



Yanco Battery Energy Storage System

Social Impact Assessment
October 2024

Contents

Glossary	5
1 Introduction	7
1.1 Background	7
1.2 Project description	7
1.3 Purpose of this assessment	10
2 Policy context	11
2.1 Commonwealth policy	11
2.1.1 <i>Australia's Net Zero Plan and renewable Energy Target (2021)</i>	11
2.2 State policy	11
2.2.1 <i>NSW Net Zero Plan (2020)</i>	11
2.2.2 <i>NSW Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap (2022)</i>	11
2.2.3 <i>NSW Electricity Strategy (2019)</i>	12
2.2.4 <i>Draft Integrated Systems Plan (2024)</i>	12
2.3 Local Policy	13
2.3.1 <i>Riverina Murray Regional Plan 2041 (2023)</i>	13
2.3.2 <i>Leeton Shire Council Local Strategic Planning Statement (2020)</i>	13
2.3.3 <i>Leeton Shire Community Strategic Plan (2021)</i>	13
3 Methodology	14
3.1 Desktop research	14
3.2 Community and stakeholder engagement method	14
3.2.1 <i>Engagement approach</i>	14
3.2.2 <i>Engagement objectives</i>	14
3.3 Social locality development	15
3.4 Social baseline development	15
3.5 Impact assessment	15
4 Community and stakeholder engagement	17
4.1 Communication and engagement tools	17
4.2 Key issues raised	17
4.2.1 <i>EIS engagement</i>	17
5 Social locality	19
5.1 Social locality	19
6 Social baseline	21
6.1.1 <i>Population</i>	21
6.1.2 <i>Age profile</i>	21
6.1.3 <i>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents</i>	22

6.1.4	<i>Families and housing</i>	22
6.1.5	<i>Liveable Leeton 2035 Community Strategic Plan – housing</i>	23
6.1.6	<i>Socio-economic indicators for areas (SEIFA)</i>	23
6.1.7	<i>Local businesses</i>	23
6.1.8	<i>Social infrastructure</i>	24
6.1.9	<i>Other construction projects</i>	25
6.1.10	<i>Employment</i>	26
7	Impact assessment	27
7.1	Assessment of non-enhanced positive impacts	27
7.1.1	<i>Livelihoods</i>	27
7.1.2	<i>Community</i>	28
7.2	Assessment of unmitigated negative impacts	29
7.2.1	<i>Way of life</i>	29
7.2.2	<i>Community</i>	30
7.2.3	<i>Accessibility</i>	30
7.2.4	<i>Culture</i>	31
7.2.5	<i>Health and wellbeing</i>	32
7.2.6	<i>Surroundings</i>	32
8	Impact enhancement, mitigation and management measures	34
8.1.1	<i>Developing management and mitigation measures</i>	34
9	References	40
10	Appendix A – Community Engagement Summary: EIS Phase	41

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List of tables

Table 1-1: Project details	7
Table 1-2: SIA requirements according to the SEARs	10
Table 3-1: Approach to community and stakeholder engagement	14
Table 3-2: Social impact assessment categories	15
Table 4-1 Communication and engagement tools.....	17
Table 5-1 – Factors considered in developing the social locality.....	19
Table 6-1: Total resident population.....	21
Table 6-2: Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander residents	22

Table 6-3: Household composition	22
Table 6-4: Housing tenure.....	22
Table 6-5: Occupancy of dwellings	23
Table 6-8: Local businesses located near the Project.....	23
Table 6-9: Social infrastructure located near the Project.....	24
Table 6-10: Yanco Solar Farm	25
Table 6-11: Labour force	26
Table 7-1: Accommodation Availability	30
Table 8-1: Management and mitigation measures	34

List of figures

Figure 1-1: Location of the Project	9
Figure 5-1 Map of Social Locality	20
Figure 6-1: Age profile.....	21

Glossary

Term	Definition
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACHAR	Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report
AEMO	Australian Energy Market Operator
BESS	Battery energy storage system
CBD	Central Business District
CO₂	Carbon dioxide
DPHI	Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure
DPHI	Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EP&A Act	<i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i>
GW	Gigawatt
HV	Heavy vehicles
IRSAD	Index of Relative Socio-economic Advantage and Disadvantage
LCVIA	Landscape Character and Visual Impact Assessment
LEP	Local Environmental Plan
LGA	Local Government Area
LSPS	Local Strategic Planning Statement
LUCRA	Land Use Conflict Risk Assessment
MVPS	Medium Voltage Power Station
MW	Megawatt
NEM	National Electricity Market
NPfi	Noise Policy for Industry
NVIA	Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment
PHA	Preliminary Hazard Assessment
REZ	Renewable Energy Zone
SAL	Suburb and Locality
SEARs	Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements
SEIFA	Socio-economic Index for Areas
SEPP	State Environmental Planning Policy
SIA	Social Impact Assessment

Term	Definition
SSD	State significant development
The Project	Yanco Battery Energy Storage System
The Social Locality	The social locality is defined as the area (Leeton SAL and Yanco SAL) surrounding the Project, where social impacts—both direct and indirect—are most likely to occur. This includes impacts on businesses, workers, residents, and visitors within the vicinity of the Project.
TIA	Transport Impact Assessment

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

The Yanco battery energy storage system (BESS) project (the Project) site is located at Lots 516 and 521 DP751745, at 120 Houghton Road, Yanco in New South Wales (NSW). The project site is within an agricultural area, with farming properties neighbouring the site. The Project site is located with the Leeton Shire local government area (LGA), and zoned RU1 Primary Production under the provisions of the Leeton Local Environmental Plan 2014 (Leeton LEP). The location of the Project site is shown in Figure 1.1.

As the Project proposes to build renewable energy infrastructure, it is classified as State Significant Development (SSD) under Division 4.7 of Part 4 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act). Section 20(a) of Schedule 1 of the State Environmental Planning Policy (Planning Systems) 2021 (Planning Systems SEPP) identifies 'development for the purpose of electricity generating works or heat or their co-generation (using any energy source, including gas, coal, biofuel, distillate, waste, hydro, wave, solar or wind power) that has an estimated development cost of more than \$30 million' as SSD.

1.2 Project description

The Project site is located approximately 1km west of the town of Yanco, directly to the west of the Transgrid Yanco Substation shown in **Error! Reference source not found.**. The Project details are outlined in Table 1-1 below.

Table 1-1: Project details

Yanco BESS	Project details
Lot and DP	Lots 516 and 521 DP751745 (Connection Route - Lot 1 DP931848, Lot 1 DP1072592)
Land use zone	RU1 - Primary Production
Development Site (Development Footprint)	Approx. 10.3ha
BESS total delivery capacity	Approx. 250MW
BESS total storage capacity	Approx. 1,100MWh
Grid connection and Transgrid substation upgrades	Up to 450m of underground or overhead transmission lines. Works are required within the existing Transgrid substation for a connection to the grid.
Project description	The Project infrastructure includes enclosed lithium-ion batteries, power conversion systems, underground power and fibre optic cabling, grid connection equipment, underground or overhead 132kV sub-transmission lines, earthing and lightning protection systems, a site office, security fencing, CCTV, a temporary construction laydown area, vegetation screening, new site access from Hume Road, and road upgrades at the intersection of Houghton Road and Irrigation Way. Other components include site investigations, and the transport, installation, testing, and commissioning of equipment.
Operational life of project	23 years, with potential upgrades to extend operational life
Hours of operation	24/7, 7 days a week

Yanco BESS	Project details
Construction methodology	Seven key stages, with overlap during the 4.5-month peak construction period: 1) Site establishment, drainage, roads and fencing, 2) Footing installation, 3) Cabling installation, 4) Steel platform installation, 5) Medium Voltage Power Station (MVPS) and BESS delivery and installation, 6) Control rooms, transformer and switchgear installation, 7) Commissioning and demobilisation
Construction timeframe	Total duration: 8 months; peak construction period: 4.5 months; construction expected to begin Quarter 4 2025
Construction hours	Standard construction hours: 7 am to 6 pm Monday-Friday, 7 am to 1 pm Saturdays, no work on Sundays and NSW public holidays. Some inaudible activities may be conducted outside standard hours under noise protocol
Site access	Hume Road via Houghton Road, Yanco
Heavy vehicle maximum length (construction)	Frequent: semi-trailer (19 m); One-off: prime mover and multiple axle trailer (50m L x 4.2m W x 4.9m H), Cranes (50t-200t, up to 16m L x 3m W x 4m H)
Heavy vehicle numbers (construction)	Average: 8 Heavy Vehicles (HV) per day; peak construction period: maximum 14 HV per day
Light vehicle numbers during construction	Average: 16 light vehicles per day; peak hour: 16; peak construction period: maximum 25 light vehicles per day; peak hour: 25
Distribution of light vehicle traffic	75% from north (Yanco/Leeton/Griffith), 25% from south (Narrandera), accessing Houghton Road from Irrigation Way
Heavy and light vehicles during operations	0 HV per week; up to 5 light vehicles per week
Jobs	Up to 70 jobs during construction; approx. 5 jobs during operation
Location/source of employees	Employees expected to be sourced locally (Yanco, Narrandera, Darlington Point, Griffith) where possible, and greater NSW if required
Decommissioning and rehabilitation	Components above and below ground (up to 1 metre) would be removed, and the land would be rehabilitated to pre-development conditions at the end of the operational life

