certainty for the energy industry and the relevant communities. The framework contains the following guidelines: Wind Energy Guideline, Transmission Guideline, Solar Energy Guideline, Benefit- Sharing Guideline and Private Agreement Guideline. These guidelines aim to ensure that communities gain benefits from renewable energy development and have improved transparency and understanding regarding the location and process of development (NSW Government, 2024).

One of the challenges frequently identified in the transition to a renewable energy-based electricity grid is the intermittency of most forms of renewable energy generation. That is; wind and solar, the two most prominent forms of renewable energy in Australia, are strong when weather and climatic conditions are suitable, but during off-peak conditions they are less able to consistently meet demand. As such, a need has been identified for energy storage systems (Suberu, Mustafa, & Bashir, 2014). Hence, the Project, as well as other BESS projects, are foreseen to play an important role in the transition to renewable energy.

3.3.3 Proximal Development Projects

A select number of relevant BESS and renewable energy projects in the region have been reviewed to identify how relevant stakeholders and communities have responded to these proposed developments, and to inform an understanding of the potential concerns and community perceptions. These projects are outlined in **Table 3.2**.

Furthermore, **Table 3.3** outlines other major projects and operations occurring in other industries across the region and the potential concurrence of these projects with the current Project to inform cumulative impact assessment.

Table 3.2 Renewable Energy Projects within the Social Locality

Project (Proponent)	Project Type	Location	Approximate Distance to Project[3]	Status	Description (Construction time frame and no. of construction and operations jobs)	Potential Cumulative Impact (Given Concurrent development Timeframes)
Vales Point Solar Farm	Solar PV	Mannering Park, Central Coast LGA and Lake Macquarie City	1.5 km southeast	Approved – October 2018	• Project size – 55 MW; • Construction workforce – 100 construction jobs over 9 months; • Operations workforce – 5 full time ongoing positions; • Construction timeframe – unknown; and • Potential construction start date–unknown.	Yes if construction occurs at the same time due to increasing demand for local workforce and potential traffic impacts. However, this is unlikely.
Waratah Super Battery Energy Storage System	Battery Energy Storage System	Colongra, Central Coast LGA	6 km southeast	Approved – February 2023	• Project size – 850 MW; • Construction workforce – 150; • Operations workforce – 10–15; • Construction timeframe – 18 months; and • Construction and commissioning to be completed in 2025.	No – Waratah BESS will be commissioned in 2025.

[3] Straight line distance measured from Project address

Project (Proponent)	Project Type	Location	Approximate Distance to Project[3]	Status	Description (Construction time frame and no. of construction and operations jobs)	Potential Cumulative Impact (Given Concurrent development Timeframes)
Eraring Battery Energy Storage System	Battery Energy Storage System	Approved – May 2022	11 km	Approved – May 2022	• Project size – 700 MW; • Construction workforce – 128; • Operations workforce – 10; • Construction timeframe – 18 months; and • Construction period – 2022–2027.	Yes – potential overlapping construction timelines increasing demand for local workforce and potential traffic impacts
Awaba Battery Energy Storage System (Firm Power)	Battery Energy Storage System	Awaba, Lake Macquarie City LGA	34 km	Approved – Dec 2023	• Project size – 50 MW; • Construction workforce – 30; • Operations workforce – 1; • Construction timeframe – 18 months; and • Potential construction start date – 2023.	Yes – potential overlapping construction timelines increasing demand for local workforce and potential traffic impacts
Steel River East Battery Energy Storage System	Battery Energy Storage System	Mayfield West, Newcastle City LGA	35 km	In planning – exhibition	• Project size – 200 MW; • Construction workforce – 100 during peak period; • Operations workforce – up to 5 part time employees; and • Construction timeframe – Late 2025 until late-2027.	Yes – potential overlapping construction timelines increasing demand for local workforce

Project (Proponent)	Project Type	Location	Approximate Distance to Project[3]	Status	Description (Construction time frame and no. of construction and operations jobs)	Potential Cumulative Impact (Given Concurrent development Timeframes)
Beresfield Battery Energy Storage System (Firm Power)	Battery Energy Storage System	Beresfield, Newcastle City LGA	41 km	Approved – Nov 2021	• Project size – 100 MW; • Construction workforce – 100; • Operations workforce – 1; and • Construction timeframe – up to 18 months.	No
Hunter Transmission Project	Transmission	Cessnock City LGA	20 km[4]	In planning – applicant preparing EIS	• Project size – 500 kV; • Construction workforce – 700; • Operations workforce – unknown; and • Construction timeframe - start in 2026, end of 2028.	No
Kiar BESS	Battery Energy Storage System	Central Coast LGA	15 km	In planning – prepare SEARs	• Project size – 1000 MW / 4000 MWh; • Construction workforce – 100; • Operations workforce – unknown; • Construction timeframe – 18–24 months; and	Yes – potential overlapping construction timelines increasing demand for local workforce and potential traffic impacts

[4] Approximate distance to the southern most point of the Hunter Transmission Project

Project (Proponent)	Project Type	Location	Approximate Distance to Project[3]	Status	Description (Construction time frame and no. of construction and operations jobs)	Potential Cumulative Impact (Given Concurrent development Timeframes)
					• Construction and commissioning to be completed in 2027/2028.	

Sources: (NSW Government, n.d.)

Table 3.3 Other Stated Significant Development/State Significant Infrastructure Developments within the Social Locality

Project	Project Type	Location	Approximate Distance to Project	Status	Description	Potential Cumulative Impact (Given Concurrent development Timeframes)
Toukley Desalination Water Treatment Plant (Central Coast Council)	Water storage or treatment facilities	Toukley, Central Coast LGA	13 km	In planning – applicant preparing EIS	• Project size – a seawater extraction pipeline with an intake point; • Construction workforce – 220; • Operations workforce – five; • Construction timeframe – 3 years; and • Potential construction start date–2026.	Yes – potential overlapping construction timelines resulting in potential traffic impacts
Newstan Mine Extension Project	Coal Mining	Fassifern, Lake Macquarie LGA	20 km	Response to submissions	• Project size – extract up to 25.9 Mt of coal at a maximum rate of 4 Mtpa;	No

Project	Project Type	Location	Approximate Distance to Project	Status	Description	Potential Cumulative Impact (Given Concurrent development Timeframes)
					• Construction workforce – NA; • Operations workforce – 320 ongoing; • Construction timeframe – 4 months; and • Potential construction start date–2023.	
Chain Valley Colliery Consolidation Project	Coal Mining	Mannering Park, Central Coast LGA	750 m	Assessment-further information required	• Project size – extension of the life of mine to 31 December 2029, 13.4 Mt ROM coal; • Construction workforce – NA; • Operations workforce – 390 ongoing; • Construction timeframe – NA; and • Potential construction start date – 2025.	Yes – potential traffic impacts

Sources: (NSW Government, n.d.).

3.4 Resilience and Adaptive Capacity

As noted in **Section 2.3.1**, to understand the communities of interest to the Project and to evaluate their resilience and adaptive capacity to change, a Sustainable Livelihoods or Community Capitals Approach (DFID, 1999) has been adopted. This includes an analysis of seven community capitals, informed by a range of primary and secondary data.

Table 3.4 identifies key challenges and opportunities experienced across the social locality that are of relevance to the Project, as determined in the development of the social baseline profile and informed through community consultation. The full baseline analysis is included in **Appendix A**.

Table 3.4 Local Challenges and Opportunities within the Social Locality Relevant to the Project

Challenges	Capital	Opportunities
• High elderly population particularly in Doyalson North indicating a more vulnerable population and increased demand for health and specialised aged care services; • The aging local population and the lower proportion of the population in the prime working age bracket of 20 to 49 years old at the LGAs level (compared to the state) could present a barrier to local employment; • Kingfisher Shore, Mannering Park and Doyalson North have a low Index of Education and Occupation (IEO) score and Year 12 completion rates, indicating lower educational attainment and occupational skills, which may present a barrier for local employment opportunities; • The Central Coast and Lake Macquarie LGAs have higher IEO scores a more balanced educational and occupational profile; • Higher proportion of the population with self-reported mental health conditions, and three or more long-term health conditions; and • Higher proportion of the local population with self-reported asthma than the state.	**Human**	• Public investment in key enabling services such as childcare and social and community infrastructure to enhance liveability and amenity will be key to attracting and retaining younger people to the area which could improve skills availability and eligible local workforce; • High trade certification attainment rates of the local population indicates the presence of skills relevant to support the Project; and • A higher-than-average First Nations population presents opportunities to create positive livelihood impacts through employment participation and training opportunities.
• While the local population demonstrates high trade certification attainment, indicating strong potential for local employment during the construction and operation phases of the Project, current labour shortages across all sectors highlight a broader regional challenge. There remains a pressing need to build local skills capacity and attract and retain skilled workers to fully realise these opportunities. The existing skills gap may limit the extent to which the Project can source labour locally. Lake Macquarie City Council has identified the growth of local employment opportunities as a	**Economic**	• Opportunity for the Project to develop collaborative education, training and employment programs with local education providers to meet skill requirements; • The social locality has a larger proportion of technicians, trades workers, labourers and machine operators than the State which indicates opportunities for local employment and procurement during the Project construction and operation; • The region's strengths across primary industries, manufacturing and service sectors contribute to a high economic resilience;

Challenges	Capital	Opportunities
strategic priority, aligning with the need to strengthen workforce capacity. • High First Nation unemployment caused by the lack of accessible employment options and barriers to employment. • Economic inequality exists between proximal communities to the Project and the broader LGA communities (represented by lower Index of Economic Resources Scores and median household income). Higher percentage of the social locality in rental and mortgage stress indicates the potential for higher negative impact if the Project accommodates the workforce locally.		• High economic resilience will support the region as emerging macroeconomic trends, including the shift towards net zero targets and increased regional migration, puts pressure on specialised industries such as mining and healthcare and social assistance; • Workforce and infrastructure in emerging, high-value industries such as renewable energy generation provide opportunities for communities to diversify their economies; • Potential for the Project to contribute towards the key economic priorities of the region: Aboriginal economic development, strategic collaboration, leveraging major projects for sustainable growth and supporting growth around existing services and centres; and • Potential for the Project to positively contribute to the local economy through community investment.
• Differing household compositions across the Central Coast LGA create an imbalance in the demand for services and facilities. For example, areas with a high proportion of family households may require more educational facilities, childcare services, and recreational spaces. Conversely, areas like Doyalson North, where lone person households are more common (52%), may have a higher demand for healthcare services, social support programs, and affordable housing. • Vulnerable groups including the elderly and people with disability are at higher risk of barriers in access to health care, financial stability and support services. • During engagement, residents highlighted that there are limited social gathering/community recreational spaces in the local area.	**Social**	• During engagement for the SISR, a strong sense of community was identified, with resident's describing the community as close-knit, friendly and safe; • There is a strong attachment to place amongst the local community which creates the potential for high levels of community interest and involvement in the Project; • High levels of volunteering in Kingfisher Shores suggests a high degree of social cohesion; and • There are opportunities for the Project to build on existing strengths of relationships developed at the community level.

Challenges	Capital	Opportunities
• Kingfisher Shore, Mannering Park and Doyalson North have a low index of relative social economic disadvantage indicating a lower level of advantage and higher levels of disadvantage compared to the broader LGA communities score and the state.		
• The local area has a high car dependency which increases the scale of impacts associated with traffic congestion and public safety during the Project's construction period. During engagement, the Lake Macquarie City Council identified improving public transport as a strategic focus area. • Poor road conditions, including issues with kerbs and guttering, were identified during community engagement as key challenges. The need for additional footpaths was also highlighted as a priority. • There are several other major developments under construction or proposed in the social locality which may place potential strain on existing infrastructure. • Increased housing market pressures in the region due to population growth and increased COVID-19-related migration. The inability of supply levels of housing to meet demand is having significant implications for house prices which may present a challenge for attracting and retaining workers to support economic prosperity. • There is a lower provision of General Practitioners and Specialist practitioners in the social locality.	**Physical**	• The locality is well connected, being in proximity to two large cities: Newcastle and Sydney that are connected by the Main North railway line and by the main north south motorway linking Sydney, Newcastle and Brisbane (Pacific Motorway, M1); • Transport connectivity will benefit from upgrades to the Central Coast Highway and the M1; • Opportunities for infrastructure investment and favourable regulatory changes associated with the adoption of the Greater Cities Commission (GCC) Six Cities region that incorporates the Central Coast City, alongside the Lower Hunter and Greater Newcastle City; • The Hunter-Central Coast REZ presents an opportunity for economic growth/diversification and to respond to evolving energy production and demand landscape; • The region has benefitted from major health infrastructure endowments which will likely support the health and medical needs of the aging population; • There are several initiatives in the area that are expected to improve housing availability; • Various tertiary educational facilities within the broader community provide an opportunity for collaboration and innovation with the Project to assist in skilling and training the workforce; and

Challenges	Capital	Opportunities
		• Potential for the Project to positively contribute to the investment into social and community infrastructure to enhance liveability and amenity.
• The Central Coast Council was in administration for 4 years (2020–24) and is still in just under $200 million of debt.	**Political**	• Both Lake Macquarie City Council and the Central Coast Council's strategic plan and vision aligns with the Project's goals and aspirations; and • State and Federal MPs highlight support for the Renewable Energy Zones and the broader renewable energy transition.
• There have been some community concern and opposition by Environmental groups in relation to the Vales Point Power Station and mining in the area on issues such as noise, air quality, water impacts, biodiversity impacts, greenhouse gas emissions and health and wellbeing impacts. • History of subsidence associated with mining operations. • The region has faced several natural disaster declarations since 2019, including storms, bushfires, and floods. The frequency and severity of these events is predicted to be exacerbated by climate change. • Previous Land and Environment Court proceedings against DE have created some distrust amongst the local community.	**Natural**	• Alternative land use of the Project presents the opportunity to potentially improve environmental outcomes. • Progress has been made in repurposing or utilising disturbed areas associated with the power stations and mines in the area that will likely result in reduced environmental and social impacts. • Lake Macquarie is highly valued by the community for its natural beauty particularly the foreshore areas and for recreational use. • The natural resource base is a strong attraction for locals and visitors. The bushland area was identified during engagement as having high environmental value for its natural beauty, biodiversity and recreational offerings. • There are future developments planned that aim to enhance the recreational value of the area and enjoyment of the living environment. • Natural disaster exposure presents the opportunity to invest in the resilience of the region's infrastructure and communities, which was identified during engagement as a strategic area of focus for Lake Macquarie City Council.

Sources: (ABS, 2021; ABS TableBuilder Pro, 2021; Renew Economy, 2025; PHIDU, 2023; Department of Environment and Climate Change NSW, 2007; Coast Communtiy News, 2024; Renew Economy, 2025).

4.0 Preliminary Social Impact Identification

This section provides a summary of the preliminarily scoped social impacts (positive and negative) in relation to the Project.

4.1 Social Impacts Identified Through the Engagement Program

Community engagement has informed the preliminary assessment of social impacts, proportionate to the nature, scale and location of the Project. When asked to rate their level of acceptance of the Project on a scale of one to ten as part of the scoping phase, where one represents a low level of acceptance and ten represents a high level of acceptance, the average rating obtained was eight (refer to **Figure 4.1** indicating a very high level of acceptance for the Project at this stage. This finding was also consistent with the survey item assessing acceptance of BESS technology generally (average rating of 7.8 out of 10) (refer to **Figure 4.2**).

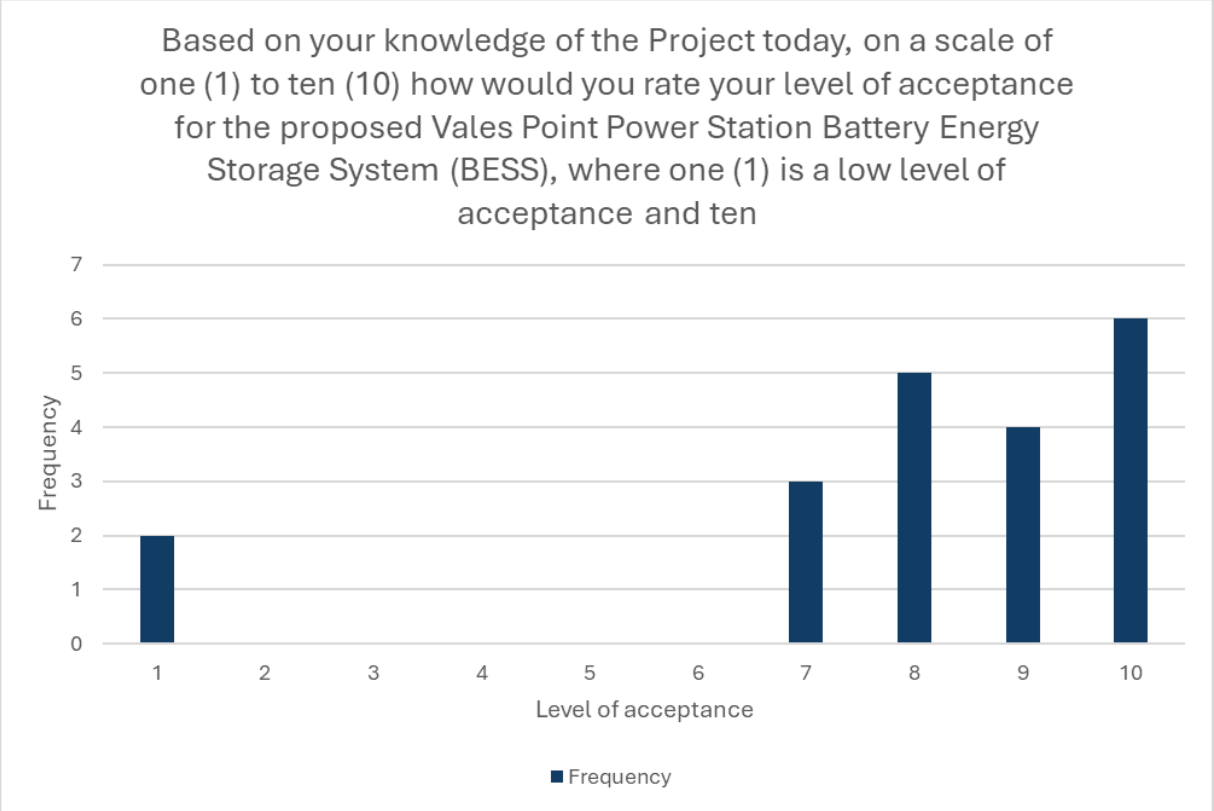

Figure 4.1 Level of Project Acceptance

Source: (Umwelt, 2025); n=20.

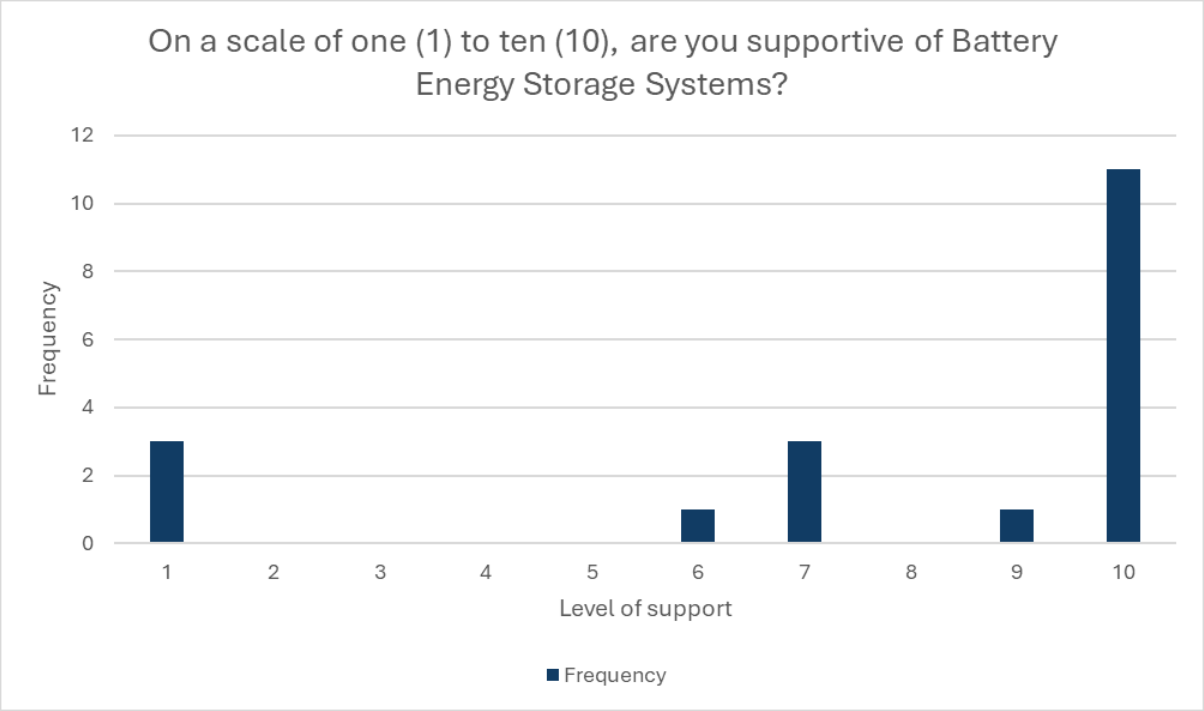

Figure 4.2 Level of Support for BESS Technology

Source: (Umwelt, 2025); n=19.

A number of social impacts (positive and negative) were identified during community engagement. **Figure 4.3** and **Figure 4.4** summarise the frequency of social impacts identified through the engagement program. When considering the positive benefits of the Project, stakeholders most frequently raised the increased energy security and the possibility of local employment.

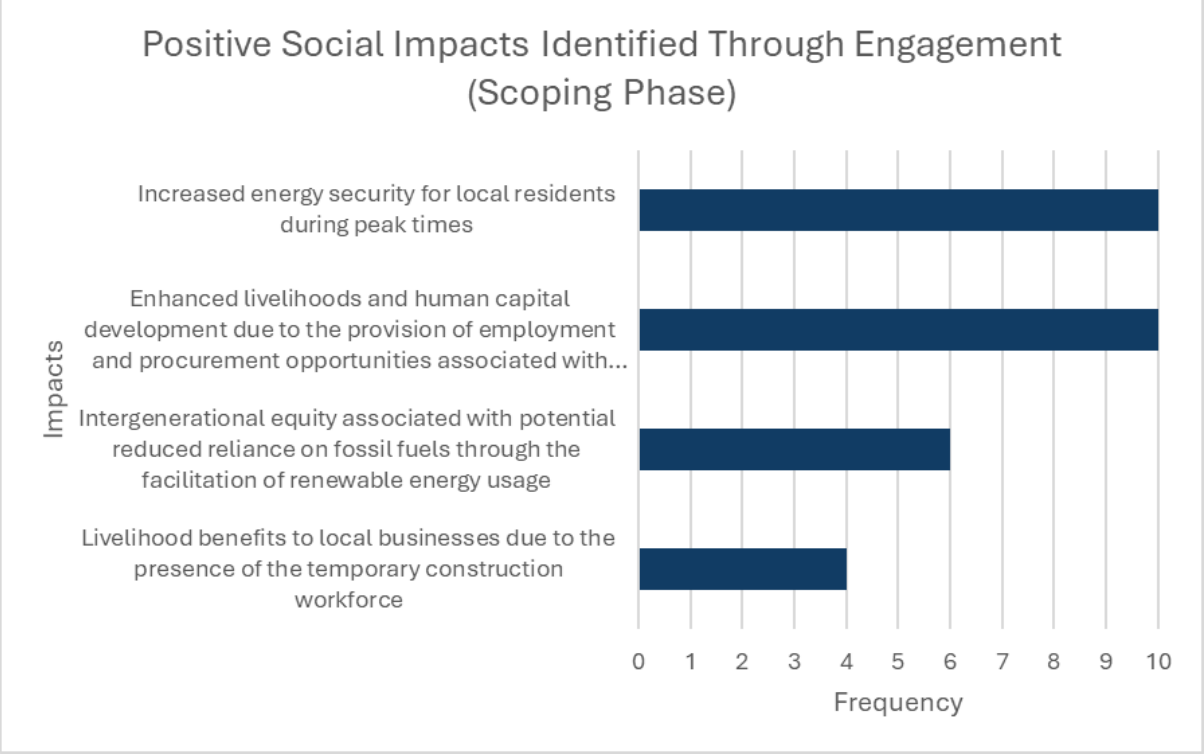

Figure 4.3 Positive Social Impacts identified through engagement (Scoping Phase)

Source: (Umwelt, 2025); n=19.

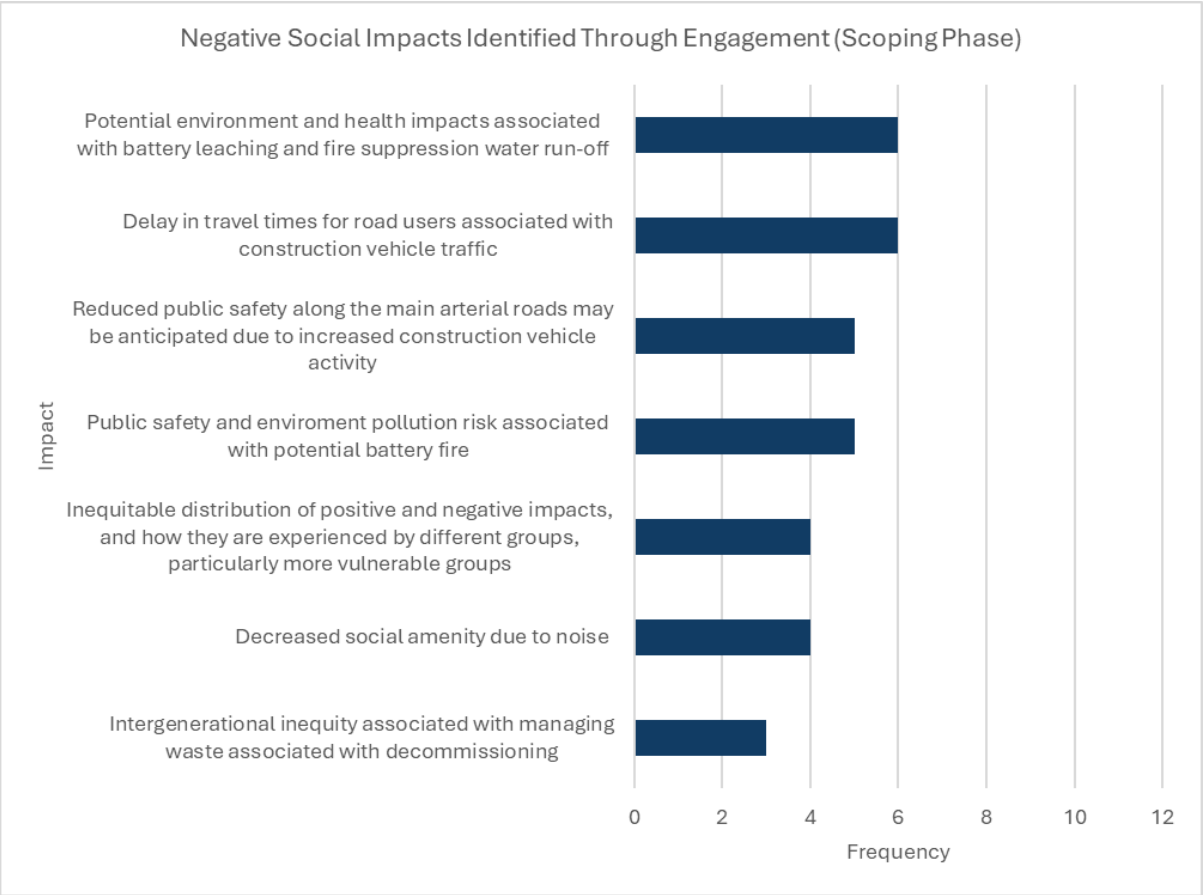

Figure 4.4 Negative Social Impacts identified through engagement (Scoping Phase)

Source: (Umwelt, 2025); n=14.

When considering the negative impacts of the Project, stakeholders most frequently raised public safety and environmental pollution risk associated with a potential battery fire event, potential environment and health impacts associated with battery chemical leaching and fire suppression water run-off and reduced public safety along the main arterial roads may be anticipated due to increased construction vehicle activity.

4.2 Summary of the Preliminary Scoped Social Impacts

Both primary (outcomes of community engagement) and secondary research have been used to inform the impacts identified for this SISR. Social impacts have been framed in accordance with the social impact categories outlined in the SIA Guideline and used in standard SIA practice.

An overview of preliminary social impacts related to the Project is provided in **Table 4.1**. Both positive (green shading) and negative (red shading) impacts are identified for further assessment.

Table 4.1 Social Impact Summary

Social Impact Category	Preliminary Social Impacts
Construction Phase	
Surroundings	Reduced public safety along the main arterial roads may be anticipated due to increased construction vehicle activity
Accessibility Way of Life	Delay in travel times for road users associated with construction vehicle traffic
Accessibility	Increased demand for short-term accommodation due to construction workforce influx
Livelihoods	Livelihood benefits to local businesses due to the presence of the temporary construction workforce
Construction and Operation Phases	
Surroundings	Decreased social amenity due to noise
Surroundings	Impact on environmental values of importance to the community
Decision-making systems	Inequitable distribution of positive and negative impacts, and how they are experienced by different groups, particularly more vulnerable groups
Livelihoods	Enhanced livelihoods and human capital development due to the employment and procurement opportunities associated with the Project
Livelihoods	Training and education opportunities to upskill local residents, particularly youth
Operational Phase	
Surroundings	Public safety and environmental pollution risk associated with a potential battery fire event
Surroundings Health and Wellbeing	Potential environment and health Impacts associated with battery chemical leaching and fire suppression water run-off
Accessibility	Increased energy security for local residents during peak times
Decision-making systems	Intergenerational equity associated with potential reduced reliance on fossil fuels through the facilitation of renewable energy usage
Decommissioning Phase	
Decision-making systems	Intergenerational inequity associated with managing waste associated with decommissioning

Source: Umwelt 2025.

A more detailed description of the social impacts identified is provided in the following sections.

4.2.1 Surroundings

Impacts upon people's surroundings refer to changes that the Project may cause on a community's experience of the landscape, environmental assets, and resources. This can include impacts on amenity, access to and use of the natural and built environment, and the aesthetic value of the surrounds.

4.2.1.1 Reduced Public Safety Along the Main Arterial Roads May Be Anticipated Due to Increased Construction Vehicle Activity

While the specific details regarding construction vehicle activity for the Project, such as the number, frequency, and timing of heavy vehicles and construction staff commute vehicles, have yet to be determined, it is anticipated by the community that the combined increase in traffic, along with the use of the Project's transport route by other nearby major projects (as outlined in **Section 3.3.3**), has the potential to reduce public safety on local access roads. For example, there is the potential for cumulative traffic impacts from the Vales Point Power Station and Colongra Power Station during station outage maintenance periods.

