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iris

MEMO

To: Lucy McDermott, Senior Town Planner, Premise

From: Suzie Rawlinson, Director

Date: 2nd April 2026

Re: Aspley BESS project modification
Landscape and visual impact assessment

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1. Introduction

A landscape and visual impact assessment was prepared and included in the EIS for the Aspley BESS (Iris, LVIA, July 2022). This memo has been prepared to address any changes to this assessment as a result of the proposed modifications.

This memo includes:

- an assessment of changes to the landscape character and visual impacts of the approved project due to the proposed modifications
- an assessment of changes to the visual impacts of the approved project due to the proposed modifications from the nearest private receivers
- review of the project mitigation measures and identification of any additional measures required to address any changed landscape character and visual impacts.

2. Proposed modification

The approved and modified project layout are shown in Figure 2-1 and Figure 2-2. The changes relevant to this revised landscape character and visual impact assessment are:

- Reduced BESS area
- New noise wall to the north of the BESS area
- Realigned internal shared access
- New harmonic filter located on the southern boundary set back from the Highway
- Removal of the transformer and noise wall
- Reduced substation area
- Indicative transmission line connection would be relocated slightly southward
- New O&M facility location to the northeast of the site set back from the road and northern site boundary
- Widened site entry to allow for site access and emergency egress
- Mitchel Highway vegetation buffer would have a reduced length and increased width
- Southern vegetation buffer would be widened
- Northern vegetation buffer would not change.

