



Engagement Summary Report

Proposed Molong BESS:

*1 Deight Street & 19 Back Saleyards Road, Molong
NSW 2866*

FOR: StorEnergy 3 Pty Limited

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Basis of Report

This report has been prepared by SLR Consulting Australia (SLR) with all reasonable skill, care and diligence, and taking account of the timescale and resources allocated to it by agreement with Storenergy 3 Pty Ltd ('Stor-Energy') (the Client). Information reported herein is based on the interpretation of data collected, which has been accepted in good faith as being accurate and valid.

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Executive Summary

SLR Consulting (SLR), on behalf of Storenergy 3 Pty Ltd (Stor-Energy), prepared and delivered a targeted community and stakeholder engagement program to support the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed Molong Battery Project in Molong, New South Wales.

The engagement program aimed to inform key stakeholders about the project, gather feedback to inform the EIS, and build early awareness and trust within the Molong community. A range of tailored communication tools were used to reach diverse audiences, including newspaper advertisements, targeted mailouts to near neighbours, and direct engagement with local government representatives and community organisations. These materials provided accessible information about the project and encouraged participation via community engagement sessions and online surveys.

Recognising a largely neutral sentiment toward Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) within the Molong community, Stor-Energy and SLR established clear performance indicators to guide the engagement approach. These included:

- Engaging with community members and stakeholders willing to participate, to understand their perceptions and concerns about the project.
- Gathering insights into what the Molong community values and identifying local nuances that may influence project delivery.

Key engagement activities included:

- A community pop-up event held at the Molong Street Stall on Friday 21 March 2025, introducing the project and the proponent to the community and providing high-level project information.
- Two community drop-in sessions held on Monday 23 June 2025 at the Cabonne Community Centre, providing opportunities for stakeholders to engage directly with the project team, ask questions, and access detailed technical information.
- Door knocking with near neighbours along Deight Street and Back Saleyards Road, offering personalised engagement and project collateral.
- Stakeholder meetings with local organisations including the Cabonne Shire Council, the Rural Fire Service (RFS), and the Orange Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC) allowing for more detailed discussion of project-specific interests and issues.

While participation was modest, consistent with the regional setting and early stage of the project, feedback from those who did engage was generally neutral to positive. Stakeholders expressed a willingness to learn more about the project and provided valuable feedback on a range of topics, including:

- Concerns around battery fires and potential radiation, particularly from near neighbours.
- Interest in the project proponent's structure, responsibilities, and the long-term management of the facility.
- Questions surrounding battery lifespan, recycling, and disposal processes.
- Interest in how local community members, including Aboriginal groups, would benefit from the project.
- Suggestions for local procurement, employment opportunities, and involvement in environmental initiatives.



- Recognition of the battery's potential to enhance energy reliability and support broader energy goals in the region.

The consultation process successfully established a foundation for future engagement. It provided the project team with insight into community attitudes, raised awareness of local values and priorities, and identified areas where further communication and collaboration would be beneficial.

Moving forward, it is recommended that Stor-Energy maintain open communication channels and continue providing regular updates to stakeholders. A proactive, transparent engagement approach will be key to building trust and ensuring community members have ongoing opportunities to participate in shaping project outcomes

The remainder of this report outlines the engagement program's design, delivery, and findings, and presents specific recommendations to support the next phase of engagement. These recommendations focus on enhancing transparency, supporting local involvement, and co-designing long-term benefits that reflect the needs and values of the Molong community.



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6.0	Recommendations and actions
Appendix A	Examples of Engagement Collateral



Acronyms and Abbreviations

BESS	Battery Energy Storage System
CSEP	Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
LALC	Local Aboriginal Land Council
MW	Megawatt
MWh	Megawatt hours
RFS	Rural Fire Service
SIA	Social Impact Assessment
SSDA	State Significant Development Application



1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this Engagement Report (the Report) is to provide an overview of the community and stakeholder engagement program undertaken to support Stor-Energy's Molong Battery Project.

This report outlines the key objectives and approach of the engagement program, summarises the key findings, key themes, and insights gathered, and provides considerations for engagement and communication materials for future stages of the Project.

This Consultation Report also summarises the feedback collected through the implementation of the Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan (CSEP). Further detailed feedback from consultation with key stakeholders is included in the following assessments:

- Social Impact Assessment
- Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment
- Economic Impact Assessment
- Landscape and Visual Amenity Assessment
- Air Quality Assessment
- Bushfire Risk Assessment
- Noise and Vibration Assessment
- Stormwater Management Plan
- Waste Management Plan.