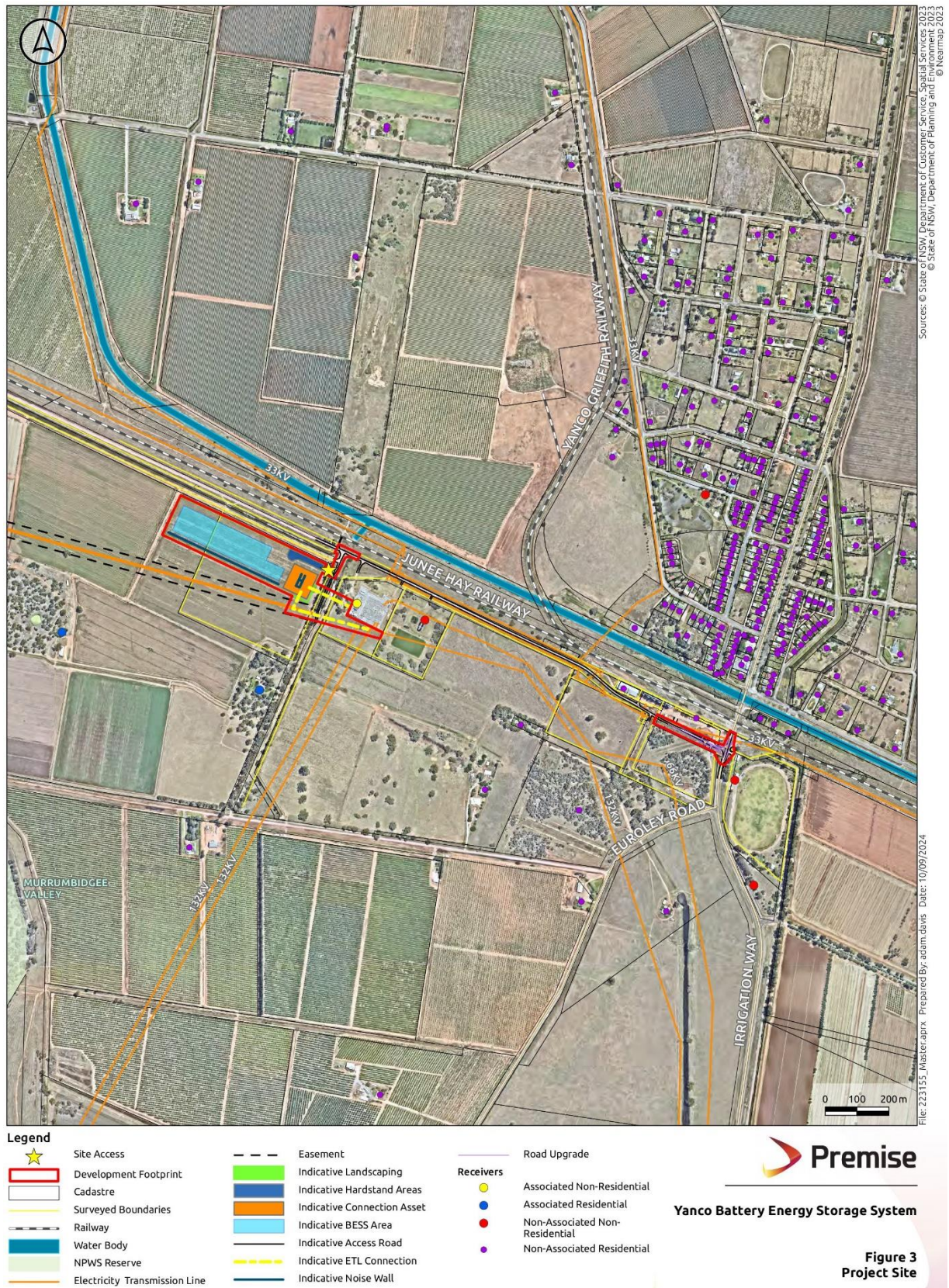


Figure 1-1: Location of the Project

Source: EIS Report for the Yanco BESS, Premise 2024

1.3 Purpose of this assessment

This Social Impact Assessment (SIA) has been prepared to inform the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Project. The purpose of an SIA is to 'identify, predict and evaluate likely social impacts arising from a project and propose responses to the predicted impacts' (NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, 2023).

This SIA outlines the existing social baseline of the nominated social locality, assesses potential social impacts which may occur as a result of the Project, and identifies measures to help manage or mitigate any potential impacts.

Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) were provided for the Project on 18 February 2024. The SEARs (see extract relevant to the SIA in Table 1-2) identified that the Project must consider social impacts, including consideration of any increase in demand for community infrastructure services and consideration of construction workforce accommodation.

The assessment of the Project's potential social impacts described in Section 7 predicts impacts of low significance only. Accordingly, this SIA report is intended to be a basic report. This approach is consistent with the *Social Impact Assessment Guideline* (hereafter the 'Guideline') which states that a "basic SIA report may be appropriate for a project where there are minor impacts and/or the social issues are not relevant to the project. In this case, the SIA report would summarise the scoping and assessment undertaken in the first phase and may conclude that no further assessment is required. If minor impacts are identified, a basic SIA report that includes desk-top research and analysis may adequately assess identified impacts (NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, 2023, pp.14-15).

Table 1-2: SIA requirements according to the SEARs

Key issue	Description
Social	Including an assessment of the social impacts or benefits of the project for the region and the State as a whole in accordance with the Social Impact Assessment Guideline (DPE, 2023), including consideration of any increase in demand for community infrastructure services and consideration of construction workforce accommodation.

2 Policy context

2.1 Commonwealth policy

2.1.1 Australia's Net Zero Plan and renewable Energy Target (2021)

The Australian Government's Net Zero Plan (Australian Government, 2021) aims to reduce gas emissions and achieve net-zero emissions by 2050. It aligns with the global goal of limiting temperature rise to less than 2°C, as outlined in the Paris Agreement.

The Net Zero Plan promotes decarbonising the electricity grid with renewables, guides electrification across sectors, and sets interim emissions reductions targets. Key elements include:

- growing the electricity grid with renewable energy sources to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote sustainability

- encouraging the electrification of activities in various sectors to reduce reliance on fossil fuels and lower emissions

- achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, with interim targets of reducing emissions to 43% below 2005 levels by 2030

- supporting the development and growth of Australia's clean energy workforce, including occupations in wind, solar, pumped hydro, large-scale battery, electricity networks, and hydrogen

The Project supports Australia's transition to net zero and reduction in emissions by enhancing the electricity grid's capacity and reliability to integrate more renewable energy sources. Additionally, the Project fosters job growth by creating a skilled workforce in the clean energy sector.

2.2 State policy

2.2.1 NSW Net Zero Plan (2020)

The NSW Net Zero Plan, in alignment with the Commonwealth Net Zero Plan above, outlines a strategic roadmap to achieve net zero emissions by 2050. This includes promoting emissions reduction technologies, empowering consumers and businesses to make sustainable choices, investing in innovative initiatives, and setting a leadership example. Key priorities include:

- promoting the adoption of proven emissions reduction technologies that stimulate economic growth, create new job opportunities, or reduce the cost of living

- empowering consumers and businesses to make environmentally conscious choices

- investing in cutting-edge emissions reduction innovation to ensure continued economic prosperity from decarbonisation beyond 2030

- ensuring the NSW Government sets a leadership example in sustainability practices.

The Net Zero Plan Stage 1: 2020-2030 directs NSW's efforts towards achieving these goals, with firming projects such as batteries supporting sustainable energy, grid stability and reliability, emissions reduction, job creation, and economic growth.

2.2.2 NSW Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap (2022)

The NSW Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap, released by the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) in November 2020, aims to boost NSW's position as an energy superpower through renewable energy development (DPIE, 2020). Key actions outlined in the Roadmap include:

- Establishment of Renewable Energy Zones (REZs) to concentrate renewable energy generation

Deployment of new renewable generation capacity

Development of transmission infrastructure to facilitate energy transportation

Implementation of storage solutions to enhance grid reliability

Promotion of industry growth and employment opportunities in the renewable energy sector.

The proposed Project site is located outside of established REZs. However, it is consistent with the goals outlined in the NSW Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap, which focus on advancing renewable energy, enhancing grid reliability, and promoting economic development. This Project is strategically positioned near Leeton and other renewable energy initiatives by enhancing grid reliability, address electricity demands and create job opportunities throughout its construction and operation phases.

2.2.3 NSW Electricity Strategy (2019)

The NSW Electricity Strategy is the NSW Government's plan for a reliable, affordable, and sustainable electricity future that supports a growing economy. The purpose of the NSW Electricity Strategy is to *'improve the efficiency and competitiveness of the NSW electricity market and encourage investment in new price-reducing generation and energy-saving technology'* (NSW Government, 2019, p.11).

The broader strategy is underpinned by four important principles:

New market-driven electricity generation should drive down prices and help protect the environment. This is because firmed renewables are the cheapest form of new reliable generation and cheaper than the current wholesale price

As electricity is an essential service, state and Commonwealth governments are ultimately responsible for reliable electricity

Government action should limit costs to households, businesses and taxpayers

Government action should be consistent with the nature of the national electricity system and NSW policy objectives.

The strategy emphasises that firmed renewables, including batteries, are the cheapest form of new, reliable energy generation and are more cost-effective than the current wholesale electricity price.

The Project is directly aligned with the NSW Electricity Strategy by incorporating large-scale BESS, which would enhance the reliability and sustainability of the electricity supply, support the integration of renewable energy, and contribute to the overall goals of affordability and efficiency in the NSW electricity market.

2.2.4 Draft Integrated Systems Plan (2024)

The 2024 Integrated System Plan (ISP) (Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO), 2024) provides a comprehensive roadmap for the National Electricity Market (NEM), based on extensive stakeholder engagement, methodology, inputs, assumptions, and power system expertise. Its aim is to optimise consumer benefits amidst complexity and uncertainty during the transition to net zero emissions.

The Draft 2024 ISP highlights the urgent need for investment in new renewable energy generation, transmission, storage, and flexible gas generation to ensure secure, reliable, and affordable energy delivery. The ISP 2024's goal is to achieve renewable electricity generation targets across NEM jurisdictions. The ISP places key emphasis on renewable energy connected by transmission, supported by storage, and supplemented by gas, considered the most cost-effective method for supplying electricity throughout Australia's net-zero transition. Firming technology such as pumped hydro, batteries, and gas-powered generation will smooth out the peaks and fill in the gaps from variable renewable energy, delivering significant net market benefits for consumers and economic opportunities in Australia's regions. It forecasts that Australia will need to significantly increase its storage capacity from 3Gigawatt (GW) in 2024 to 33 GW / 514 GWh in 2034-35, increasing to 57 GW / 642 GWh by 2050 to support the network grid.

The Project aligns with the ISP by offering large-scale storage options to contribute to delivering a reliable and secure energy network as forecasted.

2.3 Local Policy

2.3.1 Riverina Murray Regional Plan 2041 (2023)

The Riverina Murray Regional Plan 2041 (NSW Department of Planning and Environment, 2023) serves as a strategic framework for making land use planning decisions in the Riverina Murray Region for the next two decades. This plan includes 12 key objectives focused on achieving a 'diversified economy founded on Australia's food bowl, iconic waterways and a network of vibrant connected communities.

Objective 13 aims to support the transition to net zero emissions by 2050, including enabling the establishment of the South-West REZ. The objective focuses on developing renewable electricity infrastructure and networks to enhance sustainability and environmental outcomes, as well as creating employment opportunities.

Although the proposed development site is located outside the South-west Renewable Energy Zone, it is in line with Objective 13 in the Riverina Murray Regional Plan by strategically contributing to the region's objective of achieving net zero emissions by 2050. The Project will reduce dependence on fossil fuels and improve storage capacity for peak electricity consumption periods, helping to advance the region's renewable energy goals while also enhancing the network's resilience and reliability in response to changing energy demands and environmental challenges.

2.3.2 Leeton Shire Council Local Strategic Planning Statement (2020)

Council's Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) (Leeton Shire Council, 2020) outlines clear planning priorities that detail what will be needed, where these needs are located, and when they will be delivered. The LSPS sets short, medium, and long-term actions to support the "committed and innovative community to strengthen and protect our agriculture, manufacturing, education, heritage, and environmental assets" (Leeton Shire Council 2020, p. 23). The LSPS gives effect to Leeton's Community Strategic Plan (Leeton Shire Council, 2020) by setting the framework for Leeton Shire's economic, social and environmental land use needs over the next 20 years through eight planning priorities that include agriculture, employment, tourism, retail, housing, community, environment and heritage, and Aboriginal cultural heritage. Planning priority seven aims to "protect the regions environmental assets and increase resilience to natural hazards and climate change" (Leeton Shire Council 2020, p. 38) and therefore, its directly supported by the Project. In its pursuit of planning priority seven, Council is committed to embracing technologies and practices which reduce carbon emissions such as the development of BESS. This planning priority aligns with Council's Community Strategic Plan 2030 which promotes alternative energy and renewable energy projects in the region to help tackle climate change.

2.3.3 Leeton Shire Community Strategic Plan (2021)

The Liveable Leeton 2035 Community Strategic Plan (Leeton Shire Council, 2021) has been developed for and by the community of Leeton Shire, with support from Council. It outlines five key focus areas, two of which are relevant to the Project:

Focus Area 3: A thriving regional economy, with outcomes that include attracting and retaining new businesses and residents, as well as growing the population and providing diverse employment opportunities.

Focus Area 4: A quality environment, with the outcome of living sustainably, using resources responsibly, adapting to climate change, and balancing the needs of natural and built environments.

The Project is consistent to these two Focus Areas, as it would provide local workforce and supply chain opportunities during construction. Additionally, it would contribute to a small diversification of the economy through its maintenance and operation. The community's goal is to live sustainably, use resources responsibly, and adapt to climate change in the future, including reducing carbon emissions and implementing sustainable energy solutions.

3 Methodology

The methods adopted for the SIA are outlined in this section of the report.