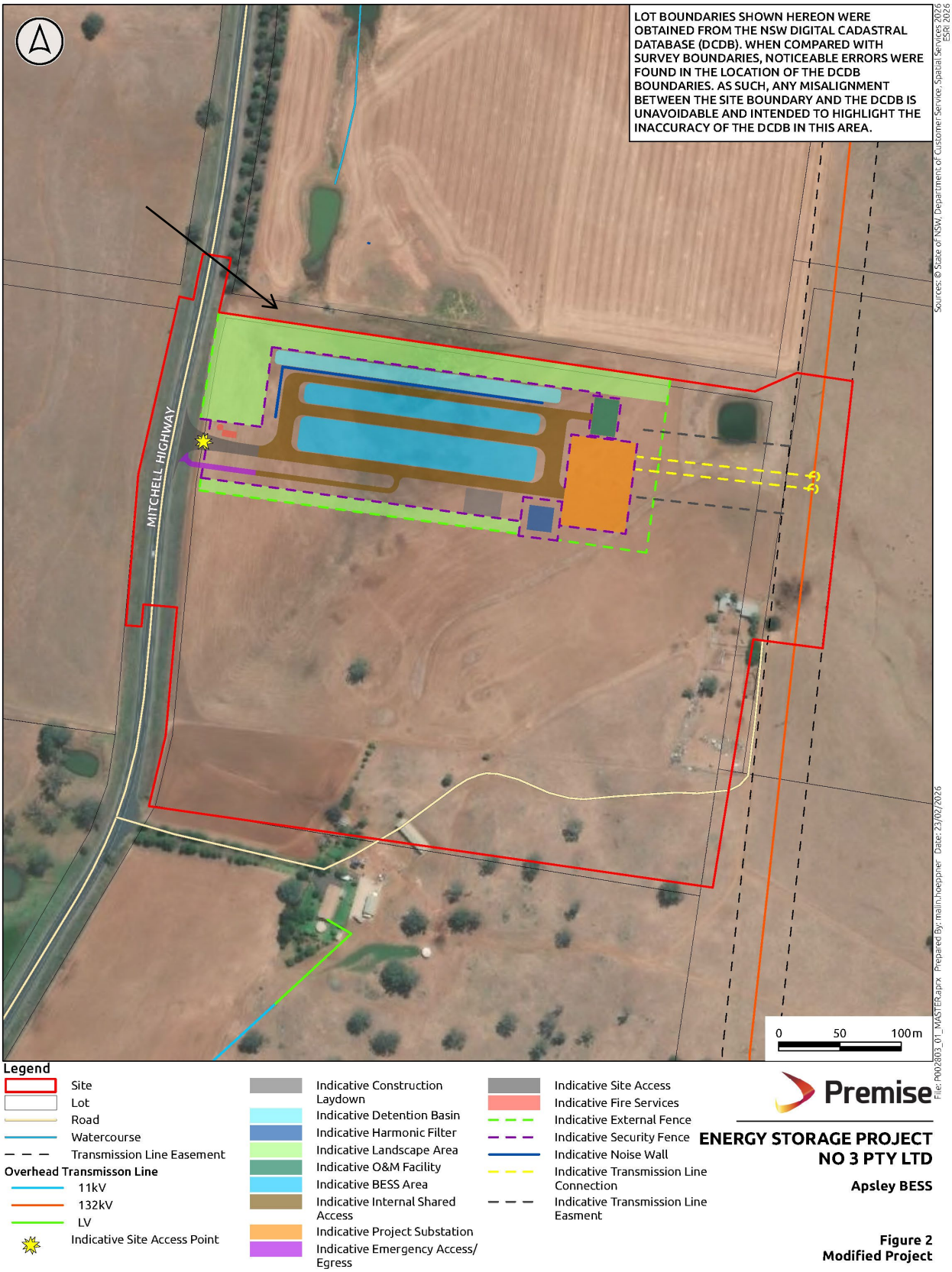

Figure 2-1 – Approved Aspley BESS project layout

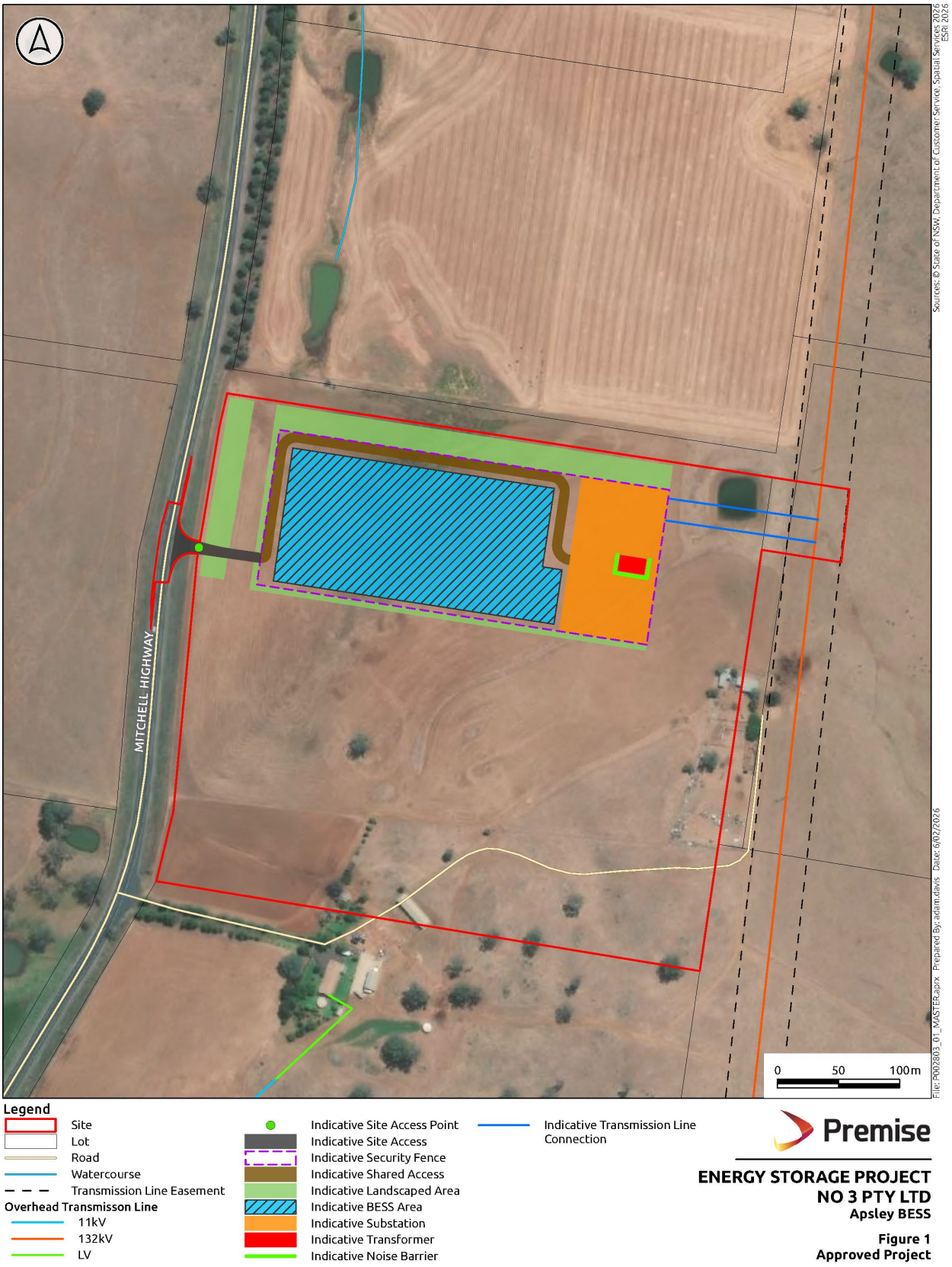

Figure 2-2 – Proposed layout, modified Aspley BESS project

3. Methodology

The methodology used for this landscape and visual assessment is consistent with the methodology contained in the LVIA (2022). This includes two separate assessments: an assessment of anticipated changes to the character of the landscape (landscape character impact), and an assessment of anticipated changes to views (visual impact).