2.0 Project overview

The Molong Battery Project is a proposed Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) designed to enhance energy integration and support the growing demand for reliable energy in the Molong region, and New South Wales. The 150-Megawatt (MW) BESS will store surplus energy from renewable sources, dispatching it during peak demand periods to enhance grid stability. The project also includes an overhead cable connection to Transgrid's existing Molong 132/66kV substation.

Currently in the Environment Impact Statement (EIS) preparation stage, the project anticipates EIS submissions in Q3 2025. As part of this process, community and stakeholder engagement was undertaken to ensure transparency, gather insights into community sentiment, and address early concerns from the community and key stakeholders.

3.0 Engagement overview

3.1 Key performance indicators

SLR in collaboration with Stor-Energy, identified the measures of success for the engagement program. A key priority was to identify and engage with key stakeholders and sensitive receivers to ensure that, at a minimum, these individuals were informed about the proposed Molong Battery Project and provided the opportunity to interact with the project team to learn more about the proposed development.



Our experience has demonstrated that while providing opportunities for community engagement is essential, actual participation can sometimes be limited. Given this, we focused on actively engaging with those willing to participate, aiming to understand community and stakeholder perceptions and concerns about the project. Additionally, it was important to gather insights specific to Molong, such as what the community values about living in the area are, and any local nuances that should be considered during the planning and development process.

3.2 Stakeholder identification

As part of the preparation for the engagement period, SLR developed a comprehensive stakeholder list. This list included sensitive receivers, state and federal government departments, relevant business owners, local emergency services, community leaders, and the Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC).

3.3 Engagement approach

3.3.1 Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan

A Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan (CSEP) was developed as a foundational framework through detailed desktop analysis for the Molong Battery Project.

The primary objective of the CSEP was to identify and guide engagement with key local stakeholders, including near neighbours, residents, community groups, the Orange LALC, and other relevant organisations such as the Rural Fire Service (CFS). The purpose was to gather valuable feedback, foster trust, and ensure transparent communication during the preparation of the EIS application.

To support this objective, the CSEP established a high-level social baseline for the project by analysing publicly available data. This analysis identified key stakeholders and highlighted the potential risks associated with both the engagement process and the project itself.

Consideration of community demographics, social sensitivities, and potential project impacts informed the selection of engagement tools and methods that were specifically tailored to the Molong community and surrounding areas.

The CSEP also outlined core engagement principles to guide the process, including:

- Ensuring open and honest communication through transparency from Stor-Energy in relation to the project and its potential impacts.
- Actively seeking to engage a diverse range of stakeholders, including First Nations groups.
- Remaining flexible to respond effectively to community needs, emerging issues, and stakeholder feedback throughout the engagement process.

This structured approach provided the framework necessary to deliver a meaningful and effective consultation process for the Molong Battery Project, laying the foundation for ongoing collaboration with stakeholders and the Molong community.

3.3.2 Communication channels

A variety of communication channels were employed to inform stakeholders about the key drivers and benefits of the Molong Battery Project, as well as to promote the upcoming engagement activities. These tools ensured a comprehensive outreach strategy tailored to



the Molong community and key stakeholders. The communication tools and activities are outlined in Table 1.