This concern is particularly significant given the social locality's large elderly population, who are more vulnerable to vehicle-related safety risks due to factors such as reduced physical mobility, impaired vision, and hearing. The risk is further exacerbated by the absence of footpaths in the area, which residents identified during engagement as a key community need, along with improved road conditions. Although pedestrian traffic is not common in the vicinity of the power station, pathway accessibility, gutter, curb and storm water drainage challenges were also highlighted by Kingfisher Shores residents. Consultation with Council also reiterated these issues as being of community concern as they are issues within their remit.

The local area also has a high level of car dependency, with engagement with both Councils reiterating community concerns regarding road safety.

It is important to note that Vales Road (off Ruttleys Road), which forms part of the Project's transport route, is the only road access to Mannering Park. However, alternative site access is provided via Construction Road, which is located 1.4 km north from the intersection of Ruttleys Road and Pacific Hwy. The use of Construction Road by construction/delivery vehicles, contractors and workforce during construction and operation of the Project is likely and will be determined as part of the ongoing design of the project with input from the construction team and will be considered in the EIS. The use of Construction Road would limit travel time/distance on Ruttleys Road and has the potential reduce the risks to public safety.

Furthermore, the proposed upgrades to the Central Coast Highway and the M1 and the shared pedestrian and cycle pathway connecting Mannering Park, Kingfisher Shores and Chain Valley Bay (described in further detail in **Section 3.3.1** and Section A.6 of **Appendix A**) will also assist in reducing public safety risks on these major roads. In order to address public safety risks associated with construction vehicle movements, a number of residents engaged identified the need to improve road quality and consider implementing a curfew for heavy vehicles and equipment being brought to site. A Traffic and Transport Impact Assessment will be undertaken as part of the EIS to assess traffic impacts associated with the Project. Delta and Samsung also plan to develop a Construction and Traffic Management Plan during the construction phase.

4.2.1.2 Decreased Social Amenity Due to Noise

It is anticipated that the BESS, once operational, will emit a low-level noise that will primarily be emitted from the inverters and transformers. The existing TransGrid switchyard, as well as the Vales Point Power Station while still operational, would also be contributing to noise emissions during construction and operation of the BESS.

Noise modelling would be undertaken as part of the Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment in the EIS phase to understand any likely noise effects on proximal residents during the construction and operational phase. The analysis will assess the cumulative noise impact with the Vales Point Power Station and also consider the potential noise impacts of the Project post closure of the Vales Point Power Station.

During the construction phase of the Project, proposed activities are also likely to generate noise and vibration, which may result in temporary decreased social amenity for nearby neighbours of the site, particularly those residing in Griffith Street and Kenneth Place on the Mannering Park peninsula and Kingfisher shores which is approximately 1.3 km southeast of the Project Area. While some distance away, residents of the Macquarie Shores - Over 50s Lifestyle Community may be more vulnerable or sensitive to noise impacts. Despite only a small number of residents (n=4) having raised concerns during engagement, noise has also been identified as an issue by other local community members and environmental groups in relation to existing Vales Point Power Station and mining activities in the area.[5]

While residents in proximity have lived with the presence of the Vales Point Power Station and the CVC for many years, additional noise impacts may result in cumulative impacts, for those already experiencing decreased social amenity due to noise from the Vales Point Power Station and surrounding industry.

Moreover, when asked what they valued most about their community, residents identified the area's 'tranquillity' (n=7) as a key attribute, which they also regarded as an important factor in attracting both visitors and new residents to the area. Consequently, any additional noise impacts may further diminish residents' enjoyment of the local area. Lake Macquarie City Council noted during engagement that change to the sense of place was a common community concern in response to previous developments, particularly among older residents.

4.2.1.3 Impact on Environmental Values of Importance to the Community

Given that the Project is situated on a brownfield site, it is unlikely to result in significant impacts on environmental values of importance to the community.

Engagement activities highlighted that both the local and broader community place a high value on the natural environment. When asked what they most appreciated about their community, respondents frequently cited the 'healthy and vibrant' lake (n=9) (**Figure 4.5**), 'nature and wildlife' (n=8), and the surrounding bushland (n=3). Residents identified the area's inability to be further developed as a core reason for choosing to live in the area (n=2), reinforcing the community's preference for utilising brownfield sites over disturbing undeveloped land.

[5] During engagement, perception of noise impacts from the Vales Point Power Station was mixed, with one resident stating that "as a resident that lives close to the power plant we are sick of hearing this thing roar" to another saying that it can only be heard in Mannering Park if there is wind from the south or if the Vales Point Power Station blow steam off, which is rare.

As one resident stated:

> "they (the proponent) should continue to repurpose existing infrastructure as opposed to creating new sites from existing green corridors".

Feedback received from both Councils also indicated that community sentiment toward past developments tended to be more negative when areas of high environmental or ecological significance were affected.

Minimising environmental impact was also important in the context of longstanding concerns expressed by some community members and environmental groups regarding air and water pollution, biodiversity loss, greenhouse gas emissions, and broader health and wellbeing impacts associated with the Vales Point Power Station and nearby mining operations.

Further assessment will occur in the EIS phase to determine the level of the impact on the environment, including consideration of air quality, surface water and groundwater.

Figure 4.5 Lake Macquarie Foreshore Areas Viewed at Kevin Street, Mannering Park and View of the Vales Point Power Station from Griffith Street

Source: (Umwelt, 2025).

4.2.1.4 Public Safety and Environmental Pollution Risk Associated with Potential Battery Fire Event

A common community concern associated with battery projects - particularly those utilising lithium-ion technology – is the public safety risk posed by potential battery fires. This is evident in media coverage of the potential fire hazards associated with other BESS technology, particularly in the reporting of incidents of fire in battery projects in Victoria (REF, 2021).

The risk to public safety resulting from a battery fire was among the most frequently raised concern by community members and key stakeholders during engagement activities (n=5). It is also of significance given the higher proportion of residents in the social locality with self-reported asthma, who may be disproportionately impacted should a fire occur (Asthma Australia, 2022; Gomez & Haw, 2024).

The likelihood of a battery fire on the Project Area is low given the equipment safety management systems and controls that exist already at the Vales Point Power Station and with the Project advantageously being situated within a low risk bushfire prone land (Industrial site) with an existing asset protection zone. As outlined in **Section 3.2**, the Project Area is in the NSW RFS jurisdiction and within the call out area of the Mannering Park, Wyee and Lake Munmorah brigades. The RFS has a longstanding relationship with Delta and during engagement raised that the Project poses no additional danger than what currently exists at the Vales Point Power Station site. Further assessments to determine the level of risk will be undertaken for the EIS through the hazard and risk and bushfire assessments.

Despite the minimal technical risk/hazard, engagement with the RFS and with community members suggests that community perception relating to the safety of the battery could be an issue as the Project progresses. CARE Forum members also identified the public safety risk, associated with a potential fire, as being a key community concern, given extreme heat episodes and the proximity of the Project to residents and surrounding bushland.

These fears could be heightened as the Central Coast and Lake Macquarie LGAs have experienced multiple natural disaster declarations in the last few years, including storms, bushfires, and floods as referenced in **Appendix A**.

To address community concerns, it will be important for Proponents to ensure that engagement is undertaken that clearly communicates the fire risk management measures and emergency response procedures to be put in place in the case of a battery fire. One resident suggested that local fire services should receive regular on-site training, while the RFS emphasised the importance of keeping their teams, other emergency responders, and the local emergency management committee informed as the Project progresses. Ongoing briefings with, and updates to, emergency responders were also recommended to ensure a collective understanding of the new dimension that the proposed Project poses to the overall Vales Point Power Station site risk profile.

4.2.1.5 Potential Environment and Health Impacts Associated with Battery Chemical Leaching and Fire Suppression Water Run-off

The Project may involve the introduction of various hazardous materials that could pose potential risks to both the environment and community health and wellbeing. A primary concern is the potential leaching of chemicals from the battery and through fire suppression water runoff in the event of a fire (n= 6). It was perceived by those engaged that such contamination could degrade water quality, which in turn could adversely affect human health and wellbeing—an issue of particular importance given the Project Area's proximity to Lake Macquarie. There is a man-made canal directly bordering the northern boundary of the Project Area. This canal flows from Chain Valley Bay in the north to Wyee Bay in a north-south direction (**Figure 4.6**). As previously noted, further assessments (i.e., hazard and risk and bushfire assessments) will be undertaken in the EIS phase to assess contamination risks and impacts.

Although the technical risk of the leaching of chemicals into Lake Macquarie is low, the perceived community risk could be high given the environmental and recreational value of the Lake to the community and community reaction to more recent lake environmental incidents, including the 2022 fish kill near Wyee Point which was noted in the community feedback and is currently under legal investigation.

Similarly to the public safety risk impact described above, to mitigate community concern it will be important for the Proponents to undertake community engagement that communicates the management measures that will be in place to avoid potential fire and contamination events and work with local emergency responders. For instance, during engagement, the RFS indicated that they have the capability to respond to hazardous material spills and possess boats equipped to manage spills into Lake Macquarie.

In addition, monitoring and effective communication of results of ground and surface water quality as required under the site Environmental Protection License (EPL761) would assist in alleviating community concerns regarding potential contamination risks. This impact will be further explored in the EIS through the contamination assessment, Water Resources Impact Assessment and the Preliminary Hazard Analysis.

Figure 4.6 Project Area and the Canal

Source: (Umwelt, 2025).

4.2.2 Livelihoods

Impacts upon people's livelihoods refer to the capacity of community members to sustain their livelihood through income-generating activities such as employment or business. This impact category considers the changes that economic conditions caused by the Project may have on individuals and businesses, and whether people experience any personal advantage or disadvantage.

4.2.2.1 Enhanced Livelihoods and Human Capital Development Due to the Provision of Employment and Procurement Opportunities Associated with the Project

Although the number of construction/operational workers and opportunities for local employment and procurement are yet to be determined, it is anticipated that the number of construction workers will be low, and minimal for the operational phase based on similar projects.

One of the most frequently identified potential benefit of the Project, raised during engagement, related to the potential to create local employment opportunities (n=9).

As outlined in **Appendix A**, the social locality's high certificate level attainment and larger proportion of technicians, trades workers, labourers and machine operators (than the State) presents opportunities to maximise local employment associated with the Project.

As has been highlighted in the social baseline, economic inequality exists between proximal communities to the Project and the broader LGA communities (represented by lower scores on the Index of Economic Resources and median household income).

The Project should therefore aim to prioritise employment of workers in the proximal communities to prevent exacerbating this inequality. In addition, the higher-than-average First Nations population in the social locality presents opportunities to create positive livelihood impacts for the local aboriginal community through employment participation. **Figure 4.7** and **Figure 4.8** display and compare the number of employed and potentially unemployed people respectively across the construction industry and relevant occupations within the Central Coast and Lake Macquarie LGAs. Employment figures are based on 2021 ABS Census data, while the number of potentially unemployed people has been estimated by applying the December 2024 unemployment rate (SALM, 2024) to the employment figure.

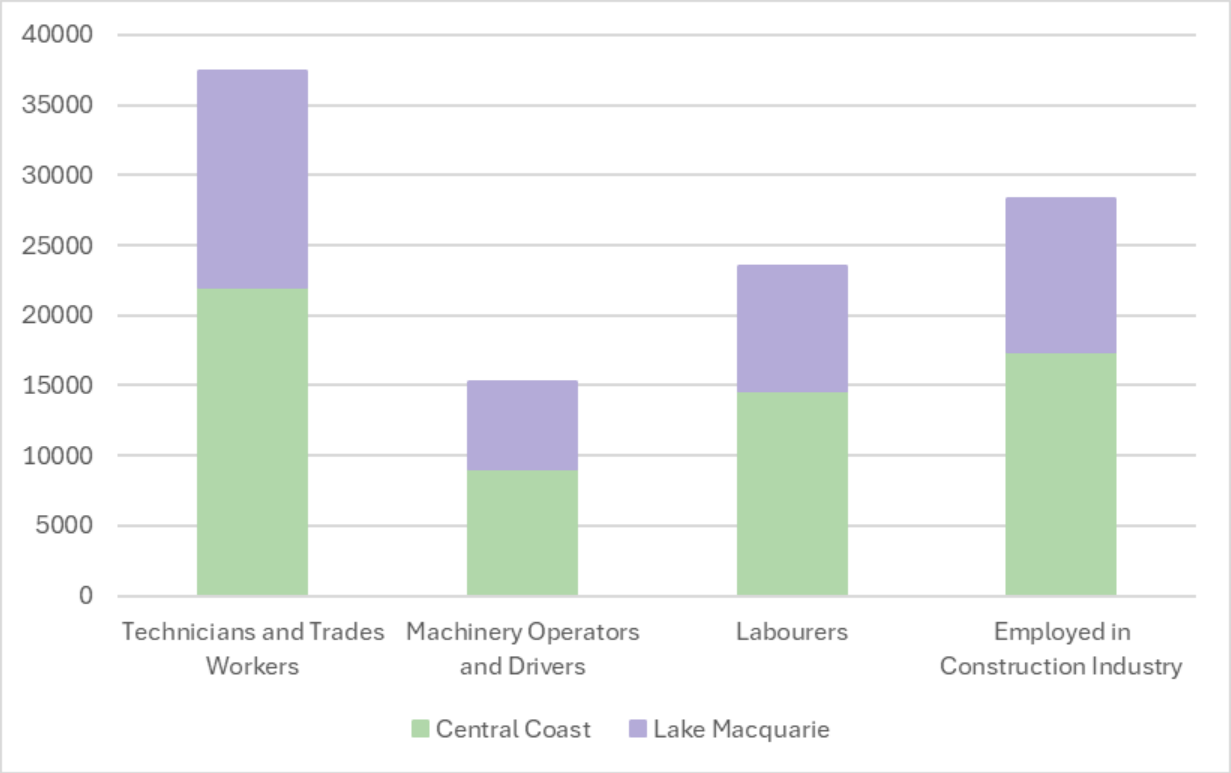

Figure 4.7 Number of People Employed in Relevant Occupations and Industries Across LGAs

Source: (ABS TableBuilder Pro, 2021).

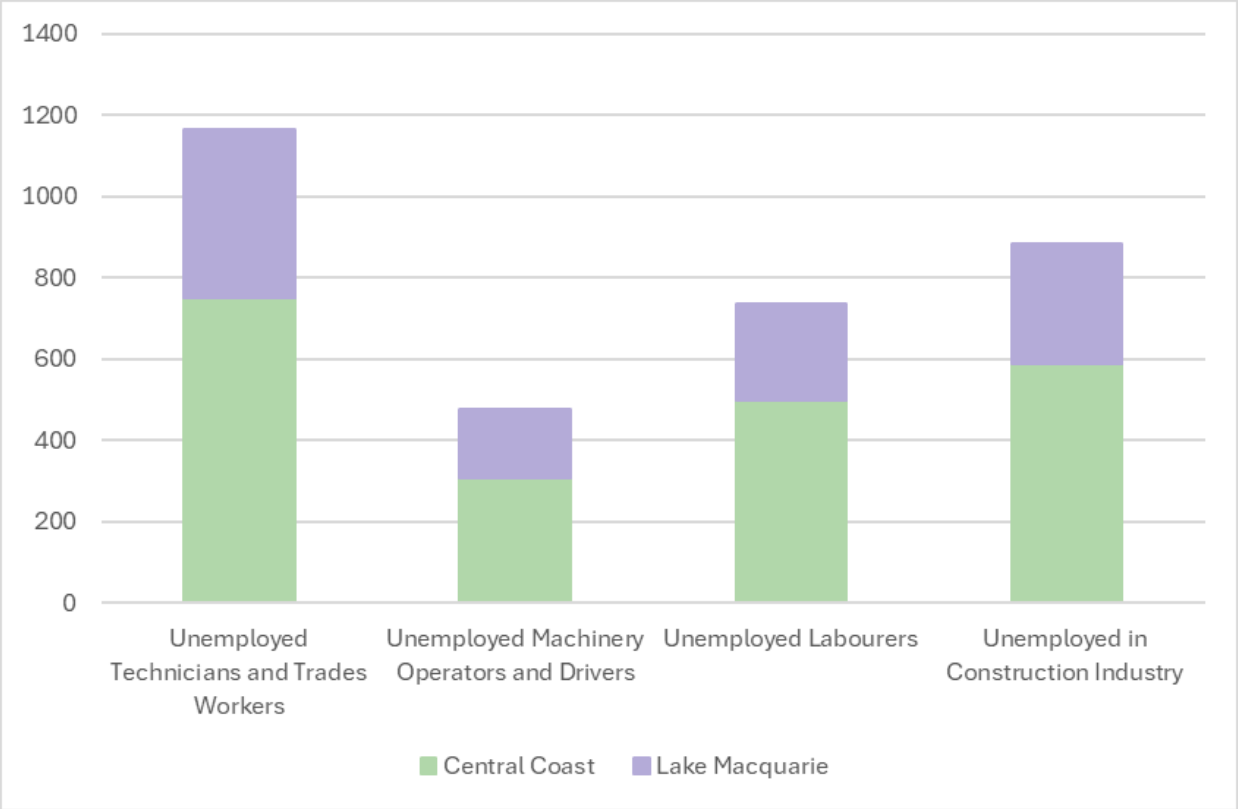

Figure 4.8 Number of Potentially Unemployed People in Relevant Occupations and Industries Across LGAs

Source: (ABS TableBuilder Pro, 2021); (SALM, 2024).

Figure 4.9 displays the number of people with relevant qualifications for the Project across the respective LGAs, highlighting the potential opportunities to source employment locally in Project construction and operation.

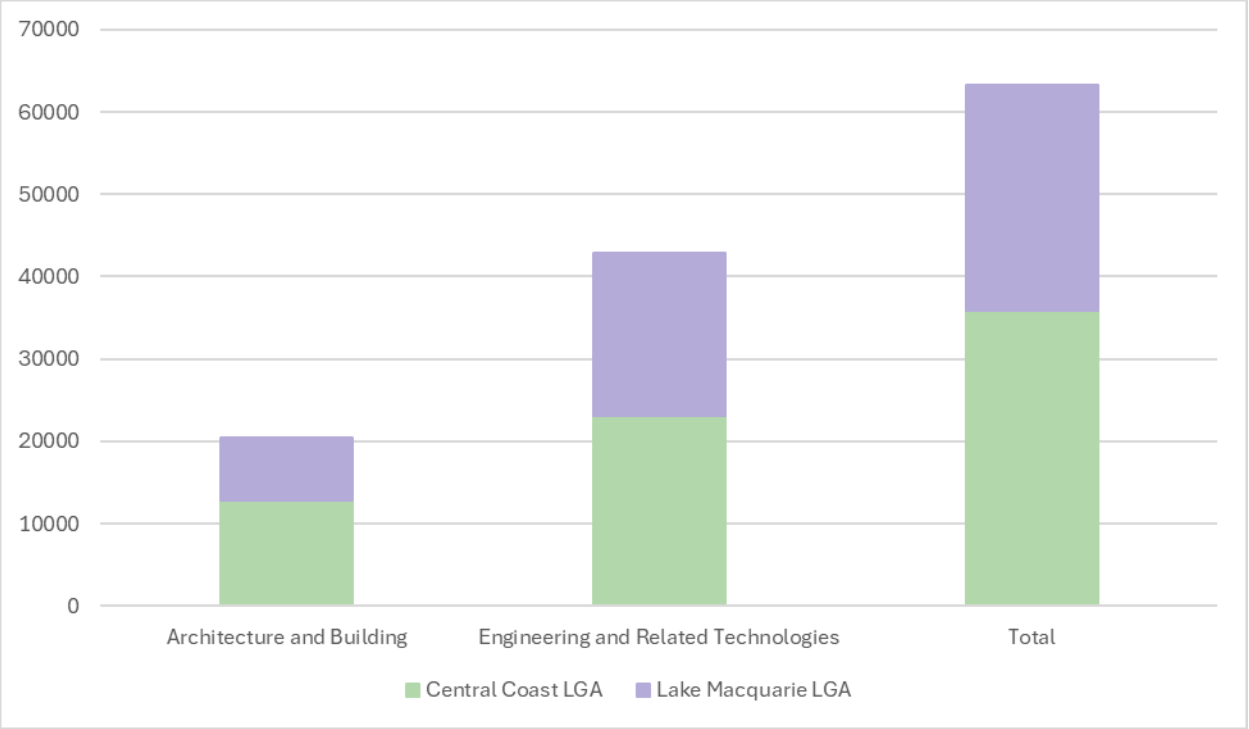

Figure 4.9 Number of People with Relevant Project related Qualifications Across the key LGAs

Source: (ABS TableBuilder Pro, 2021).

The continuation of commercial activities on the site was considered a key benefit of the Project. As one resident stated,

> *"as an employee of [Delta] and a local resident I can see it as future employment keeping me in the local area."*

While the Vales Point Power Station is not expected to close until 2033, engagement with residents identified a desire to see renewable energy development on the site. This was also identified by both respective Councils as being consistent with their economic strategic focus, both in terms of generating/maintaining local employment and re-using/repurposing existing infrastructure.

Delta currently contributes approximately $950 million annually to the local and state economy through workforce salaries for over 500 FTE, purchase of goods and services, government taxes and royalties and community grants and sponsorships. In relation to social investment within the locality, project-led community development strategies often lead to improved social outcomes when an identification process of local needs and opportunities is undertaken in collaboration with local stakeholders.

4.2.2.2 Livelihood Benefits to Local Businesses Due to the Presence of the Temporary Construction Workforce

It is established that hosting local construction workforces can create economic flow-on effects for host communities as workers spend money at local businesses, use nearby accommodation providers, and generally create greater economic stimulus (Livingston, 2024).

The presence of a construction workforce is expected to be a peak of 150 workers per day during the construction period and 10-15 workers during operation based on similar projects, could provide additional expenditure to local businesses in proximity to the site. For example, one resident noted that the Bakery in Mannering Park recently expanded and is frequently used by Delta employees (**Figure 4.10**). Strategies that have been implemented in other projects to facilitate benefits at the local community level and for local businesses specifically, include implementation of 'buy-local' programs and facilitating workforce participation at a local community level.

Figure 4.10 Local Businesses in Mannering Park

Source: (Umwelt, 2025).

4.2.2.3 Training and Education Opportunities that Upskill Local Residents, particularly Youth

While employment and training of local residents has the potential to provide local benefits, outcomes of the baseline profile suggest that a labour shortage is affecting businesses across all sectors, with a pressing need to build local skills and capacity, and attract and retain skilled workers.

To address the skills gap, there may be an opportunity for the Project to develop collaborative education, training and employment programs with local education providers to upskill the local community to meet skill requirements where there is a need in the types of skills required in the delivery of the project. These opportunities will be explored in more detail in the SIA, in the assessment phase.

During engagement, improving educational outcomes and developing local employment were identified as key community needs, particularly for youth[6]. Kingfisher Shore, Mannering Park and Doyalson North demonstrated a low Index of Education and Occupation (IEO) score and Year 12 completion rates, compared to both the Central Coast and Lake Macquarie LGAs which exhibit higher IEO scores and more balanced educational and occupational profiles. Resident's engaged suggested undertaking outreach with local TAFE and high schools to facilitate skills and capacity development.

4.2.3 Accessibility

The SIA Guideline (DPIE, 2023) defines accessibility as impacts that affect how people access and use infrastructure, services and facilities, and any changes to way of life, including how people live, get around, work, recreate and interact.

[6] Total n = 14.

4.2.3.1 Delay in Travel Times for Road Users Associated with Construction Vehicle Traffic

A potential negative impact of the Project relates to increased travel delays for road users along the transport route, including the transport of Project infrastructure and the movement of construction workers to and from the site during construction.

In relation to local transport routes, a local resident described Ruttleys Road as "moderately busy but steady," underscoring potential traffic challenges in the area. As outlined previously, there is high car dependency and the only road access to Mannering Park is via Ruttleys Road which would comprise part of the Project's transport route. Ruttleys Road users and members of the Mannering Park community may be likely to be disproportionately impacted by potential delays from construction traffic.

Further assessment of this impact will be undertaken in the SIA, drawing on the outcomes of the Traffic and Transport Impact Assessment to be undertaken as part of the EIS. The Proponent also plans to develop a Construction and Traffic Management Plan to ensure effective management of potential traffic impacts during the construction phase.

4.2.3.2 Increased Demand for Short-term Accommodation Due to Construction Workforce Influx

The Project could increase demand for short-term accommodation if the construction workforce cannot be sourced locally and would require accommodation close to the site. The majority of the construction workforce would likely be sourced from local regions, including Central Coast, Newcastle and Sydney. Given this and the likely size of the Project construction workforce, it is anticipated that an influx of workers is unlikely to place strain on existing short term accommodation supply, though it is important to note that the locality is experiencing an existing level of rental stress and that demand will fluctuate during peak tourism periods.

Conversely, the presence of a construction workforce, and demand for short-term and rental accommodation may benefit local accommodation providers for the construction period. If required, an assessment of the capacity for short-term accommodation and Project demand for such accommodation will be undertaken in the SIA in the assessment phase. The degree of accommodation required is also likely to differ depending upon local employment targets, which will be further defined in the subsequent SIA phase.

4.2.3.3 Increased Energy Security for Local Residents During Peak Times

One of the key positive impacts of the Project is the enhancement of energy security for residents during peak demand periods, contributing to grid stability and a more balanced supply-demand dynamic. BESS' support this by storing electricity during times of surplus generation, which can then be deployed when demand is high. This capability also improves the reliability of energy supply as more renewable sources are integrated into the grid.

The strategic importance of BESS technology in the energy transition is underscored by government commitments, including the NSW Government's target of two gigawatts of long-duration storage by 2030 (EnergyCo, 2020; Csereklyei, Dwyer, Kallies, & Economou, 2024).

Although several community members were sceptical of the potential of batteries to meet demand, increased energy security was the most cited benefit of the Project during engagement, with residents referencing *"consistent reliable energy"*, *"secure future power supply"* and the ability to *"alleviate brownouts and/or blackouts"* (n = 8).

Residents also noted that without the development of BESS Projects, "*energy security will be challenged*", given a growing population and the electrification of key industries such as transport.

A potential secondary impact of increased energy security noted during engagement by the Central Coast Council and member of the CARE Forum also included the potential to reduce the cost of reliable energy, given that increasing accessibility to match supply with demand and smoothing out peaks, assists in stabilising prices and helping to make renewable energy more affordable (Timilsina, 2021).

To enhance these primary and secondary positive social impacts, one resident suggested building batteries with a greater capacity, and another suggested developing local community battery storage. A community battery storage is a shared battery system that stores and distributes energy on a neighbourhood-scale and is often owned by a community cooperative. Such projects have been shown to increase community control over their energy usage, which has in turn enhanced their energy resilience and security (Csereklyei, Dwyer, Kallies, & Economou, 2024).

Although community battery storage is in its infancy in Australia, relative to other countries such as Denmark, there have been a number of recent supportive policies and programs from state and federal governments to fund feasibility studies and pilots into community-scale batteries (Csereklyei, Dwyer, Kallies, & Economou, 2024).

4.2.4 Decision-making Systems

Impacts relating to this category refer to whether stakeholders consider they are able to provide input to the planning and assessment process.

This refers to whether they are adequately informed about a Project, experience procedural fairness, can meaningfully influence decisions in relation to the Project, and are able to access appropriate complaint, remedy, and grievance mechanisms.

4.2.4.1 Intergenerational Equity Associated with Potential Reduced Reliance on Fossil Fuels through the Facilitation of Renewable Energy Usage

The Project supports the transition to greater use of renewable electricity generation by providing network firming and grid stability services and plays a role in the decarbonisation of the energy sector. As cited earlier, the Proponent has stated that the Vales Point site is uniquely positioned to participate in the energy transition due to the connection to the adjacent Transgrid 330 kV VP Switchyard and its location within the Hunter-Central Coast REZ. During engagement residents stated that BESS technology was *"essential technology for energy system transition to more renewables"* and that they were *"hopeful that battery storage will create a pathway for eliminating coal"*. Some residents suggested that the Project could be linked to the Vales Point Solar Farm, if developed, to store excess renewable energy created.

At a broader societal level, there is a significant benefit to the development of renewable energy projects from an intergenerational equity perspective. Wood (1996, p. 295) defines intergenerational equity as encompassing both "*the moral principle that no generation has priority over another and the legal standard that there is equality among generations*". Climate change, by threatening the existence of future generations, can be considered a violation of intergenerational equity if it is not acted upon by current generations. A transition away from fossil fuels to renewable energy is seen as one of the most important actions to reduce anthropogenic carbon dioxide emissions and mitigate the impacts of climate change (Wood, 1996). These benefits will be further explored in the SIA.

Community residents, participating in the engagement, highlighted the desire for further clarity as to whether the BESS would be powered by renewable energy or coal. Some residents were sceptical as to whether the Project served clean energy ends at all, outlining that *"the Project is an excuse to further extend the working life of Vales Point",* or that while they were in favour of the development of a BESS, they were not supportive of *"the loud, dirty, outdated plant that has to charge it*". Other residents, however, stated that they *"assumed it was cleaner"* and or explicitly stated that the Project would *"support green energy generation"*.

Further information provision on the Project will be beneficial as the Project progresses to improve community understanding, address any misconceptions and clarify expectations, particularly given some residents have indicated that they are accepting of the Project but less supportive of the Vales Point Power Station, as the source of energy supply.

Lake Macquarie City Council also recommended presenting the Project through a lens that highlights the role of the BESS in supporting renewable energy usage and why the Project is needed, to align with the environmental values of both the local and broader community.

4.2.4.2 Inequitable Distribution of Positive and Negative Impacts, and How They Are Experienced by Different Groups, Particularly More Vulnerable Groups

Although the Project has the potential to benefit future generations in NSW, those who are likely to be disproportionately impacted by the Project's negative impacts at the local community level are particularly the elderly population who are considered more vulnerable community members and are unlikely to benefit from the long-term positive impacts, such as the reduced reliance on fossil fuels, through the facilitation of renewable energy usage.

As noted previously, some residents who participated in the engagement process that oppose the Vales Point Power Station, expressed concern that the development of the Project may prolong the operation of the Vales Point Power Station. As one resident stated, *"I don't see us as residents benefiting from having this old power station still running for however long just to keep power to the batteries."* A further resident voiced scepticism about whether the full extent of the impacts on the local community would be transparently communicated, fearing that this might be avoided to prevent project delays and protect profits.

The Project's Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan (CSEP) will guide information provision and foster meaningful community involvement on project benefits, impacts and mitigation measures throughout the Project's development and environmental assessment process.

When asked whether they had heard, or were previously aware of the Project, 45% or respondents were aware and 55% not aware of the Project prior to engagement. The level of knowledge of the Project was also mixed, which is to be expected at this early stage of communication and engagement given the Project is only in its scoping phase and engagement has just commenced (refer to **Figure 4.11**).