3.1 Desktop research

A desktop review of existing information relevant to the Project was carried out. This included:

A review of existing state and local government policies, such as community strategic plans, to understand how the Project meets local objectives

A review of existing literature related to other major projects either near the project site or similar to the Project. This review enabled an identification of potential social impacts (benefits or disbenefits) that the Project may create, if it proceeds.

3.2 Community and stakeholder engagement method

3.2.1 Engagement approach

Community and stakeholder engagement during preparation of the EIS was carried out in accordance with the following guidelines:

Undertaking Engagement Guidelines for State Significant Projects, (NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, 2024)

Social Impact Assessment Guideline for State Significant Projects, (NSW Department of Planning and Environment, 2023)

The approach to community and stakeholder engagement during preparation of the EIS incorporated the core principles of *Undertaking Engagement Guidelines for State Significant Projects* (NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, 2024) (Table 3-1 below)

Table 3-1: Approach to community and stakeholder engagement

Principles	Approach
Open and inclusive	Communications were clear and concise, easy to understand and supported by engaging visual content.
Easy to access	Approach allows for targeted one-on-one engagement and broader consultation via accessible online and in person tools and communications.
Relevant	Clearly identify elements of the Project that can be influenced or shaped by stakeholders and the community and align our communications with their interests.
Timely	Engage early in the SIA development allowing time for feedback to be considered in the assessment.
Meaningful	Work with community members to close the loop on feedback, clearly articulating how feedback has been addressed and why.

3.2.2 Engagement objectives

The engagement process for the Project aimed to:

Provide an update and inform community and stakeholder members about the Project, its impacts and benefits

Use quality engagement to develop relationships with the community and understand values relevant to the development of the Project

- Help the local community understand the Project benefits, development approval process and how they can participate in the process
- Demonstrate ACEnergy commitment to appropriate and responsive engagement, by collecting and presenting information and outlining an engagement approach that demonstrates appropriate effort under relevant guidelines
- Respond to community feedback by making relevant changes to the Project and including appropriate mitigation measures in the EIS
- Enable authentic conversations through all stages of the approvals process by using quality engagement and communications materials that enable community members and stakeholders to provide informed feedback.

3.3 Social locality development

The social locality is defined as the area surrounding the Project, where social impacts—both direct and indirect—are most likely to occur. This includes impacts on businesses, workers, residents, and visitors within the vicinity of the Project.

The social locality was developed by considering the following six features described in Section 4.2 of the Guideline:

Scale and nature of the Project

Who may be affected

Vulnerable or marginalised individuals

Relevant social, cultural, and demographic trends, and other change processes

Built or natural features

Community history and experience.

3.4 Social baseline development

The social baseline describes the social context of the social locality before the introduction of the Project. This study serves as a benchmark against which the direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts of the project can be predicted and analysed. The baseline identifies relevant indicators for understanding the existing socio-economic profile of people living and working in the social locality. Data sources used for the baseline include the ABS Census 2021, local and State government plans and strategies.

3.5 Impact assessment

The social impacts identified in this assessment were categorised according to the impact categories (see Table 3-2) in the Guideline (NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, 2023).

The significance of the Project's potential positive and negative social impacts was evaluated using the social impact assessment tables contained in the Guideline. The evaluation involved determining the magnitude and dimension and likelihood of each identified impact, before applying mitigation or enhancement measures

Details on how these social impacts were assessed and scoped can be found in Tables 3 to 6 of the [Social Impact Assessment's Technical Supplement](#) (NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, 2023) which provides a breakdown of the impact evaluation process.

Table 3-2: Social impact assessment categories

Social impact category	Description
Way of life	Including how people live, how they get around, how they work, how they play, and how they interact each day.

Social impact category	Description
Community	Including composition, cohesion, character, how the community functions, resilience, and people's sense of place.
Accessibility	Including how people access and use infrastructure, services and facilities, whether provided by a public, private, or not-for-profit organisation.
Culture	Including both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, such as shared beliefs, customs, practices, obligations, values and stories, and connections to Country, land, waterways, places and buildings.
Health and wellbeing	Including physical and mental health especially for people vulnerable to social exclusion or substantial change, psychological stress resulting from financial or other pressures, access to open space and effects on public health.
Surroundings	Including ecosystem services such as shade, pollution control, erosion control, public safety and security, access to and use of the natural and built environment, and aesthetic value and amenity.
Livelihoods	Including people's capacity to sustain themselves through employment or business.
Decision-making systems	Including the extent to which people can have a say in decisions that affect their lives, and have access to complaint, remedy and grievance mechanisms.

Adapted from *the Guideline* (NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, 2023)

4 Community and stakeholder engagement

4.1 Communication and engagement tools

The engagement strategy for the Project utilised a variety of communication channels and activities to enhance community and stakeholder participation and feedback relevant to the Project's scale, size and impact. Community engagement methods included both in-person and online approaches to reach a wide range of individuals and cater to their preferred mode of communication. This engagement has been ongoing since mid-2023, during development of the scoping report and the EIS Report. Engagement activities to support the EIS are described in Table 4-1.

Table 4-1 Communication and engagement tools

Engagement Tool	Description
Engagement conducted in the development of the EIS Report	
Modification newsletter (letterbox drop)	The newsletter provided Project information, notice of upcoming consultation, and included a community survey. It was distributed to 216 properties on 12 April 2024.
Modification email notification	An email was sent to introduce the Project and offer an online briefing for interested parties. On 24 April 2024, it was emailed to 4 residents, as well as 21 community groups and peak body groups.
Print and digital media advertising	Print and digital advertisements were published in 'The Irrigator'. The print advertisement appeared on 26 April 2024, while the digital version was displayed on 3 May 2024.
In-person community drop-in session and community flyer drop	An in-person community information session was held on 7 May 2024 at the Yanco Powerhouse Museum, located at 13 Binya St, Yanco NSW 2703. Community flyers promoting the session were distributed on 29 April 2024.
Community feedback survey	An online survey was developed to identify social and economic impacts associated with the Project. It was distributed in 'the Irrigator' advertisement, in the newsletter, on the website, in community flyer, and emailed as a part of the modification email notification. The survey was open from 20 April 2024 until 25 August 2024.
Briefings and ongoing communication	- Briefings were offered to provide information and gather feedback. A briefing was held with Leeton Shire Council on 7th Nov 2023 to introduce the project. - State agencies were consulted throughout September and October 2024. - Ongoing communication included discussions with GrainCorp from November 2023. - A Murrumbidgee Irrigation engineer visited the site on 11th April 2024 to assess the Project's proximity to their assets and expressed satisfaction with ACEnergy's design.
Toll-free phone number, project email, and website	The Project email address, phone line, and website originally setup in the SIA scoping phase were maintained in the EIS phase.

This diverse range of engagement methods aimed to enhance data collection and support more informed decision-making for the project. A summary of consultation activities and feedback is included Appendix A.

4.2 Key issues raised

4.2.1 EIS engagement

During the EIS engagement phase, feedback from stakeholders was minimal, and overall community interest was relatively low. For detailed engagement and communication activities, refer to consultation summary in Appendix A

There was general support for the Project among the stakeholders who participated. The Yanco Powerhouse expressed interest in the community benefit sharing program. Graincorp, a local business adjacent to the site, requested further details about traffic impacts during both the construction and operational phases. Other stakeholders, such as community groups, did not provide feedback during this engagement phase.

Two neighbours responded to phone outreach regarding the Land Use Conflict Risk Assessment (LUCRA) (Premise, 2024), discussing how they use the land and any potential impacts they might face. One survey respondent outlined their preferences and concerns regarding potential impacts and requested to stay informed.

Although the level of interest in the Project was low, the potential impacts on the community and stakeholders will still be assessed according to the Guideline. Key social issues raised during community and stakeholder engagement, and the ways these issues have been addressed, are further discussed in Section 7 of the SIA. Appropriate management and mitigation strategies have been developed in response to some of the issues raised (see Section 8).

5 Social locality

5.1 Social locality

For this assessment, the social locality encompasses Yanco, NSW Suburb and locality (SAL) 14478 and Leeton, NSW (SAL12302). See Figure 5-1 for the map of social locality. The following factors were considered when defining the social locality, as outlined in Table 5-1 below.

Table 5-1 – Factors considered in developing the social locality

Factors	Considerations
Scale and nature of the Project	- The Project is small in scale compared to other major projects (e.g., a linear transport project travelling a long-distance through many communities, or an extractive industry project with a much larger footprint and external transport requirements). It is in a rural area and will not require a large workforce or external interfaces during operations. - Accordingly, a subset of the LGA was adopted for the Project's social locality.
Who may be affected	The Project site is confined to 10.3 hectares and separated from the nearest population centre at Yanco by approximately 1km. Therefore, the Project's direct social impacts would likely be experienced by people living on rural properties nearest to the Project site. Project vehicles are expected to primarily use Hume Road, Houghton Road and Irrigation Way which are contained in the social locality.
Vulnerable or marginalised individuals	There were no vulnerable or marginalised people identified during the engagement activities which had an influence on the nominated social locality.
Relevant social, cultural, and demographic trends, and other change processes	- The main social and demographic trend relevant to the Project is the lack of affordable housing. This is a nation-wide issue and people in the social locality are experiencing this issue like many other people in NSW regional areas. The Project's nominated social locality allows for an assessment of this issue in the SIA. - A change process underway in NSW is the energy sector's transition towards renewable energy. The social locality is already exposed to the transition, with a solar farm development occurring in Yanco.
Built or natural features	- Project impacts to natural features would be confined to the relatively small Project footprint. No significant impacts are identified in the Project's ACHAR (Premise, 2024). - The Project site has no direct neighbours and screening options are available to protect visual impacts to other built assets according to the Project's Landscape Character and Visual Impact Assessment (LCVIA) (Iris, 2024).
Community history and experience	- The Wiradjuri People are the first inhabitants of the land on which the Project is located. The social locality nation extends from Albury and Corowa in the south of New South Wales, north to Nyngan and Gilgandra, extends east to Mudgee and Lithgow and across to the west to Hay. The nominated social locality incorporates some of this nation. - In recent years the renewable energy industry has been introduced to the Yanco and other nearby townships, courtesy of projects such as the Yanco Solar Farm. The social locality incorporates the communities with exposure to the solar farm development.



Figure 5-1 Map of Social Locality

6 Social baseline

This section contains the social baseline developed for the Project. The baseline is the nominated set of social indicators for communities potentially affected by the development. The baseline provides a point of comparison and can be used as reference to measure the future impacts of the Project, if it proceeds.

The data in the baseline is primarily sourced from the ABS 2021 Census of Population and Housing. The census geographies adopted are consistent with the nominated social locality, being Yanco (SAL14478) and Leeton NSW (SAL12302). Equivalent NSW data is used as a comparison for some datasets.

6.1.1 Population

At the 2021 Census, the social locality had a total resident population of about 10,330 people (refer to Table 6-1).

Table 6-1: Total resident population

Population	Leeton SAL	Yanco SAL	New South Wales
Resident population	9,170	744	8,072,163

Source: Based on 2021 Census of Population and Housing, Australian Bureau of Statistics (General Community Profile)

6.1.2 Age profile

Yanco SAL within the social locality had a significantly younger age profile than the Leeton and NSW, with a median age of 25 years compared to 38 and 39 years respectively. Yanco SAL has a higher percentage of younger residents compared to Yanco SAL and NSW, while Leeton SAL shows a more balanced age distribution with higher proportions of residents in the 15-24 years and lower in the 25-44 years age groups (refer to Figure 6-1). This may indicate a potentially younger residential population near the Project.