Table 1 Communication tools

Tool	Activity description
Targeted traditional mailout	Near neighbours to the project site were identified and contacted through a direct mailout. Letters invited recipients to call the dedicated project telephone line or email to schedule a meeting with the project team. A total of 8 letters were sent via priority Australia Post delivery, with 0 letters returned.
Newspaper advertisement campaign	Advertisements were placed in the Molong Express newspaper on Saturdays 7 June and 21 June 2025. The campaign included a print advertisement, which aimed to raise awareness of the Project and promote the community drop-in session to a broad audience.
Dedicated project phone line	A dedicated phone line, 1800 920 060, was established to provide stakeholders with direct access to the project information and support. The phone number was prominently included in all printed and digital communication to encourage queries and feedback.
Dedicated project email address	A dedicated email address, information@molong-battery.com.au , was created to facilitate stakeholder communication. This email was included in all printed materials and managed by the project team to ensure timely responses to enquiries.
Online SIA survey	An online SIA survey was launched to collect feedback and understand community concerns about the project. A QR code was included on the project's technical factsheet allowing stakeholders to easily access the survey via their mobile devices.
Online Community Benefits Fund survey	An online Community Benefits Fund survey was launched to collect feedback and understand how the community would like to see community benefit funds distributed. A QR code was included on a Community Benefits Fund Poster allowing stakeholders to easily access the survey via their mobile devices.
Project database	To expand community engagement, stakeholders were encouraged to sign up for project updates via the project website. This facilitated ongoing communication awareness.
Project website	A dedicated Project website (https://molong-battery.com.au/) was created to host up-to-date information about the Project and to promote the engagement period. The webpage also provided stakeholders with the opportunity to sign up for the project updates and access key materials.
Project social media	A Facebook page and Instagram accounts were established for the project, with active campaigns for Facebook users in and around Molong (17 km surroundings).
Project collateral	Informational materials were developed to support the in-person engagement sessions and to inform the community about the Project. Key collateral included Examples of Engagement Collateral (See Appendix A): • Project Overview Factsheet A concise overview of the Project, highlighting its objectives, key messages, potential benefits, and timeline. It served as an accessible reference for community members to understand the Project's purpose. • Project Technical Factsheet A concise overview of the draft technical reports prepared to support the project's Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) submission. The factsheet outlined key findings, assessment areas, and potential impacts,



Tool	Activity description
	providing community members with a clear summary of the technical basis for the project. It also included a QR code linking to the online SIA survey to encourage participation and support feedback collection. Project Poster A visual summary outlining the project's purpose, a brief description of the proposed battery development, and a clear overview of the approvals process. The poster included contact details for the project, both email and phone, encouraging community members to reach out to the project team for further information or to ask questions. Designed for display at the community pop-up event and local venues. Project Map A detailed visual representation of the Project site, including the location of the BESS and its proximity to near neighbours on Deight Street and Back Saleyards Road. Social media tile posters Key aspects of the project were visually communicated and displayed in a clear and accessible format on A3 posters adapted from social media tiles. These included simplified messages about the Project's purpose, potential benefits, and opportunities for community input. Designed for visibility and ease of understanding, they reinforced key information presented online and supported consistent messaging across engagement channels. Approvals Timeline Poster A poster illustrating the project's approvals process and indicative timeline, outlining key milestones from the planning and assessment phase of the project. Community Benefits Fund Survey A QR code linking to the Community Benefits Fund survey was provided to gather input from residents on how potential community funding associated with the project could be best directed. The survey invited community members to identify local priorities, suggest initiatives, and help shape the development of a benefits framework that reflects the needs and values of the Molong community. LVIA Photomontage A set of photomontages prepared as part of the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) were presented on A3 posters. These visual simulations showed how the project would appear from key public viewpoints once constructed. They provided community members with a realistic impression of visual changes to the local landscape and supported informed feedback during consultation.

3.3.3 Engagement opportunities

Opportunities for face-to-face engagement were actively promoted to provide community members and key stakeholders with direct access to the project team. These interactions were designed to foster open communication, address concerns, and gather valuable feedback. The activities are outlined in Table 2.



Table 2 Engagement activities

Tool	Activity description
Near neighbour door knocking	Near neighbour door knocking was conducted ahead of the community pop-up event and drop-in sessions to introduce Stor-Energy and provide introductory information about the Molong Battery Project and its potential impact on nearby properties during construction and operation. During these interactions, communication materials were distributed to facilitate discussions and address any questions or concerns raised by property owners and residents.
Pop-up event	A community pop-up event was held on Friday 21 March 2025, at the Molong Street Stall from 10am to 11am. This high-traffic public location was chosen to maximise visibility and accessibility to the local community. The event provided high-level information about the Project, while introducing Stor-Energy to the local community. Project collateral was distributed at the event.
Drop-in event	Two community drop-in sessions were held on Monday 23 June 2025, from 10am to 1pm and 4pm to 7pm at the Cabonne Community Centre, Bank Street, Molong. Community members were invited to learn more about the Project and the subsequent technical reports. This event allowed attendees to engage directly with Project representatives from both Stor-Energy and SLR, ask questions in a one-on-one or small group setting, and provide feedback to the SIA and Community Benefit Fund surveys available. Project collateral was distributed at the event including the Project Overview Factsheet and Technical Factsheet.
Stakeholder meetings	Face-to-face meetings were conducted with the RFS, Cabonne Shire Council, Molong Advancement Group and the Orange LALC. These meetings provided an opportunity to introduce the project, address enquiries, and gain a deeper understanding of key areas of interest and concerns associated with the Molong region.
Direct contact with stakeholders	Direct contact has been sought with potentially interested stakeholders identified in the initial stakeholder mapping and as new information has been gathered during engagement activities and project design. Methods included emails, phone calls and dropping in to local businesses on the main street and attending local community organisations meetings.