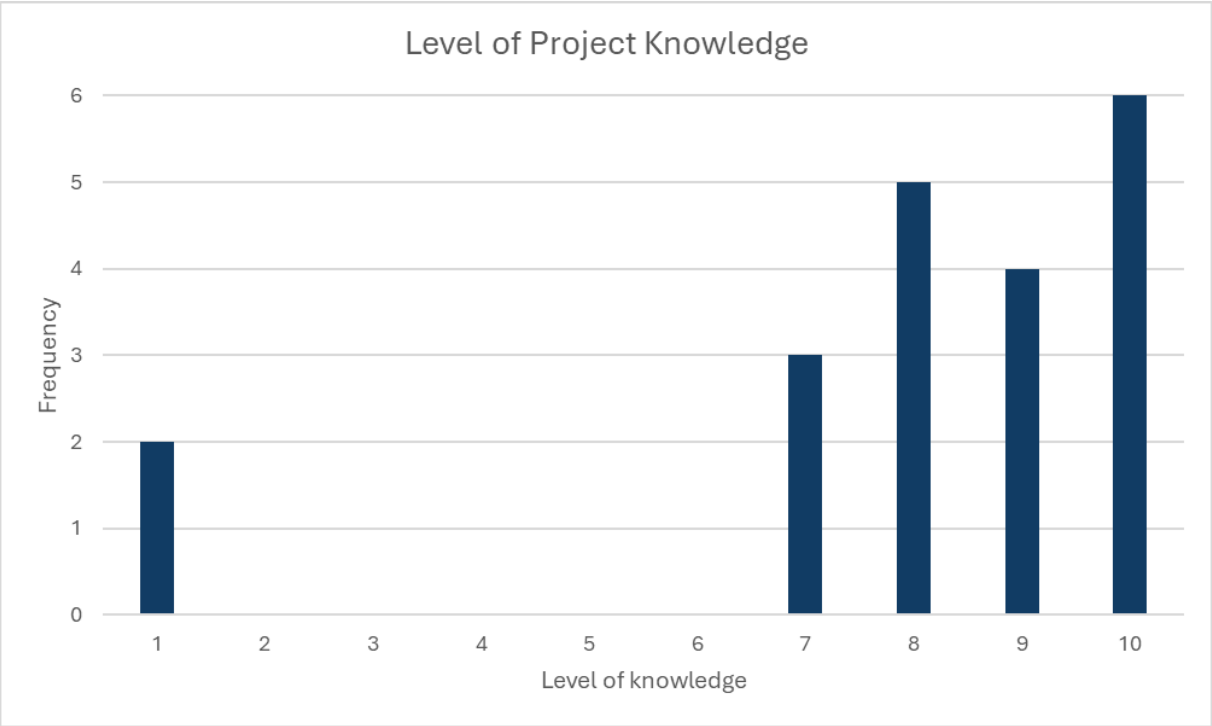

Figure 4.11 Level of Project Knowledge

Source: (Umwelt, 2025); n=20.

All community members and stakeholders that participated in the scoping engagement indicated that they would like to be kept up to date with information on the Project, with electronic newsletters being the preferred mechanism.

4.2.4.3 Intergenerational Inequity Associated with Managing Waste Associated with Decommissioning

A common concern related to BESS and renewable energy projects is the waste generated from project infrastructure following decommissioning, and the responsibility of the proponent to manage this waste.

The decommissioning of any battery or renewable energy technology can cause social impacts relating not just to environmental waste and pollution, but also governance (whose responsibility is it to rehabilitate the Project Area and dispose of the parts), livelihoods (workforce required to recycle components), surroundings (visual amenity, noise, etc. associated with decommissioning activities) and intergenerational equity, among others.

Decommissioning has become a key concern raised in multiple national community perception surveys relating to renewable energy development, and has in some cases prevented local communities from benefitting economically from hosting Project infrastructure due to uncertainty relating to decommissioning responsibility (ABC News, 2024).

During engagement, community residents raised questions relating to the longevity of the Project, the quality of the technology, recycling, and governance issues, particularly in the light of the fact that there is an existing Handback Deed in place with NSW Treasury for the site which comes into effect at the completion of operations.

As one resident stated:

> *"I want a battery development but I am not sure of the long-term outlook for the batteries themselves including post usage recycling and upgrading batteries to larger capacity as tech improves so that the site does not eventually get shut down in 20yrs when the batteries have reached end of life".*

As stated previously, both Councils and residents raised the Project's use of the existing Vales Point Power Station brownfield site as being a key benefit of the Project, with a high level of interest expressed, in exploring other complementary land uses for the Vales Point Power Station at the end of life rather than rehabilitating it. Generally, there was significantly high interest from residents and key stakeholders in the future of the Vales Point Power Station site, with both Councils also emphasising the importance of collaborating with local government in relation to the long term strategic planning for the Vales Point Power Station site.

Once the Project reaches the end of its operational life, a decision would be made to either decommission or re-power the facility. If the Project is decommissioned, all above ground infrastructure would be removed. Batteries would either be disposed of or recycled at a licensed disposal facility, or subject to confirmation, be returned to the original equipment manufacturer for refurbishment and recycling.

The Project Area would be rehabilitated to return the site to as close to its pre-development condition as possible. The Central Coast Council identified the environmental impacts associated with potential remediation as being a possible concern. This issue will be further explored in the EIS phase through the Waste Management Assessment.

5.0 Preliminary Social Impact Evaluation

Table 5.1 provides a summary of the preliminary social impacts relating to the Project. The table provides a ranking of the social significance of each social impact (low to very high) based on an evaluation of the likelihood and magnitude dimensions outlined in the SIA guideline.

The table is consistent with the social impact scoping tool, which as highlighted in **Section 2.1,** is used to determine the level of assessment required for each impact in the assessment phase, ranging from no assessment through to a detailed level of assessment (**Table 2.1**), with the level of assessment determining the extent of effort and data required to assess the impact in the subsequent SIA phase (**Table 2.1**).

Table 5.1 Preliminary Social Impact Evaluation

Social Impact Category	Potential Social Impact on People	Nature	Phase / Duration[7]	• Affected Stakeholder Group	Perceived Stakeholder Concern / interest	Preliminary Impact Significance	• Relevant EIS technical studies / assessments	Level of Further Assessment
Surroundings	Reduced public safety along the main arterial roads may be anticipated due to increased construction vehicle activity	Negative	C	• Nearby neighbours; • Local community; • Broader community; • Regular users of the transport route; • Employees/ contractors; • Emergency services; • Community and Special Interest Groups; and • Local community groups/ NGOs.	High	Medium (possible, minor)	• SIA; and • Traffic and Transport Impact Assessment.	Detailed
				• The elderly and other vulnerable groups.	High	Medium (possible, moderate)		
Surroundings	Decreased social amenity due to noise	Negative	C & O	• Nearby neighbours; • Local community; • Vulnerable groups; and • Community and Special Interest Groups.	Medium	Low (possible, minimal)	• SIA; and • Noise and Vibration Assessment.	Standard
Surroundings	Impact on environmental values of importance to the community	Negative	C & O	• Nearby neighbours; • Local community; • Environmental groups; • Community and special interest groups; • First Nation stakeholders; and • Govt agencies.	Low	Low (very unlikely, minimal)	• SIA; • Air Quality Assessment; • Surface Water Assessment; • Groundwater Assessment; and • Visual Amenity Assessment.	Minor
Surroundings	Public safety and environmental pollution risk associated with potential battery fire event	Negative	O	• Nearby neighbours; • Local community; • Broader community; • Emergency services; and • Community and Special Interest Groups.	High	Medium (unlikely, moderate)	• SIA; • Hazard and Risk Assessment; and • Bushfire Assessment.	Detailed
				• The elderly, those with asthma or existing health conditions and other vulnerable groups.	High	Medium (unlikely, major)		
Surrounds Health and wellbeing	Potential environment and health impacts associated with battery chemical	Negative	O	• Nearby neighbours; • Local community; • Broader community;	High	Medium (unlikely, moderate)	• SIA; • Contamination Assessment; and • Hazard and Risk Assessment.	Detailed

[7] C= Construction, O= Operation, D= Decommissioning

Social Impact Category	Potential Social Impact on People	Nature	Phase / Duration[7]	• Affected Stakeholder Group	Perceived Stakeholder Concern / interest	Preliminary Impact Significance	• Relevant EIS technical studies / assessments	Level of Further Assessment
	leaching and fire suppression water run-off			• Vulnerable groups; • Emergency services; • Community and Special Interest Groups Visitors/ tourist; and • Regulators (EPA), local Gov.				
Livelihoods	Enhanced livelihoods and human capital development due to the employment and procurement opportunities associated with the Project	Positive	C	• Local community; • Broader community; and • Local businesses and suppliers.	Medium	Medium (possible, minor)	• SIA; and • Accommodation and Employment Strategy (if required).	Standard
Livelihoods		Positive	O		Low	Low (possible, minimal)		
Livelihoods	Livelihood benefits to local businesses due to the presence of temporary construction workforce	Positive	C	• Local businesses and suppliers; and • Community and Special Interest Groups.	Low	Low (possible, minor)	• SIA.	Minor
Livelihoods	Training and education opportunities to upskill local residents, particularly youth	Positive	C & O	• Local community; • Broader community; • Education providers; and • Community and Special Interest Groups.	Low	Low (possible, minor)	• SIA; and • Accommodation and Employment Strategy (if required).	Standard
Accessibility **Way of life**	Delay in travel times for road users associated with construction vehicle traffic	Negative	C	• Nearby neighbours; • Local community; and • Local community groups/ NGOs.	High	Medium (possible, moderate)	• SIA; and • Traffic and Transport Assessment.	Standard
				• Broader community; • Road users; and • Community and Special Interest Groups.	High	Medium (possible, minor)		
Accessibility	Increased demand for short-term accommodation due to construction workforce influx	Negative	C	• Accommodation providers; • Local community; • Visitors/tourists; and • Community and Special Interest Groups.	Low	Low (unlikely, minor)	• SIA; • Accommodation and Employment Strategy (if required).	Minor
Accessibility	Increased energy security for local residents during peak times	Positive	O	• Nearby neighbours; • Local community; and • Community and Special Interest Groups.	High	High (likely, moderate)	• SIA.	Standard

Social Impact Category	Potential Social Impact on People	Nature	Phase / Duration[7]	• Affected Stakeholder Group	Perceived Stakeholder Concern / interest	Preliminary Impact Significance	• Relevant EIS technical studies / assessments	Level of Further Assessment
Decision-making systems	Intergenerational inequity associated with potential reduced reliance on fossil fuels through the facilitation of renewable energy usage	Positive	O	• Environmental groups; • Community and Special Interest Groups; • Nearby neighbours; and • Local community.	Medium	Medium (possible, moderate)	• SIA.	Standard
Decision-making systems	Inequitable distribution of Projects benefits and impacts and how they are experienced by different groups, particularly vulnerable groups	Negative	C & O	• Vulnerable groups; • Future generations; and • Nearby neighbours subject to cumulative impacts from the Vales Point Power Station / other industries.	Medium	Medium (possible, moderate)	• SIA; • Traffic and Transport Assessment; • Air Quality Assessment; • Surface Water Assessment; • Groundwater Assessment; • Hazard and Risk Assessment; and • Bushfire Assessment.	Standard
Decision-making systems	Intergenerational inequity associated with managing waste associated with decommissioning	Negative	D	• Nearby neighbours; • Local community; • Environmental groups; and • Community and Special Interest Groups.	Low	Medium (possible, moderate)	• SIA; and • Waste Management Assessment.	Standard

Source: (Umwelt, 2025)

6.0 Conclusion

The SISR has defined and profiled the social locality and has documented preliminary social impacts and opportunities associated with the Vales Point BESS Project. The SISR forms part of the broader Project Scoping Assessment to inform the issue of SEARs by the NSW DPHI.

As part of the EIS, subsequent stages of the SIA for the Project will include a comprehensive assessment and prediction of social impacts and the development of relevant management and enhancement measures to mitigate the negative and enhance the positive impacts associated with the Project. Further SIA and technical environmental impact studies will address perceptions of impacts raised by key stakeholders during this phase.

Subsequent phases of the SIA program will involve the following key activities:

- An update of the baseline social profile so that any further baseline data relevant to key social impact matters is identified and analysed.
- Further validation of the social locality and identification of affected communities and vulnerable groups.
- Provision of feedback to community members and key stakeholders on the outcomes of the issues raised in the scoping phase and communication of the Project's SEARs (once issued), including an outline of the next steps in the assessment process and further opportunities for community engagement and input to inform project design and planning.
- Update of the Project CSEP and further engagement with community members and other key stakeholders on key social impact areas. This will involve feedback on the outcomes of EIS technical studies and will provide opportunities for input to the development of appropriate management and enhancement measures to address social impacts and any residual social effects.
- A comprehensive assessment and evaluation of social impacts against existing baseline conditions.

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Appendix A

Social Baseline Profile

A.1 Demographic Analysis and Collection

A key component in the development of the social baseline profile for the SISR has been the collation, interpretation and analysis of demographic data. Analyses undertaken relate to:

- **Social Indicator** identification and selection to afford appropriate assessment of social impacts relating to the Project; and
- **Comparative analysis** across the different localities identified as being relevant to the Project.

Socio-economic characteristics of the relevant localities are largely based on Suburbs and Localities (SAL) and Local Government Area (LGA) levels of analysis and informed by data available from ABS Census and other social indicator data sources as relevant. **Table A.1** provides a summary list of data sets that have been used to inform the baseline.

Table A.1 Data Sources

Source	Content

Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS)	2011, 2016 and 2021 General Community and Time Series, Profile data and Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas data for:
	• Suburbs and localities (SAL):
	  ○ Mannering Park;
	  ○ Kingfisher Shores; and
	  ○ Doyalson North.
	Local Government Areas (LGA):
	• Central Coast; and
	• Lake Macquarie.

.idprofile	2022 Central Coast and Lake Macquarie LGAs
REMPLAN	2023 Central Coast and Lake Macquarie LGAs
The Public Health Information Development Unit (PHIDU), Torrens University Australia	2022 release of public health data through the Social Health Atlas (New South Wales). Data within the Social Health Atlas is collated from a range of sources which can be accessed at http://phidu.torrens.edu.au/social-health-atlases.
Local and State Government Reports	• One – Central Coast - the Community Strategic Plan (2018–2028 – CC CSP); • Central Coast Regional Plan 2036; • Central Coast and Lake Macquarie Regional Economic Development Strategy 2023 update; • Our Future in Focus – Lake Macquarie City Community Strategic Plan (2017–2027 – Lake Mac CSP); and • Lake Macquarie City Community Strategic Plan 2025-2035.

Source: (ABS, 2021; idcommunity, 2023; REMPLAN, 2023; PHIDU, 2022; Department of Regional NSW, 2023; Central Coast Council, 2018; DPE, 2016; Lake Macquarie City Council, 2017; Lake Macquarie City Council, 2025)

It should also be noted that the ABS demographic data may be skewed for smaller populations. The ABS quotes that 'small random adjustments have been made to all cell values to protect the confidentiality of data, which may cause the sum of rows or columns to differ by small amounts from the table totals'. In small populations, each person greatly impacts the area's data making it more difficult to undertake comparisons.

A.2 Community Capitals Quantitative Data Summary

Using the Capitals framework, the following **Table A.2** summarises key statistics sourced from the ABS census general community profiles for 2011, 2016 and 2021 as well as PHIDU reports from 2022.

Table A.2 Capitals Table

Locality	Mannering Park (SAL)	Kingfisher Shore (SAL)	Doyalson North (SAL)	Central Coast LGA			Lake Macquarie LGA			NSW
Year	2021	2021	2021	2011	2016	2021	2011	2016	2021	2021
Human Capital										
Population										
Population	2,554	160	383	308,000	329,000	346,596	194,000	203,000	213,845	8,164,000
Median Age	41	41	72	41	42	43	41	42	42	39
Indigenous Population (%)	8	7	3	3	4	5	3	4	5	3
Age: 0-14 (%)	20	15	5	19	18	18	19	18	19	18
Age: 15-34 (%)	24	20	5	23	22	22	23	23	22	26
Age: 35-54 (%)	26	20	9	27	25	25	27	25	25	27
Age: 55+ (%)	32	36	84	31	34	35	32	34	35	30
Self-reported mental health condition (including depression or anxiety)	12.6	11.2	7.7	-	-	11.1	-	-	12.2	8
Self-reported three or more long-term health conditions	4.5	7.5	14.1	-	-	3.6	-	-	3.8	3
Self-reported asthma	10.9	6.9	9.9	-	-	9.6	-	-	10.2	7.8
Education										
Year 10 highest year of schooling (%)	42	41	36	-	34	30	35	40	32	20
Year 12 highest year of schooling (%)	28	43	14	-	46	46	35	33	44	58
Bachelor degree (%)	3	9	1	9	10	8	10	11	8	11
Certificate (%)	25	27	18	23	24	20	24	26	22	15
Economic Capital										
Proportion of the labour force employed full-time (%)	49	49	44	56	55	50	57	55	54	55
Proportion of the labour force employed part-time (%)	34	29	40	31	33	33	32	33	34	30

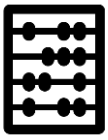
Locality	Mannering Park (SAL)	Kingfisher Shore (SAL)	Doyalson North (SAL)	Central Coast LGA			Lake Macquarie LGA			NSW
Year	2021	2021	2021	2011	2016	2021	2011	2016	2021	2021
Proportion of the labour force who are unemployed (%)	6	4	6	7	7	5	5	7	5	5
Median household income ($/week)	1,391	1,531	691	1,000	1,256	1,507	1,114	1,310	1,623	1,829
Median mortgage repayment ($/month)	1,625	1,929	945	1,820	1,750	2,000	1,733	1,733	1,950	2,167
Social Capital										
Proportion of population with a different address 5 years ago (%)	33	24	25	43	44	35	38	40	34	38
Proportion of single parent families (%)	18	9	3	-	10	13	9	8	13	11
Proportion of population aged 15+ who volunteer (%)	8.7	16.4	9.4	-	17	12	16	18	13	14.1
Proportion of population born overseas (%)	9	9	18	14	15	16	10	10	11	29
Proportion of family households (%)	71	68	46	68	67	70	72	71	73	71
Proportion of group households (%)	4	6	2	3	3	3	2	2	2	4
Proportion of lone person households (%)	25	32	52	26	25	27	23	23	25	25
Index of relative social economic disadvantage (quartile)	2	4	1	-	-	7	-	-	7	-
Physical Capital										
Proportion of occupied private dwellings that are free-standing houses (%)	84	92	86	79	78	71	86	85	80	59
Travel to work by car (%)	96	98	88			92			94	43
Household Tenure										
Proportion of occupied private dwellings that are fully owned (%)	33	38	88	34	33	35	38	37	37	32
Proportion of occupied private dwellings that are being purchased/ owned by a mortgage (%)	37	46	4	33	33	34	35	35	36	33

Locality	Mannering Park (SAL)	Kingfisher Shore (SAL)	Doyalson North (SAL)	Central Coast LGA			Lake Macquarie LGA			NSW
Year	2021	2021	2021	2011	2016	2021	2011	2016	2021	2021
Proportion of occupied private dwellings that are being rented (%)	28	16	4	26	26	28	23	22	23	33
Proportion of households in mortgage stress (%)	15	9.4	62.5	-	9	14.7	9	8	12.1	8.4
Proportion of households in rental stress (%)	41.6	63.6	0	-	35	42	30	34	37	17.3

Source: (ABS, 2021; 2016; 2011; PHIDU, 2022).

A.3 Human Capital

The level of human capital within a community is assessed by considering population size, age distribution, education and skills, general population health and the prevalence of vulnerable groups within the community. The following categorises the human capital of the social locality.

	The social locality has higher proportions of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander populations than the State (3.3%). This suggests there are multiple opportunities for Indigenous participation and empowerment in the Project.
	All communities in the social locality had higher levels of self-reported mental health conditions than the state average. They also had higher levels of self-reported three or more long-term health conditions, with Doyalson North being more than four times higher than the state. This indicates that there are more people accessing or in need of health services. It also implies that the introduction of large temporary Project workers could have the potential to overwhelm the health system and/or marginalise those who are most in need.
	Certificate level attainment is higher and bachelor's degree level attainment was lower in the social locality than the State (15%). The most common tertiary fields of study within Central Coast LGA are management and commerce, society and culture and health.
	The Index of Relative Socio-Economic Advantage and Disadvantage (IRSAD) score for the social locality is low indicating the area has relatively lower levels of education and occupational skills. The score is lower for the local community than the LGAs as a whole.

Source: (ABS, 2021; ABS SIEFA, 2021; PHIDU, 2022).

Population Trends

The historic and predicted population trend are shown in **Figure A.1**. The Central Coast population was 348,493 in 2021 and is projected to increase to 408,390 by 2041, representing a 17.2% growth (59,897 additional people). Lake Macquarie's population was 214,054 in 2021 and is projected to reach 228,237 by 2041, representing a 6.6% growth (14,183 additional people). Comparatively, NSW's population is projected to grow by 21.3% from 8,092,962 in 2021 to 10,075,487 by 2041, showing that both LGAs are growing at a slower rate than the state average (Planning NSW, 2024).

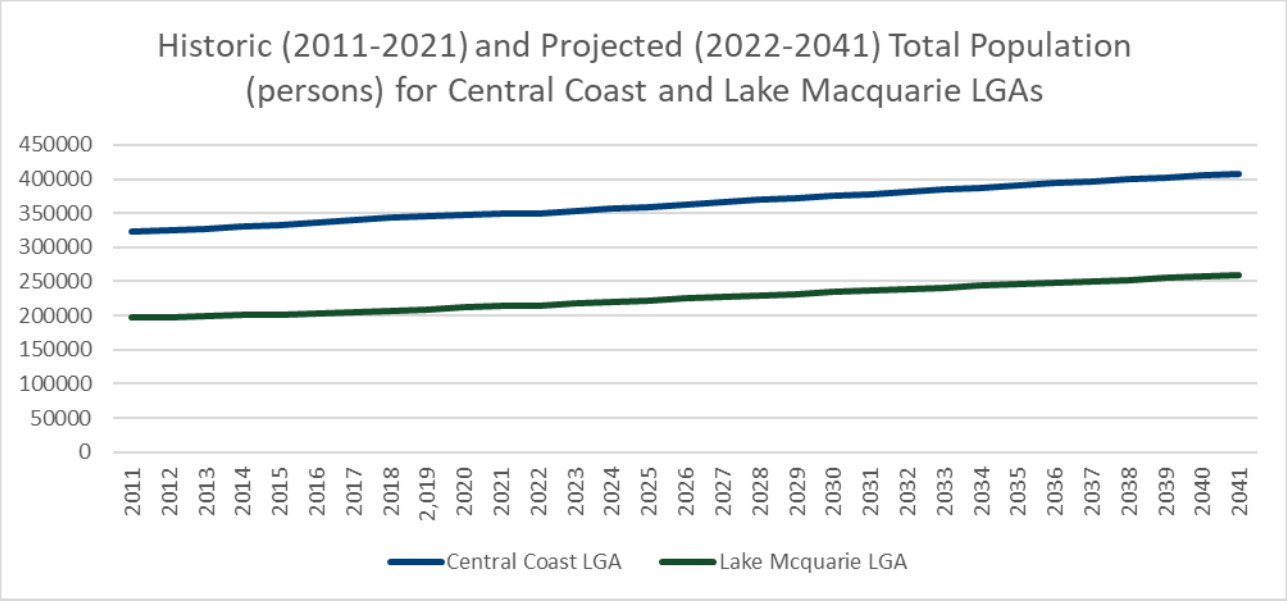


Figure A.1 Historic and Predicted Population Trends for Central Coast and Lake Macquarie LGAs

Source: Umwelt, 2025 using Planning NSW, 2024 data (Planning NSW, 2024).

The annual growth rate for Central Coast is 0.8%, while Lake Macquarie has a 0.3% annual growth rate. Both are lower than NSW's overall annual growth rate of 1.0%. Between 2021 and 2041, Central Coast is projected to increase by 59,897 people, while Lake Macquarie is projected to increase by 14,183 people (Planning NSW, 2024).

Figure A.2 and **Figure A.3** show the projected population by age for the Central Coast and Lake Macquarie respectively. The population for both LGAs is skewed towards older age cohorts. In 2021, the share of 65+ year-olds in Central Coast was 22.7% and in Lake Macquarie it was 23.5%, both higher than the NSW average. The proportion of the population in the prime working age bracket of 20 to 49 years old is 6% lower than the NSW average.

The median age in Central Coast in 2021 was 43 and in Lake Macquarie was 42, which is higher than the NSW average (39 years). Both regions have a larger proportion of older residents relative to the rest of the population.

Given this demographic profile, key challenges for the region lie in delivering the infrastructure and services required to support an ageing population and attracting and retaining a skilled workforce to support economic prosperity. Sufficient provision of key enabling services such as childcare, and investment into social and community infrastructure to enhance liveability and amenity will be key to attracting and retaining a workforce to meet demand.

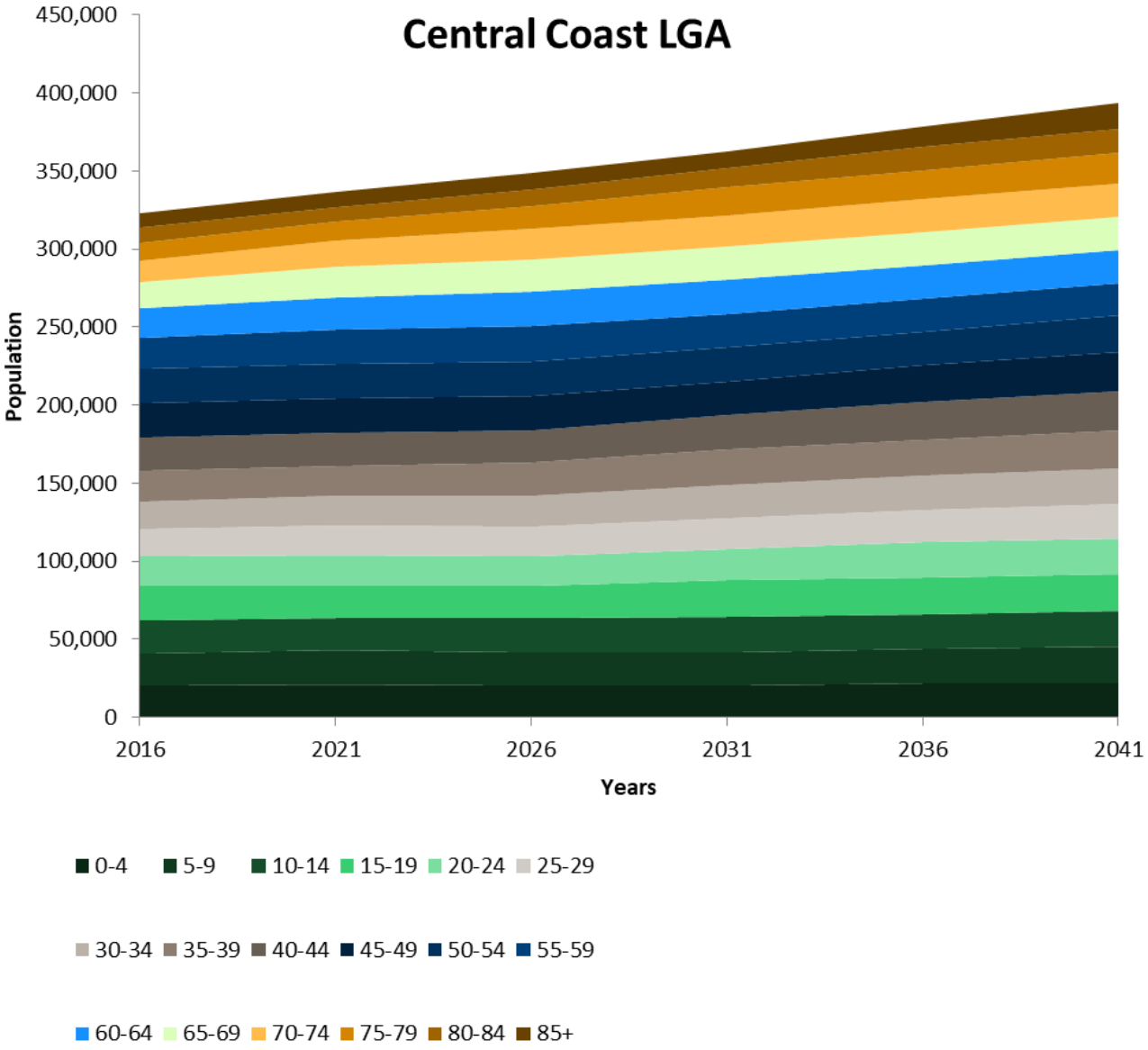


Figure A.2 Central Coast LGA Historic and Projected Population Trends by Age Group

Source: Umwelt, 2025 using Planning NSW, 2024 data (Planning NSW, 2024).

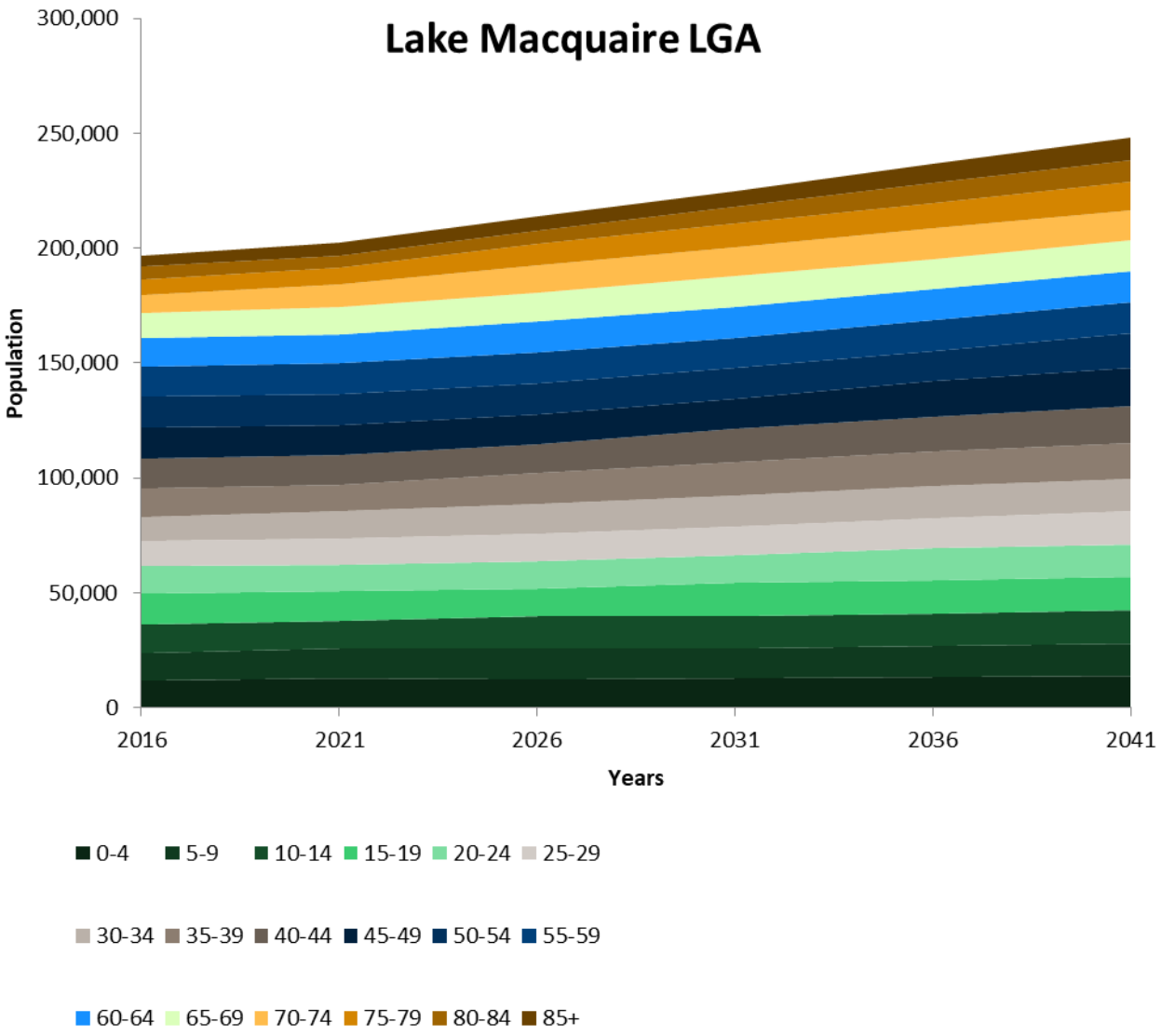


Figure A.3 Lake Macquarie LGA Historic and Projected Population Trends by Age Group

Source: Umwelt, 2025 using Planning NSW, 2024 data (Planning NSW, 2024).