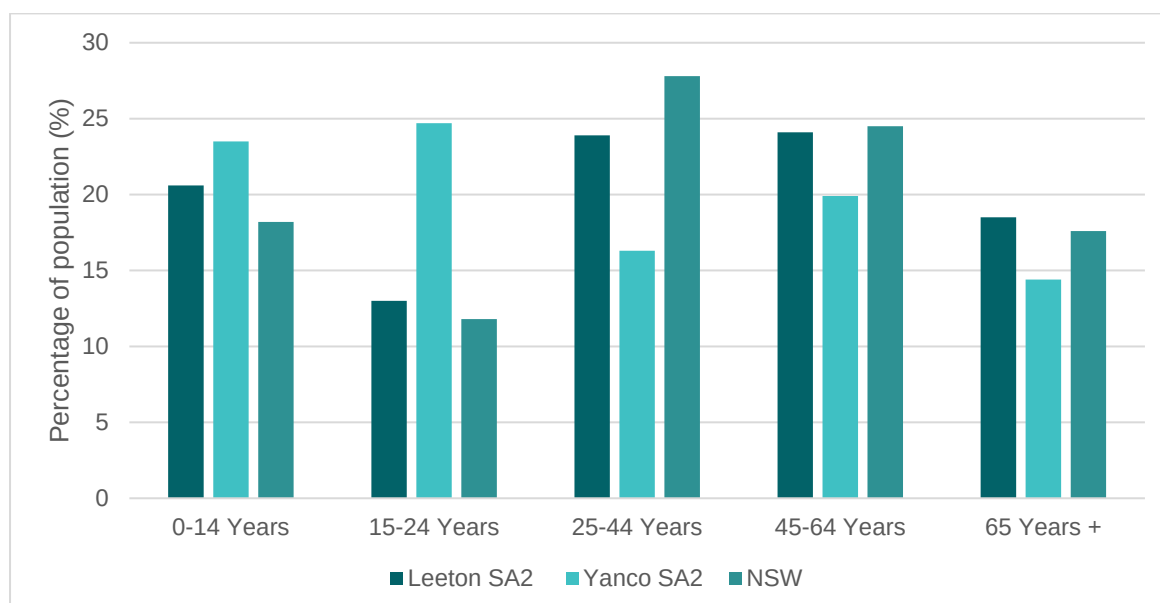


Figure 6-1: Age profile

Source: Based on 2021 Census of Population and Housing, Australian Bureau of Statistics (General Community Profile)

6.1.3 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents

At the 2021 Census, the social locality exhibited a greater percentage of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander residents compared to the state of NSW, with figures of approximately 6.3 percent and 7.2 percent respectively, in contrast to the state average of 3.4 percent (refer to Table 6-2).

Table 6-2: Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander residents

Population	Leeton SAL	Yanco SAL	NSW
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population	7.2%	6.3%	3.4%

Source: Based on 2021 Census of Population and Housing, Australian Bureau of Statistics (General Community Profile)

6.1.4 Families and housing

6.1.4.1 Household composition

In 2021, Leeton SAL's household composition was closer to the NSW average than Yanco SAL. Leeton SAL had 68.7 percent family households, while Yanco SAL had only 39.4 percent, compared to 71.2 percent for NSW.

Leeton SAL had a higher proportion of couple families with children (27.8 percent) compared to Yanco SAL (25.8 percent), but both were below the NSW average of 32.5 percent. Yanco SAL had a higher percentage of lone person households (25.8 percent) compared to Leeton SAL (28.9 percent) and NSW (25.0 percent).

Yanco SAL had a slightly higher proportion of couple families with no children (28.3 percent) compared to Leeton SAL (27.7 percent) and NSW (26.3 percent). Leeton SAL had fewer group households (2.5 percent) than NSW (3.9 percent) but more than Yanco SAL (4.0 percent) (refer to Table 6-3).

Table 6-3: Household composition

Household composition	Yanco SAL	Leeton SAL	NSW
Family households	39.4%	68.7%	71.2%
Couple family with no children	28.3%	27.7%	26.3%
Couple family with children	25.8%	27.8%	32.5%
Lone person households	25.8%	28.9%	25.0%
Group households	4.0%	2.5%	3.9%

Source: Based on 2021 Census of Population and Housing, Australian Bureau of Statistics (General Community Profile)

6.1.4.2 Housing tenure

Yanco SAL has a higher proportion of dwellings owned outright or with a mortgage at 77.8 percent compared to Leeton SAL at 66.1 percent and NSW at 64.0 percent at the 2021 Census (refer to Table 6-4). Conversely, Yanco SAL has a lower proportion of rented dwellings at 14.6 percent compared to Leeton SAL at 30.5 percent and NSW at 32.6 percent.

Table 6-4: Housing tenure

Dwelling ownership	Yanco SAL	Leeton SAL	NSW
Dwellings owned outright or with a mortgage	77.8%	66.1%	64.0%
Dwellings rented	14.6%	30.5%	32.6%

Source: Based on 2021 Census of Population and Housing, Australian Bureau of Statistics (General Community Profile)

6.1.4.3 Dwellings

Yanco SAL has a significantly higher occupancy rate of private dwellings at 100.0 percent, compared to Leeton SAL at 91.7 percent and NSW at 90.6 percent. This indicates that all dwellings in Yanco SAL are occupied, while both Leeton SAL and NSW have a small proportion of unoccupied private dwellings, with Leeton SAL at 8.3 percent and NSW at 9.4 percent (refer to Table 6-5). These figures illustrate the housing availability pressures being experienced by communities nationally.

Table 6-5: Occupancy of dwellings

Occupancy	Yanco SAL	Leeton SAL	NSW
Occupied private dwellings	100.0%	91.7%	90.6%
Unoccupied private dwellings	0.0%	8.3%	9.4%
Total dwellings	198	3,575	3,199,988

Source: Based on 2021 Census of Population and Housing, Australian Bureau of Statistics (General Community Profile)

6.1.5 Liveable Leeton 2035 Community Strategic Plan – housing

The Liveable Leeton 2035 Community Strategic Plan (Leeton Shire Council, 2024), developed by the Leeton Shire community with support from the Leeton Shire Council, highlights several key housing issues:

- Affordable and decent housing is essential for families to manage other essentials
- Leeton Shire faces a significant housing shortage, especially in rental properties, with rising prices and limited availability
- Most homes are separate houses, with around a third fully owned, and 27% rented. A small percentage of households struggle with housing costs
- Growing demand for accessible, affordable housing for the elderly and people with disabilities, including retirement villages and 'granny flats'
- Long waitlists for social housing could lead to increased homelessness. Several organisations provide social housing, including specific support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

6.1.6 Socio-economic indicators for areas (SEIFA)

The Socio-economic Index for Areas (SEIFA) measures relative socio-economic advantage and disadvantage. The Index of Relative Socio-economic Advantage and Disadvantage (IRSAD), used in this SIA, ranks areas on a scale from 1 (high disadvantage) to 10 (high advantage). The SA2 region encompassing Leeton, Yanco, and surrounding areas has an IRSAD score of 921, placing it in the 2nd decile, 1st quintile, and 19th percentile. This indicates a relatively high level of socio-economic disadvantage compared to other areas in Australia and NSW.

6.1.7 Local businesses

Local businesses near the Project and along the transport route used by vehicles and trains are listed in Table 6-6. GrainCorp Yanco Site is the closest business, as it is adjacent to the Project Site. Roads used by the Project will be shared with GrainCorp. All other businesses are located within Yanco and Leeton.

Table 6-6: Local businesses located near the Project

Business type	Business name	Location
Yanco		
Industrial and Agriculture	GrainCorp Yanco site	Houghton Road, Yanco NSW 2703
Retail and Hospitality	Yanco All Servicemen's Club	11 Main Ave, Yanco NSW 2703
	Little Wok Restaurant (in the Yanco All Servicemen's Club)	11 Main Ave, Yanco NSW 2703

Business type	Business name	Location
	The Yanco Shop	18 Main Ave, Yanco NSW 2703
Accommodation	Yanco Hotel	1 Main Ave, Yanco NSW 2703
Post Office	Yanco Post Office (in the Yanco Shop)	18 Main Ave, Yanco NSW 2703
Assets	Yanco substation and a sewage treatment	Houghton Rd, Yanco NSW 2703
Leeton		
Accommodation	Hydro Hotel	58-66 Chelmsford Pl, Leeton NSW 2705
	Leeton Centre Motel	22 Wade Ave, Leeton NSW 2705
	Kindred Lodge and Kindred Parkside Apartments	Boree Street, Reservoir Ln, Leeton NSW 2705
	Kindred Studio Apartments	Boree St, Leeton NSW 2705
	Rooms of Renown	36 Kurrajong Ave, Leeton NSW 2705
	The Leeton Heritage Motor Inn	29 Yanco Ave, Leeton NSW 2705
	Motel Riverina	1 Yanco Ave, Leeton NSW 2705
	Leeton Caravan Park	3 Yanco Ave, Leeton NSW 2705
	BJ's Accommodation Leeton	121 Acacia Ave, Leeton NSW 2705
	Oasis Caravan Park	90 Corbie Hill Rd, Leeton NSW 2705
Hospitality	Leeton Hotel	71 Pine Ave, Leeton NSW 2705
	Leeton Soldiers Club	Cnr Acacia &, Yanco Ave, Leeton NSW 2705
	Wade Hotel	42 Pine Ave, Leeton NSW 2705
Retail	Woolworths Leeton	Palm Ave & Wamoon Avenue, Leeton NSW 2705
	ALDI	1 Acacia Ave, Leeton NSW 2705
	Leeton Tourist Supermarket	11 Brobenah Rd, Leeton NSW 2705
	Golden Apple SUPA IGA	2637 Irrigation Way, Leeton NSW 2705
	Golden Apple Super Store	19 Breed Rd, Leeton NSW 2705

6.1.8 Social infrastructure

Social infrastructure near the Project is listed in Table 6-7. The closest sports ground is Yanco Sports Ground, and the closest museum is the Yanco Powerhouse Museum.

Table 6-7: Social infrastructure located near the Project

Category	Name	Location
Yanco		
Schools	Yanco Public School	Main Ave, Yanco NSW 2703
	Yanco Agricultural High School	250 Euroley Rd, Yanco NSW 2703

Category	Name	Location
Museums	Yanco Powerhouse Museum	13 Binya St, Yanco NSW 2703
Parks	Yanco Sports Ground	Euroley Road and Irrigation Way, Yanco NSW 2703
	McCaughey Bicentennial Park	Hebden St, Yanco NSW 2703
	McCaughey's Lagoon	Mia 1 Walking Track, Yanco NSW 2703
Services	Yanco Rural Fire Station	Corner of Irrigation and Houghton Road
Leeton		
Schools	Leeton public School	Mallee St, Leeton NSW 2705
	Leeton High School	29-37 Mallee Street, Leeton NSW 2705
	Parkview Public School	Park Ave, Leeton NSW 2705
	Saint Joseph's Primary School	Ash St, Leeton NSW 2705
	TAFE NSW	117-119 Palm Ave, Leeton NSW 2705
	Leeton Preschool	4/6 Valencia St, Leeton NSW 2705
Parks and recreation	Leeton Showground	Acacia Ave E, Leeton NSW 2705
	Leeton Golf Club	Leeton NSW 2705
	Leeton Regional Aquatic Centre	62 Palm Ave, Leeton NSW 2705
Emergency services	Fire and Rescue NSW Leeton Fire Station	19 Wade Ave, Leeton NSW 2705
	Leeton Police Station	24 Oak St, Leeton NSW 2705
Health	Leeton District Hospital	Cnr Wade Avenue and, Palm Ave, Leeton NSW 2705
	Leeton Medical Centre	11 Wade Ave, Leeton NSW 2705

6.1.9 Other construction projects

A 60 MW solar energy facility is proposed on approximately 152 hectares of land, 10 km south of Leeton by Origin Energy. Construction is due to commence in July 2025, 4-5 months before the Yanco BESS project is scheduled to begin (see Table 6-8).