3.3.4 Engagement to inform Social Impact Assessment

Targeted consultation with stakeholders and affected community to inform the Social Impact Assessment (SIA) was undertaken in parallel with the wider engagement program. Building on the engagement undertaken during the social impact scoping, SIA consultation included online surveys and interviews with affected stakeholders.

Key stakeholders were invited to participate in interviews to understand potential impacts (both positive and negative) arising from the project as well as possible mitigation and enhancement measures. Invitations were distributed via email or phone call to local accommodation businesses, real estate agencies, emergency services and Council officers.

A series of online SIA surveys were prepared to seek feedback from the local community, accommodation providers, businesses and service providers, and real estate agents.

Industry specific surveys were shared via email or phone with relevant businesses and operators.

The general community survey was advertised at public engagement events via a QR code on project fact sheets, and through Facebook posts on the Molong Battery Project page.



Public Molong community group Facebook accounts were approached to share posts, however no response was received to these requests.

Outcomes of SIA consultation are reported in detail in the SIA report prepared as part of the EIS for the Project.

4.0 Engagement outcomes

4.1 Pop-up event

A community pop-up event was held on Friday 21 March 2025, at the Molong Street Stall from 10am to 11am. The event was designed as a casual and accessible engagement opportunity, encouraging Molong residents to stop by at their convenience and learn more about the project.

The project team hosted an information stall featuring printed factsheets and project posters. Representatives from SLR Consulting were present to provide information about the project, introduce the proponent to the community, respond to questions, and collect feedback on local perceptions and concerns.

A total of five people engaged with the team during the event. Discussions predominantly aligned with the themes outlined below.

4.1.1 Interest in the project and access to information

Several attendees approached the stall to enquire about the project. The team provided factsheets and verbal explanations to their queries. One resident indicated they would sign up for updates via email after receiving project materials. Another attendee expressed general interest in the project and its objectives.

4.1.2 Off-grid living and community benefits

A resident with a personal interest in off-grid living expressed curiosity about how the project might support similar community-driven sustainability initiatives. They noted that many couples were relocating to the area with the intent of establishing off-grid lifestyles and were interested in the potential community benefit initiatives associated with the project.

4.1.3 Health and safety concerns

One attendee mentioned concerns related to battery fires, though he was not personally worried as he resides on the north-western fringe of town, away from the proposed project site. This indicates a general awareness of perceived battery risks, even among those who consider themselves geographically removed from potential impacts.

4.2 Community drop-in session

Two community drop-in sessions were held on Monday 23 June 2028, at the Cabonne Community Centre on Bank Street, Molong from 10am to 1pm and 4pm to 7pm. A total of eight people attended one of the sessions.

The sessions provided a valuable opportunity for stakeholders to engage in meaningful dialogue with the Project team. Attendees were able to voice their concerns, ask detailed questions, and receive comprehensive information about the Molong Battery Project. This open engagement approach helped to foster transparency, build trust, and strengthen relationships within the local community.



During the session, attendees raised a range of queries, which predominantly aligned with the themes outlined on the next page.

4.2.1 Strong local and industry support

Stakeholders expressed a high level of enthusiasm and support for the Molong Battery Project, recognising its potential to bring economic, environmental, and social benefits to the region. One community member, a lifelong resident of Molong and the President of a local community group, described the project as “... *the most exciting thing to happen for our town in a long time.*” Similarly, an industry member demonstrated a proactive interest in being involved, offering to support the tender process. This level of support from both community and industry stakeholders highlights a shared optimism around the project’s positive contribution to Molong’s future.