The main drivers of population change differ between the two LGAs. For Central Coast, migration is the primary driver (+32,341), with natural change (births minus deaths) contributing a smaller positive amount (+3,780). For Lake Macquarie, migration is also the dominant factor (+42,903), but this is offset by negative natural change (-17,571), meaning deaths are exceeding births in this LGA. This could explain why Lake Macquarie's overall growth rate is lower despite strong migration numbers (Planning NSW, 2024).

Index of Education and Occupation

The Index of Education and Occupation (IEO) reflects the educational and occupational level of communities. The education variables reflect educational attainment or if further education is being undertaken. The occupation variables are based on the Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO). It classifies the workforce into groups of occupations, skill levels and employment status. Unlike the other indexes IEO does not include any income variables.

A low IEO score indicates relatively lower education and occupation levels of people in the area. For example, an area could have a low score if there are: many people without qualifications, or many people in low skilled occupations, or many people unemployed, and few people with a high level of qualifications or in highly skilled occupations. And vice versa for a high IEO score.

As shown in **Figure A.4**, Mannering Park SAL and Doyalson North SAL both have very low IEO scores of 1, indicating these small areas have populations with lower educational attainment and occupational skills. These are reflected in the low Year 12 completion rates (14% for Doyalson North SAL and 28% for Mannering Park SAL). The presence of a higher elderly population also may be a contributing factor as generally, those in the younger age groups are more likely to have a qualification at certificate, diploma or degree level than those in the older age groups (Welfare, 2024)

Kingfisher Shore SAL has a slightly better, but still low IEO score of 2, which aligns with its higher Year 12 completion rate of 43%. While this rate is better than the other small localities, it still falls below the state average.

Both the Central Coast and Lake Macquarie LGAs have IEO scores (7), indicating these broader regions have more balanced educational and occupational profiles.

The difference between the low IEO scores in the smaller localities, and higher in the broader LGAs, suggest socioeconomic disparities. While the LGAs overall maintain average educational and occupational levels, these particular localities represent educational and occupational disadvantage pockets that could benefit from targeted educational and workforce development initiatives.

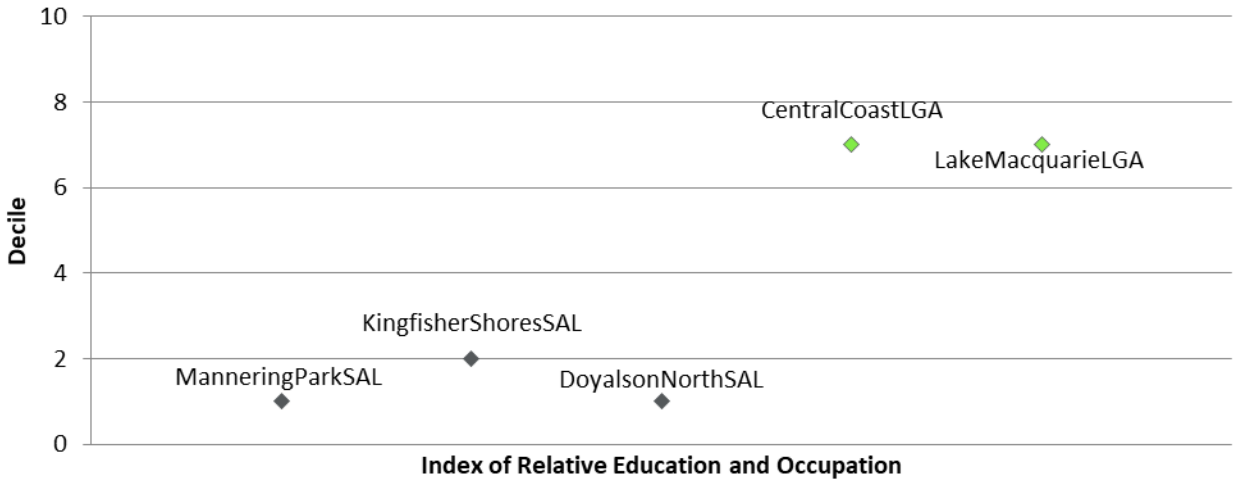


Figure A.4 Index of Education and Occupation

Source: Umwelt, 2025 using ABS, 2021 data (ABS SIEFA, 2021).

A.4 Economic Capital

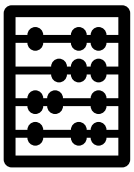
Examining a community's economic capital involves consideration of several indicators, including industry and employment distribution, workforce participation and unemployment, income levels and cost of living pressures, such as weekly rent or mortgage repayments. The following provides a summary of the key characteristics of the communities within the area of social influence from an economic capital perspective.

The median household income is lower across the social locality than the state ($1,829). It is significantly lower for Doyalson North ($691), however, this is likely due to its large, retired population.

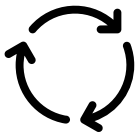
The proportion of renters and mortgage holders in rent/mortgage stress is higher for the social locality than the state (8.4% and 17.3% for both LGAs respectively). Higher rates of housing stress indicate vulnerability for increased demand for temporary and rental properties.

Top three industries by value add 2022/23 for the Central Coast LGA are Health Care and Social Assistance: $2,469 million, Construction: $1,388 million and Manufacturing: $1,270 million.

Gross Regional Product (GRP) for the Central Coast LGA is $21.84 billion and for Lake Macquarie is $16.824 billion. The Greater Cities Commission Bill 2022 saw the Central Coast added to the Six Cities region, a move likely to attract investment and increase inter-regional connectivity.



The Herfindahl index measures a community's economic resilience by considering its economic diversity and industry concentration. when compared to NSW (0.0092) both the LGAs of Central Coast (0.0127) and Lake Macquarie (0.0130) demonstrated higher indices therefore have a more constrained market with reliance on fewer industries.



Central Coast and Lake Macquarie Regional Economic Development Strategy identified the region's key enablers of economic growth to be:

- Facilitate commercial and industrial development through improved transport links;
- Invest in the growth of innovative industries and employment opportunities;
- Realise economic opportunity in the health, aged-care and education sectors; and
- Be a highly liveable region that is attractive to both commuters and visitors.

The Central Coast Strategy for Economic Growth, the Central Coast Economic Development Strategy 2020-2040, and Lake Macquarie Economic Development Strategy 2022-32 aim to support local businesses and attract investment, especially in emerging sectors like the circular economy and technology. During engagement, the Lake Macquarie City Council identified focused growth around existing services and centres such as Wyee and Morisset as being the key focus over the next decade. The Central Coast Regional Plan 2041 outlines a strategic vision for sustainable growth, balancing natural assets with the needs of a growing population. It focuses on enhancing housing, infrastructure, and employment opportunities, while improving residents' quality of life.

Key priorities include fostering a strong local economy, improving transport connectivity, and ensuring resilient communities by addressing climate change and environmental challenges.

The Aboriginal unemployment rate in the region has dropped significantly since 2016, which represents a continuation of the positive trend observed since 2011.

Table A.3 First Nation's Unemployment Rate

First Nation's Unemployment Rate	Year		
	2011	2016	2021
Aboriginal Unemployment Rate (Central Coast - Lake Macquarie)	15.1%	14.4%	9.9%
NSW Aboriginal Unemployment Rate	16%	18.2%	12%
NSW Unemployment rate	5.6%	5.8%	4.6%

Source: (ABS, 2021; 2016; 2011).

The study communities have a larger proportion of technicians, trades workers, labourers and machine operators than the State, but fewer Professionals. This indicates opportunities for local employment and procurement during the Project construction and life cycle. Top industries of employment across Central Coast LGA include health care, construction and retail trade as outlined in **Table A.4**. Similarly top industries of employment in Lake Macquarie LGA are health care, construction and education and training.

In 2022/23, the total tourism sales in Central Coast Council area were $2459.3 m, the total value added was $1248.0 million. The Central Coast Tourism Opportunity Plan 2019–2024 (Central Coast Council, 2019), highlights the LGAs potential to become a top tourism destination, but it needs investment in visitor experiences to reach its full potential. Negative perceptions about the region need to be addressed through collective efforts and strategic improvements. By highlighting its unique advantages and improving the quality of visitor experiences, the Central Coast can attract more visitors and grow its share of the visitor economy.

Table A.4 Top Industries of Employment

Locality (2021)	Mannering Park SAL	Kingfisher Shores SAL	Doyalson North SAL	Central Coast LGA	Lake Macquarie LGA	NSW
Top three industries of employment	Supermarket and Grocery Stores (4.7%)	Concreting Services (6.3%)	Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals) (13.7%)	Health care and social assistance (17.8%)	Health care and social assistance (19.1%)	Health care and social assistance (14.4%)
	Other Social Assistance Services (4.5%)	Real Estate Services (5%)	Supermarket and Grocery Stores (9.8%)	Construction (11.5%)	Construction (11.2%)	Retail trade (9.0%)
	Takeaway Food Services (3.5%)	Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals) (5%)	Floriculture Production (Outdoors) (5.9%)	Retail trade (10.2%)	Education and training (9.2%)	Professional, scientific and technical services (8.9%)

Source: (ABS, 2021; Central Coast Council, 2019; Department of Regional NSW, 2023; REMPLAN, 2023; idcommunity, 2023; real estate investar, 2025).

Index Economic Resources

The Index of Economic Resources (IER) focuses on the financial aspects of relative socio-economic advantage and disadvantage by summarizing variables related to income and housing. The IER excludes education and occupation variables as they are not direct measures of economic resources, as well as assets such as savings or equities which, although relevant, cannot be included as they are not collected in the Census.

As shown in **Table A.5**, Doyalson North SAL has the lowest IER score of 1, indicating this small area has limited economic resources. This suggests residents likely have lower incomes and may face housing affordability challenges.

Mannering Park SAL has an IER score of 3, pointing to below-average economic resources, though somewhat better than Doyalson North. Kingfisher Shore SAL has an IER score of 4, which indicates marginally better economic resources compared to the other small localities examined.

In contrast, both the Central Coast and Lake Macquarie LGAs have relatively high IER scores of 8, suggesting these broader regions have good overall economic resources with better income levels and housing conditions.

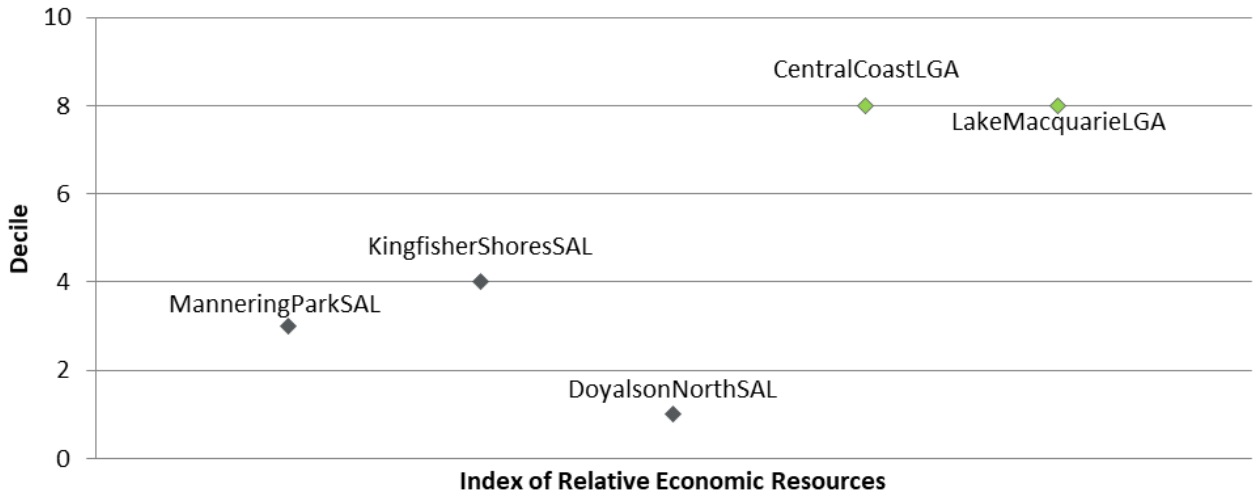


Table A.5 Index of Economic Resources Scores for the SALs and LGAs in the Study Area

Source: Umwelt, 2025 using (ABS SIEFA, 2021).

A.5 Social Capital

	During engagement for this SISR, the sense of community was identified as what residents value the most about living in the area. Residents described the community as close-knit, friendly, supportive and safe. However, residents also highlighted that there are limited social gathering/community recreational spaces in the local area.
	There are a number of progress associations and special interest groups who represent their communities, manage funding and bid for grants and who run the local community centres. These groups are also members of the CARE forum. They include Gwandalan Progress Association, Chain Valley Bay Progress Association, Mannering Park Progress Association, Mannering Park Tidy Towns, and Lake Munmorah Progress.

	Levels of voluntary work varied across the social locality. Central Coast LGA, Doyalson North SAL, and Mannering Park SAL had lower rates than the State average. However, Kingfisher Shores SAL had a higher rate at 13.8% compared to the State's 10.6%. High rates of volunteerism are often considered to be an indicator of social connection and inclusion (United Nations, 2014). There is a community garden on the Vales Point Power Station site and at Kingfisher Shore which is run by volunteers.
	Household composition significantly influences the demand for services and facilities, particularly education and healthcare. Family households were the most dominate household composition across the broader Central Coast LGA though most notably in Doyalson North SAL lone person households were more common at 52%.
	Across the social locality there is a greater proportion of the population who are living at the same address 5 years ago at the time of the Census compared to the state (50.7%). This indicates that there is greater population stability and likely stronger social ties and place-based attachments (Devine-Wright, 2009).
	Communities facing barriers (sometimes called 'vulnerable communities') are typically defined as groups of people at a higher risk of experiencing social, economic, or health-related challenges than the general population (Petrovic, 2023). In 2021, 24,360 people (or 7.0% of the population) in Central Coast Council area reported needing help in their day-to-day lives due to disability. This increased from 2016. There were 48,101 people in low-income households8 living in Central Coast LGA.
	There is various social gatherings which occur in the social locality. These events provide an opportunity to bring the community together. These include: Mannering Park Australia Day Breakfast (DE & DC): This event, organised by the Lions Club of Gwandalan, is a community gathering that celebrates Australia Day with a big breakfast. It serves as a "thank you" to the local community GOATS Festival (DE): GOATS Family Festival is a drug and alcohol-free event that showcases the talents of young people and children who are a part of our community' as well as a diverse range of musical artists (Amnesty, n.d.). HVTC Excellence Awards: These awards recognise the achievements of apprentices, trainees, and students across various vocational education and training pathways (Hunter Headline, 2022) Catherine Hill Bay Surf Life Saving Club (SLSC): A volunteer organization that provides lifesaving services and promotes surf sports (Surf Life Saving, n.d.)

Source: (ABS, 2021; Central Coast Council, 2018; Lake Macquarie City Council, 2025; Umwelt, 2025).

Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage

The Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage (IRSD) is a general socio-economic index that summarises a range of information about the economic and social conditions of people and households within an area. IRSD only includes measures of relative disadvantage.

As shown in **Figure A.5**, Doyalson North SAL has the lowest IRSD score of 1, indicating greater relative disadvantage. This suggests Doyalson North likely has many households with low incomes, many people without qualifications, and many residents in low-skilled occupations.

[8] Low income households for the purposes of the communities of interest profiles is defined as households falling into approximately the bottom 20% of equivalised incomes across Australia.

Mannering Park SAL has a slightly better, but still low IRSD score of 2, indicating this area also experiences socio-economic disadvantage. Kingfisher Shore SAL has an IRSD score of 3, which, while still in the lower range, suggests marginally better socio-economic conditions compared to the other small localities examined.

Both the Central Coast and Lake Macquarie LGAs have IRSD scores of 7, indicating these broader regions have more balanced socio-economic profiles with fewer households experiencing disadvantage.

The difference between the low IRSD scores in the smaller localities and the higher scores in the broader LGAs points to socio-economic disparities. These small areas show concentrated disadvantage within otherwise moderately advantaged broader regions, indicating that those SALs could benefit from targeted social and economic support initiatives.

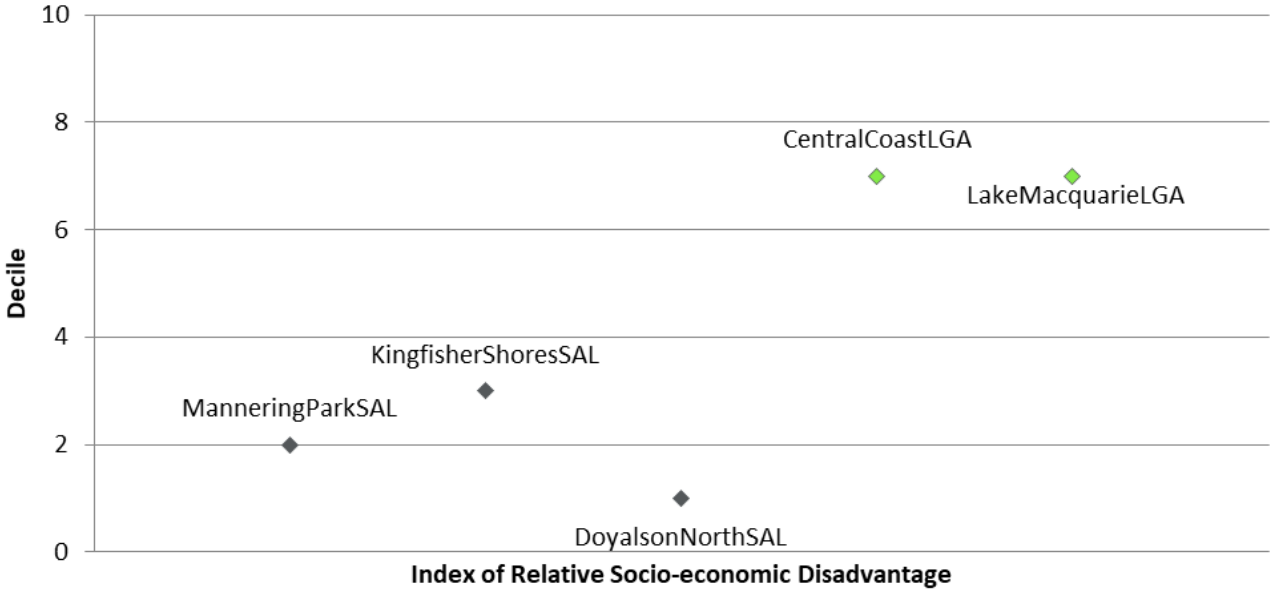


Figure A.5 Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage

Source: Umwelt, 2025 using (ABS SIEFA, 2021).

A.6 Physical Capital

Physical or built capital includes provision of infrastructure and services to the community. Within this capital area it is important to consider the type, quality, and degree of access to public, built and community infrastructure (including amenities, services, and utilities) as well as housing.

The proportion of the population in the social locality who drive a car to work is significantly higher when compared to the State (43%), which indicates high road network usage/dependency. The high rate can be attributed to the lack of public transport as well as distances between service centres. During engagement for this SISR, the Lake Macquarie City Council indicated the lack of public transport as a key challenge and its improvement a strategic area of focus.

Poor road conditions, including issues with kerbs and guttering, were identified during community engagement as key challenges. The need for additional footpaths was also highlighted as a priority.

The Central Coast Council area is served by the Sydney-Newcastle Freeway, the Pacific Motorway, the Central Coast Highway, the Pacific Highway, the Sydney-Newcastle railway line and Warnervale Airport. (idcommunity, 2023). The closet airport to the Project is Newcastle Airport located 1hr 10 min north. The airport offers a range of national flights daily.

Over $900 million has been invested in key infrastructure projects in the Central Coast region, including upgrades to the Central Coast Highway, the M1, Mandalong Road, and the development of Warnervale Town Centre. These projects aim to improve transport connectivity, enhance safety, and support the region's growth by providing better infrastructure for residents, businesses, and visitors (Transport for NSW, 2023)

The Central Coast LGA offers two tertiary educational facilities, including:

- **TAFE NSW Wyong:** This campus recently opened a $4.9 million Animal Studies Training Centre, providing state-of-the-art facilities for courses in animal care, veterinary nursing, and wildlife studies (NSW Government, 2025)
- The **University of Newcastle** has a significant presence on the Central Coast, primarily through its Ourimbah Campus. Additionally, the Central Coast Clinical School and Research Institute, located at Gosford Hospital, is an extension of the University of Newcastle. It offers advanced learning areas, including simulation wards and laboratories, and focuses on healthcare education and research (University of Newcastle, n.d.).

The Project falls within the Hunter-Central Coast Renewable Energy Zones (REZ) which has an intended capacity of one gigawatt of renewable energy generation. The REZ presents an opportunity for economic growth/diversification and to respond to evolving energy production and demand landscape.

During engagement for this SISR, when asked about their perception of Australia's energy future and energy security, survey participants provided mixed opinions on security and sources of energy generation as outlined in the quotes below:

"Mixed power sources are required to maintain in the future"

"We need to transition to new forms of electricity generation and storage."

"I don't believe the shift to renewable energy will effectively meet demand long term, though batteries could improve this ability. I worry that the significant use natural resources in the development of renewables is being ignored, and requires increased monetary and investment, for reduced return"

"I believe that renewables are the best option to replace our coal fired fleet."

As outlined in **Table A.6** there are a number of schools, childcare, fire services and police stations across Central Coast LGA, although they are confined to Mannering Park within the local community. The isolated nature of community owing to the peninsular location combined with proximal access to amenities was identified as a key strength of the community during engagement and comparatively better than the wider Lake Macquarie LGA, where access to infrastructure due to the dispersed population is a challenge identified by Council during engagement.

Source: (ABS, 2021; EnergyCo, n.d.; ATDW, 2025; Hunter Headline, 2022; Lake Macquarie City Council, 2017; Lake Macquarie City Council, 2025; Transport for NSW, 2023; PHIDU, 2022; Umwelt, 2025).

Table A.6 Social Infrastructure

Service	Mannering Park SAL	Kingfisher Shores SAL	Doyalson North SAL	Central Coast LGA	Lake Macquarie LGA
Schools	Mannering Park Public School	0	0	103	68
Childcare	Goodstart Early Learning	0	0	132	89
Fire Services	Mannering Park RFS	0	0	15 Fire and Rescue 20 RFS	8 Fire and Rescue3 22 RFS
Police Stations	0	0	0	7	4

Source: (Care for Kids, n.d.; Fire and Rescue, n.d.; NSW Police, n.d.; Playing in Puddles, n.d.).

Access to Health Care

Both Central Coast LGA and Lake Macquarie LGA recorded lower access to GPs per 100,000 people compared to the State average of 122.6 as outlined in **Table A.7**. Notably, Lake Macquarie had significantly lower access to specialists compared to Central Coast LGA and the State, indicating a need to travel beyond the LGA for specialist treatments.

Table A.7 Provision of Medical Practitioners

Indicator	Central Coast LGA	Lake Macquarie LGA	NSW
Provision of General Medical Practitioners (per 100,000)	116	116.3	122.6
Provision of Specialist Practitioners	128.9	76.2	156.4

Source: (PHIDU, 2022).

The regions healthcare industry is served by major health infrastructure endowments, including Gosford Hospital and Wyong Public Hospital, supported by sub-acute care providers in Woy Woy and Belmont Hospital and Long Jetty Healthcare Centre. **Table A.8** outlines the various health facilities located within the LGAs of Central Coast and Lake Macquarie. Wyong Public Hospital is located most proximal to the Project. It is also noted that John Hunter Hospital; Located in Newcastle LGA is located within 30 km.

Table A.8 Health Facilities in the Central Coast and Lake Macquarie LGAs

Facility	Suburb/location	Straight Line Distance to Project
Wyong Public Hospital	Wyong	12 km
Tuggerah Lakes Private Hospital	Kanwal	13 km
Berkeley Vale Private Hospital	Berkeley Vale	22 km
Lake Macquarie Private Hospital	Gateshead	25 km
Gosford Hospital	Gosford	34 km
Gosford Private Hospital	North Gosford	34 km
Central Coast Day Hospital	Erina	34 km
Brisbane Waters Private Hospital	Woy Woy	42 km
Woy Woy Public Hospital	Woy Woy	42 km

Source: (PHIDU, 2022).

A total of $548 million has been invested in the redevelopment of Gosford and Wyong Hospitals. This investment aims to significantly enhance healthcare services in the Central Coast region. The upgrades include new and expanded facilities, such as emergency departments, intensive care units, and additional inpatient beds, to meet the growing healthcare needs of the community (Department of Regional NSW, 2023).

Lake Macquarie Private Hospital is undergoing a significant expansion including, 10-storey building with surgery theatres, ward beds, car parking, and consulting suites. This development aims to alleviate the strain on the existing 187-bed facility and improve healthcare services. The project is expected to create 800-1000 jobs during construction and nearly 200 permanent jobs once completed (Lake Macquarie City Council, 2022).

Housing and Accommodation

In the Central Coast LGA, 90% of private dwellings were occupied. Of these, 34.5% were owned outright, 34.0% were owned with a mortgage, and 23.2% were rented. Similarly in Lake Macquarie LGA 37.1% of dwelling were owned out right, 36.3% owned with a mortgage and 23.1% rented. In comparison, across NSW, 31.5% of dwellings were owned outright, 32.5% were owned with a mortgage, and 32.6% were rented. This indicates that the Central Coast and Lake Macquarie LGAs have a higher rate of homeownership (both outright and with a mortgage) and a lower rate of rented dwellings compared to the state average.

The Central Coast Affordable and Alternative Housing Strategy 2020 aims to address the region's major housing shortage by supporting the delivery of affordable and low-cost housing. Similarly, the Lake Macquarie Housing Strategy 2021 seeks to improve housing supply by diversifying the housing offering and facilitating growth centres. The insufficient supply of housing to meet demand has significantly impacted house prices in the Central Coast and Lake Macquarie regions.

As of April 2024, the median house price in Central Coast LGA was $970,000, reflecting a 7.77% increase over the past two years. In Mannering Park, the median house price was lower at $700,000, with no increase over the same period. The median house price in NSW was also $970,000, matching that of Central Coast LGA. In contrast, Lake Macquarie LGA had a lower median house price of $900,000, which increased by 4.65% over the past two years (real estate investar, 2025).

As of April 2024, there were 1,093 rentals available in the Central Coast LGA, with a vacancy rate of 0.63%. In Mannering Park, only three rentals were available, with a lower vacancy rate of 0.23%. In comparison, Lake Macquarie LGA had 447 rentals available, with a vacancy rate of 0.47% (real estate investar, 2025). Overall, vacancy rates across these areas were lower compared to the state average of 1.06%, indicating greater demand and lower supply.

The Central Coast LGA has a greater number of short-term accommodations and Airbnbs compared to Lake Macquarie. Across the Central Coast LGA, there are approximately 163 short-term accommodation providers with 3,025 rooms. In the neighbouring LGA of Lake Macquarie, there are 98 providers with approximately 1,221 rooms (ATDW, 2025).

Similarly, Central Coast LGA had 2,922 active Airbnb listings in April 2025, with an average occupancy rate of 41.6% over the past three years. In comparison, Lake Macquarie LGA had 627 active listings with an average occupancy rate of 46.7%, which is marginally higher than the Central Coast as illustrated in **Figure A.6**.

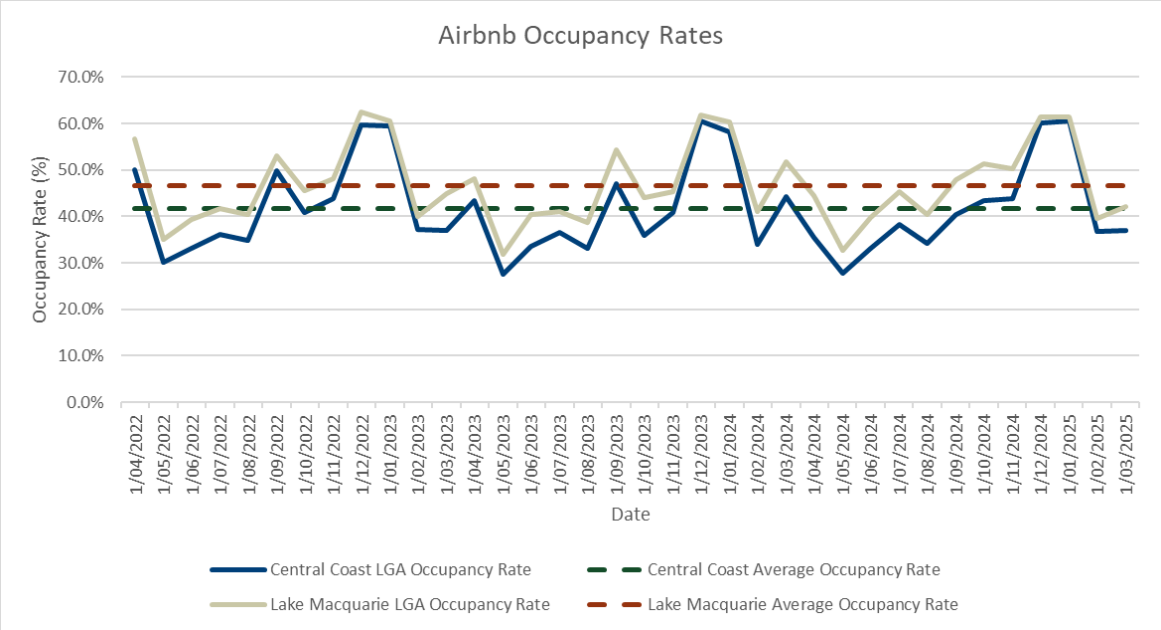


Figure A.6 Airbnb Occupancy Rates in Central Coast and Lake Macquarie LGA

Source: (AIRDNA, 2025).