The impacts are determined by combining the landscape character zone or viewpoint 'sensitivity', with the 'magnitude of change' that would result from the project.

4. Changes to landscape character impacts

Two broad landscape character zones (LCZ) were identified in the LVIA (2022). These are the:

- Bell River and Watsons Creek rural valley LCZ
- Catombal Range and Dripstone Hills LCZ

The project is located within the Bell River and Watsons Creek rural valley LCZ.

This LCZ is characterised by cleared grazing land with scattered trees, creeks and rural dwellings. The Mitchell Highway and some existing transmission lines pass through this zone.

In the Bell River and Watsons Creek rural valley LCZ the approved project includes:

- the removal of some scattered vegetation and an area of pasture grassland
- BESS elements, including the battery and MVPS containers, placed on concrete landings and laid out in multiple rows
- energy transmission infrastructure including a 132kV transformer and switching station, and new connection between the switching station and existing 132Kv transmission line to the east
- grid transformer enclosed on three sides by a noise wall
- chainmesh security fences
- 20-metre-wide area of screening vegetation along northern site boundary
- 5-metre-wide screening vegetation along the western boundary of the site
- 5-metre-wide screening vegetation along the southern boundary of the site
- tree planting along western site boundary, about 20 metres wide x 150 metres long, along the Mitchell Highway
- localised landform modifications to accommodate the BESS infrastructure.

Overall, while these changes would only impact a small area of the wider valley, this development would have a developed character with densely packed built structures and industrial scale infrastructure. For the approved project there will be a medium-minor adverse landscape character impact in the short term and a minor adverse landscape character impact in the long term. This is consistent with the approved project.

In the Bell River and Watsons Creek rural valley LCZ the modified project includes:

- a reduced BESS area
- an increased screening vegetation along the western and southern boundaries
- a longer noise barrier.

The modified project would be contained within the approved construction and operational footprint and not increase the geographic area of the project. The character of the works would be consistent with the works for the approved project anticipated to occur within this LCZ.

Overall, for the modified project the landscape character impact on would be **medium-minor adverse** in the short term and **minor adverse** in the long term. This is consistent with the approved project.

The following table (Table 1) contains a summary of this assessment.

Table 1 Summary of Landscape character impacts

		Approved project		Modified project	
Landscape character zone	Sensitivity	Magnitude	Impact	Magnitude	Impact
Bell River and Watsons Creek rural valley	Low-medium	Short term – Medium	Medium-minor adverse	Short term – Medium	Medium-minor adverse
		Long term – Low	Minor adverse	Long term – Low	Minor adverse
Catombal Range and Dripstone Hills landscape	Medium	Short term – Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
		Long term – Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

5. Changes to visual impacts

5.1 Public viewpoint assessment

Identified public viewpoints

Five representative public viewpoints (all from the Mitchell Highway) were assessed in the LCVIA for the approved project. As the modified project would be located within the approved project footprint there are no further viewpoints that would require assessment.

As shown in Table 2, of those five viewpoints previously assessed:

- There would be no perceived visible change from viewpoints 1; 2, 4 and 5
- There is a potential change visible from viewpoints 3.

An assessment of the modified project (compared to the approved project) from Viewpoint 3 is included in the following section.

Table 2 Potential changes to representative viewpoints

Public viewpoint	Updated assessment required (Y/N)	Reasoning
1. View southeast from the Mitchell Highway rest stop	No	Proposed changes would not be perceived due to distance
2. View southeast from the Mitchell Highway	No	Proposed changes would not be perceived due to intervening vegetation
3. View east from the Mitchell Highway	Yes	Proposed changes would be visible
4. View north from the driveway entrance at 9010 Mitchell Highway	No	Limited visibility of the upper portion of the project.
5. View north from the Mitchell Highway, 1.2 km	No	Proposed changes would not be perceived due to distance and intervening landform

Assessment of impacts to views

Viewpoint 3: View east from the Mitchell Highway

Figure 1 Viewpoint 3: View east from the Mitchell Highway

Magnitude of change for the approved project:

- The proposal would be seen in the middle ground of this view, extending for about 150 metres along this section of the highway.
- The BESS infrastructure would be set back over 110 metres from the highway, with security fencing along the full length of the site.
- The battery storage area would include groups of battery containers and MVPs arranged both across and extending away from the view.
- There would be a chainmesh fence along the site boundary and substation infrastructure beyond the battery storage area with some taller structures rising above the site and potentially above the horizon.
- There would be a five-metre-wide corridor of screening vegetation along the western site fence line. There would also be a 20-metre-wide area of trees, along the highway frontage. This vegetation would mature over time that would screen views to the BESS infrastructure, from this location.