Table 6-8: Yanco Solar Farm

General information	Project details
Access and Traffic	All site traffic will access Irrigation Way to the north of the intersection with Houghton Road. A maximum of 90 movements per day is expected during peak operations for the construction phase (approximately one vehicle every 12 minutes).
Location	The site is bound by Amato Road, Toorak Road, Hume Road, River Road, Yale Road, and the Gogeldrie Branch Canal, and intersected by Research Road, Ronfeldt Road, Houghton Road, and the Junee – Hay railway line. This is approximate 0.5 kilometres away from the project site.
Construction Timing	Approximately 10 months commencing July 2025.
Workforce	Construction – peak of around 120 workers; Operation – 2-3 full-time equivalent staff and up to 6 service contractors.

General information	Project details
Operation Period	Up to 30 years.
Construction Hours	Standard daytime construction hours would be 7:00 am to 6:00 pm Monday to Friday and 7:00 am to 1:00 pm on Saturdays.
Transmission Line	A transmission line would connect to the existing Transgrid Yanco Substation located 1 km to the southeast of the proposal.

6.1.10 Employment

Within the social locality, the Yanco SAL had lower proportions of unemployment (at about 2.3 per cent), compared to the Leeton SAL (at about 2.4 per cent) (refer to Table 6-9). Both the Yanco SAL and the Leeton SAL had lower proportions of unemployment when compared to NSW (at about 3.0 per cent).

Table 6-9: Labour force

Participation in the labour force	Yanco SAL	Leeton SAL	NSW
Total employed	49.6%	56.8%	56.0%
Total unemployed	2.3%	2.4%	3.0%
Total labour force	51.5%	59.1%	58.7%
Not in the labour force	44.8%	32.5%	35.5%

Source: Based on 2021 Census of Population and Housing, Australian Bureau of Statistics (General Community Profile)

7 Impact assessment

This section of the report provides a comprehensive analysis of the potential social impacts—both positive and negative—that the Project is predicted to create. Each phase of the Project lifecycle was assessed, including construction, operation, and, where applicable, decommissioning. The potential for the Project's impacts to combine with those derived from other projects or existing developments (i.e. cumulative social impacts) is also considered to provide a holistic understanding of potential effects on the community and surrounding areas.

An evaluation of the Project's predicted impacts has identified the range of social impact categories that are relevant to the SIA. These are addressed individually below. Other social impact categories listed in the Guideline that do not feature in this section of the report were deemed irrelevant to the Project and are assessed in the SIA.

The assessment made in the section of the report assumes the Project will not implement mitigation or enhancement measures. However, a range of these measures are proposed for implementation. The measures are identified in Section 8 and have the effect of improving the non-enhanced positive or reducing unmitigated negative social impact significance of the impacts identified below.

7.1 Assessment of non-enhanced positive impacts

7.1.1 Livelihoods

Livelihoods refer to 'people's capacity to sustain themselves through employment or business' (NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, 2023).

7.1.1.1 Construction – business revenue and employment

If the Project proceeds, its construction phase is predicted to deliver significant immediate short-term benefits to the local economy. It would create up to 70 new jobs and stimulate local businesses.

The economic impact of the construction sector would extend beyond direct job creation. The increased demand for construction materials would stimulate the local economy, and the project's development cost, exceeding \$30 million, is projected to significantly boost economic activity in the area over its 8-month construction period. Local businesses would benefit from the demand for materials, freight, and labour, with ACenergy planning to collaborate with local contractors and suppliers to maximise regional economic benefits, especially in civil and installation work.

The Project would also impact support services and lead to growth in sectors like hospitality, food, and beverage, if only temporarily. Local stakeholders, including residents and Council, support these economic benefits and appreciate the potential for job creation and increased business revenue. Feedback from one individual in the survey selected the importance of "*local employment*" and "*the positive impact on job opportunities*".

The influx of out-of-region workers would also positively impact local accommodation providers, particularly during mid-week periods of low demand. This may, however, lead to a temporary reduction in availability for visitor, tourist and rental accommodation in the area (see Section 7.2.2 for an assessment of this impact).

Overall, the Project's potential positive impact on livelihoods stemming from business revenue and employment opportunity is predicted to be of medium significance (likely, moderate magnitude).

7.1.1.2 Operation and cumulative impacts - business revenue and employment

The operation phase of the project is expected to deliver positive outcomes, particularly through advancing renewable energy. This transition is anticipated to provide both local and national economic benefits. Feedback from residents and stakeholders, as noted in the scoping report, has been largely positive, highlighting the economic advantages of renewable energy.

While modest, the Project would generate five full-time operational jobs if it proceeds, contributing to local employment over a 20–30-year period. This job creation supports not only direct employment but also potentially benefits local businesses through increased demand for goods and services, thereby enhancing livelihoods in the

region. The Project is expected to stimulate local economic activity by providing opportunities for local contractors, suppliers, and service providers involved in the ongoing maintenance and operation of the facility.

Additionally, combined with the nearby Yanco Solar Farm, the Project may attract further investment and projects related to renewable energy and infrastructure, fostering the growth of the industry in the social locality. This could lead to additional business opportunities and contribute to the long-term economic stability of the community.

The positive livelihood impact the project is anticipated to yield during operations would be of medium significance (likely, minor magnitude) without enhancement.

7.1.2 Community

Community refers to the 'composition, cohesion, character, how the community functions, resilience, and people's sense of place.' (NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, 2023). Composition involves demographic changes due to migration, including newcomers and departures of long-term residents. Character reflects the community's shared identity and valued attributes, influenced by changes in buildings, landscapes, and land use. Cohesion and function pertain to social connections, trust, and participation, where lack of cohesion can lead to dislocation and conflict. Sense of place relates to one's feelings of belonging and identity, shaped by cultural and historical ties.

7.1.2.1 Operation and cumulative – community benefit and energy transition

The community's response during the scoping phase was overwhelmingly positive, with both residents and stakeholders expressing support for the transition to renewable energy. This reflects a broad recognition of the environmental and economic benefits at both local and national levels. The implementation of community benefit-sharing programs linked to SSD projects could further enhance these outcomes, promoting resilience and social cohesion by addressing the specific needs of project-impacted communities.

Ensuring an equitable distribution of benefits is important for maintaining trust within the community and preventing feelings of dislocation. The development of a Community Benefit Fund, as well as a Voluntary Planning Agreement (VPA), are currently under consideration. This fund would likely focus on improving local amenities such as parks, community centres, roads, and drainage, thereby directly benefiting the community and reinforcing a sense of place.

However, some concerns were raised during the scoping phase. One stakeholder noted that *"any contribution to the local council may not directly benefit the Yanco community but instead be allocated to Leeton town."* This highlights the need for careful management of expectations to ensure local communities feel included and directly benefit from the project.

The Yanco Powerhouse Museum, located near the project site, has shown interest in participating in community benefit initiatives. They proposed several projects for consideration, including:

Enhancements to their AV equipment to improve the functionality of their theatre/meeting room

Development of interactive displays

Construction of a new pavilion for additional exhibits.

The museum expressed a desire to engage actively in benefit-sharing and indicated they have *"no potential concerns regarding the project's impacts."* Supporting such initiatives could enhance cultural infrastructure and help preserve the community's character and identity.

While other broader stakeholder engagement did not raise specific concerns about community benefits, it is essential to maintain transparency and ongoing consultation as the project progresses. Community benefit programs have the potential to mitigate unforeseen impacts by ensuring local needs are prioritised.

In conclusion, the project has the potential to support social cohesion, strengthen community identity, and deliver economic and cultural benefits. Through effectively managed benefit-sharing programs and active community engagement, the project could enhance local well-being and contribute to long-term resilience. The overall impact on the community is expected to be positive, with moderate significance.

The potential positive impact on the community, stemming from the Community Benefit Fund or VPA, is predicted to be of medium significance (likely, moderate magnitude).

7.2 Assessment of unmitigated negative impacts

7.2.1 Way of life

Way of life refers to 'how people live, how they get around, how they work, how they play, and how they interact each day' (NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, 2023). It addresses impacts on daily routines from construction activities or operational arrangements, including changes to commuting times, travel experiences, and freedom of movement. It also considers effects on privacy, peace, and quiet enjoyment, particularly due to increased noise, as well as the overall community experience, especially if the project may lead to cumulative impacts like property acquisitions, community severance, or significant construction disruption.

7.2.1.1 Construction and cumulative impacts - amenity

The construction phase of the Project may affect the daily routines and local amenities for nearby residents and businesses. Potential disruptions include the establishment of construction facilities, which can introduce noise, vibration, visual changes, and traffic congestion. Nearby residents and workers might experience reduced peace and quiet, while construction vehicle movements could cause disturbances and interruptions to utility services, impacting productivity and increasing stress levels. Additionally, the temporary influx of construction workers may lead to increased local activity and a heightened sense of busyness, though this is expected to be short-term. The project would not involve land acquisition or direct impacts on community services or infrastructure.

Feedback from local engagement activities has shown minimal concern regarding these impacts. Neighbours have indicated that they believe that there might not be any disruption to their agricultural activities or future plans. Survey respondents have requested regular updates from Council but have not raised major concerns about construction impacts. The Yanco Powerhouse Museum and attendees at information sessions in Yanco, Leeton, and Griffith have expressed general interest in the project without voicing specific concerns about noise, vibration, or traffic. Ongoing discussions with Graincorp are addressing potential traffic congestion and detours related to Houghton Road to mitigate any impact on their operations.

If the Project proceeds, construction would be scheduled to occur during standard hours: Monday to Friday from 7 am to 6 pm, Saturday from 8 am to 1 pm, with no work on Sundays or public holidays. Any out-of-hours work would be communicated in advance to key stakeholders. The construction phase is projected to last up to 8 months, commencing after all regulatory approvals are secured.

The Transport Impact Assessment (TIA) (Traffic Works, 2024) indicates that no significant adverse impacts on local transportation are expected beyond the current levels experienced. The Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment (NVIA) (Assured Environmental, 2024) suggests that noise levels might affect approximately eight properties near the construction site identified in Appendix A of the NVIA. However, the assessment of cumulative impact from the Yanco Solar Farm shows that the highest predicted noise levels do not exceed the highly affected noise criteria of 75 dB(A) at any receptor. Best practice mitigation, as detailed in the NVIA, along with staff training regarding excessive noise from machinery use, is recommended to manage noise impacts.

Overall, these impacts are anticipated to be temporary and primarily affect those close to the construction site. It is assessed that there would be a negative social impact of low significance (possible, minimal magnitude) on way of life in the social locality due to the presence of the workforce within the community during the construction of the Project.

7.2.1.2 Operations - amenity

The Yanco BESS is situated in a rural area, detached from Yanco and Leeton town centres. This location minimises the likelihood of any direct impact on the nearby communities and the daily activities of the majority of people during the operation of the Project. The rural setting of the BESS helps to alleviate potential concerns related to land use and privacy.

Due to the BESS's rural location, the Project's anticipated operational noise was the main forecast way of life impact that received attention in the SIA. Feedback from some people living near the Project site indicates that they are aware of and not concerned about these impacts.

In its evaluation of the Project's predicted operational noise and vibration impacts, the NVIA (Assured Environmental, 2024) states that operational noise levels from the BESS will comply with established noise criteria at all times. Even under worst-case meteorological conditions, the noise levels are predicted to meet the intrusive noise criteria specified in the Noise Policy for Industry (NPfI) for all receptors.

In summary, if it proceeds the impact of the Project creating negative effects on way of life in the social locality during operations is predicted to be of low significance (possible, minimal magnitude).