A.7 Political

Local Government

The Central Coast LGA is represented by the Central Coast Council which was formed in May 2016 from the amalgamation of the former Wyong Shire and Gosford City Councils. In October 2024, following a period of administration, the Council returned to a democratically elected body. Councillor Lawrie McKinna was elected as Mayor, and Councillor Douglas Eaton OAM was elected as Deputy Mayor. The Lake Macquarie LGA is represented by the Lake Macquarie City Council. The Council is separated into three wards that are overseen by Mayor Adam Shultz.

Relevant Council strategies and plans outlined in **Table A.9** were also reviewed to identify the challenges and opportunities due to the proximity to Project.

Table A.9 Local Government Strategies and Plans

Local Strategic Plans	Summary
One – Central Coast – the Community Strategic Plan (2018–2028 – CC CSP)	Defines the community's vision and roadmap for the future. The CC CSP was developed around five themes, each with focus areas, that were identified through community consultation and reflect the needs and values of the region. The themes included: belonging, smart, green, responsible and liveable. In response to financial challenges, the CSP underwent a revision in 2022 to better reflect community sentiment and emphasize financial accountability.
Central Coast Regional Plan 2036	The Local Strategic Planning Statement presents a 20-year vision for land use, infrastructure, and sustainability, guiding the region's growth in response to population changes. It predicts that the region's population will grow to around 415,000 by 2036, which will require the creation of approximately 24,674 new jobs to meet employment demands. To accommodate this growth, the plan proposes the addition of 41,500 new dwellings by 2036, emphasising the need for diverse housing options and affordable living spaces.
Central Coast and Lake Macquarie Regional Economic Development Strategy 2023 update	The strategy provides a comprehensive framework to enhance economic growth and resilience in the region. It outlines several strategic priorities, including economic diversification to reduce reliance on traditional industries, improving infrastructure such as transportation and digital networks, and focusing on sustainability in development. Additionally, the strategy aims to enhance the well-being of local communities by addressing the challenges of housing affordability and those posed by the region's aging and growing population.
Our Future in Focus – Lake Macquarie City Community Strategic Plan (2017–2027 – Lake Mac CSP)	The plan provides a framework to guide the area's growth and development and outlines key strategic directions to address various issues such as environmental sustainability, economic development, and social well-being. The CSP focuses on creating a prosperous, sustainable, and vibrant community by setting clear goals in areas like infrastructure, housing, and public services.

Local Strategic Plans	Summary
Lake Macquarie City Community Strategic Plan 2025–2035	The Plan was endorsed on 24 February 2025 and will come into effect on 1 July 2025. This ten-year plan outlines the city's vision and strategic directions, focusing on economic, environmental, social, and governance goals. The development of the plan involved extensive community engagement, with input from over 32,000 residents. It is considered the 'blueprint that captures the ideas, priorities and aspirations' of the Lake Macquarie community. The four main goals identified for Lake Macquarie by 2035 are: environmental stewardship, economic diversity, community well-being and governance excellence.

Source: (DPE, 2016; Central Coast Council, 2018; Lake Macquarie City Council, 2025; Lake Macquarie City Council, 2017).

State Government

The Project Area is located within the boundaries of the Swansea State Electoral Division (SED), which extends from Budgewoi in the south to Jewells in the north; and from the coast to Mannering Park in the west (and the centre of Lake Macquarie). The Swansea SED has been represented by the Australian Labour Party Member Yasmin Catley since 2015. Yasmin Catley has previously demonstrated her support for the transition to renewable energy, with the proposed BESS near Raymond Terrace, "today's announcement further shores up our region as a renewable energy powerhouse, that'll power communities for decades to come," (Thompson, 2024).

Federal Government

The Project Area is located within the Shortland Commonwealth Electoral Division (CED) represented by Mr Patrick Conroy (Australian Labor Party) since 2016. Patrick Conroy has expressed support for the renewable energy transition for energy production including supporting the declaration of the Renewable Energy Zones (Labor, 2018).

Federal elections (most recent May 2025) can create political uncertainty that affects renewable energy projects. Changes in government can lead to shifts in energy policies, funding priorities, and regulatory frameworks. This uncertainty can delay project approvals, disrupt ongoing initiatives, and create an unpredictable investment environment.

Local Aboriginal Land Councils and Traditional Owners

The Project is located within Darkinjung Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC) boundary.
The traditional boundaries of Darkinjung (Darkinyung) land extend from the Hawkesbury River in the south, Lake Macquarie in the north, the McDonald River and Wollombi up to Mt Yengo in the west and the Pacific Ocean in the East (Darkinjung LALC, n.d.). The area also has strong connections to Awabakal and Guringai Peoples.

A.8 Cultural Capital

Cultural capital refers to underlying factors that provide human societies with the means to adapt to their environment (Cochrane, 2006) It includes the way people know and understand their place within the world. It may also refer to the extent to which the local culture, traditions, or language, may promote or hinder wellbeing, social inclusion, and development (IAIA, 2015).

Indigenous Heritage and Culture

The Project is located within the Darkinjung LALC area, who are the traditional custodians of the territory that extend from the Hawkesbury River in the south, Lake Macquarie in the north, the McDonald River and Wollombi up to Mt Yengo in the west and the Pacific Ocean in the East. The area also has strong connections to Awabakal and Guringai Peoples.

The Central Coast is home to over 2,900 registered sites of cultural significance. Many are accessible in the NSW National Parks network, while others are sacred and should only be visited with the local Aboriginal community's invitation. Three key sites include:

- Bouddi National Park: Around 100 significant cultural sites, including rock shelters with art and engravings, middens, and grinding grooves. Notable site: Daleys Point Aboriginal Relic Site with whale engravings.
- Brisbane Water National Park: Features the sacred Bulgandry Art Site Aboriginal Place with rock engravings and a Dreamtime Creation story. Notable carvings include a Dreamtime creator figure, wallaby, fish, dolphin, and grinding grooves.
- Popran National Park: Hundreds of protected Aboriginal sites, including rock engravings, sandstone shelters with stencil art, and foreshore middens. Notable trails: Hominy Creek trail leading to Emerald Creek and Emerald Pool with axe-grinding grooves and engravings.
- Both Councils have developed strategic planning documents aimed at embedding First Nations perspectives into council planning and governance. The Central Coast First Nations Accord, adopted in December 2022, is a formal commitment by Central Coast Council to acknowledge and respect the region’s Aboriginal heritage and strengthen relationships with local First Nations communities (Central Coast Council, 2022). It also outlines a path toward reconciliation through shared decision-making, cultural recognition, and the establishment of an Aboriginal Advisory Committee.

Lake Macquarie City Council is in the process of updating its Aboriginal Community Plan, bayikulinan, for 2025–2029. The plan aims to address the needs of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, focusing on strategies to improve health, wellbeing, and cultural representation. Key challenges identified include lack of cultural awareness, discrimination, limited access to services, employment opportunities, and representation in decision-making. The plan emphasises consulting with the Aboriginal community, co-designing programs, increasing cultural awareness, and improving access to services. The updated plan is expected to be presented for public exhibition in the first half of 2025 (Lake Macquarie City Council, 2025).

Cultural Diversity

Central Coast LGA has a greater proportion of the population born overseas (16.1%) compared to Lake Macquarie (10.8%) though this is lower compared to the state (29.3%).

Central Coast LGA celebrates Harmony Week annually, which highlights the cultural diversity of on the Central Coast through local performances, workshops and art (Central Coast Council, 2025). Similarly, Lake Macquarie City Council has the Culturally Diverse Lake Mac 2025–2029, which is a commitment to the community to be an inclusive and welcoming place, where the whole community can feel a sense of safety and belonging (Lake Macquarie City Council, 2025).

A.9 Natural Capital

Natural capital refers to the natural assets and resources that contribute to community sustainability. Natural capital can include resources such as minerals, land, forests, and waterways, that provide benefit to the community, as well as environmental assets that hold or provide cultural, social, or recreational value. The following section is a summary of the key highlights from a natural capital perspective.

	The Project Site is located approximately 200 m from Lake Macquarie, which is the largest saltwater lake in the southern hemisphere. The lake is of significant environmental value for the community, especially the foreshore area. During engagement residents noted its natural beauty and sense of peace. The lake is also popular for recreational activities including swimming, fishing, boating, kayaking and stand-up paddle boarding. The foreshore areas are popular for parks, picnic areas and walking and cycling trails.
	The local and broader LGA populations are generally environmentally conscious and maintain active lifestyles. During consultations with both Councils, it was noted that community sentiment toward previous developments was notably more negative when areas of high environmental or ecological value were affected.
	The nearest National Parks and Wildlife Service Estate are Lake Macquarie State Conservation Area, Munmorah State Conservation Area, and Colongra Swamp Nature Reserve. During engagement, the natural environment and bushland area were identified as having high environmental value to the local community due to their natural beauty, biodiversity and recreational offerings.
	The Region has unique geology containing coal seams surface gravel, sand, sandstone and other construction material resources. These resources are associated with existing mining and extractive industry operations such as the neighbouring Chain Valley Colliery. In 2020, mining represented 65% of the region's Gross Value Added (GVA), with coal mining accounting for 91% of this value.
	There has been community concern and opposition by Environmental groups in relation to the Vales Point Power Station and mining in the area including noise, air quality, water impacts, biodiversity impacts, greenhouse gas emissions and health and wellbeing impacts. During engagement, potential subsidence from mining under residential areas in Lake Macquarie was raised, which presents an ongoing concern for residents.
	Both the Central Coast and Lake Macquarie LGAs in New South Wales have experienced multiple natural disaster declarations, including storms, bushfires, and floods. Developing resilient infrastructure to meet the challenges of climate change and shifting environmental conditions was identified during engagement as a strategic area of focus for Lake Macquarie City Council.

	Delta is working with the EPA in relation to the investigation of marine wildlife impact events in Lake Macquarie during August and September 2022. On 5 September 2023 the EPA commenced a prosecution in the Land & Environment Court, with the Company pleading not guilty in April 2024. The matter was listed for Final Submissions on 12 March 2025 and a decision is reserved. During engagement, it was raised that the incident has created some mistrust amongst some local community members towards Delta.
	The Project is located within the Hunter Central Coast REZ. This region has been chosen as a REZ due to its suitable renewable energy resources and can utilise existing power stations, rehabilitated mining land, electricity network infrastructure, port and transport infrastructure and a skilled workforce.

Source: (Environmental Justice Australia, n.d.; ABC News, 2025; EnergyCo, n.d.; EPA, 2021; NSW Government, n.d.; Umwelt, 2025).

Appendix B

Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan

umwelt

Vales Point BESS Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan

1.0 Social Impact Assessment Scoping Phase

This Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan (CSEP) has been developed to guide engagement activities in relation to the social impact scoping phase for the Vales Point BESS Project.

1.1 Engagement Objectives

The strategy has the following objectives:

1. To identify social impacts associated with the Project (both positive and negative) to key stakeholders and local community members and to facilitate community and stakeholder input in the scoping phase for the Project, in line with the NSW DPHI SIA Guideline (2023);
2. To identify preliminary strategies to avoid or mitigate negative impacts and enhance positive impacts;
3. To understand community aspirations for the site; and
4. To identify future engagement preferences in the assessment phase.

1.2 Stakeholder Identification

Table 1.1 outlines the key stakeholders to be engaged in the scoping phase and provides a justification for their inclusion in the engagement program.

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Table 1.1 Stakeholder Identification

Stakeholder Group	Stakeholder	Justification
Closest residential community (adjacent to the site)	• Griffith St; and • Vales Rd.	Residents that are situated adjacent (North) to the project site and are therefore most proximal to the Project.
Nearby neighbours	• Mannering Park Peninsular: Griffith St, Kenneth St, Dunvegan St, Spencer Rd, Campbell Parade, Catherine St, Harwood Cl, Kevin St, Halcyon St, Eliot St, Kenneth Pl, Vales Rd/Warwick Ave.	Residents located approx. 1.8 km north of the Project site on the Mannering Park Peninsula.
	• Kingfisher Shores: Tall Timbers Rd, Lakeshore Ave, Morotai Ave, Karoola Ave.	Residents located approximately 1.3 km southeast of the Project Area and therefore likely to have an interest or may be impacted by the Project.
	• Macquarie Shores – Over 50s Lifestyle Community.	Over 50s lifestyle village located 4 km southeast of the Project site. The residents have previously been engaged by Delta and have voiced their concerns about social amenity impacts related to noise from the power station.
Broader community	• Central Coast LGA and Lake Macquarie LGA, including the residents of Chain Valley Bay North and South, Gwandalan, Summerland Point and Wyee Point.	The Project is wholly located in the Central Coast LGA, though is close to the boundary of the Lake Macquarie LGA. The communities of these LGAs may have interest in the Project given the history of mining and power generation in the area. Community representatives from Chain Valley Bay North and South, Gwandalan, Summerland Point and Wyee Point are active participants in the CARE Forum and have a relationship with Delta through Vales Point Power Station and Chain Valley Colliery (CVC).

Stakeholder Group	Stakeholder	Justification
Community Reference Group	• Vales Point Power Station Community and Regional Environment (CARE) Forum: Membership includes Gwandalan Progress Association, Chain Valley Bay Progress Association, Mannering Park Progress Association, Mannering Park Tidy Towns, and Lake Munmorah Progress Association.	The CARE Forum consists of seven individuals representing six local community groups. CARE Forum members will likely have an interest in the Project and the potential impacts on surrounding communities.
Local Government Representative	• Central Coast Council; and • Lake Macquarie City Council	Representatives of the two key local government areas. Delta has had previous engagement with both Councils.
First Nations Representatives	• Darkinjung Local Aboriginal Land Council.	Representatives of local Aboriginal community interested in the Project and potential impacts on tangible and intangible cultural heritage in the social locality.
Emergency Services	• Doyalson Fire & Rescue.	Potential interest in the Project due to potential fire risk.

1.3 Engagement Mechanisms

Table 1.2 outlines the proposed key engagement mechanisms and activities to be implemented in the scoping phase for the Project.

Table 1.2 Key Engagement Activities

Mechanism	Targeted stakeholder group	Description	Responsibilities

Project Information Sheet	• Closest residents and nearby neighbours via letter box drop:
	  ○ Mannering Park Peninsular: Griffith St, Kenneth St, Dunvegan St, Spencer Rd, Campbell Parade, Catherine St, Harwood Cl, Kevin St, Halcyon St, Eliot St, Kenneth Pl, Vales Rd/Warwick Ave;
	  ○ Kingfisher Shores: Tall Timbers Rd, Lakeshore Ave, Morotai Ave, Karoola Ave; and
	  ○ Macquarie Shores - Over 50s Lifestyle Community.
	• Broader community: Central Coast and Lake Macquarie LGAs via the Project webpage; and
	• Community Reference Group: CARE Forum via email.
		• To provide an overview of the proposed Project and Scoping phase; and
		• Provide a link to the SIA scoping survey.
			• Umwelt to develop;
			• Delta/Samsung to provide input, review and approve;
			• Umwelt to graphically design; and
			• Umwelt to organise printing and distribution.

Online Community Scoping Survey (Appendix A)	• Closest residential areas and nearby neighbours listed above will be invited to complete the survey via the Project Information Sheet; • Community Reference Group: the CARE Forum; and • Local and broader community via the Project website.	• To provide an opportunity for the community to provide input in the scoping phase of the Project; and • A survey link be included in the Project Information Sheet to invite participation and to be made available on the Project website.	• Umwelt to develop; • Delta/Samsung to review and approve; • Delta/Samsung to upload link to website; and • Umwelt to host and analyse.

Mechanism	Targeted stakeholder group	Description	Responsibilities
Personal/ Phone Interviews (Appendix B)	• Local Government: Central Coast Council and Lake Macquarie Council; • Community Reference Group: the CARE Forum; • Emergency Services: Rural Fire Service; and • First Nations stakeholders: Darkinjung Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC).	• To gather information to inform the assessment of social impacts and discuss potential mitigation and enhancement measures; and • Ideally participation at the CARE Forum is preferred or alternatively Umwelt to contact representatives individually to obtain their input following introductory communication by Delta.	• Delta to provide dates for the next CARE forum or alternatively to make introductions to members; • Delta/Samsung to provide relevant stakeholder contact information; • Umwelt to develop discussion guide to guide interviews; • Delta/Samsung to review and approve; and • Umwelt conduct interviews online or in person.
Project Website	• Local and broader community.	• Dedicated Project website providing information about the proposed project, the scoping and assessment phase; • Link to the community scoping survey to be provided on the website; and • Project team contact details will also be included.	• Delta/Samsung to provide website information; • Delta/Samsung to upload information/link to the survey onto the website; and • Umwelt to provide survey QR code for upload.

Draft materials to support the engagement e.g. online survey instrument and interview/discussion guide are provided in Appendices A and B for review by the Project team. The Information Sheet is provided in **Appendix C**.

Appendix A

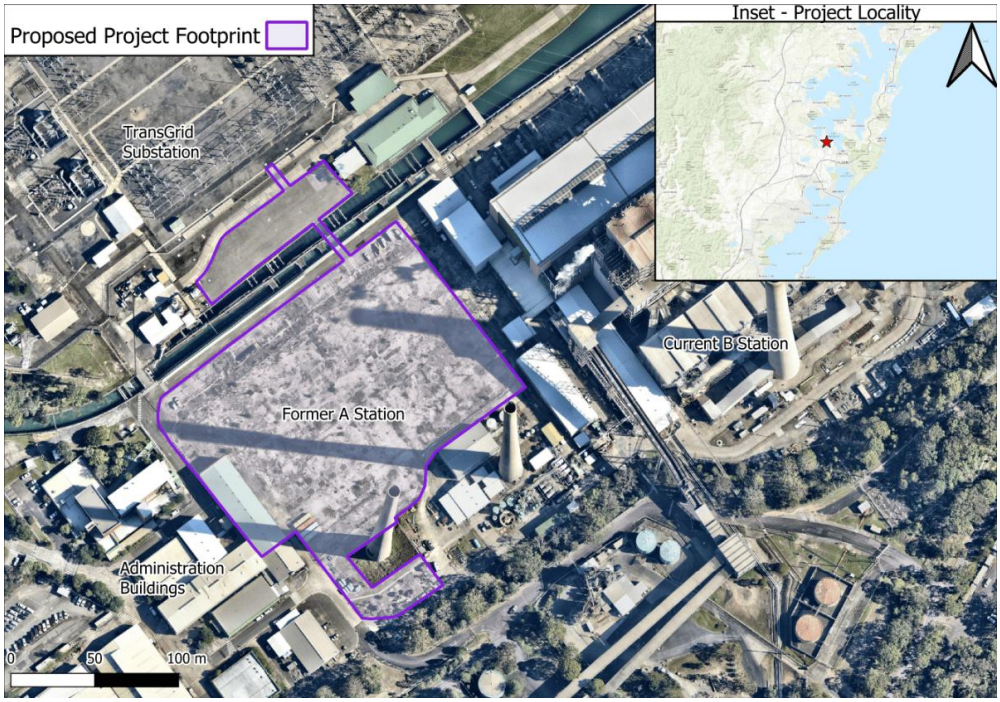
Draft Survey Instrument

Thank you for your interest in completing this survey about the proposed Vales Point Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) Project (the Project). The survey should take around 5–10 minutes to complete.

Project Overview

Delta Electricity in partnership with Samsung is exploring a large-scale battery energy storage system (BESS) at the Vales Point Power Station site. A BESS stores electrical energy in batteries for later use. The benefit of a BESS is that it provides the ability to store electricity during periods of excess generation or supply to be used later during periods of high electricity demand. The Project could therefore strengthen NSW's electricity supply reliability and support the renewable energy transition.

The Project site is located at the Vales Point Power Station former A-Station footprint and will require a Project area of approximately 1.8 hectares. The site is located in the suburb of Mannering Park, within the Central Coast Council local government area, approximately 32 km South of Newcastle and 84 km North of Sydney. This site is well placed for a BESS, as it is a brownfield site (previously used for power generation) and is in close proximity to the neighbouring TransGrid Substation.



The Project is classified as a State Significant Development (SSD) under the provisions of the State Environmental Planning Policy 2021 and is currently in the scoping phase of the SSD assessment process. Construction is subject to the final decision and environmental planning approval.

For more information about the Project, please visit www.de.com.au/valespointbess

A.1 Survey Purpose

Umwelt Australia Pty Ltd (Umwelt) has been engaged by Delta Electricity and Samsung to undertake a Scoping Phase: Social Impact Assessment (SIA) for the Project. As a State Significant Development, Delta Electricity and Samsung have a requirement to complete a SIA.

As part of the SIA, we are seeking your early feedback on the potential social impacts (positive and negative) that may occur as a result of the Project. Your responses will also help us to understand and develop appropriate management measures tailored to your concerns or experiences, as well as in identifying opportunities where the proposed Project can bring local benefits.

Delta Electricity will continue to keep you informed and there will be further opportunities for you to provide feedback as project planning and assessment activities progress.

A.2 Privacy Statement

Umwelt is committed to protecting your privacy and complying with all applicable personal data protection laws and regulations. Information collected via this survey will be used to inform the SIA. All information and written data will be retained by Umwelt and will be reported in de-identified form in the SIA Scoping Report. The information you provide will be used to compile aggregated information for public reporting and no specific details on individuals or family groups will be reported publicly. Information recorded will not be used for any other purpose.

Involvement in this survey is voluntary, and you are not required to answer any questions that you do not feel comfortable doing so. Your name and any personal information that you choose to provide will be stored only for the purpose of analysis and to ensure feedback or future correspondence can be provided as required or preferred.

1. Please complete the following details.

   Name:

   Address:

   Phone Number:

   Email:

2. What age group do you belong to?

Under 18	18-34	35-54	55-64	65+

1. What do you identify as?

Male	Female	Non-binary	Prefer not to say

1. Do you identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander?

Aboriginal	Torres Strait Islander	Both	Neither	Prefer not to say

1. Which locality do you live in?

Kingfisher Shore	Mannering Park	Doyalson North	Chain Valley Bay North	Chain Valley Bay South	Gwandalan	Summerland Point	Wyee Point	Other, please specify

1. How long have you lived in the locality?

_____*years*

2. What are the things you value most about your community and local area?

3. What do you see as the top needs in your community at this time?

4. Are there any ways in which Delta Electricity & Samsung C&T could work with the community to support local needs or create community value?

5. Have you heard, or are you aware of nearby Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) projects that have been developed (such as Waratah Super Battery) or are being developed (such as Eraring Battery Energy Storage System) in the broader Central Coast and Lake Macquarie community?

Yes	No

6. On a scale of one (1) to ten (10), are you supportive of Battery Energy Storage Systems?

1 (Low)	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 (High)

7. Why did you provide that rating?

_____

8. What is your perception of Australia's energy future and energy security?

_____

9. Had you heard, or were previously aware of the proposed Vales Point Battery Energy Storage System Project?

Yes	No

10. How did you hear about the proposed Project?

11. On a scale of one (1) to ten (10), how would you rate your level of knowledge of the proposed Project, where one (1) is a no knowledge at all and ten (10) is all the possible knowledge?

1 (Low)	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 (High)

12. Why did you provide that rating?

_____

13. Based on your knowledge of the Project today, on a scale of one (1) to ten (10) how would you rate your level of acceptance for the proposed Vales Point Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), where one (1) is a low level of acceptance and ten (10) is a high level of acceptance.

1 (Low)	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 (High)

14. Why did you provide that rating?

_____

15. What do you see as the benefits of the Project?

_____

16. What could be done to enhance these benefits?

_____

17. Do you have any concerns in relation to the Project?

_____

18. What can be done to address these concerns?

_____

19. What is your level of interest in the future of the Vales Point Site on a scale of one (1) to ten (10), where one (1) is a low level of interest and ten (10) is a high level of interest (please rate).

1 (Low)	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 (High)

20. Would you like to be kept up to date with information on the proposed Vales Point Battery Energy Storage System Project?

Yes	No

21. If yes, what sort of information would you like to receive as the Project planning and assessment activities progress?

_____

22. How would you prefer to receive information about the proposed Project? (please tick relevant mechanisms or specify others)

Electronic Newsletters	Website	Letterbox drops	Information sessions	Advertising	Other (please specify)

23. Do you have anything else to add?

_____

Thank you for completing the survey.

For the latest updates visit the project webpage www.de.com.au/valespointbess or contact our project team at ValesPointBESS@de.com.au or 1800 115 277.

Appendix B

Stakeholder Interview Guide

umwelt

B.1 Project Overview

Same as the survey instrument.

Contact Details

Email
Phone / Mobile
Organisation
Address

B.2 General Questions

- What features of the local area, or characteristics of the communities in the area, are particularly important to people who live here?
- What is your perception of Australia's energy future and energy security?
- Had you heard, or were previously aware of the proposed Vales Point Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) Project?

Yes	No

- How did you hear about the proposed Project?
- On a scale of one (1) to ten (10), how would you rate your level of knowledge of the proposed Project, where one (1) is a no knowledge at all and ten (10) is all the possible knowledge?

1 (Low)	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 (High)

- Why did you provide that rating?
- Based on your knowledge of the Project today, on a scale of one (1) to ten (10), how accepting are you of the Project? (where one (1) is a low level of acceptance and ten (10) is a high level of acceptance).

1 (Low)	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 (High)

- Why did you provide that rating?
- What do you see as the benefits of the Project?
- What could be done to enhance these benefits?
- Do you have any concerns in relation to the Project?
- What can be done to address these concerns?
- Would you like to be kept up to date with information on the proposed Vales Point Battery Energy Storage System Project?

Yes	No

- If yes, what sort of information would you like to receive as the Project planning and assessment activities progress?
- How would you prefer to receive information about the proposed Project? (please tick relevant mechanisms or specify others)

Electronic Newsletters	Website	Letterbox drops	Information sessions	Advertising	Other (please specify)

Is there anything else you would like to add?

B.3 Local Government - Central Coast Council & Lake Macquarie City Council

- What are the Council's strategic areas of focus and challenge?
- What do you see as local community values and challenges?
- What has been the sentiment of local communities in the LGA to previous new developments?
- What do you see as the benefits of the Project?
- What do you see as the concerns of the Project?
- Do you have any thoughts on how these benefits/concerns could be better addressed/enhanced?
- What do you see as the challenges/opportunities associated with the transition of the Vales Point Power Station site and how it will affect the local community?
- What do you see as the construction and operation impacts of the Project (positive and/or negative) for the local communities?
- Do you have any thoughts on how these impacts could be better addressed/managed?
- Do you see any opportunities for your organisation and Delta Electricity & Samsung to work together in relation to the Project?

B.4 Community Reference Group – CARE Forum

- Please provide an overview of the CARE forum (including year established and membership).
- What is the forum's purpose/strategic areas of focus?
- What do you see as the values, strengths and challenges of the communities that you represent?
- What has been the sentiment of local communities to previous new developments in the area?
- What do you see as the benefits of the Project?
- What do you see as the concerns of the Project?
- Do you have any thoughts on how these benefits/concerns could be better addressed/enhanced?
- What do you see as the challenges/opportunities associated with the transition of the Vales Point Power Station site and how it will affect the communities that you represent?
- What role, if any, would you like the CARE forum to play in the Project?
- Is there anything else that you think Delta Electricity & Samsung should consider in relation to the Project?

B.5 Emergency Service Provider

- What type of service do you provide and how long has the service been operating in the area?
- How would you describe your service trends over the past few years? Please describe any annual or seasonal trends.
- Is there a specific catchment or area that you service?
- Are there any particular groups in the community that you service?
- What challenges does your service experience or issues that you are currently facing?
- What would you say are your highest needs or priorities?
- What do you see as the benefits of the Project?
- What do you see as the concerns of the Project?
- Do you have any thoughts on how these benefits/concerns could be better addressed/enhanced?

B.6 First Nations Representative - Darkinjung Local Aboriginal Land Council

- Please provide an overview of your organisation (including name, year established and approximate membership numbers).
- Please describe, to the extent that you feel comfortable to do so, known cultural values including heritage, stories, landscape features, and interconnections between such items and places.
- What do you see as the benefits of the Project?
- What do you see as the concerns of the Project?

- Do you have any thoughts on how these benefits/concerns could be better addressed/enhanced?
- Do you see any impacts of the Project on tangible and intangible cultural heritage?
- Do you have any suggestion for how the Project could promote or enhance the landscape features or cultural values discussed?
- Do you see any opportunities for your organisation to work with Delta Electricity and Samsung in relation to the Project.

Appendix C

Project Information Sheet

SAMSUNG C&T
Engineering & Construction Group

SAMSUNG

Delta

COMMUNITY UPDATE - APRIL 2025

Vales Point Battery Energy Storage System

Delta Electricity values our relationships with neighbouring community members, with whom we have been working with over many years. This community update shares important information about a proposed project at the Vales Point Power Station site and how the local community can get involved.

In late February 2025 Delta Electricity and Samsung Construction & Trading (Samsung C&T) announced a partnership to explore the development of a large-scale battery energy storage system at the Vales Point Power Station site. Samsung C&T is a leading global technology company undertaking the development of renewable energy projects, to provide alternative, sustainable energy sources for communities across Australia.

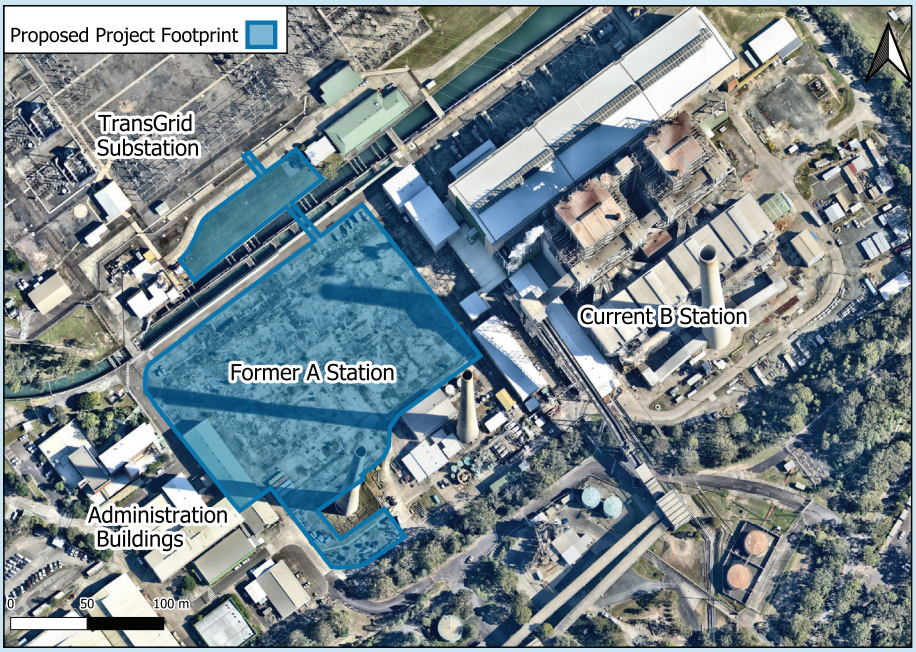
Once complete, the project would provide essential energy storage capacity to help keep NSW's electricity network stable and strengthen supply reliability as more renewable energy is integrated into the network.