4.2.2 Desire for project participation

Stakeholders expressed a clear interest in being actively involved in the delivery and success of the project. Offers of participation ranged from technical assistance, product supply, and support with future procurement processes, to community volunteering, environmental restoration, and cultural initiatives. Some participants also flagged the potential for local businesses to contribute to site preparation and environmental management activities. This indicated a strong appetite for both direct and indirect involvement from a diverse range of local and regional stakeholders.

4.2.3 Community benefit opportunities

The importance of meaningful and visible community benefit opportunities was a consistent theme. Stakeholders shared suggestions for legacy initiatives that could enhance public spaces, cultural identity and town pride. These included investment in flood-damaged community facilities, completion of public art installations, and ongoing support for local arts and heritage projects. There was a clear interest in ensuring that the project delivers lasting value to the local area beyond its technical function, particularly through initiatives that reflect community character and priorities.

4.2.4 Local knowledge

Participants demonstrated strong familiarity with the project site and its surrounding environment, offering valuable insights informed by generations of lived and professional experience. Specific references were made to nearby vegetation types, past environmental rehabilitation efforts, and the suitability of land for infrastructure and development. This local knowledge is an important asset in ensuring that project planning and implementation are appropriately informed by on-the-ground context, particularly in relation to environmental sensitivities and land use history.

4.2.5 Environmental and technical considerations

Stakeholders raised thoughtful and informed questions about the technical and environmental aspects of the project. Topics included voltage levels and grid connection, equipment configuration, operational lifespan of the battery systems, and end-of-life waste management. Concerns were also raised about potential wildlife impacts, particularly the presence of kangaroos on and around the site. Project representatives provided clarification and assurance, including information about compliance with recycling regulations and environmental mitigation measures.



4.2.6 End-of-life management of the Molong Battery system

There was specific interest in understanding the operational lifespan of the battery infrastructure and the processes in place for managing battery components at end-of-life. Stakeholders referenced broader public discussions about battery waste and its environmental implications, expressing concern about how and where used materials would be disposed. Project team members confirmed that all battery components would be subject to stringent disposal and recycling processes in line with state and federal environmental regulations.

4.2.7 Integration with existing energy projects in the region

Stakeholders identified the potential for the Molong Battery to complement and strengthen the region's growing energy landscape. There was discussion of nearby wind, solar, and transmission projects, with attendees recognising the strategic value of the battery in supporting grid stability and improving energy storage capacity. The project was seen as a logical and necessary addition to existing energy infrastructure, offering opportunities for synergy and enhanced system reliability.

4.2.8 Future engagement opportunities

Several stakeholders expressed a desire to remain engaged and informed throughout the construction and operation of the project. Suggested actions included invitations to site walkovers once safe access is established, updates on the project's approval status and construction timeline, and continued consultation on community benefit opportunities. Some participants also indicated that they would be seeking support from local groups to demonstrate broader community backing.



Photo 1 Stor-Energy project team engaging during the community drop-in session



4.3 Door knocking with near neighbours

Door knocking was conducted on Tuesday 10 December 2024 and Friday 21 March 2025, targeting residents along Deight Street and Back Saleyards Road. A total of eight residents were reached. Project Overview factsheets were distributed to provide accessible information about the Molong Battery Project and to encourage participation in the community feedback process.

Overall, near neighbours appeared largely neutral or indifferent toward the project. However, one community member raised a series of concerns, which are summarised below.

4.3.1 Perceived health impacts

The resident expressed concern about potential health effects associated with the battery project, specifically referring to any potential radiation exposure. They noted that they have a young family and were worried about the long-term implications of living near the facility. Clarification was provided onsite regarding the nature of battery storage systems and the lack of evidence linking BESS infrastructure to harmful levels of electromagnetic radiation.

4.3.2 Ownership and accountability

Questions were raised about who owns the company responsible for delivering the project. The resident expressed an interest in understanding the structure of the proponent organisation and who ultimately holds responsibility for the development and its long-term impacts.

4.3.3 Financial benefit to the proponent

The resident also questioned what Stor-Energy stands to gain from locating the project in Molong, including how much profit is expected to be generated. These comments reflected a scepticism around perceived corporate benefit versus local community value and highlights the importance of clearly articulating the regional benefits and legacy outcomes of the project.

4.4 Data summary

The engagement activities for the Molong Battery Project did not reach a large number of stakeholders, which is consistent with expectations for a regional project in the early planning stages. However, those who did engage with the project team generally expressed neutral to positive sentiment.