7.2.2 Community

7.2.2.1 Construction and cumulative impacts – workforce accommodation

Transient workforces emerged as one of the Project's potential negative social impacts during the SIA data collection activities.

If the Project proceeds, the daily influx of temporary construction workers would increase the daytime population of the local community, contributing to a heightened sense of activity in the area. While some residents may perceive this as an impact or disruption to the community during the construction phase, others view it as an accepted aspect of construction that is not necessarily negative and may even bring benefits, such as increased socio-economic activity from workers utilising local shops and services.

Discussions with a local real estate agent indicated that *“Leeton and Yanco have a history of accommodating transient workforces, especially for seasonal labour”*, suggesting a level of resilience to fluctuations in demand. A hotel service provider noted that *“there is an extremely tight rental market, with high demand from seasonal workers and large groups of 100-150 workers, particularly from industries such as fruit picking and JBS operations (abattoir), which employ a significant workforce from the Solomon Islands.”*

Given the variety of community services and facilities identified in the social locality, as described in 6.1.8, and the seasonal and transient workforce associations with farming and the abattoir, it is believed that an increase in workforce due to the Project would not create substantial social disruptions in a social locality already characterised by a transient population. However, in recognition of the tight rental market described by the local hotel service provider, it is possible that the Project's construction workforce accommodation requirements might exacerbate rental accommodation demand.

The Project's construction workforce is expected to peak at about 50-70 employees for a period of 4.5 months. The timing of this peak is relevant from a cumulative impact perspective when assessed concurrently with the workforce requirements of the nearby Yanco Solar Farm. The solar farm, approved on 16 July 2020, is situated roughly 430 meters northwest of the Project and involves solar panel arrays spread across a development footprint of about 183 hectares, extending north of Ronfeldt Road. Construction on the Project would begin as the Yanco Solar Farm nears the end of its peak construction phase. Consequently, simultaneous peak construction activities are not expected, although there will be a slight overlap in workforces. The total overlap is predicted to last around 22 weeks, with a peak overlap of approximately 15 weeks, during which both projects will have workforces exceeding 60, resulting in a combined total above 120. The number of staff brought in from outside the area could be up to half lower than anticipated. Local employment is a priority for the project, and it is expected that only some specialised electricians will be required from out of the area depending on availability.

A review of anecdotal housing data (**Error! Reference source not found.**) revealed the availability of suitable short-term accommodation in the social locality, Griffith, and Narrandera, in mid-September 2024. This data corroborates the statement above made by the hotel service provider.

Table 7-1: Accommodation Availability

Accommodation platform	Leeton	Yanco	Narrandera	Griffith
Airbnb properties available	4	1	3	7
realestate.com and Domain.com properties available	20	1	15	45

Whilst people in the social locality are considered to be generally resilient to population transience in the social locality, this assessment takes a precautionary approach to the potential for the Project to create negative impacts to community during the construction phase, as a result of the workforce accommodation requirements. It is assessed that there would be an impact of medium significance (possible, minor magnitude) if the Project proceeds. This pressure is forecast to be temporary only; it would cease when the Project becomes operational.

7.2.3 Accessibility

Accessibility refers to how 'people access and use infrastructure, services, and facilities' whether they be provided by a 'public, private or not-for-profit organisation' (NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, 2023). This includes impacts on road usage, access routes, and the effects of severance, restrictions, or improvements. It also encompasses the impacts of the project on pedestrian routes and access to schools, medical services, community services, and businesses, as well as the capacity of services to accommodate in-migrating residents.

7.2.3.1 Construction and cumulative impacts - local road network access and transport services

As described in the Project description, if the Project proceeds, its vehicles would mainly utilise Houghton Road (local) and Irrigation Way (state). Construction activities may temporarily affect access to locations near the Project site through changed access arrangements. Therefore, there could be a potential negative impact on road access and parking that could disrupt residents' and the community's ability to reach homes, workplaces, local businesses, and community facilities.

During scoping engagement, concerns were raised about the cumulative impact of multiple large-scale projects on the road network. Government departments and the Council representatives stressed the need for detailed route analysis and consideration of infrastructure (e.g. electricity transmission lines) to be examined in the EIS. Concerns were also expressed about potential traffic issues if construction phases of nearby projects, such as the Yanco Solar Farm, overlap. Additionally, the Council representatives highlighted the impact of GrainCorp operations, which peak from November to December, leading to significant traffic along Houghton Road to Irrigation Way.

While proactive community and landowner engagement was conducted for the SIA following receipt of the SEARs, limited community feedback was received regarding road access and transport impacts. Input from real estate providers, local businesses, Council, and the Yanco Powerhouse Museum was also minimal, with no significant concerns raised about access or transport disruptions. GrainCorp was contacted throughout the design process to understand how the Project might impact its operations and to discuss potential road updates, as well as transport plans and vehicle access needs. These discussions focused on ensuring that both the Project's and GrainCorp's transport requirements are addressed, particularly during their peak operations season, to minimise any cumulative effects on road use and infrastructure.

In the traffic assessment commissioned for the EIS, Traffic Works (2024) indicates that there will be minimal traffic impact, with peak construction generating 25 light vehicles and 1 heavy vehicle per hour over an 8-month period. On-site parking for 25 cars is provided, and no upgrade to the Houghton Road and Irrigation Way intersection is required, as heavy and oversized vehicles can enter the site safely. The assessment also indicates that the additional traffic generated by the Project will not significantly affect the level of service for residents and the community on Houghton Road and Irrigation Way. Delays and queuing are expected to be minimal and comparable to current conditions.

Given the rural setting, traffic management measures, and on-site parking provisions, impacts on local road access, parking, public transport, and active transport services are expected to be minimal. The Project's location away from the main town on a private road, near existing industrial operations, further reduces potential impacts.

Therefore, the Project is expected to have a negative social impact of low significance (unlikely, minor magnitude) on accessibility (access to the road network and transport services) within the social locality.

7.2.4 Culture

Culture encompasses both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal elements, including shared beliefs, customs, practices, values, and connections to country, land, waterways, places, and buildings (NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, 2023). Impacts can affect the values, customs, and beliefs linked to a site, stemming from changes in scenic quality, landforms, or water flows. Project design can strengthen community values and culture. For Aboriginal cultural heritage, it should consider the potential for intangible harm, such as 'cultural or spiritual loss' related to traditional land attachment and rights to spiritual sustenance.

7.2.4.1 Construction – Aboriginal cultural heritage

Construction activities have the potential to impact community and cultural heritage, including both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal historic sites. Such impacts may arise from disturbances to archaeological items or other culturally significant locations.

The Historic Heritage Assessment Report prepared by Premise did not identify any historic heritage items or archaeological deposits in the area, indicating that the project will not affect non-Aboriginal historic heritage.

The ACHAR, also prepared by Premise, identified one Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System (AHIMS) site near the proposed development. This site was not found during the site visit and may have been relocated due to agricultural activities. The survey did not discover any new Aboriginal sites. Given the social locality's history of moderate disturbance from irrigated cropping and infrastructure development, its archaeological potential is considered low, and no further investigations were required.

Consultations were conducted with Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs) to gather input on Aboriginal cultural values. However, no specific information on the significance of the social locality was provided.

The preliminary survey summary indicates that the area has been significantly modified by historical agricultural use and the construction of Houghton Road and nearby infrastructure. The survey does not suggest high potential for archaeological significance in the proposed development area.

While protecting Aboriginal cultural heritage is an important consideration for the Project, particularly during construction, the overall negative impact on cultural heritage during operation is assessed as being of low significance (unlikely, minor magnitude) based on the findings described above.

7.2.5 Health and wellbeing

Health and wellbeing refer to both the 'physical and mental health' and includes the effects of 'substantial change, psychological stress resulting from financial or other pressures, access to open spaces and effects on public health' (NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, 2023). Concerns include potential health impacts from noise, dust, odour, vibration, lighting, and toxic materials, as well as stress and anxiety related to the project and its effects on the community. There are also worries about impacts on social behaviours, sleep, general health, and overall community wellbeing.

7.2.5.1 Operation – potential operational fire risks and EMF

During the SIA scoping phase, community concerns were raised about potential fire risks associated with the BESS. These concerns were particularly focused on whether fire safety regulations were being adhered to and if relevant fire authorities had been consulted by the Project team. Given high-profile incidents like the Victorian Big Battery Fire (Cool Burn Ecology, 2024), fire risks have been a prominent topic in discussions about BESS technology.

A Preliminary Hazard Assessment (PHA) conducted by Riskcon Engineering (2024) assessed the identified hazardous events as 'low' risk, with no significant off-site impacts expected. This assessment addressed potential fire hazards, electromagnetic field (EMF) exposure, toxic gas dispersion, and other common hazards associated with BESS technology. The Victorian Big Battery Fire case study was used to ensure that best practices for battery spacing, technology improvements, and vent protection were incorporated.

Regarding EMF exposure, the PHA shows that there are no immediate impacts anticipated to residences adjacent to the areas where the Project would be developed. The closest residence to the Project's EMF-generating sources at the BESS is over 200m, rendering the potential for EMF levels to exceed accepted limits as negligible. Based on typical levels generated by transmission equipment, the cumulative effect of EMFs would not exceed the 2,000 mG limit for prolonged exposure.

Overall, it is predicted that the Project would have an impact of low significance (unlikely, minor magnitude) on the health and wellbeing of people in the social locality during its operation. This reflects the small amount of correspondence about the issue generated by the Project team's engagement activities, and the results of the PHA commissioned for the EIS.

7.2.6 Surroundings

Surroundings refers to 'ecosystem services such as shade, pollution control, erosion control, public safety and security, access to and use of the natural and built environment, and aesthetic value and amenity' (NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, 2023). This includes impacts on essential environmental services like food, water, and flood/fire defences, as well as safety for pedestrians, children, and drivers. It also covers crime levels, perceptions of safety (especially for women), public space quality, and the aesthetic and functional value of both natural and built environments.

7.2.6.1 Cumulative visual impacts

The SIA must consider the potential for the combined visual effects of the Project and the Yanco Solar Farm, located approximately 430m north-west of the Project. There is potential for the two projects to transition the landscape from its predominantly rural character to one where energy generation, storage, and transmission infrastructure is integrated. The changes would involve minor landform alterations, removal of crops, and the addition of electrical and transmission infrastructure. However, the contribution of the Project to this overall character change is relatively minor.

A preliminary visual assessment conducted during the scoping phase identified the potential for possible visual impacts. Although the subsequent stakeholder and community engagement activities did not yield specific concerns about cumulative impacts, as a precaution it is important to consider these potential effects due to the close proximity of the two projects.

The LCVIA (Iris, 2024) conducted for the Project provides advice about the likelihood of cumulative visual impacts. It states that there is a possibility that both projects could be viewed sequentially and collectively from areas southwest of Yanco, including Research Road and Houghton Road. Views from Houghton Road might also include the transmission lines, the Yanco substation, the Yanco Sewerage Treatment Plant, and the freight train line. The landscape in these views is described as being flat with blocks of vegetation and embankments, and as having a relatively high capacity for accommodating such infrastructure changes. It determined that there is not likely to be a material cumulative effect on views during construction or operation due to the Project.

In summary, the Project's potential cumulative visual impact (in conjunction with the Yanco Solar Farm) is forecast to be of low significance (unlikely, minor magnitude).

8 Impact enhancement, mitigation and management measures

This final chapter identifies enhancements of the positive social impacts, and mitigation measures of the negative social impacts identified in Chapter 7. The impacts are then re-evaluated, and residual impacts are predicted. The residual impacts are the predicted outcomes of the Project's SIA.