A battery energy storage system stores electrical energy in batteries for later use.

The system stores electricity during periods of excess generation or supply which can be used during periods of high electricity demand. This helps with stabilising the electricity network and ensuring a more reliable supply of electricity.

A typical battery energy storage system consists of a battery bank, power conversion systems and control systems to manage the charging and discharging of the batteries.

Proposed project site



About the project

The proposed project site is located at Vales Point Power Station in the former A-Station footprint. This site is well placed for a battery energy storage system, as it is a cleared area of sufficient size and is close to TransGrid's existing transmission infrastructure.

The project would involve the installation, operation, maintenance and decommissioning/re-powering of a battery energy storage system, supported by ancillary infrastructure.

Different options for storage and discharge capacity and operating life duration will be investigated during the project's planning stage to identify a preferred option for development and detailed design.

Project status and assessment

The project is classified as a State Significant Development under the provisions of the State Environmental Planning Policy 2021 and is currently in the feasibility and scoping phase.

Key activities currently underway include early environmental and social studies and community consultation. Umwelt Environmental and Social Consultants has been engaged to undertake these studies and prepare a Scoping Report and request for Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) from the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure.

The next phase of the project will involve preparation of the State Significant Development application and includes:

- Conducting technical and environmental investigations.
- Consulting the community and stakeholders and seeking feedback.
- Preparing and lodging the State Significant Development Application.

A final decision to proceed is expected to be made by Delta Electricity and Samsung C&T in early 2026, pending completion of the investigations. Construction is subject to the final decision and environmental planning approval.

Community engagement

Consultation is starting with nearby residents, the local community and key stakeholders to understand the community's early views on the project, how best to involve you as the project progresses and to explore opportunities to enhance local benefits.

You are invited to share your feedback by completing a short 5-10 minute survey by 23 April 2025.

Scan the QR code to access the survey, or visit

www.research.net/r/valespointbess

Your feedback will be considered to prepare the Scoping Report and SEARs application and will help to shape the project design and environmental assessment as it progresses.

We will keep you informed as the project develops and there will be more opportunities to provide feedback as the project planning and assessment activities progress.

More information

For the latest updates visit the project webpage

www.de.com.au/vales-point-bess

or contact our project team at

ValesPointBESS@de.com.au

(02) 4352 6111

State Significant Development Assessment Process

Environmental Impact Assessment Phase	Social Impact Assessment Activities and Outputs
SCOPING	
PRE-LODGEMENT: Preliminary assessment studies commence	Engagement with local residents and key stakeholders **WE ARE HERE**
PRE-LODGEMENT: Scoping Report lodged with NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure	
PRE-LODGEMENT: NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure issues project specific Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs)	
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (EIS)	
APPLICATION: Refinement of plans and preparation of assessment studies	Continue engagement with local landholders and key stakeholders
APPLICATION: Lodgement of DA supported by the EIS including SIA	Preparation of Social Impact Assessment (SIA)
PUBLIC EXHIBITION	
APPLICATION: NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure places EIS on public exhibition	
RESPONDING TO SUBMISSIONS	
APPLICATION: Preparation of Submissions Report that explains how submissions have been addressed	
ASSESSMENT	
APPLICATION: NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure assesses the Project and provides its findings to the consent authority	
DETERMINATION	
APPLICATION: Consent authority decides whether to approve or refuse the Project, including conditions of consent if approved	
POST APPROVAL	
NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure regulates Project to ensure compliance with the conditions of consent **Implementation of mitigation and enhancement measures and monitoring and management framework**	

Engagement with potentially affected people and other interested parties

umwelt

P 1300 793 267 E info@umwelt.com.au W umwelt.com.au

NSW | ACT | WA | QLD | VIC | SA ABN 18 059 519 041

Appendix C

AHIMS Basic Search

AHIMS Web Services (AWS)
Search Result

Your Ref/PO Number : VPPS BESS

Client Service ID : 1027181

Jai Roby

75 York Street
Teralba New South Wales 2284

Attention: Jai Roby

Email: jroby@umwelt.com.au

Date: 24 July 2025

Dear Sir or Madam:

AHIMS Web Service search for the following area at Lat, Long From : -33.1668, 151.5343 - Lat, Long To : -33.1578, 151.5498, conducted by Jai Roby on 24 July 2025.

The context area of your search is shown in the map below. Please note that the map does not accurately display the exact boundaries of the search as defined in the paragraph above. The map is to be used for general reference purposes only.

A search of Heritage NSW AHIMS Web Services (Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System) has shown that:

0	**Aboriginal sites are recorded in or near the above location.**
0	**Aboriginal places have been declared in or near the above location. ***

If your search shows Aboriginal sites or places what should you do?

- You must do an extensive search if AHIMS has shown that there are Aboriginal sites or places recorded in the search area.
- If you are checking AHIMS as a part of your due diligence, refer to the next steps of the Due Diligence Code of practice.
- You can get further information about Aboriginal places by looking at the gazettal notice that declared it. Aboriginal places gazetted after 2001 are available on the NSW Government Gazette (https://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/gazette) website. Gazettal notices published prior to 2001 can be obtained from Heritage NSW upon request

Important information about your AHIMS search

- The information derived from the AHIMS search is only to be used for the purpose for which it was requested. It is not be made available to the public.
- AHIMS records information about Aboriginal sites that have been provided to Heritage NSW and Aboriginal places that have been declared by the Minister;
- Information recorded on AHIMS may vary in its accuracy and may not be up to date. Location details are recorded as grid references and it is important to note that there may be errors or omissions in these recordings,
- Some parts of New South Wales have not been investigated in detail and there may be fewer records of Aboriginal sites in those areas. These areas may contain Aboriginal sites which are not recorded on AHIMS.
- Aboriginal objects are protected under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 even if they are not recorded as a site on AHIMS.
- This search can form part of your due diligence and remains valid for 12 months.

Level 6, 10 Valentine Ave, Parramatta 2150
Locked Bag 5020 Parramatta NSW 2124
Tel: (02) 9585 6345

ABN 34 945 244 274
Email: ahims@environment.nsw.gov.au
Web: www.heritage.nsw.gov.au

Appendix D

BDAR Waiver

Subject	BDAR Waiver Request, Vales Point Battery Energy Storage System

Umwelt has been engaged by The Proponent, a joint venture between Delta Power & Energy Pty Ltd (Delta) and Samsung Construction and Trading (C&T) Corporation (Samsung), to prepare a request for a Biodiversity Development Assessment Report (BDAR) Waiver for the proposed Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) at Vales Point Power Station in Mannering Park, NSW.

It is understood that the proposed Project comprises State Significant Development (SSD), which automatically triggers the NSW Biodiversity Offset Scheme (BOS). The BOS requires the submission of a BDAR under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* (BC Act) to assess potential impacts on native biodiversity unless the Planning Agency Head (or delegate) and the Environment Agency Head (or delegate) determine that the Project is not likely to have any significant impact on biodiversity values. For the purpose of deciding whether the requirement for a BDAR can be waived, a proposed Project could be considered as unlikely to have any significant impact on biodiversity values if it:

- Will not clear or remove native vegetation other than:
    - A few single trees with no native understorey in an urban context; and
    - Planted native vegetation that is not consistent with a Plant Community Type (PCT) known to occur in the same Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation of Australia (IBRA) subregion (e.g., street trees, trees in carparks, landscaping).
- Will have negligible adverse impacts on threatened species or ecological communities, considering habitat suitability, abundance and occurrence, habitat connectivity, movement and water sustainability including consideration of any non-natural features, non-native vegetation and human-built structures; and
- Will have negligible adverse impacts on protected animals because of impacts to flight path integrity.

This BDAR waiver request has been prepared on behalf of the applicant, The Proponent, in accordance with the biodiversity development assessment report waiver determinations for SSD and SSI applications fact sheet prepared by the Department of Planning and Environment (DPE, 2018) (refer to Error! Reference source not found.). Justification for the waiver is provided in the Attachment however a summary of the findings against the significant impact criteria above is provided below:

- A desktop review of the Project Area site found that the site is entirely cleared of native vegetation and any previous structures. The site has been previously cleared for the development of the Vales Point Power Station around 45 years ago, leaving no native vegetation;
- The areas surrounding the site contain native vegetation. Lakes and estuaries occur within 1.5 kilometres (km) to the north, east and west of the site, with the nearest being approximately 580 metres (m) northeast. Multiple urban development's occur in the sites surroundings with the largest being Mannering Park which occurs approximately 520 m north of the site. A smaller housing development occurs approximately 1.2 km southeast of the site at Kingfisher Shores;

P 1300 793 267 E info@umwelt.com.au W umwelt.com.au NSW | ACT | WA | QLD | VIC | SA Umwelt (Australia) Pty Ltd ABN 18 059 519 041

- There is no vegetation present within the development area, therefore none occurs that is consistent with any recognised native PCT;
- No threatened species, threatened ecological communities (TECs), or their habitats, are likely to occur within the proposed development site and, as such, the development would have negligible adverse impacts on threatened species and ecological communities;
- The site is within the Vales Point Power Station property. The surroundings of the proposed development site do consist of native vegetation that may provide suitable habitat for protected animals. However, given the project is restricted within the central industrial zone of the power station, the development is unlikely to have any adverse impacts on protected animals or impacts to flight path integrity;
- The proposed development is to be constructed directly adjacent to the Vales Point Power Station outlet canal which flows directly into Lake Macquarie. The implementation of correct mitigation strategies during the construction phase of the project in conjunction with Vales Point Power Station's existing dirty water management systems will eliminate the risk of water contamination and impacts to aquatic threatened species in the area; and
- Based on the above, the proposed development is not likely to significantly impact native biodiversity and the requirements for a BDAR should be waived.

Yours sincerely

Allison Riley

Senior Principal Ecologist and Accredited BAM Assessor

E | ariley@umwelt.com.au
M| 0409 112 771

Attachment 1

Table D.1 BDAR Waiver Request Information Requirements

Waiver Request Information Requirements	
Admin	• **Proponent name and contact details** ProjectCo JV No.1 Lachlan McWha, Environment Compliance & Approvals Coordinator, Delta Coal Chain Valley Colliery, Off Construction Road (Off Ruttleys Road), Mannering Park NSW 2259 M: +61 (2) 4358 0883 E: LMcWha@deltacoal.com.au • **Project ID** Vales Point Power Station BESS, refer to scoping report for SSD number. • **Name and ecological qualifications of person completing Table 2** Alison Riley, B. Sc, BAM Assessor Accreditation Number BAAS17042
Site Details	• **Street address, Lot and DP, local government area** 200 Vales Road, Mannering Park, 2259 Part Lot 102 of DP1065718 Mannering Park • **Description of existing development site** The site is located within Vales Point Power Station at Mannering Park, approximately 1 km south of Mannering Park town centre and 17 km northeast of Wyong. The development is proposed to be constructed on the site of previous power station infrastructure (former station A) which has since been decommissioned and demolished. The site covers an area of approximately 2.2 hectares (ha) and currently consists of a concrete slab with no buildings. A desktop review of the site found that no native vegetation is present, nor has there been for approximately 45 years when the original power station was constructed. • **Location map showing the development site in the context of surrounding areas and landscape features** Refer to **Figure D-1**.
Proposed	• **Project Description** Delta Power & Energy Pty Ltd owns and operates Vales Point Power Station. Delta is a key electricity generator in the National Electricity Market (NEM), supplying approximately four percent of the market's total demand and has extensive experience in the development, construction and operation of large-scale electricity generation infrastructure. The Proponent, a joint venture between Delta and Samsung propose to develop the Vales Point Power Station BESS to provide a reliable and affordable source and store of energy which will contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions associated with energy generation. The Project is located on part of Lot 102, DP 1065718 in the Central Coast Local Government Area (LGA), approximately 1.0 km south of Mannering Park town centre, NSW. The BESS is proposed to have a capacity of 400 megawatts (MW)/ 800 megawatt hour (MWh), connecting to the existing Transgrid Vales Point 330 kV Substation, which is located directly northwest of the Project Area.

Waiver Request Information Requirements	
	• **Construction and operation** Construction of the Project is expected to be completed over approximately 12 to 18 months and will include: ○ Project Area levelling and construction of concrete footings on which the batteries would be installed; ○ Upgrade of access and egress point to the Project Area from internal Vales Point Power Station access road; ○ Installation of security fencing, battery containers, medium voltage stations and associated electrical equipment, an earthing system and lighting; ○ Installation of high-voltage electrical equipment such as circuit breakers, transformers, switching equipment, auxiliary power equipment and control systems; and ○ The construction of a 330 Kilovolt (kV) transmission line between the BESS and the adjacent Transgrid Substation. The Project would be operational 24 hours a day, seven days a week, with storage and export activities occurring as required. The operational lifespan of the Project is expected to be approximately 30 years.

Table D.2 Impacts of the Proposed Development on Biodiversity Values

Biodiversity value	Meaning	Relevance (✓ or N/A)	Potential impacts, including prescribed impacts under the BC Regulation
Vegetation abundance 1.4(b) BC Regulation	Occurrence and abundance of vegetation at a particular site.	N/A	A desktop review of the project area confirmed the site is entirely cleared of all native and exotic vegetation. The site consists of concrete slab which covers the entirety of the area, allowing no vegetation to occur within the project area. All vegetation within the project area was likely cleared in the 1960s and 1970s when the Vales Point Power Station was originally constructed. Given the lack of all native and exotic vegetation, impacts to vegetation is negligible.
Vegetation integrity 1.5(2)(a) BC Act	Degree to which the composition, structure and function of vegetation at a particular site and the surrounding landscape has been altered from a near natural state.	N/A	A desktop review of the project area confirmed the site is entirely cleared of all native and exotic vegetation. All vegetation within the project area was likely cleared in the 1960s and 1970s to make way for the construction of the Vales Point Power Station. Much of the project area's immediate surroundings were also cleared during this time to facilitate the construction of further power station infrastructure. Given all vegetation in the project area has been previously cleared and developed, impacts to vegetation integrity is negligible.
Habitat suitability 1.5(2)(b) BC Act	Degree to which the habitat needs of threatened species are present at a particular site.	N/A	A desktop review of the project area confirmed the site is entirely cleared of all native and exotic vegetation that may provide suitable habitat for threatened species. While the Project Area's surroundings are likely to provide suitable habitat for threatened species, it is unlikely that any species would use the Project Area given the total lack of any vegetation. A review of the site using the BioNet Atlas of NSW Wildlife Tool confirmed that 4 threatened species are known to occur within 1 km of the project area including:

Biodiversity value	Meaning	Relevance (✓ or N/A)	Potential impacts, including prescribed impacts under the BC Regulation
			• southern myotis; • grey-headed flying fox; • short-tailed shearwater; and • squirrel glider. The southern myotis is known to roost in man-made culverts, buildings, wharves and bridges that occur in close proximity to water (OEH, 2020). One workshop requires demolition as part of the Project. This building was inspected on 24 July 2025 and determine to not provide potential micro-bat habitat, due to a lack of features that would support roosting for micro-bat species. The proposed Project does not provide habitat for threatened species. t
Threatened Species abundance 1.4(a) BC Regulation	Occurrence and abundance of threatened species or threatened ecological communities, or their habitat at a particular site.	N/A	A review of the site using the BioNet Atlas of NSW Wildlife Tool confirmed that no threatened species have been recorded within the project area. Based on the desktop review of the site, it is predicted that no threatened species have the potential to occur within the project area and impacts are negligible. Given the total lack of vegetation within the project area, it is predicted that no threatened ecological communities have the potential to occur within the project area and impacts are negligible.
Habitat Connectivity 1.4(c) BC Regulation	Degree to which a particular site connects different areas of habitat of threatened species to facilitate the movement of those species across their range.	N/A	The project's surroundings contain substantial amounts of native vegetation that is likely to provide suitable habitat for threatened species. While urban and industrial development are scattered throughout the surrounding landscape, majority of the habitat is still connected through vegetation corridors allowing for the movement of threatened species. The Vales Point Power Station and supporting infrastructure does impact habitat connectivity of the area, however the proposed BESS project will not induce further impacts as no vegetation clearing is required. Given the project does not require any further vegetation clearing and will be constructed on previously cleared land, the project will have no impact on habitat connectivity of threatened species.
Threatened species movement 1.4(d) BC Regulation	Degree to which a particular site contributes to the movement of threatened species to maintain their lifecycle.	N/A	The project is proposed to be developed on land that was cleared in the 1960s and 1970s to facilitate the construction of the original Vales Point Power Station. The project area now consists of concrete slab that covers the entirety of the site, leaving no native or exotic vegetation. Given the project will not impact any existing native vegetation that provides suitable habitat for threatened species, and that it is predicted that no threatened species has the potential to occur within the project area, the project will have no impact on the movement of threatened species.
Flight path integrity 1.4(e) BC Regulation	Degree to which the flight paths of protected animals over a particular site are free from interference.	✓	The construction of the BESS is unlikely to have any impact on the flight path of protected fauna species. The BESS is proposed to be a ground dwelling development and does not stand at significant heights relative to the existing Power Station infrastructure that will surround it. The construction of the 330kV overhead transmission line between the BESS and the adjacent Transgrid Vales Point 330 kV Substation may impact the flight path of some threatened fauna species if

Biodiversity value	Meaning	Relevance (✓ or N/A)	Potential impacts, including prescribed impacts under the BC Regulation
			the transmission line is constructed above ground. The transmission connection arrangement would be subject to Transgrid's detailed requirements and would be further refined during the EIS. **Above ground transmission line** The construction of an above ground transmission line may have the potential to impact the flight path of several threatened flying fauna species that have been recorded in the project locality. The above ground transmission line is predicted to be approximately 100 m long spanning from the BESS, over the outlet canal to the Transgrid substation. A review of the site using the BioNet Atlas of NSW Wildlife Tool identified several flying protected fauna species that have the potential to be impacted including: • southern myotis; • grey-headed flying fox; • short-tailed shearwater; • swift parrot; and • white-bellied sea eagle. All species listed above have been recorded within 2 km of the site and are predicted to use the surrounding native vegetation and man-made structures for roosting and foraging habitat. Although the swift parrot, grey-headed flying fox, short-tailed shearwater and the white-bellied sea eagle were recorded in the project locality, it is predicted these species are unlikely to come in close proximity to the power station and would only use the surrounding native vegetation for roosting and foraging habitat. The construction of an above ground transmission line is unlikely to impact these threatened flying fauna species. Southern myotis are known to roost in man-made culverts, buildings, wharves and bridges that occur in close proximity to water (OEH, 2020). Southern myotis forage over streams and other water bodies catching insects and small fish (OEH, 2020). Given the presence of southern myotis in the immediate surroundings of the power station, it is predicted that man-made culverts, buildings, wharves and bridges in the area may be used as roosting locations for the species. With the known presence of southern myotis, it can be assumed the species utilize the outlet canal for foraging insects and fish. While there are no records to prove that southern myotis specifically use power station outlet canals for foraging, a study by Gonsalves and Law (2017) found that Myotis sp. can use water ways with some form of long-lasting industrial activity and even heavy meatal contamination. Such water ways match the description of the Vales Point Power Station outlet canal. Given the above information, the construction of an above ground transmission line extending over the outlet canal has the potential to impact the flight path of southern myotis when foraging above the canal. However, as the proposed transmission line will be located in the central area of the power station (a heavily industrialized zone with no native vegetation) and given the presence of numerous

Biodiversity value	Meaning	Relevance (✓ or N/A)	Potential impacts, including prescribed impacts under the BC Regulation
			suitable foraging habitats for the Southern Myotis in the surrounding area, it is unlikely that the construction of an overhead transmission line would significantly impact the species' flight paths.
Water sustainability 1.4(f) BC Regulation	Degree to which water quality, water bodies and hydrological processes sustain threatened species and threatened ecological communities at a particular site.	✓	The BESS and transmission line is proposed to be constructed adjacent to and above the Vales Point Power Station outlet canal which flows from west to east into the southern end of Lake Macquarie. Although the review of the site using the BioNet Atlas of NSW Wildlife Tool did not identify records of any threatened aquatic species within 1km of the site, there are records of several threatened aquatic species which are known to occur in the greater Lake Macquarie area including: • loggerhead turtle; • green turtle; and • great white shark. These species may be at risk of the effects caused by contaminated water due to the close proximity of the construction site. The BESS is proposed to be constructed approximately 25 m from the outlet canal which constantly flows into Lake Macquarie. The water quality of Lake Macquarie in the immediate surroundings may be affected during the construction phase of the project due to run off, spillages and dust and other airborne particles making their way into the canal. With proper mitigation strategies, these impacts can be avoided. Strategies include: • Security fencing – as listed in the construction plan, security fencing will be set up around the construction site to conceal all materials and equipment for the project; • Correct signage – to ensure all materials and equipment are stored and transported in the correct way to avoid contamination of the outlet canal. Correct signage helps to avoid run off and spillages; • Dust and airborne particle suppression – water can be used to effectively suppress airborne particles that may make their way into the canal; and • Designated vehicle tracks – the movement of vehicles is known to produce airborne particles which may make their way into the canal. By implementing designated vehicle tracks, the movement of vehicles around the construction site and canal can be designed to avoid airborne particle pollution of the canal. Implementing these mitigation strategies during the construction phase of the project will help prevent adverse impacts on the water quality of Lake Macquarie. In doing so, the risk of affecting aquatic threatened species that may occur in the immediate vicinity can also be avoided.

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FIGURE D-1

Biodiversity Values of the Project Area

Legend

- Vales Point Power Station Security Facilities
- Vales Point 330 kV Substation
- Project Area
- Waterbody
- Man made waterbody
- Road

0 50 100

Metres

Scale 1:6,000 at A4
GDA2020 MGA Zone 56

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Image Source: ESRI Basemap (2025) | **Data Source:** NSW DFSI (2025)

2.0 References

Department of Planning and Environment (DPE). (2018). *Biodiversity development assessment report waiver determinations for SSD and SSI applications*.

Gonsalves, L., & Law, B. (2017). *Distribution and key foraging habitat of the Large-footed Myotis Myotis macropus in the highly modified Port Jackson estuary, Sydney, Australia: An overlooked, but vulnerable bat. Australian Zoologist*, 38(4), 629-642. https://doi.org/10.7882/AZ.2017.012

Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH). (August 7, 2020). *Southern Myotis – profile*. https://threatenedspecies.bionet.nsw.gov.au/profile?id=10549

Appendix E

EPBC Act Protected Matters Report

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EPBC Act Protected Matters Report

This report provides general guidance on matters of national environmental significance and other matters protected by the EPBC Act in the area you have selected. Please see the caveat for interpretation of information provided here.

Report created: 23-Apr-2025

Summary

Matters of National Environment Significance

This part of the report summarises the matters of national environmental significance that may occur in, or may relate to, the area you nominated. Further information is available in the detail part of the report, which can be accessed by scrolling or following the links below. If you are proposing to undertake an activity that may have a significant impact on one or more matters of national environmental significance then you should consider the Administrative Guidelines on Significance.

World Heritage Properties:	None
National Heritage Places:	None
Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar	None
Great Barrier Reef Marine Park:	None
Commonwealth Marine Area:	None
Listed Threatened Ecological Communities:	3
Listed Threatened Species:	80
Listed Migratory Species:	44

Other Matters Protected by the EPBC Act

This part of the report summarises other matters protected under the Act that may relate to the area you nominated. Approval may be required for a proposed activity that significantly affects the environment on Commonwealth land, when the action is outside the Commonwealth land, or the environment anywhere when the action is taken on Commonwealth land. Approval may also be required for the Commonwealth or Commonwealth agencies proposing to take an action that is likely to have a significant impact on the environment anywhere.

The EPBC Act protects the environment on Commonwealth land, the environment from the actions taken on Commonwealth land, and the environment from actions taken by Commonwealth agencies. As heritage values of a place are part of the 'environment', these aspects of the EPBC Act protect the Commonwealth Heritage values of a Commonwealth Heritage place. Information on the new heritage laws can be found at https://www.dcceew.gov.au/parks-heritage/heritage

A permit may be required for activities in or on a Commonwealth area that may affect a member of a listed threatened species or ecological community, a member of a listed migratory species, whales and other cetaceans, or a member of a listed marine species.

Commonwealth Lands:	1
Commonwealth Heritage Places:	None
Listed Marine Species:	54
Whales and Other Cetaceans:	None
Critical Habitats:	None
Commonwealth Reserves Terrestrial:	None
Australian Marine Parks:	None
Habitat Critical to the Survival of Marine Turtles:	None

Extra Information

This part of the report provides information that may also be relevant to the area you have

State and Territory Reserves:	None
Regional Forest Agreements:	1
Nationally Important Wetlands:	None
EPBC Act Referrals:	3
Key Ecological Features (Marine):	None
Biologically Important Areas:	3
Bioregional Assessments:	1
Geological and Bioregional Assessments:	None

Details

Matters of National Environmental Significance

Listed Threatened Ecological Communities [Resource Information]

For threatened ecological communities where the distribution is well known, maps are derived from recovery plans, State vegetation maps, remote sensing imagery and other sources. Where threatened ecological community distributions are less well known, existing vegetation maps and point location data are used to produce indicative distribution maps.
Status of Vulnerable, Disallowed and Ineligible are not MNES under the EPBC Act.

Community Name	Threatened Category	Presence Text	Buffer Status
Coastal Swamp Oak (Casuarina glauca) Forest of New South Wales and South East Queensland ecological community	Endangered	Community may occur within area	In feature area
Coastal Swamp Sclerophyll Forest of New South Wales and South East Queensland	Endangered	Community likely to occur within area	In feature area
River-flat eucalypt forest on coastal floodplains of southern New South Wales and eastern Victoria	Critically Endangered	Community likely to occur within area	In feature area

Listed Threatened Species [Resource Information]

Status of Conservation Dependent and Extinct are not MNES under the EPBC Act.
Number is the current name ID.