Overall, due to the setback and low vertical scale of the battery containers and MVPs, there would be a medium magnitude of change and **moderate adverse visual impact** in the short term. In the longer term, the proposed vegetation would screen the proposal and there would be a **negligible** residual visual impact.

Magnitude of change for the **modified project**:

- The project would continue to be set back over 110 metres from the highway, with security fencing along the full length of the site
- A smaller BESS area would be visible in the middle ground of this view
- There would be a smaller area of substation infrastructure beyond the battery storage area, there would continue to be some taller structures rising above the site and potentially above the horizon
- The new noise wall may be visible together with the BESS area, and extending away from this view towards the background
- The development would be seen in the context of a five-metre-wide corridor of screening vegetation along the western site fence line, a wider area of trees on the eastern boundary, and a wider area of trees, along the highway frontage. This vegetation would mature over time that would screen views to the BESS infrastructure, from this location.
- A wider driveway would create a larger gap through which views of the project would be possible.

Overall, there would be less visible infrastructure in the short term, however, due to the character of the development there would continue to result in a medium magnitude of change and a **moderate adverse visual impact**. This is consistent with the approved projects.

In the longer term, the wider areas of screening vegetation would reduce the visibility of the proposal, and the project would mainly be visible through the gap created by the site entry. Overall, in the long term there would continue would be a **negligible residual visual impact**. This is consistent with the approved project.

Overall, there is no change to assessment findings for impact to public viewpoints compared to the approved Aspley BESS project.

Table 1 Summary of Landscape character impacts

		Approved project		Modified project	
Viewpoint	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change	Impact	Magnitude of change	Impact
1. View southeast from the Mitchell Highway rest stop	Low-medium	Short-term – Low	Minor adverse	Short-term – Low	Minor adverse
		Longer-term – Negligible	Negligible	Longer-term – Negligible	Negligible
2. View southeast from the Mitchell Highway	Medium	Short-term – Negligible	Negligible	Short-term – Negligible	Negligible
		Longer term - Negligible	Negligible	Longer term - Negligible	Negligible
3. View east from the Mitchell Highway	Medium	Short-term – Medium	Moderate adverse	Short-term – Medium	Moderate adverse
		Longer term - Negligible	Negligible	Longer term - Negligible	Negligible
4. View north from the driveway entrance at 9010 Mitchell Highway	Medium	Short-term – Low	Minor adverse	Short-term – Low	Minor adverse
		Longer term - Negligible	Negligible	Longer term - Negligible	Negligible
5. View north from the Mitchell Highway, 1.2 km	Medium	Short-term – Negligible	Negligible	Short-term – Negligible	Negligible
		Longer term - Negligible	Negligible	Longer term - Negligible	Negligible

5.2 Private viewpoint assessment

Private dwellings within two kilometres of the project were identified and considered in the LVIA (2022). Viewshed analysis was undertaken (LVIA, 2022) and illustrated that intervening landform and vegetation limited the number of dwellings that have a potential view of the approved Aspley BESS project.

Two dwellings, R2b and R5, were identified as having a potential view to the approved project and short term minor visual impact, and a negligible visual impact in the longer term due to the provision of screening vegetation for the approved project.

Specifically:

- R2b (a future dwelling site) located to the northeast of the site would be screened by approved project landscaping along the Highway; and
- R5 to the north of the site would have a view screened by the approved project vegetation along the northern boundary of the site.

The modified project would reduce the amount of visible BESS infrastructure and increase the area of screening vegetation along the western property boundary of the site, adjacent to the Mitchell Highway. The proposed screening to the north of the project would be unchanged from the approved project.

Overall, there would be no changes to the visual impacts from R2b or R5, and the impact on private viewpoints as a result of the modified project would be consistent with the approved project.

Table 5-2: Private viewpoint assessment

Viewpoint	Existing view	Visible area of the project	Approved project - Potential impact	Approved project - Effect of screening vegetation	Approved project - Potential impact
R2b Potential future dwelling at 9091 Mitchell Highway, Aspley	Views east towards the site would include some filtering by trees along the highway and surrounding the house site	Potential view to the northern part of the BESS.	Minor adverse	The vegetation proposed for the north and west edges of the BESS would effectively screen the view to the project when the vegetation achieves a height of about three metres.	Negligible
R5 9092 Mitchell Highway	Views south towards the site would include filtering by trees within field to the south of the property and within the gardens located around the house	Potential view to the northern part of the BESS.	Minor – moderate	The vegetation proposed for the north edge of the BESS would effectively screen the view to the project from the driveway, when the vegetation achieves several seasons of growth, achieves a height of about three metres with foliage cover.	Negligible

6. Conclusion

This landscape character and visual assessment has determined that the impacts of the modified project would be consistent with the approved Aspley BESS project. As the impacts are unchanged, there are no additional mitigation measures proposed.