8.1.1 Developing management and mitigation measures

In consultation with ACEnergy and the respective technical assessments for the Project (provided as part of the EIS) enhancements, management and mitigation measures were identified, including:

- Traffic Impact Assessment
- Noise And Vibration Assessment
- Landscape Character and Visual Impact Assessment
- Preliminary Hazard Analysis
- Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment
- Bushfire Risk Assessment.

Table 8-1: Management and mitigation measures

Impact	Social impact category	Originally evaluated significance (non-enhanced/ unmitigated)	Project aspect	Project-specific enhancement/ mitigation measures	Residual impact significance
Potential positive impacts					
Business revenue and employment	Livelihoods	Medium significance (likely, moderate magnitude)	Construction	Local economy and working with the contractor. • Target local economic impact through procurement of local goods and services.	Medium significance (likely, moderate magnitude)

Impact	Social impact category	Originally evaluated significance (non-enhanced/ unmitigated)	Project aspect	Project-specific enhancement/ mitigation measures	Residual impact significance
				- Track and report on local content used for the project. - Prioritise hiring local workers with requisite skills and experience. - Use online and offline methods to share and register interest in project opportunities. - Engage regularly with local businesses about construction periods and potential increases in trade. - Encourage project workforce to support local businesses through local spending initiatives (e.g., vouchers). - Develop and implement an Industry Participation Plan addressing: - Opportunities for supply of goods and services, employment, training (including Aboriginal participation), and sustainable procurement. - Metrics to track goals for each opportunity. - Engagement with Leeton Shire Council, local businesses, and the Leeton Chamber of Commerce to understand procurement limitations and aspirations.	
Business revenue and employment	Livelihoods	Medium significance (likely, minor magnitude)	Operation and cumulative	Create awareness within the community - Partner with LGAs and organizations to inform prospective workers about participation in the project. - Use a project-specific website and existing LGA communication channels. - Collaborate with local employment, apprenticeship, and training providers to enhance local hiring potential. - Develop and implement local content initiatives with procurement goals for the operation phase.	Medium significance (likely, minor magnitude)
Community benefits program	Community	Medium significance (likely, minor magnitude)	Operation	Collaborate with stakeholders and the community - Identify community funding opportunities. - Engage in community involvement initiatives, potentially in partnership with nearby renewable energy SSD proponents. - Promote and use the Community Stakeholder Engagement Plan (CSEP) to continue collaborating with stakeholders and the community to identify opportunities.	Medium significance (likely, minor magnitude)
Potential negative impacts					

Impact	Social impact category	Originally evaluated significance (non-enhanced/ unmitigated)	Project aspect	Project-specific enhancement/ mitigation measures	Residual impact significance
Amenity	Way of life	Low significance (possible, minimal magnitude)	Construction and cumulative	Traffic Implement the recommendations from the TIA (Trafficworks, 2024), including a traffic management plan to prevent heavy vehicles from arriving and departing simultaneously along Houghton Road. Noise Due to the mobile nature of construction, permanent or temporary acoustic barriers are not feasible. However, construction contractors can minimise noise impacts as recommended in the NVIA (Assured environmental, 2024) to: - Limiting the scale and type of concurrent activities near sensitive receptors. - Using broad-band reversing alarms on mobile equipment where practical. - Selecting the least noisy machines available for the required tasks. - Operating equipment efficiently and reducing throttle settings when not in use. - Regularly maintaining machinery, particularly mufflers, to ensure they are in good working order. Community and high-level Noise Maintain ongoing communication with local residents throughout the project to ensure transparency and during work that produces impulsive, intermittent, or low-frequency noise, regular consultation with sensitive receptors is advised. As noise levels are predicted to stay below the highly affected noise criteria (75 dB(A)), no additional noise controls are required beyond the standard measures outlined above. Staff training on noise management is also recommended.	Low significance (unlikely, minimal magnitude)
Amenity	Way of life	Low significance (possible, minimal magnitude)	Operations	Community Maintain regular communication with local residents to ensure transparency. For works involving impulsive, intermittent, or low-frequency noise, conduct regular consultations with sensitive receptors. Noise Noise levels are predicted to remain below the highly affected noise criteria of 75 dB(A); however, the following measures are recommended by NVIA (Assured environmental, 2024) to ensure compliance: Install noise barriers (gap-free and constructed from materials with a mass density of at least 12 kg/m²).	Low significance (possible, minimal magnitude)

Impact	Social impact category	Originally evaluated significance (non-enhanced/ unmitigated)	Project aspect	Project-specific enhancement/ mitigation measures	Residual impact significance
				- The southern noise barrier should be approximately 388 metres long and approximately 4.5 metres high, with a 150mm gap at the bottom for flood design. - Ensure a 10-metre gap between the southern acoustic barrier and the BESS equipment for fire safety. - Noise barriers around large-scale transformers (175 MVA) should be 4 metres high, with the northern face open. - Position the Medium Voltage Power Station equipment to face north (away from sensitive receptors) to minimise noise impact. - Similarly, place BESS units with their loudest side facing north to direct noise away from sensitive receptors to the south.	
Workforce accommodation	Community	Medium significance (possible, minor magnitude)	Construction and cumulative	It recommended that ACEnergy implement the following measures: - Shuttle bus service - organising shuttle buses from Griffith and Narrandera for a portion of the workforce. This will reduce the demand for local accommodation and help mitigate worker travel fatigue. - Accommodation provider coordination - continue discussions with accommodation providers, ensuring proactive planning to secure availability in Yanco, however unlikely this may be due to accommodation stock levels. - Cumulative - Maintain ongoing dialogue with the Yanco Solar Farm team and accommodation suppliers to address potential cumulative impacts and ensure coordination and if possible, sequencing of workforce. - Planning - Develop an Accommodation, Employment, and Procurement Strategy/Plan to support local businesses in becoming competitive and sustainably servicing the construction workforce over the 8-month project period. - Procurement – Seek out opportunities to engage local people and local businesses through the construction phase.	Low significance (unlikely, minor magnitude)
Local road network access and transport services	Accessibility	Low significance (unlikely, minor magnitude)	Construction and cumulative	Traffic The recommendations made by Trafficworks in the TIA (2024) recommend that ACE: Develop a site plan to include a designated parking area for 25 vehicles. This will meet construction parking needs and prevent overflow onto local roads, minimising disruption.	Low significance (unlikely, minimal magnitude)

Impact	Social impact category	Originally evaluated significance (non-enhanced/ unmitigated)	Project aspect	Project-specific enhancement/ mitigation measures	Residual impact significance
				- Upgrade the intersection of Houghton Road, Hulme Road, and the access point to the development site will be upgraded to facilitate safe entry and exit for all vehicles. - Implement a traffic management plan to ensure the safe movement of all light and heavy vehicles, preventing congestion and maintaining smooth traffic flow during construction.	
Aboriginal cultural heritage	Culture	Low significance (unlikely, minor magnitude) based	Construction	Cultural heritage The Premise ACHAR (2024), suggested the following measures will be implemented to protect Aboriginal cultural heritage during construction: - A 10-metre buffer around the previously identified Aboriginal site has been integrated into the design to mitigate impacts on Aboriginal cultural heritage. - A Chance Finds Procedure (CFP) will be included in the Construction Environment Management Plan. This outlines the steps to follow if any Aboriginal cultural heritage items are discovered during construction. If a find occurs, a qualified archaeologist will assess it, and Heritage NSW, along with the Leeton and District Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC), will be notified promptly.	Low significance (very unlikely, minor magnitude)
Potential operational fire risks and EMF	Health and wellbeing	Low significance (unlikely, minor magnitude)	Operation	Hazards The Preliminary Hazard Assessment (PHA, Riskcon, 2024) indicates that implemented controls will include the following key measures: - Provide testing data for battery units to the Department of Planning prior to commissioning. - Use non-combustible materials for vent covers. - Implement bushfire protection strategies, including maintaining an asset protection zone, adhering to construction standards, and ensuring emergency service access. Fire The Bushfire Risk Assessment (Cool Burn, 2024) recommends additional protections, including: - Buffer zones from vegetation and screening known as Asset Protection Zones. - Ongoing landscaping and maintenance to reduce bushfire risks. - Non-combustible materials for noise walls.	Low significance (unlikely, minor magnitude)

Impact	Social impact category	Originally evaluated significance (non-enhanced/unmitigated)	Project aspect	Project-specific enhancement/ mitigation measures	Residual impact significance
				- An onsite water supply strategically located for emergency use. - Clear access routes (main and internal) and alternate unobstructed passages through and on site. - A Bushfire and Emergency Management Operations Plan (BEMOP) to support emergency management and ensure maintenance of these measures.	
Visual impacts	Surroundings	Low significance (unlikely, minor magnitude)	Cumulative	Visual To minimise visual impacts, the proposal incorporates the following measures, as outlined in the Iris Landscape Character and Visual Impact Assessment (2024): - Located near existing electricity infrastructure to maximise distance from residential areas. - Avoids significant landscape features, such as irrigation channels and mature Eucalyptus trees outside of perimeter fence Hulme Road. - Includes screen planting along the perimeter fence with species that reflect the local character. Extra visual mitigations To further reduce visual impacts, the following mitigation measures are recommended: - Designed and operated in accordance with AS4282-2019 to minimise obtrusive effects. - Noise walls and buildings will be painted in colours that blend with the local landscape.	Low significance (unlikely, minimal magnitude)

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10 Appendix A – Community Engagement Summary: EIS

Stakeholder category	Individual stakeholder subcategory	Consultation summary	Issues raised	Project Response
Government authorities	Leeton City Council	A briefing was conducted between ACEnergy and Council on 7th Nov 2023 to introduce the project. Email communications between ACEnergy and Leeton Shire Council between 1st March 2024 and 1st July 2024 to seek guidance on proposed usage of Houghton Rd and road upgrades.	Leeton Shire Council agreed with the proposed road usage and the proposed road upgrades at both Hume Rd/Houghton Rd and Irrigation Way/Houghton Rd intersections.	None
	DPHI	Ongoing engagement throughout the EIS preparation period.	None to note	None
Relevant regulators, agencies, and service providers	Heritage NSW (ACH)	The draft Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report was provided via the Major Projects Portal on 11 September 2024 to discuss potential impacts and seek guidance.	Heritage NSW noted that as the ACHAR was in draft form and did not include the RAPs feedback. Heritage NSW recommended that the finalised ACHAR including RAPs feedback be submitted as part of the EIS, as which time Heritage NSW would review and provide comments.	No feedback from RAPs was received during the consultation period. The finalised ACHAR will be included in the EIS submission.
	Fire and Rescue NSW	The draft Preliminary Hazard Analysis was provided via the Major Projects Portal on 19 September 2024 to discuss potential impacts and seek guidance.	FRNSW advised that a Fire Safety Study (FSS) is likely to be recommended. The FSS would be developed in accordance with Hazardous Industry Planning Advisory Paper No 22 as a condition of consent.	A FSS will be prepared in accordance with consent conditions.