Scientific Name	Threatened Category	Presence Text	Buffer Status
BIRD			
Anthochaera phrygia Regent Honeyeater [82338]	Critically Endangered	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In feature area
Ardenna grisea Sooty Shearwater [82651]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In buffer area only
Botaurus poiciloptilus Australasian Bittern [1001]	Endangered	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In feature area
Calidris acuminata Sharp-tailed Sandpiper [874]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In feature area

Scientific Name	Threatened Category	Presence Text	Buffer Status
Calidris canutus Red Knot, Knot [855]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In feature area
Calidris ferruginea Curlew Sandpiper [856]	Critically Endangered	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In feature area
Callocephalon fimbriatum Gang-gang Cockatoo [768]	Endangered	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In feature area
Calyptorhynchus lathami lathami South-eastern Glossy Black-Cockatoo [67036]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In feature area
Charadrius leschenaultii Greater Sand Plover, Large Sand Plover [877]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In feature area
Climacteris picumnus victoriae Brown Treecreeper (south-eastern) [67062]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In feature area
Diomedea antipodensis Antipodean Albatross [64458]	Vulnerable	Foraging, feeding or related behaviour likely to occur within area	In buffer area only
Diomedea antipodensis gibsoni Gibson's Albatross [82270]	Vulnerable	Foraging, feeding or related behaviour likely to occur within area	In buffer area only
Diomedea epomophora Southern Royal Albatross [89221]	Vulnerable	Foraging, feeding or related behaviour likely to occur within area	In feature area
Diomedea exulans Wandering Albatross [89223]	Vulnerable	Foraging, feeding or related behaviour likely to occur within area	In buffer area only

Scientific Name	Threatened Category	Presence Text	Buffer Status
Diomedea sanfordi Northern Royal Albatross [64456]	Endangered	Species or species habitat may occur within area	In feature area
Falco hypoleucos Grey Falcon [929]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat may occur within area	In feature area
Gallinago hardwickii Latham's Snipe, Japanese Snipe [863]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In feature area
Grantiella picta Painted Honeyeater [470]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In feature area
Hirundapus caudacutus White-throated Needletail [682]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In feature area
Lathamus discolor Swift Parrot [744]	Critically Endangered	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In feature area
Limosa lapponica baueri Nunivak Bar-tailed Godwit, Western Alaskan Bar-tailed Godwit [86380]	Endangered	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In feature area
Macronectes giganteus Southern Giant-Petrel, Southern Giant Petrel [1060]	Endangered	Species or species habitat may occur within area	In buffer area only
Macronectes halli Northern Giant Petrel [1061]	Vulnerable	Foraging, feeding or related behaviour likely to occur within area	In buffer area only
Melanodryas cucullata cucullata South-eastern Hooded Robin, Hooded Robin (south-eastern) [67093]	Endangered	Species or species habitat may occur within area	In feature area
Neophema chrysostoma Blue-winged Parrot [726]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat may occur within area	In feature area

Scientific Name	Threatened Category	Presence Text	Buffer Status
Numenius madagascariensis Eastern Curlew, Far Eastern Curlew [847]	Critically Endangered	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In feature area
Pachyptila turtur subantarctica Fairy Prion (southern) [64445]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In feature area
Pycnoptilus floccosus Pilotbird [525]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat may occur within area	In feature area
Rostratula australis Australian Painted Snipe [77037]	Endangered	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In feature area
Stagonopleura guttata Diamond Firetail [59398]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In feature area
Sternula nereis nereis Australian Fairy Tern [82950]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat may occur within area	In feature area
Thalassarche bulleri Buller's Albatross, Pacific Albatross [64460]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat may occur within area	In buffer area only
Thalassarche bulleri platei Northern Buller's Albatross, Pacific Albatross [82273]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat may occur within area	In buffer area only
Thalassarche cauta Shy Albatross [89224]	Endangered	Foraging, feeding or related behaviour likely to occur within area	In feature area
Thalassarche eremita Chatham Albatross [64457]	Endangered	Foraging, feeding or related behaviour may occur within area	In feature area
Thalassarche impavida Campbell Albatross, Campbell Black-browed Albatross [64459]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat may occur within area	In buffer area only

Scientific Name	Threatened Category	Presence Text	Buffer Status
[Thalassarche melanophris](#) Black-browed Albatross [66472]	Vulnerable	Foraging, feeding or related behaviour likely to occur within area	In buffer area only
[Thalassarche salvini](#) Salvin's Albatross [64463]	Vulnerable	Foraging, feeding or related behaviour likely to occur within area	In feature area
[Thalassarche steadi](#) White-capped Albatross [64462]	Vulnerable	Foraging, feeding or related behaviour known to occur within area	In feature area
[Tringa nebularia](#) Common Greenshank, Greenshank [832]	Endangered	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In feature area
FISH			
[Epinephelus daemelii](#) Black Rockcod, Black Cod, Saddled Rockcod [68449]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In buffer area only
FROG			
[Litoria aurea](#) Green and Golden Bell Frog [1870]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In feature area
[Mixophyes balbus](#) Stuttering Frog, Southern Barred Frog (in Victoria) [1942]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat may occur within area	In buffer area only
[Uperoleia mahonyi](#) Mahony's Toadlet [89189]	Endangered	Species or species habitat may occur within area	In feature area
MAMMAL			
[Chalinolobus dwyeri](#) Large-eared Pied Bat, Large Pied Bat [183]	Endangered	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In feature area
[Dasyurus maculatus maculatus (SE mainland population)](#) Spot-tailed Quoll, Spotted-tail Quoll, Tiger Quoll (southeastern mainland population) [75184]	Endangered	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In feature area

Scientific Name	Threatened Category	Presence Text	Buffer Status
[Petauroides volans](#)			
Greater Glider (southern and central) [254]	Endangered	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In feature area
[Petaurus australis australis](#)			
Yellow-bellied Glider (south-eastern) [87600]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In feature area
[Phascolarctos cinereus (combined populations of Qld, NSW and the ACT)](#)			
Koala (combined populations of Queensland, New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory) [85104]	Endangered	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In feature area
[Potorous tridactylus tridactylus](#)			
Long-nosed Potoroo (northern) [66645]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In feature area
[Pseudomys novaehollandiae](#)			
New Holland Mouse, Pookila [96]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In feature area
[Pteropus poliocephalus](#)			
Grey-headed Flying-fox [186]	Vulnerable	Foraging, feeding or related behaviour known to occur within area	In feature area
PLANT			
[Acacia bynoeana](#)			
Bynoe's Wattle, Tiny Wattle [8575]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In feature area
[Angophora inopina](#)			
Charmhaven Apple [64832]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In feature area
[Caladenia tessellata](#)			
Thick-lipped Spider-orchid, Daddy Long-legs [2119]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In feature area
[Corunastylis insignis](#)			
Wyong Midge Orchid 1, Variable Midge Orchid 1 [84692]	Critically Endangered	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In feature area
[Cryptostylis hunteriana](#)			
Leafless Tongue-orchid [19533]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In feature area

Scientific Name	Threatened Category	Presence Text	Buffer Status
Cynanchum elegans White-flowered Wax Plant [12533]	Endangered	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In feature area
Diuris praecox Newcastle Doubletail [55086]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In feature area
Eucalyptus camfieldii Camfield's Stringybark [15460]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat may occur within area	In feature area
Eucalyptus parramattensis subsp. decadens Earp's Gum, Earp's Dirty Gum [56148]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat may occur within area	In buffer area only
Euphrasia arguta [4325]	Critically Endangered	Species or species habitat may occur within area	In feature area
Genoplesium branwhiteorum listed as Corunastylis sp. Charmhaven (NSW 896673) [93200]	Critically Endangered (listed as Corunastylis sp. Charmhaven	Species or species habitat may occur within area	In feature area
Melaleuca biconvexa Biconvex Paperbark [5583]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat may occur within area	In feature area
Persicaria elatior Knotweed, Tall Knotweed [5831]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat may occur within area	In feature area
Rhizanthella slateri Eastern Underground Orchid [11768]	Endangered	Species or species habitat may occur within area	In feature area
Rhodamnia rubescens Scrub Turpentine, Brown Malletwood [15763]	Critically Endangered	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In feature area
Rhodomyrtus psidioides Native Guava [19162]	Critically Endangered	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In feature area

Scientific Name	Threatened Category	Presence Text	Buffer Status
Rutidosis heterogama Heath Wrinklewort [13132]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In feature area
Syzygium paniculatum Magenta Lilly Pilly, Magenta Cherry, Daguba, Scrub Cherry, Creek Lilly Pilly, Brush Cherry [20307]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In feature area
Tetratheca juncea Black-eyed Susan [21407]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In feature area
Thelymitra adorata Wyong Sun Orchid [84724]	Critically Endangered	Species or species habitat may occur within area	In feature area
Thesium australe Austral Toadflax, Toadflax [15202]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In feature area
REPTILE			
Caretta caretta Loggerhead Turtle [1763]	Endangered	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In buffer area only
Chelonia mydas Green Turtle [1765]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In buffer area only
Dermochelys coriacea Leatherback Turtle, Leathery Turtle, Luth [1768]	Endangered	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In buffer area only
Eretmochelys imbricata Hawksbill Turtle [1766]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In buffer area only
Natator depressus Flatback Turtle [59257]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In buffer area only
SHARK			
Carcharodon carcharias White Shark, Great White Shark [64470]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In buffer area only

Scientific Name	Threatened Category	Presence Text	Buffer Status
Sphyrna lewini			
Scalloped Hammerhead [85267]	Conservation Dependent	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In buffer area only

Listed Migratory Species [Resource Information]

Scientific Name	Threatened Category	Presence Text	Buffer Status
Migratory Marine Birds			
Anous stolidus			
Common Noddy [825]		Species or species habitat may occur within area	In buffer area only
Apus pacificus			
Fork-tailed Swift [678]		Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In feature area
Ardenna grisea			
Sooty Shearwater [82651]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In buffer area only
Calonectris leucomelas			
Streaked Shearwater [1077]		Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In buffer area only
Diomedea antipodensis			
Antipodean Albatross [64458]	Vulnerable	Foraging, feeding or related behaviour likely to occur within area	In buffer area only
Diomedea epomophora			
Southern Royal Albatross [89221]	Vulnerable	Foraging, feeding or related behaviour likely to occur within area	In feature area
Diomedea exulans			
Wandering Albatross [89223]	Vulnerable	Foraging, feeding or related behaviour likely to occur within area	In buffer area only
Diomedea sanfordi			
Northern Royal Albatross [64456]	Endangered	Species or species habitat may occur within area	In feature area
Fregata ariel			
Lesser Frigatebird, Least Frigatebird [1012]		Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In buffer area only

Scientific Name	Threatened Category	Presence Text	Buffer Status
Fregata minor Great Frigatebird, Greater Frigatebird [1013]		Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In buffer area only
Macronectes giganteus Southern Giant-Petrel, Southern Giant Petrel [1060]	Endangered	Species or species habitat may occur within area	In buffer area only
Macronectes halli Northern Giant Petrel [1061]	Vulnerable	Foraging, feeding or related behaviour likely to occur within area	In buffer area only
Phaethon lepturus White-tailed Tropicbird [1014]		Species or species habitat may occur within area	In buffer area only
Thalassarche bulleri Buller's Albatross, Pacific Albatross [64460]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat may occur within area	In buffer area only
Thalassarche cauta Shy Albatross [89224]	Endangered	Foraging, feeding or related behaviour likely to occur within area	In feature area
Thalassarche eremita Chatham Albatross [64457]	Endangered	Foraging, feeding or related behaviour may occur within area	In feature area
Thalassarche impavida Campbell Albatross, Campbell Black-browed Albatross [64459]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat may occur within area	In buffer area only
Thalassarche melanophris Black-browed Albatross [66472]	Vulnerable	Foraging, feeding or related behaviour likely to occur within area	In buffer area only
Thalassarche salvini Salvin's Albatross [64463]	Vulnerable	Foraging, feeding or related behaviour likely to occur within area	In feature area

Scientific Name	Threatened Category	Presence Text	Buffer Status
[Thalassarche steadi](#) White-capped Albatross [64462]	Vulnerable	Foraging, feeding or related behaviour known to occur within area	In feature area
Migratory Marine Species			
[Carcharodon carcharias](#) White Shark, Great White Shark [64470]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In buffer area only
[Caretta caretta](#) Loggerhead Turtle [1763]	Endangered	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In buffer area only
[Chelonia mydas](#) Green Turtle [1765]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In buffer area only
[Dermochelys coriacea](#) Leatherback Turtle, Leathery Turtle, Luth [1768]	Endangered	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In buffer area only
[Eretmochelys imbricata](#) Hawksbill Turtle [1766]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In buffer area only
[Lamna nasus](#) Porbeagle, Mackerel Shark [83288]		Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In buffer area only
[Mobula alfredi as Manta alfredi](#) Reef Manta Ray, Coastal Manta Ray [90033]		Species or species habitat may occur within area	In buffer area only
[Mobula birostris as Manta birostris](#) Giant Manta Ray [90034]		Species or species habitat may occur within area	In buffer area only
[Natator depressus](#) Flatback Turtle [59257]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In buffer area only
Migratory Terrestrial Species			
[Cuculus optatus](#) Oriental Cuckoo, Horsfield's Cuckoo [86651]		Species or species habitat may occur within area	In feature area

Scientific Name	Threatened Category	Presence Text	Buffer Status
Hirundapus caudacutus White-throated Needletail [682]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In feature area
Motacilla flava Yellow Wagtail [644]		Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In feature area
Migratory Wetlands Species			
Actitis hypoleucos Common Sandpiper [59309]		Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In feature area
Calidris acuminata Sharp-tailed Sandpiper [874]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In feature area
Calidris canutus Red Knot, Knot [855]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In feature area
Calidris ferruginea Curlew Sandpiper [856]	Critically Endangered	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In feature area
Calidris melanotos Pectoral Sandpiper [858]		Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In feature area
Charadrius leschenaultii Greater Sand Plover, Large Sand Plover [877]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In feature area
Gallinago hardwickii Latham's Snipe, Japanese Snipe [863]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In feature area
Limosa lapponica Bar-tailed Godwit [844]		Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In feature area
Numenius madagascariensis Eastern Curlew, Far Eastern Curlew [847]	Critically Endangered	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In feature area

Scientific Name	Threatened Category	Presence Text	Buffer Status
Pandion haliaetus			
Osprey [952]		Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In feature area
Pluvialis fulva			
Pacific Golden Plover [25545]		Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In buffer area only
Tringa nebularia			
Common Greenshank, Greenshank [832]	Endangered	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In feature area

Other Matters Protected by the EPBC Act

Commonwealth Lands [Resource Information]

The Commonwealth area listed below may indicate the presence of Commonwealth land in this vicinity. Due to the unreliability of the data source, all proposals should be checked as to whether it impacts on a Commonwealth area, before making a definitive decision. Contact the State or Territory government land department for further information.

Commonwealth Land Name	State	Buffer Status
Communications, Information Technology and the Arts - Telstra Corporation Limited		
Commonwealth Land - Australian Telecommunications Commission [11716]	NSW	In buffer area only

Listed Marine Species [Resource Information]

Scientific Name	Threatened Category	Presence Text	Buffer Status
Bird			
Actitis hypoleucos			
Common Sandpiper [59309]		Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In feature area
Anous stolidus			
Common Noddy [825]		Species or species habitat may occur within area	In buffer area only
Apus pacificus			
Fork-tailed Swift [678]		Species or species habitat likely to occur within area overfly marine area	In feature area
Ardenna grisea as Puffinus griseus			
Sooty Shearwater [82651]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In buffer area only

Scientific Name	Threatened Category	Presence Text	Buffer Status
Bubulcus ibis as Ardea ibis Cattle Egret [66521]		Species or species habitat may occur within area overfly marine area	In feature area
Calidris acuminata Sharp-tailed Sandpiper [874]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In feature area
Calidris canutus Red Knot, Knot [855]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat known to occur within area overfly marine area	In feature area
Calidris ferruginea Curlew Sandpiper [856]	Critically Endangered	Species or species habitat known to occur within area overfly marine area	In feature area
Calidris melanotos Pectoral Sandpiper [858]		Species or species habitat likely to occur within area overfly marine area	In feature area
Calonectris leucomelas Streaked Shearwater [1077]		Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In buffer area only
Charadrius leschenaultii Greater Sand Plover, Large Sand Plover [877]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In feature area
Diomedea antipodensis Antipodean Albatross [64458]	Vulnerable	Foraging, feeding or related behaviour likely to occur within area	In buffer area only
Diomedea antipodensis gibsoni as Diomedea gibsoni Gibson's Albatross [82270]	Vulnerable	Foraging, feeding or related behaviour likely to occur within area	In buffer area only
Diomedea epomophora Southern Royal Albatross [89221]	Vulnerable	Foraging, feeding or related behaviour likely to occur within area	In feature area

Scientific Name	Threatened Category	Presence Text	Buffer Status
Diomedea exulans Wandering Albatross [89223]	Vulnerable	Foraging, feeding or related behaviour likely to occur within area	In buffer area only
Diomedea sanfordi Northern Royal Albatross [64456]	Endangered	Species or species habitat may occur within area	In feature area
Fregata ariel Lesser Frigatebird, Least Frigatebird [1012]		Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In buffer area only
Fregata minor Great Frigatebird, Greater Frigatebird [1013]		Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In buffer area only
Gallinago hardwickii Latham's Snipe, Japanese Snipe [863]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area overfly marine area	In feature area
Haliaeetus leucogaster White-bellied Sea-Eagle [943]		Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In feature area
Hirundapus caudacutus White-throated Needletail [682]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat known to occur within area overfly marine area	In feature area
Lathamus discolor Swift Parrot [744]	Critically Endangered	Species or species habitat known to occur within area overfly marine area	In feature area
Limosa lapponica Bar-tailed Godwit [844]		Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In feature area
Macronectes giganteus Southern Giant-Petrel, Southern Giant Petrel [1060]	Endangered	Species or species habitat may occur within area	In buffer area only

Scientific Name	Threatened Category	Presence Text	Buffer Status
Macronectes halli Northern Giant Petrel [1061]	Vulnerable	Foraging, feeding or related behaviour likely to occur within area	In buffer area only
Merops ornatus Rainbow Bee-eater [670]		Species or species habitat may occur within area overfly marine area	In feature area
Monarcha melanopsis Black-faced Monarch [609]		Species or species habitat likely to occur within area overfly marine area	In feature area
Motacilla flava Yellow Wagtail [644]		Species or species habitat likely to occur within area overfly marine area	In feature area
Myiagra cyanoleuca Satin Flycatcher [612]		Species or species habitat known to occur within area overfly marine area	In feature area
Neophema chrysostoma Blue-winged Parrot [726]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat may occur within area overfly marine area	In feature area
Numenius madagascariensis Eastern Curlew, Far Eastern Curlew [847]	Critically Endangered	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In feature area
Pachyptila turtur Fairy Prion [1066]		Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In feature area
Pandion haliaetus Osprey [952]		Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In feature area
Phaethon lepturus White-tailed Tropicbird [1014]		Species or species habitat may occur within area	In buffer area only

Scientific Name	Threatened Category	Presence Text	Buffer Status
Pluvialis fulva Pacific Golden Plover [25545]		Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	In buffer area only
Pterodroma cervicalis White-necked Petrel [59642]		Species or species habitat may occur within area	In feature area
Rhipidura rufifrons Rufous Fantail [592]		Species or species habitat likely to occur within area overfly marine area	In feature area
Rostratula australis as Rostratula benghalensis (sensu lato) Australian Painted Snipe [77037]	Endangered	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area overfly marine area	In feature area
Sterna striata White-fronted Tern [799]		Migration route may occur within area	In feature area
Symposiachrus trivirgatus as Monarcha trivirgatus Spectacled Monarch [83946]		Species or species habitat may occur within area overfly marine area	In feature area
Thalassarche bulleri Buller's Albatross, Pacific Albatross [64460]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat may occur within area	In buffer area only
Thalassarche bulleri platei as Thalassarche sp. nov. Northern Buller's Albatross, Pacific Albatross [82273]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat may occur within area	In buffer area only
Thalassarche cauta Shy Albatross [89224]	Endangered	Foraging, feeding or related behaviour likely to occur within area	In feature area
Thalassarche eremita Chatham Albatross [64457]	Endangered	Foraging, feeding or related behaviour may occur within area	In feature area

Scientific Name	Threatened Category	Presence Text	Buffer Status
Thalassarche impavida			
Campbell Albatross, Campbell Black-browed Albatross [64459]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat may occur within area	In buffer area only
Thalassarche melanophris			
Black-browed Albatross [66472]	Vulnerable	Foraging, feeding or related behaviour likely to occur within area	In buffer area only
Thalassarche salvini			
Salvin's Albatross [64463]	Vulnerable	Foraging, feeding or related behaviour likely to occur within area	In feature area
Thalassarche steadi			
White-capped Albatross [64462]	Vulnerable	Foraging, feeding or related behaviour known to occur within area	In feature area
Tringa nebularia			
Common Greenshank, Greenshank [832]	Endangered	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area overfly marine area	In feature area
Reptile			
Caretta caretta			
Loggerhead Turtle [1763]	Endangered	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In buffer area only
Chelonia mydas			
Green Turtle [1765]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In buffer area only
Dermochelys coriacea			
Leatherback Turtle, Leathery Turtle, Luth [1768]	Endangered	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In buffer area only
Eretmochelys imbricata			
Hawksbill Turtle [1766]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In buffer area only
Natator depressus			
Flatback Turtle [59257]	Vulnerable	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	In buffer area only

Extra Information

Regional Forest Agreements [Resource Information]

Note that all areas with completed RFAs have been included. Please see the associated resource information for specific caveats and use limitations associated with RFA boundary information.

RFA Name	State	Buffer Status
North East NSW RFA	New South Wales	In feature area

EPBC Act Referrals [Resource Information]

Title of referral	Reference	Referral Outcome	Assessment Status	Buffer Status
Not controlled action				
Improving rabbit biocontrol: releasing another strain of RHDV, sthrn two thirds of Australia	2015/7522	Not Controlled Action	Completed	In feature area
Wallarah Peninsula Residential development	2004/1490	Not Controlled Action	Completed	In feature area
Not controlled action (particular manner)				
Multipurpose Centre Dora St Lot 122 DP 881828 Morisset	2003/1084	Not Controlled Action (Particular Manner)	Post-Approval	In feature area

Biologically Important Areas [Resource Information]

Scientific Name	Behaviour	Presence	Buffer Status
Seabirds			
Ardenna grisea			
Sooty Shearwater [82651]	Foraging	Likely to occur	In buffer area only
Ardenna pacifica			
Wedge-tailed Shearwater [84292]	Foraging	Likely to occur	In buffer area only
Ardenna tenuirostris			
Short-tailed Shearwater [82652]	Foraging	Likely to occur	In buffer area only

Bioregional Assessments [Resource Information]

SubRegion	BioRegion	Website	Buffer Status
Hunter	Northern Sydney Basin	BA website	In feature area

Caveat

1 PURPOSE

This report is designed to assist in identifying the location of matters of national environmental significance (MNES) and other matters protected by the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cth) (EPBC Act) which may be relevant in determining obligations and requirements under the EPBC Act.

The report contains the mapped locations of:

- World and National Heritage properties;
- Wetlands of International and National Importance;
- Commonwealth and State/Territory reserves;
- distribution of listed threatened, migratory and marine species;
- listed threatened ecological communities; and
- other information that may be useful as an indicator of potential habitat value.

2 DISCLAIMER

This report is not intended to be exhaustive and should only be relied upon as a general guide as mapped data is not available for all species or ecological communities listed under the EPBC Act (see below). Persons seeking to use the information contained in this report to inform the referral of a proposed action under the EPBC Act should consider the limitations noted below and whether additional information is required to determine the existence and location of MNES and other protected matters.

Where data is available to inform the mapping of protected species, the presence type (e.g. known, likely or may occur) that can be determined from the data is indicated in general terms. It is the responsibility of any person using or relying on the information in this report to ensure that it is suitable for the circumstances of any proposed use. The Commonwealth cannot accept responsibility for the consequences of any use of the report or any part thereof. To the maximum extent allowed under governing law, the Commonwealth will not be liable for any loss or damage that may be occasioned directly or indirectly through the use of, or reliance on the contents of this report.

3 DATA SOURCES

Threatened ecological communities

For threatened ecological communities where the distribution is well known, maps are generated based on information contained in recovery plans, State vegetation maps and remote sensing imagery and other sources. Where threatened ecological community distributions are less well known, existing vegetation maps and point location data are used to produce indicative distribution maps.

Threatened, migratory and marine species

Threatened, migratory and marine species distributions have been discerned through a variety of methods. Where distributions are well known and if time permits, distributions are inferred from either thematic spatial data (i.e. vegetation, soils, geology, elevation, aspect, terrain, etc.) together with point locations and described habitat; or modelled (MAXENT or BIOCLIM habitat modelling) using point locations and environmental data layers.

Where little information is available for a species or large number of maps are required in a short time-frame, maps are derived either from 0.04 or 0.02 decimal degree cells; by an automated process using polygon capture techniques (static two kilometre grid cells, alpha-hull and convex hull); or captured manually or by using topographic features (national park boundaries, islands, etc.).

In the early stages of the distribution mapping process (1999-early 2000s) distributions were defined by degree blocks, 100K or 250K map sheets to rapidly create distribution maps. More detailed distribution mapping methods are used to update these distributions when time permits.

4 LIMITATIONS

The following species and ecological communities have not been mapped and do not appear in this report:

- threatened species listed as extinct or considered vagrants;
- some recently listed species and ecological communities;
- some listed migratory and listed marine species, which are not listed as threatened species; and
- migratory species that are very widespread, vagrant, or only occur in Australia in small numbers.

The following groups have been mapped, but may not cover the complete distribution of the species:

- listed migratory and/or listed marine seabirds, which are not listed as threatened, have only been mapped for recorded breeding sites; and
- seals which have only been mapped for breeding sites near the Australian continent

The breeding sites may be important for the protection of the Commonwealth Marine environment.

Refer to the metadata for the feature group (using the Resource Information link) for the currency of the information.

Acknowledgements

This database has been compiled from a range of data sources. The department acknowledges the following custodians who have contributed valuable data and advice:

-Office of Environment and Heritage, New South Wales
-Department of Environment and Primary Industries, Victoria
-Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment, Tasmania
-Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources, South Australia
-Department of Land and Resource Management, Northern Territory
-Department of Environmental and Heritage Protection, Queensland
-Department of Parks and Wildlife, Western Australia
-Environment and Planning Directorate, ACT
-Birdlife Australia
-Australian Bird and Bat Banding Scheme
-Australian National Wildlife Collection
-Natural history museums of Australia
-Museum Victoria
-Australian Museum
-South Australian Museum
-Queensland Museum
-Online Zoological Collections of Australian Museums
-Queensland Herbarium
-National Herbarium of NSW
-Royal Botanic Gardens and National Herbarium of Victoria
-Tasmanian Herbarium
-State Herbarium of South Australia
-Northern Territory Herbarium
-Western Australian Herbarium
-Australian National Herbarium, Canberra
-University of New England
-Ocean Biogeographic Information System
-Australian Government, Department of Defence
Forestry Corporation, NSW
-Geoscience Australia
-CSIRO
-Australian Tropical Herbarium, Cairns
-eBird Australia
-Australian Government – Australian Antarctic Data Centre
-Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory
-Australian Government National Environmental Science Program
-Australian Institute of Marine Science
-Reef Life Survey Australia
-American Museum of Natural History
-Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Inveresk, Tasmania
-Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart, Tasmania
-Other groups and individuals

The Department is extremely grateful to the many organisations and individuals who provided expert advice and information on numerous draft distributions.

Please feel free to provide feedback via the Contact us page.

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Appendix F

SIA Worksheet

Social Impact Assessment (SIA) Worksheet

Project name: Vales Point Battery Energy Storage System

Date: 04/07/2024 1-Jul-25

CATEGORIES OF SOCIAL IMPACTS	POTENTIAL IMPACTS ON PEOPLE		PREVIOUS INVESTIGATION OF IMPACT		CUMULATIVE IMPACTS		ELEMENTS OF IMPACTS - Based on preliminary investigation					ASSESSMENT LEVEL FOR EACH IMPACT				SIA METHODS	PROJECT REFINEMENT	MITIGATION / ENHANCEMENT MEASURES
what **social impact categories** could be affected by the project activities	What impacts are likely, and what concerns/aspirations have people expressed about the impact? Summarise how each relevant stakeholder group might experience the impact. NB. Where there are multiple stakeholder groups affected differently by an impact, or more than one impact from the activity, please add an additional row.	Is the impact expected to be **positive or negative**	Has this impact previously been investigated (on this or other project/s)?	If "yes - this project," briefly describe the previous investigation. If "yes - other project," identify the other project and investigation	Will this impact combine with others from this project (think about when and where), and/or with impacts from other projects (cumulative)?	If yes, identify which other impacts and/or projects	Will the project activity (without mitigation or enhancement) cause a material social impact in terms of its: You can also consider the various magnitudes of these characteristics					Level of assessment for each social impact	What methods and data sources will be used to investigate this impact?			What methods will be used to investigate this impact?	Has the project been refined in response to preliminary impact evaluation or stakeholder feedback?	What **mitigation / enhancement measures** are being considered?
							extent i.e. number of people potentially affected?	**duration** of expected impacts? (i.e. construction vs operational phase)	**intensity** of expected impacts i.e. scale or degree of change?	**sensitivity** or **vulnerability** of people potentially affected?	**level of concern/interest** of people potentially affected?		Secondary data	Primary Data - Consultation	Primary Data - Research			
surroundings	Reduced public safety along the main arterial roads may be anticipated due to increased construction vehicle activity	Negative	Yes - other project	Waratah Super BESS EIS, assessed as low-negative significance prior to mitigation Awaba BESS EIS- assessed as medium- negative significance prior to mitigation Eraring BESS EIS, assessed as low-negative significance	Yes	Chain Valley Colliery Consolidation Project Vales Point Solar Farm Eraring BESS Awaba BESS Kiar BESS Toukley Desalination Water Treatment Plant	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Detailed assessment of the impact	Required	Broad consultation	Targeted research			
access	Delay in travel times for road users associated with construction vehicle traffic	Negative	Yes - other project	Waratah Super BESS EIS, assessed as low-negative significance prior to mitigation Awaba BESS- EIS assessed as medium- negative significance prior to mitigation	Yes	Vales Point Solar Farm Eraring BESS Awaba BESS Kiar BESS	Yes	No	Unknown	No	No	Standard assessment of the impact	Required	Targeted consultation	Potentially targeted research			
access	Increased demand for short-term accomodation due to construction workforce influx	Negative	Yes - other project	Waratah Super BESS EIS, assessed as low-negative significance prior to mitigation Eraring BESS EIS, assessed as low-negative significance	No		No	No	Unknown	No	No	Minor assessment of the impact	Required	Limited - if required	Not required			
livelihoods	Livelihood benefits to local businesses due to the presence of the temporary construction workforce	Positive	Yes - other project	Waratah Super BESS EIS, assessed as low-positive significance prior to enhancement Eraring BESS EIS, assessed	Yes	Vales Point Solar Farm	No	No	Unknown	No	No	Minor assessment of the impact	Required	Targeted consultation	Potentially targeted research			
surroundings	Decreased social amenity due to noise	Negative	Yes - other project	Waratah Super BESS EIS, assessed as low-negative significance prior to enhancement Awaba BESS EIS- assessed as medium- negative prior to mitigation	No		No	Yes	Unknown	No	No	Standard assessment of the impact	Required	Targeted consultation	Potentially targeted research			
surroundings	Impact on environmental values of importance to the community	Negative	No	Eraring BESS EIS, assessed as low-negative significance	No		No	Yes	No	No	No	Minor assessment of the impact	Required	Limited - if required	Not required			
decision-making systems	Inequitable distribution of positive and negative impacts, and how they are experienced by different groups, particularly more vulnerable groups	Negative	No		Unknown		No	Yes	Unknown	Yes	No	Standard assessment of the impact	Required	Targeted consultation	Potentially targeted research			
livelihoods	Enhanced livelihoods and human capital development due to the employment and procurement opportunities associated with the Project	Positive	Yes - other project	Waratah Super BESS EIS, assessed as low-positive significance prior to enhancement	Yes	Vales Point Solar Farm	Unknown	Yes	Unknown	No	No	Standard assessment of the impact	Required	Targeted consultation	Potentially targeted research			
livelihoods	Training and education opportunities to upskill local residents, particularly youth	Positive	No	Eraring BESS EIS, assessed as low-positive significance	Yes	Vales Point Solar Farm	Unknown	No	Unknown	No	No	Standard assessment of the impact	Required	Targeted consultation	Potentially targeted research			
surroundings	Public safety and enviromental pollution risk associated with a potential battery fire event	Negative	Yes - other project	Waratah Super BESS EIS, assessed as low-negative significance prior to mitigation	Yes	Vales Point Solar Farm	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Detailed assessment of the impact	Required	Broad consultation	Targeted research			
surroundings	Potential environment and health impacts associated with battery chemical leaching and fire suppression water run-off	Negative	No		No		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Detailed assessment of the impact	Required	Broad consultation	Targeted research			
access	Increased energy security for local residents during peak times	Positive	Yes - other project	Awaba BESS - assessed as medium-positive significance	Yes	Chain Valley Colliery Consolidation Project Vales Point Solar Farm BESS Projects identified in Table 3.2 of the SISR	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Standard assessment of the impact	Required	Targeted consultation	Potentially targeted research			
decision-making systems	Intergenerational inequity associated with potential reduced reliance on fossil fuels through the facilitation of renewable energy usage	Positive	No	Waratah Super BESS EIS, assessed as medium-positive significance Awaba BESS EIS- assessed as medium-positive significance Vales Point Solar Farm EIS-positive significance	Yes	Vales Point Solar Farm	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	No	No	Standard assessment of the impact	Required	Targeted consultation	Potentially targeted research			
decision-making systems	Intergenerational equity associated with managing waste associated with decommissioning	Negative	No		No		No	Unknown	Unknown	No	No	Standard assessment of the impact	Required	Targeted consultation	Potentially targeted research			

Appendix G

Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan

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Vales Point Battery Energy Storage System

Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan

July 2025

Table of contents

Introduction and context

Purpose

This community and stakeholder engagement plan (CSEP) has been developed to support the Vales Point Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) project. It is a working document which will be used to plan, implement and manage communication and engagement activities with key stakeholders and the community throughout the project's planning, development and delivery.

The CSEP has been developed in line with Delta and NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) communication and engagement principles and guidelines. It outlines the:

- Level of engagement to be undertaken
- Key stakeholders
- Potential issues, risks and mitigation activities
- Communication and engagement activities to ensure effective, relevant and timely input from stakeholders and the community
- Communication protocols and responsibilities within the project team.

The CSEP is dynamic document and will be monitored, evaluated and updated at each project phase. The focus of this version is the project's planning, development and assessment phase.

Project background

Delta, in partnership with Samsung C&T, is proposing to develop a large-scale BESS at the Vales Point Power Station site. Once operational, the BESS will provide critical energy storage capacity to help keep NSW's electricity network stable and reliable as more renewable energy sources, including solar and wind, are added to the network.

The proposal

The proposed project involves the installation, operation, maintenance and decommissioning or re-powering of a 400-megawatt (MW / 800-megawatt-hour (MWh) BESS, supported by ancillary infrastructure.

The BESS would connect directly to the adjacent Transgrid Vales Point Substation. It would operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week, storing and exporting electricity as required.

The expected operational life of the project is approximately 30 years, at which time a decision would be made to either decommission or re-power the facility, subject to planning approvals.

Project features

The BESS would store electricity from the grid and release it during periods of high demand. Key features include:

- Construction and operation of a 400 MW / 800 MWh BESS.
- Overhead connection to the Transgrid Vales Point 330kV Substation.
- Other ancillary infrastructure and services required for the project, including:
    - Temporary construction facilities
    - Security fencing

- Internal access tracks and parking areas
- Hardstand areas
- Operations and maintenance buildings.

Project site

The project is proposed to be located on a brownfield site within the Vales Point Power Station site, on the footprint of the former A Station (demolished 2014). The site is in the Central Coast Local Government Area (LGA), approximately 1km southeast of Mannering Park town centre.

This site was selected due to:

- Located entirely within the existing power station boundary in a footprint previously used for power generation.
- Immediate proximity to the Transgrid Vales Point 330 kV Substation.
- Accessibility to the existing public road network.
- Currently unused land, with the closest dwelling located approximately 500m to the north.

Delta owns and operates Vales Point Station and is a key electricity generator in the National Electricity Market (NEM), supplying around 10% of NSW's electricity – or about 4% of total NEM demand. Delta has extensive experience in developing, constructing and operating large-scale electricity and generation infrastructure.

Project benefits

The Project is expected to deliver long-term benefits to NSW and the local community:

- Support the NEM by supplying up to 400 MW of power supply during peak periods.
- Provide essential energy storage capacity to help keep NSW's electricity network stable and reliable as more renewable energy, including solar and wind, is added to the network.
- Support renewables integration and provide network stability by storing excess electricity from the grid during periods of over-supply and providing additional energy when needed.
- Benefit local and regional economies through creating construction jobs and operating and maintenance roles, as well as opportunities for local suppliers.

Project status

The project is currently in the scoping and preliminary assessment stage. This stage involves:

- Preparing a Scoping Report and Request for Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) for lodgement with DPHI.
- Early engagement with stakeholders and the community to inform the Scoping Report and SEARS request.

The next phase of the project involves preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and State Significant Development Application (SSDA) to seek planning approval from DPHI. This phase involves:

- Conducting technical and environmental investigations.
- Engaging the community and stakeholders and seeking feedback.
- Preparing and lodging the SSDA with DPHI.

A final decision to proceed by Delta and Samsung C&T is expected in mid-2026, pending completion of the investigations and planning approval. Construction is subject to the final decision and environmental planning approval.

Community engagement and SSD process

Under Clause 4.12(8) of the *NSW Environmental Planning and Assessment Act* 1979 (EP&A Act), an EIS will be prepared as part of the SSDA process.

This assessment will involve extensive engagement with the community and stakeholders who may be impacted by, or have an interest in, the project. There will be opportunities to provide feedback on the project and its potential impacts and proposed mitigation measures.

The SEARs will identify specific assessment considerations relevant to the project that must be addressed in the EIS, including the requirements for stakeholder and community engagement.

Engagement to date

Early engagement with stakeholders and the community commenced in March 2025, following the public announcement of the project in late February 2025. This engagement builds on Delta's long-standing communications and engagement program which supports its operations, and the strong relationships developed with the community and stakeholders over 60 years of operation.

Since March, engagement has focused on introducing the project to neighbouring residents, the broader community and key stakeholders. It provided information on the project's scope, timing, benefits, potential impacts and engagement process. Feedback was also sought to gain an early understanding of the community's values and aspirations for the project, perceived benefits and concerns, and communication preferences.

Feedback and sentiment to date has been largely positive, with strong support for the project's potential to improve local energy security, contribute to the transition away from fossil fuels, and create employment and procurement opportunities in the region. These benefits were seen as being of medium to high significance, particularly in relation to intergenerational equity and improved local livelihoods.

Concerns raised during consultation primarily centred on potential safety risks, including the possibility of battery fires and associated chemical leaching or fire suppression water runoff. Some community members also raised concerns about potential traffic impacts and delays during construction. Additional feedback related to ensuring equitable distribution of project benefits and impacts, especially among vulnerable groups, and decommissioning waste management.

This feedback has informed the development of the project's Scoping Report and this CSEP. The EIS will include detailed assessment of the potential environmental and health impacts of chemical leaching, the risk of battery fire, and construction-related traffic safety, reflecting the key areas of concern. Despite these issues, overall community sentiment is supportive, particularly where appropriate mitigation measures and ongoing engagement are in place.

Project milestones

The following table outlines indicative key milestones, noting timing is subject to change.

Project milestone	Date
Prepare Scoping Report and SEARS	H1 2025
Submit Scoping Report and Request SEARS	July 2025
Prepare SSDA and complete technical investigations	H2 2025
Submit SSDA and Public Exhibition	Late 2025
SSDA Public Exhibition	Early 2026
Prepare and Lodge Submissions Report	Early 2026
Project Determination	Mid 2026
Decision to Invest/Proceed	Mid 2026
Construction	Late 2026
BESS operational	From 2027 (subject to approval)

Project area profile

The project is located entirely within Central Coast LGA in NSW, which is home to approximately 346,596 residents (ABS 2021). It is situated near the border of the Lake Macquarie LGA, which has a population of 213,845 and surrounds Australia's largest coastal saltwater lake, Lake Macquarie.

The project site lies 1km south of Mannering Park and is bordered by approximately 1,500 homes in the surrounding communities, including Mannering Park (1km north), Kingfisher Shores (1.3km southeast), and Macquarie Shores (4km southeast). The nearest residential properties are located around 500m north of the project area.

Newcastle is located 50km to the north and Wyong 21km to the south. The site is close to the M1 Pacific Motorway – Australia's primary freight and transport corridor linking Sydney with Central Coast, Newcastle, Hunter region and Queensland.

The project area falls within the Swansea state electorate and the federal electorate of Shortland and lies close to the boundary of the Lake Macquarie state electorate.

The Central Coast and Lake Macquarie regions have experienced significant population growth over the past 30 years. These communities are navigating demographic shifts including an ageing population, varying access to economic and educational opportunities, workforce pressures, and infrastructure constraints. Despite these challenges, the region offers strong foundations for future development, including a resilient and connected community, a skilled workforce with high trade qualifications, and strategic transport links.

The region also has a long-standing presence of coal mining and power generation industries. Its emerging renewable energy sector and ongoing infrastructure investment present opportunities for economic diversification and improved liveability. The area's natural environment remains a valued and defining feature for the local community.

A map of the project location is provided at **Appendix A**.

Communication and engagement objectives

The objectives of this communication and engagement plan are to:

- Build awareness and understanding of the project and relationships with stakeholders.
- Introduce the project team and provide a central point of contact.
- Explain the need for the project including scope, benefits, impacts and mitigation.
- Keep stakeholders and the community informed and provide opportunities for feedback.
- Understand and consider community and stakeholder values, aspirations and concerns.
- Explain the parameters for engagement including what is and isn't negotiable.
- Ensure issues and concerns are identified early and effectively managed.
- Manage enquiries and feedback in a timely, respectful way.
- Monitor and evaluate feedback and adjust planning and delivery as necessary.

Stakeholder analysis

The following stakeholders are identified as having potential interest in the project. These stakeholders may either be directly involved in, or impacted by, the project or may influence project outcomes. A detailed stakeholder listing, including names and contact details, is available in the Stakeholder Contacts List.

Category	Stakeholder	Potential areas of interest/concern	Engagement method
Elected government representatives	• State Member for Swansea • State Member for Lake Macquarie • Federal Member for Shortland • NSW Minister for Climate Change, Energy, Environment and Heritage	• Alignment with State and Federal energy commitments • Employment opportunities and economic benefits to region • Construction and operational impacts and mitigation measures • Community concern and engagement process and outcomes	• Correspondence and briefings as required.
Local Government	• Central Coast Council • Lake Macquarie City Council	• Traffic impacts during construction • Impacts to environment and community • Coordination with council works and other projects • Community engagement process and outcomes	• Correspondence and briefings as required.
State Government	• NSW Treasury	• Vales Point Power Station land use	• Correspondence and briefings as required.
	• NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure	• SEARS compliance • Environmental and social impacts and mitigation • Community and stakeholder engagement	
	• NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, Environment and Water	• Environmental and cultural heritage impacts and mitigation	
	• NSW Environmental Protection Authority	• Compliance with statutory requirements	

Category	Stakeholder	Potential areas of interest/concern	Engagement method
	• NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development	• Environmental impacts and mitigation	
	• Transport for NSW	• Traffic impacts and management during construction	
Emergency services	• Fire and Rescue NSW • NSW Rural Fire Service • NSW Ambulance • NSW Police • Central Coast Emergency Management Committee (LEMC) • NSW State Emergency Service (Wyong)	• Safety risks to land, structures and local community • Emergency management procedures • Provisions for emergency services access during construction and operation • Traffic impacts and management during construction	• Correspondence and briefings as required.
Utilities	• Transgrid	• Technical compliance • Provisions for access	• Workshops and meetings as required

Neighbours	• Residents/property owners in nearest streets:
	  ○ Mannering Park Peninsular: Griffith St, Kenneth St, Dunvegan St, Spencer Rd, Campbell Parade, Catherine St, Harwood Cl, Kevin St, Halcyon St, Eliot St, Kenneth Pl, Vales Rd/Warwick Ave
	  ○ Kingfisher Shores: Tall Timbers Rd, Lakeshore Ave, Morotai Ave, Karoola Ave
	  ○ Macquarie Shores Over 50s Lifestyle Community
	• Eatons Frame and Truss
	• First Mannering Park Scouts
	• Central Coast Model Aero Club
		• Construction impacts and mitigation including noise, dust and vibration
		• Operational impacts and mitigation including noise and fire safety
		• Traffic impacts during construction
		• Urban amenity and local heritage
		• Property values
			• Correspondence
			• Community updates
			• Community information sessions
			• Meetings as required

Category	Stakeholder	Potential areas of interest/concern	Engagement method
First Nations	• Darkinjung LALC • Awabakal LALC • Traditional Owners	• Cultural heritage impacts • Employment and supplier opportunities	• Correspondence and briefings as required
Local community	• Residents in Mannering Park, Wyee Point, Chain Valley Bay, Gwandalan and Summerland Point.	• Local employment opportunities • Construction and operational impacts and mitigation including noise and safety • Changed traffic conditions during construction • Urban amenity and local heritage	• Project website • Community updates • Community information sessions • Advertising and media activities
	• Vales Point Community and Regional Environment (CARE) Forum	• Local employment opportunities • Impacts to local businesses and trade during construction • Construction and operational impacts and mitigation including noise and safety • Changed traffic conditions during construction • Urban amenity and heritage	• Quarterly briefings • Correspondence • Community updates • Community information sessions
	• Community interest groups – refer detailed listing in Stakeholder Contacts List		• Vales Point CARE Forum • Correspondence • Project website • Community updates • Briefings as required
	• Environmental groups – refer detailed listing in Stakeholder Contacts List	• Environment and heritage impacts and mitigation	• Correspondence • Project website • Community updates • Briefings as required

	• Education providers
	  ○ Mannering Park Public School
	  ○ Goodstart Early Learning Mannering Park
		• Changed traffic conditions during construction
		• Construction and operational impacts and mitigation including noise and safety
			• Correspondence and meetings as required
			• Project website
			• Community updates

Category	Stakeholder	Potential areas of interest/concern	Engagement method
	• Road users	• Traffic impacts and safety during construction	• Project website • VMS signage
Local business	• Businesses in Mannering Park and surrounding area – refer detailed listing in Stakeholder Contacts List	• Impacts to trade during construction • Construction impacts and mitigation including noise, dust, vibration and changed traffic conditions • Operational impacts and mitigation including noise and fire safety	• Correspondence • Community updates • Community information sessions • Meetings as required
	• Accommodation providers – refer detailed listing in Stakeholder Contacts List		
	• Bus companies	• Traffic impacts and management during construction	• Correspondence and briefings as required
	• Business NSW Central Coast	• Local employment and supplier opportunities • Regional economic benefits • Impacts to local businesses during construction	• Correspondence and briefings as required

Risks and mitigation

The following table provides a high-level overview of the potential communication and engagement risks for the project and how they could be mitigated.

Risk	Mitigation
Confusion with other BESS projects in the area	• Consistent application of project branding. • Clear, consistent messaging on project scope, location and timing, tailored to audience. • Protocols and processes in place to guide timely communication and engagement.
Planning and engagement fatigue with other projects in the area	• Ensure communication and engagement activities are well planned, managed and purposeful. Utilise existing channels where possible. • Clearly outline the project timeline and process, highlighting the role and importance of engagement participation and feedback. • Timely response to enquiries and feedback.
Confusion about planning and/or delivery process	• Clear communication about the planning and delivery process and timeline, and ensure this information is easily accessible. • Clear messaging on feedback opportunities, project negotiables and non-negotiables and how feedback is used in decision making.
Dissatisfaction about opportunities to provide feedback and/or influence outcomes	• Be clear about the level of input and influence stakeholders and community will have, including what is and isn't negotiable. • Reiterate the project's engagement process and timeline in all communication and engagement activities. • Ensure enquiries and input are addressed and responded to in a timely, respectful manner. • Timely communication of engagement outcomes to stakeholders and community.
Concerns about potential impacts and changes the project will bring to area	• Monitor enquiries and feedback to identify and address concerns and issues. • Keep key stakeholders informed and notified of concerns and issues and how they are being addressed. • Clear and timely communication on impacts and mitigation. • Highlight benefits in communication and engagement activities.
Frustration with delayed planning approvals and/or changes in project scope, timing and impacts	• Protocols in place to ensure regular and timely updates to internal and external stakeholders. • Early, regular engagement with elected representatives and local councils on assessment process, impacts and mitigation measures. • Clear, easily accessible information on project scope, timeline and the assessment and decision process and points. • Keep stakeholders and community informed as project progresses, including timely updates on changes.

Key messages

Key messages will be developed and updated as the project progresses to ensure consistency across all communication and engagement activities. These messages are

Project team members should be aware of the key messages and be informed of any changes to ensure consistent information is shared with the community and stakeholders.

Key messages for this project include:

- Project details including objectives, scope and benefits
- Project timeframes and milestones
- Key impact and mitigation statements
- How the community and stakeholders can participate, including what is and isn't negotiable
- How community and stakeholder feedback will be used in developing the project
- Project contact details and how to make enquiries or provide feedback.

The messages, including FAQ, are maintained and available in the separate Key Messages document.

Communication and engagement approach

The communication and engagement approach for the Vales Point BESS will focus on early, proactive, transparent and regular engagement throughout all stages of the project to:

- Build awareness and understanding of the project.
- Ensure meaningful opportunities for input and feedback.
- Proactively identify and address concerns and issues early.
- Help achieve better outcomes for the project and community.

The approach is guided by NSW Government's Undertaking Engagement Guidelines for State Significant Projects (March 2024) and principles of open and inclusive, easily accessible, relevant, timely and meaningful engagement.

The approach is also guided by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Spectrum of Public Participation. The level of participation will vary throughout the project, depending on the stakeholder group, activity, expected level of impact and the scope for stakeholder and community input and influence.

IAP2 spectrum as applied to Vales Point BESS:

	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
OUR COMMITMENT	We will provide balanced, objective and timely information to help stakeholders and the community understand the project, including: • Scope • Benefits • Opportunities • Impacts • Mitigation • How people can participate • Negotiables and non-negotiables • Decision-making process.	We will seek feedback from stakeholders and the community to inform development of the project's negotiable aspects and SSDA. We will provide feedback on how this input was considered in the decision-making process.	We will test options and solutions with stakeholders, affected property owners and community representatives to understand their values, aspirations and concerns, and ensure these are considered.	We will work with key stakeholders to develop solutions or alternatives for relevant aspects of the project.	Stakeholder and community feedback will be considered in project team and government decision-making, including the SSDA.

First Nations engagement

Delts is committed to engaging proactively and forming meaningful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples whose Country our operations and this project are located on.

In line with DPHI engagement guidelines and Connecting with Country Framework, we will engage with LALCs, Traditional Owners and First Nations groups to deepen our understanding of cultural heritage and embed cultural values, knowledge and aspirations into the planning and delivery of the project.

This includes identifying opportunities to incorporate Country-centred design principles and ensure that First Nations voices meaningfully shape project outcomes.

Communication and engagement tools

A range of engagement and communication tools tailored to each stakeholder's needs will be used and may change as the project progresses through the planning, development and assessment phase.

Tool	Purpose	Stakeholders
Briefings	Presentations and discussions with stakeholders and community groups to gather feedback.	All stakeholders (as required)
Project email and telephone	Project email address and telephone available to stakeholders for questions, concerns and feedback.	All stakeholders and community
Project website	Dedicated webpage on the Delta website to provide timely and accessible information. All communication activities to direct people to the webpage as a single source of information.	All stakeholders and community
Interactive online tools	Online platforms that allow community participation including surveys, feedback forms, submissions and public meetings.	All stakeholders and community
Letterbox drops	Notify neighbouring properties and residents to raise project awareness and how to find more information and provide feedback.	Neighbouring property owners and residents
Electronic Direct Mail (EDM)	Project updates and newsletters emailed to people registered to receive project information.	Community
Pop-up information sessions	Staffed information sessions at a physical location in community displaying information, plans, documents and surveys.	Community
Static information displays	Static information displays of project information, plans and documents.	Community
Media, social media and advertising	Media and social media notices announcements and advertising to advise stakeholders and community of key project information, pop-up information sessions and feedback and exhibition periods.	All stakeholders and community
Surveys	Survey questionnaires used to seek stakeholder and community input and collect feedback.	All stakeholders and community
Workshops and forums	Structured sessions with stakeholders and community representatives to explore options and seek input.	Key stakeholders and community representatives
Stakeholder contacts database	A stakeholder database to be maintained for duration of the project and used to record all contact, details of enquiries/concerns, and corresponding actions.	All stakeholders and community

Action plan

The following activities are planned and will be monitored throughout implementation with adjustments made as required.

Timing	Activity	Details	Audience	Responsibility	Status
Early Engagement – Scoping Report and SEARS					
February to July 2025	Announce project	• Media release • Social media • CARE Forum presentation	• Community • All stakeholders	C&E Lead	Complete
	Establish C&E foundations	• CSEP • Key messages and FAQs • Stakeholder database • Project webpage • C&E protocols	• Project team	C&E Lead	Complete
	Start connection process	• Meetings and correspondence	• Transgrid	Project Manager	Ongoing
	Start land use consultation	• Meetings and correspondence	• NSW Treasury	Project Manager	Ongoing
	Introduce project scope, timing, benefits, potential impacts and engagement process. Invite early feedback to inform the CSEP and social impact scoping.	• Community update • Letterbox drop • Project webpage • Online survey • Stakeholder notifications and interviews	• Neighbours • Local businesses • Local community • CARE Forum • Local councils • LALC	C&E Lead Project Manager	Complete

		• CARE Forum presentation and consultation	• Emergency services		
	Submit Scoping Report and Request SEARS for approval	• Project webpage • Stakeholder notifications • CARE Forum presentation	• Neighbours • Community • All stakeholders	C&E Lead Project Manager	Underway
EIS and SSDA Preparation					
September to October 2025	Seek feedback on concept design, project impacts and mitigation	• Project webpage • Online survey • Community update • Letterbox drop • EDM • Pop-up information sessions • Static information displays • Media announcement • Social media and digital advertising • Stakeholder letters and briefings • CARE Forum presentation and consultation	• Neighbours • Local businesses • Local community • CARE Forum • LALC • Local councils • State agencies • Emergency services • Elected government representatives	C&E Lead Project Manager	
November 2025	Report back on consultation outcomes. Project update and next steps.	• Project webpage • Community update • EDM • Media announcement • Stakeholder emails • CARE Forum email	• Neighbours • Community • All stakeholders	C&E Lead Project Manager	

December 2025	SSDA lodgement for approval	• Media announcement • Project webpage • EDM • Stakeholder emails • CARE Forum email	• Neighbours • Community • All stakeholders	C&E Lead Project Manager	
EIS and SSDA Exhibition					
February 2025	Announce SSDA exhibition period and invite feedback via Major Projects Planning Portal	• Media announcement • Project webpage • Community update • Letterbox drop • EDM • Pop-up information sessions • Static information displays • Social media and digital advertising • Stakeholder letters and briefings • CARE Forum presentation and consultation	• Neighbours • Community • All stakeholders	C&E Lead Project Manager	
Post-Exhibition					
March to April 2026	Prepare and lodge Submissions Report	• Media announcement • Project webpage • EDM • Stakeholder emails • CARE Forum email	• Neighbours • Community • All stakeholders	C&E Lead Project Manager	

Mid 2026	Announce project determination and provide update on next steps	• Media announcement • Project webpage • Letterbox drop • EDM • Stakeholder emails • CARE Forum email	• Neighbours • Community • All stakeholders	C&E Lead Project Manager	

Communication protocols

The following protocols will guide a consistent and comprehensive approach to communications and engagement throughout the project lifecycle.

Stakeholder contact, response and submissions

The single point of contact for the project is the Delta Project Manager. All enquiries and complaints will be documented in a contact database, including all incoming and outgoing correspondence, details of the enquiry/concern, submissions, responses and the actions taken. A monthly report will be generated to monitor contact protocols and make updates to processes where required.

Enquiries and complaints management

An enquiries and complaints management process will be established for the duration of the project. It will include:

- Promotion of direct contact with the Delta Project Manager and a telephone number and email address provided to stakeholders.
- Verbal enquiries will be responded to within 24 hours (Monday to Friday). Written enquiries will be acknowledged within 24 hours of receipt and responded to within five working days.
- Follow-up monitoring to ensure complaints have been resolved satisfactorily
- The efficient recording, tracking and responding to enquiries and complaints using the contact database, including registering of the following details:
    - Date and time of complaint
    - Method of communication
    - Full name, address and contact details of complainant
    - Nature of the complaint and issues raised
    - Names of people involved throughout
    - Action taken and details of the resolution, including response times.

Media

All media contact will be managed by the Delta Communication and Engagement (C&E) team and in accordance with Delta's Media and Public Comment Policy (DEP BM 012). Media enquiries should be referred to the C&E team via media@de.com.au as soon as received. The C&E team will liaise with the Delta and Samsung project team for input and approval. Only approved spokespeople can address the media and provide statements on behalf of the project.

Working with MPs and councils

All enquiries from elected representatives and their offices will be forwarded to the Delta C&E team to manage.

Reporting of issues, risks and opportunities

Community and stakeholder issues, risks and opportunities will be monitored and reported to management and the Executive via the project's risk register and established internal protocols and reporting mechanisms.

Branding

All project branding and collateral will adhere to Delta branding requirements and be co-branded with the Samsung C&T logo. All branding matters should be referred to the Delta C&E team.

Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Executive Manager, Business Improvement **Delta**	• Overall accountability for delivery of the project. • Approve the CSEP.
Project Manager **Delta**	• Accountability for the day-to-day management of the project • Approve the CSEP. • Approve external communication and media materials. • First point of contact for all stakeholders and community members. • Manage project inbox and input and management of the stakeholder contact database, including monthly reporting. • Attend stakeholder and community meetings, workshops and information sessions. • Stakeholder meeting records and correspondence.
Environment and Stakeholder Manager **Samsung C&T**	• Approve the CSEP. • Facilitate Samsung C&T input and approval of communication and media materials. • Coordinate Samsung C&T involvement in community and stakeholder meetings, workshops and information sessions.
Head of Communications and Engagement **Delta**	• Prepare the CSEP. • Advise on community and stakeholder involvement strategies. • Advise on management of stakeholder risks, issues, opportunities. • Approve all communication materials and activities. • Manage media strategy and interface. • Manage engagement with elected representatives. • Guide and manage the communications and engagement approach and implementation of the CSEP.
Communication and engagement consultant	• Prepare of communication messages, materials and activities, including design, print and distribution processes. • Prepare engagement reports and summaries, including content for SSDA Submission Report. • Monitor and advise on stakeholder risks, issues and opportunities. • Manage and attend community information sessions and forums. • Attend stakeholder and project meetings as required. • Monitor, evaluate and report on CSEP implementation

Evaluation

To ensure the ongoing effectiveness of the communication and engagement plan, activities will be monitored and evaluated against the engagement objectives and desired project outcomes:

- **Participation:** Did stakeholders and the community have an opportunity to participate? Was participation offered in an adequate and timely way?
- **Transparency:** Was the information available and clear to all parties? Were participants told what was negotiable and non-negotiable?
- **Integrity:** Was the consultation process fair, trustworthy and respectful to all parties?
- **Accountability:** Was the process accountable, genuine and equitable?
- **Cost-effectiveness:** Was the consultation activity the most effective option representing value for money?
- **Certainty:** Has the community been told what the consultation process is, how their input will be used and what the next steps are?

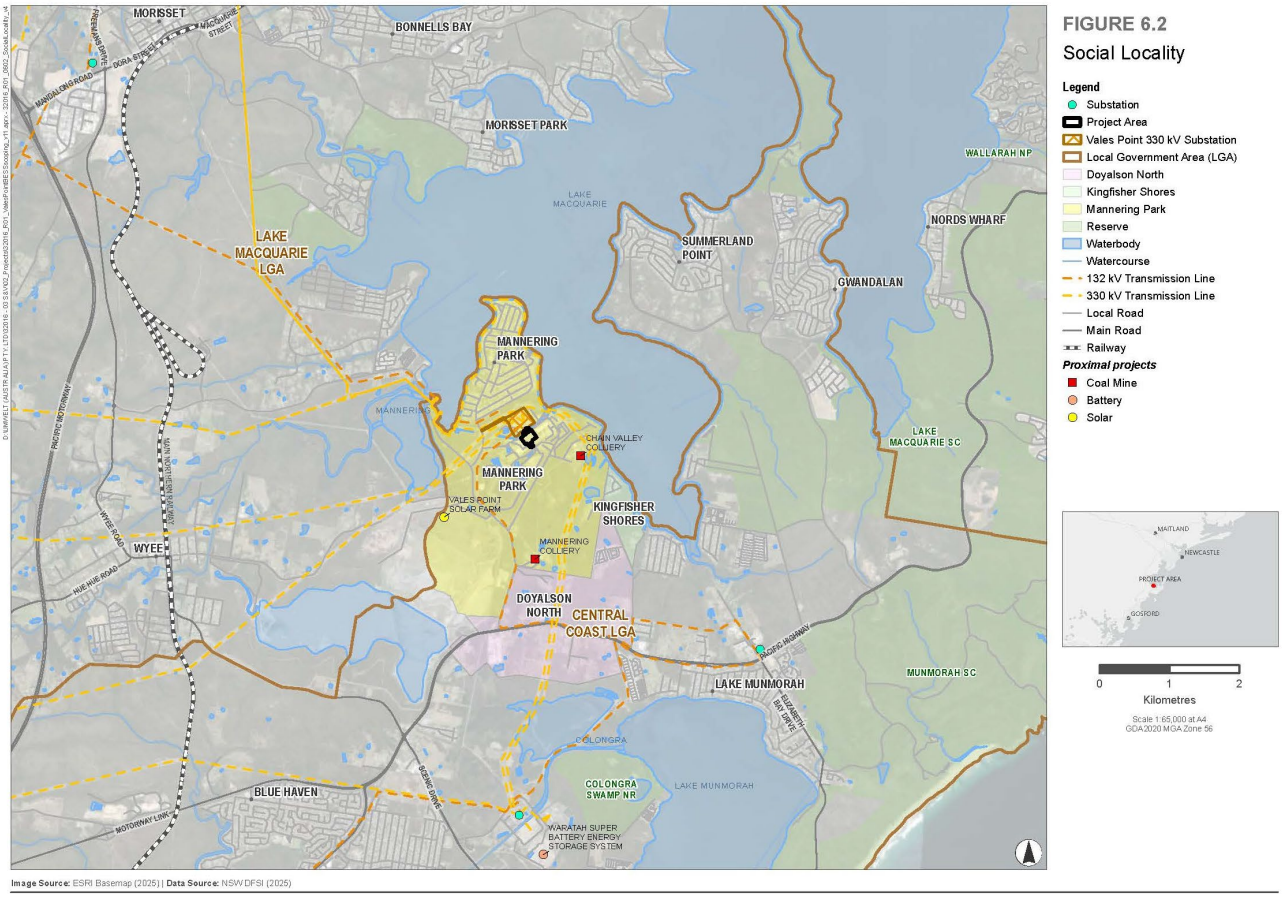
A range of evaluation methods will be used which may include:

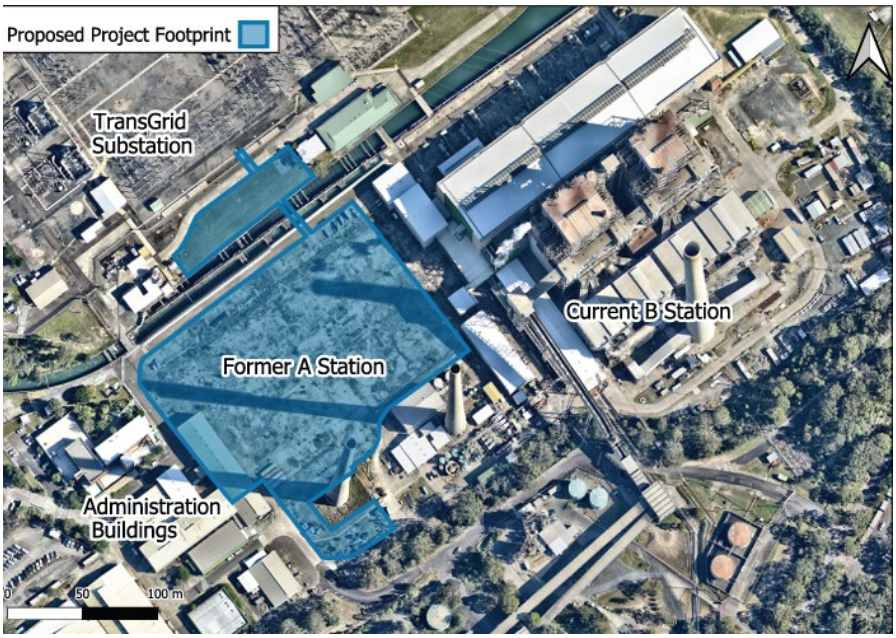
- Monitoring, analysis and reporting of stakeholder enquiries and complaints to identify emerging trends and unresolved issues.
- Monitoring and review of responses to enquiries to assess compliance with protocols.
- Timing of notifications to stakeholders and the community.
- Feedback collected during engagement activities.
- Informal discussions and feedback with participants following engagement activities
- Value judgments on how community feedback has been considered.

Along with considering individual comments from the above methods, effectiveness of the consultation process will be measured by considering:

- The number of participants over the duration of the project and/or in comparison to similar projects.
- Whether participation increased over the period of the project.
- The tone and level of dialogue and feedback.
- The tone of media and social media coverage
- Whether the project was refined through participation.

Appendix A – Project location





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