Stakeholder category	Individual stakeholder subcategory	Consultation summary	Issues raised	Project Response
	Rural Fire Service (RFS)	The draft Bushfire Assessment Report was provided via the Major Projects Portal on 20 September 2024 to discuss potential impacts and seek guidance.	The RFS have advised that they cannot pre review our bushfire report, and as such they recommended that the proposal be referred to the next stage of the process where they can undertake a full assessment of the report.	No response required. The Bushfire Assessment Report has been prepared in-line with SEARS.
	Crown Lands	The draft Land Use Conflict Risk Assessment was provided via the Major Projects Portal on 20 September 2024 to discuss potential impacts and seek guidance.	Crown Lands have advised that all issues have been identified and addressed in the proposed LUCRA and that there were no further comments. Crown Lands note that ACEnergy have advised of future consultation in relation to the Houghton Road upgrades.	Further details will be provided to Crown Lands as the road upgrades are planned and developed.
	Biodiversity Conservation and Science	A summary of the Biodiversity Development Assessment Report (BDAR) was provided via the Major Projects Portal on 26 September 2024 to discuss potential impacts and seek guidance.	No response has been received to date.	No response required to date.
	Transgrid	Email communications were sent on 29th August 2024 to seek owner's consent for the proposal. Transgrid indicated they were working towards providing owner's consent by 30th September 2024.	Transgrid provided owner's consent including feedback as follows: Transgrid does not propose to enact its Part 5 rights for the augmentation works at Yanco 132 k substation. All required grid connection works for Customer connection must be included in the EIS for DA approval of complete scope. The development footprint would need to be extended to include the Yanco 132 kV substation switchyard to adequately capture all required connection works. This can be completed in post-notification stage when the applicant responds to agency comments.	The applicant's response to Transgrid's feedback is as follows: EIS has been updated to remove reference to Part 5 rights Development footprint will be updated in post-notification stage
	NSW DCCEEW Water	The draft Flood Risk and Groundwater Assessment was provided via the Major Projects Portal on 26 September 2024 to discuss potential impacts and seek guidance.	No response has been received to date.	No response required to date.

Stakeholder category	Individual stakeholder subcategory	Consultation summary	Issues raised	Project Response
	Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development – NSW Resources	The draft Land Use Conflict Risk Assessment was provided via the Major Projects Portal on 20 September 2024 to discuss potential impacts and seek guidance.	NSW Resources have advised that they have reviewed the draft LUCRA and have no specific comments in relation to <i>Mining Act 1992</i> considerations and raises no issues regarding the Project at this stage.	No response required.
	Transport for NSW	A summary of the Traffic Impact Assessment was provided via the Major Projects Portal on 20 September 2024 to discuss potential impacts and seek guidance.	No response has been received to date.	No response received to date.
	UGL	Email communications were sent on 6 November 2023 to discuss the requirements for utilising the current alignment of Houghton Rd within TAHE land parcels as part of the proposed construction and operational traffic routes. Briefings and ongoing consultation were conducted on 6 December 2023, 19 December 2023, 12 April 2024, and 9 August 2024.	UGL informed us on 6 December 2023 about the application requirements for obtaining TAHE owner's consent. UGL indicated that TAHE owner's consent and Graincorp consent are required for the proposal to use Houghton Rd within TAHE land parcels as part of the proposed construction and operation traffic routes. These requirements were modified following a meeting between UGL and ACEnergy on 19 December 2023. On 12 April 2024, UGL recommended that ACEnergy seek Graincorp's consent for the use of the referenced section of Houghton Rd, where there is an exclusive easement with Graincorp as the sole beneficiary. ACEnergy submitted an application for TAHE owner's consent on 9 August 2024. Ongoing consultation is currently taking place.	Consultation to continue throughout detailed design
	Telstra	Email communications were sent on 16 July 2024 to discuss potential impacts on their asset and seek guidance on requirements for the detailed design stage. Correspondence was received on 29 July 2024.	Email responses have been received for the construction requirements for works on or around Telstra assets regarding Houghton Road-Irrigation Way intersection upgrade.	Consultation to continue throughout detailed design

Stakeholder category	Individual stakeholder subcategory	Consultation summary	Issues raised	Project Response
	Jemena	Email communications were sent on 16 July 2024 to discuss potential impacts on their asset and seek guidance on requirements for the detailed design stage. Correspondence was received on 1 August 2024.	Jemena indicates that intersection works at Houghton Road- Irrigation Way will require Jemena approval before any works. Email responses have been received for the construction requirements for works on or around Jemena assets. Responses received during the EIS Phase.	Consultation to continue throughout detailed design
	Water (Leeton Shire Council)	Email communications were sent on 16 July 2024 to discuss potential impacts on their asset and seek guidance on requirements for the detailed design stage. Correspondence was received on 1 August 2024.	Email responses have been received for the construction requirements for works on or around Council water assets at Houghton Road-Irrigation Way intersection upgrade. Responses received during the EIS Phase.	Consultation to continue throughout detailed design
	TPG	Email communications were sent on 16 July 2024 to discuss potential impacts on their asset and seek guidance on requirements for the detailed design stage. Correspondence was received on 16 July 2024.	Email responses have been received for the construction requirements for works on or around TPG assets at Houghton Road-Irrigation Way intersection upgrade.	Consultation to continue throughout detailed design
Community	Affected landowners surrounding the development (2km from the site)	A newsletter featuring project updates was distributed to 216 properties on April 12, 2024, with a scheduled delivery date of April 18, 2024, within the designated area. The newsletter was subsequently emailed on April 24, 2024, to four residents, providing a project update and an offer of a briefing.	No emails, phone calls, or briefings were received or accepted by the affected landowners surrounding the project site.	ACEnergy will continue to reach out to affected landowners surrounding the development throughout the planning process.

Stakeholder category	Individual stakeholder subcategory	Consultation summary	Issues raised	Project Response
		Briefings, as well as ongoing email and phone communications, have been conducted with the neighbouring business GrainCorp since November 2023. Murrumbidgee Irrigation was introduced to the Yanco BESS project in June 2024 through email.	A Murrumbidgee Irrigation engineer visited the site on 11th April 2024 to assess the project's proximity to their assets and expressed satisfaction with ACEnergy's design. Since November 2023, ACEnergy has engaged in ongoing discussions with GrainCorp, seeking consent for the shared use of Houghton Road, a portion of which is owned by TAHE. Consent for shared use was granted in April 2024. Following the outcomes of a traffic assessment, it was determined that the road intersection between Houghton Road and Irrigation Way would require an upgrade. Since this intersection is located on TAHE land, additional consent from Grain Corp was necessary. Consent for the road upgrades and shared usage of Houghton Road was granted in August 2024.	
		In-person information session at the Yanco Powerhouse Museum: An in-person drop-in session was held on 7 May 2024 in partnership with the Yanco Powerhouse Museum, located at 13 Binya St, Yanco NSW 2703. The session was attended by four community members who expressed a general interest in the project. Community flyers promoting the information session, were distributed to various locations in Leeton and Yanco on 26 April 2024 by the Yanco Powerhouse Museum, including two locations in Yanco and at the Monthly Yanco Markets and Leeton Connect Facebook page on 29 April 2024. The flyer also included contact details and access to the website. An advertisement for the information session and survey, as well as a front-page article in The Irrigator was displayed in print and digitally on 26 April and 3 May 2024, respectively.	No surrounding landowners, businesses, and occupiers within a 2km radius from the project site attended the information session.	

Stakeholder category	Individual stakeholder subcategory	Consultation summary	Issues raised	Project Response
		The tollfree-information line, project website and email have been operational since September 2023.	To date, we have not received any responses, emails, or calls from surrounding landowners, businesses, and occupiers.	
		The community survey was open from 20 April 2024 until 30 July 2024.	Only one person responded to the survey. They outlined lifestyle preferences, cost of living, and the importance of local employment and opportunities in their area. They noted that supporting investment in renewable energy is essential, expressed neutrality towards a benefit-sharing program, and emphasised the importance of local employment opportunities. They did not express concern or any level of concern regarding the potential impacts associated with the project. They showed interest in the project and expressed a desire to stay updated via the council.	The Social Impact Assessment addresses key themes raised and mitigation strategies. ACEnergy will continue to reach out to affected landowners surrounding the development throughout the planning process.
		To mitigate consultation fatigue, informal discussions were also conducted by bd infrastructure on behalf of Premise with two neighbouring landowners near the project site to understand land use conflicts for the LUCRA assessment. 3 emails and 2 direct calls were made on 26 April 2024 and 3 May 2024 to directly adjacent landholders to provide updates on the project and understand their current and future land uses, respectively.	To date, we have not received any responses via email. Two neighbouring individuals were contacted by the project team via phone to provide information regarding LUCRA. The north and south neighbours are full-time agricultural farmers specialising in citrus and grapes. One neighbour expressed potential interest in expanding their operations and subdividing the land in the future, while the other neighbour has no immediate plans for changes to their current operations. Both neighbours have evaluated the potential impacts of the proposed construction and operation of a new battery on a neighbouring property, and they have concluded that it will not significantly disrupt their current agricultural activities or future plans. Samsung has reached out to both neighbours regarding the possibility of hosting a battery on their land.	The information gained has been considered in finalising the LUCRA

Stakeholder category	Individual stakeholder subcategory	Consultation summary	Issues raised	Project Response
	Community groups and peak bodies	Continued email correspondence has been maintained with community groups and peak bodies following the Scoping Phase. On 24 April 2024, a project update, newsletter, and briefing offer were sent out via email to: 21 community groups and peak bodies.	To date, we have not received any responses, emails, or calls. Community groups and peak bodies have not accepted the briefings. Since October 2023, we have maintained ongoing communication with The Yanco Powerhouse Museum via phone and email. They are in favour of the project, have expressed no potential concerns regarding the project's impacts and have displayed a keen interest in the community benefit sharing program. The Yanco Powerhouse has proposed several projects for which they are seeking financial assistance, including improvements to their AV equipment to enhance the functionality of their theatre/meeting room, interactive displays for their museum, and the construction of a new pavilion to accommodate additional exhibits.	ACEnergy has committed to granting \$10,000 to the Yanco Powerhouse Museum from the Community Benefit Fund. This money will be put towards upcoming projects nominated by the Museum Board. ACEnergy has committed to a \$100,000 community benefit fund. This fund is to be distributed to Yanco community groups. Each year, community groups will be encouraged to submit their interest. Yanco Powerhouse have submitted their expression of interest for 2025 and will be awarded \$10,000.
		The community survey was open from 20 April 2024 until 30 July 2024.	No survey responses have been received by community groups and peak bodies.	
		The toll free-information line, project website and email have been operational since September 2023.	No responses have been received by community groups and peak bodies.	ACEnergy will continue to reach out to Community groups and peak bodies throughout the planning process.
		In-person drop-in session was held on 7 May 2024 at the Yanco Powerhouse Museum, located at 13 Binya St, Yanco NSW 2703.	No identified attendance from Community groups and peak bodies at the information's session.	
	Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs) and Leeton District LALC.	Registration of interest requests for RAPs were open on 15 January 2024 and coordinated by Premise. Please refer to the RAP report that is included in the Yanco BESS EIS.	No comments were received from the RAPs on the significance of the site through review of the assessment methodology, via initial correspondence or during site survey.	Refer to Section 6.2
		Project newsletter and an offer of a briefing was emailed on 24 April 2024 to the Leeton District Aboriginal Land Council.	To date, we have not received any responses from the Leeton District LALC.	ACEnergy will continue to reach out to Leeton District

Stakeholder category	Individual stakeholder subcategory	Consultation summary	Issues raised	Project Response
		The community survey was open from 20 April 2024 until 30 July 2024.	No survey responses have been received by Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs) and Leeton District LALC.	LALC throughout the planning process.
		The toll free-information line, project website and email have been operational since September 2023.	To date, we have not received any responses, emails, or calls from the Leeton District LALC	
	Broader community (Leeton and Yanco townships)	The community survey was open from 20 April 2024 until 30 July 2024.	No survey responses have been received by the broader community (Leeton and Yanco townships).	ACEnergy will continue to reach out to the Broader community (Leeton and Yanco townships) throughout the planning process.
		The toll free-information line, project website and email have been operational since September 2023.	To date, we have not received any responses or calls. One submission via email was made by a labour hire company looking for possible procurement pathway during construction.	
		In-person drop-in session was held on 7 May 2024 at the Yanco Powerhouse Museum, located at 13 Binya St, Yanco NSW 2703.	Four people from Yanco, Leeton and one from Griffith attended the information session, who expressed a general interest in the project's location, construction and operation timeline. No concern around any potential impacts were mentioned.	