Participants demonstrated a willingness to listen, ask questions, and consider the project's potential impacts and benefits. Community members sought general information about the project, with some indicating interest in staying informed or participating in future opportunities. There was support for the role of the project in advancing energy reliability in the region and delivering benefits, particularly in the context of other energy infrastructure in the area.

While only a small number of concerns were raised, these related to potential health impacts, environmental management, and how project ownership and financial benefit would be distributed. These concerns were constructive in nature and reflected a desire for transparency and accountability. Suggestions for community benefit initiatives were thoughtful and locally grounded, indicating a strong interest in seeing lasting value delivered to Molong.



4.5 Council meeting

On Thursday 12 December 2024, Stor-Energy and SLR met Cabonne Council online for an initial project introduction. Key points discussed included adjacent developments, renewables context including other proposals in the area, site history and constraints, infrastructure context and community considerations, including project legacy and community benefits.

On 13 February 2025, SLR Consulting and Stor-Energy met online with Cabonne Council to provide an update on the project and discuss infrastructure and traffic related issues relating to the Project, including access routes and heavy vehicle movements.

On 13 May 2025 Stor-Energy presented in person a project update and answered queries in a monthly workshop for Cabonne Council Councillors.

Additionally, Stor-Energy have sought advice on topics such as roads, community and local developments to guide the design and EIS, ensuring the project is fit for the local area.

4.6 Rural Fire Service meeting

A meeting between Stor-Energy, SLR Consulting and representatives of the Canobolas Orange Rural Fire Service (RFS) was held on 9 December 2024 at the Orange RFS office. The purpose of the meeting was to introduce the Molong Battery Project, discuss fire safety considerations, and explore opportunities for early RFS involvement in the design and planning stages of the project.

The RFS acknowledged that while they are not jurisdictional within the site boundaries of the Molong Battery, they play a critical role in broader fire prevention and community protection efforts. Concerns were raised about the fire risk posed by adjacent vegetation and prevailing north-westerly winds. The RFS recommended establishing an adequate Asset Protection Zone (APZ) along the northern boundary and suggested pre-development hazard reduction such as grazing. A site visit was proposed to assess conditions firsthand.

Discussion focused on internal and external fire suppression systems, with the RFS emphasising the need for high-quality container design, battery separation, and the use of gas-based suppression within BESS units. The team also discussed water storage requirements, noting that larger tanks would be necessary for effective fire suppression. Clarification was sought on battery specifications, shipping container fire protection, and overhead cable voltage and design.

The RFS expressed interest in being more actively involved in early project design, including emergency response planning and coordination with local brigades. The potential role of full-time emergency management personnel onsite was raised as a point for further discussion.

Community safety, Aboriginal cultural heritage, and coordination with the Orange LALC were also discussed.

4.7 Orange LALC meeting

A site meeting was held on Wednesday 18 December 2024 in Molong with representatives from the Orange LALC, SLR Consulting, Virtus Heritage, and the Orange Rural Fire Service (RFS). The purpose of the meeting was to discuss site preparation, cultural heritage considerations, and bushfire risk management as part of the Molong Battery Project.

Orange LALC and RFS representatives provided recommendations on fencing, fire buffers, and access requirements. It was noted that the type of perimeter fencing would influence fire risk, with colourbond steel preferred for its non-combustibility. A 5–6 metre Asset Protection



Zone (APZ) lined with mineral earth was recommended from the battery enclosure, with an additional 18-metre mineral earth buffer from the fence line to reduce the risk of fire spread.

In terms of site design, it was recommended that a four metre ring road be established between the boundary fence and the battery compound to support vehicle access and fire management. A 25 metre easement along the 132kV overhead line was also advised for safety and maintenance purposes. The need for two site access points was identified to ensure flexibility for future construction and operational requirements.

Water management was a key focus, with a total of 288,000 litres of onsite water storage recommended for fire suppression. A minimum of 45,000 litres should be stored near the main vehicle entry point to support rapid emergency response. The use of bunding was also advised to prevent runoff into nearby waterways during emergency events. The source and treatment of water were raised as considerations for compliance and operational planning.

Vegetation observations noted the presence of wallaby grass on the project site and shrubby vegetation to the west, requiring appropriate bushfire mitigation. The understory of nearby Transgrid-managed land was identified as predominantly grass-covered, reducing relative risk in some areas.

An Aboriginal Cultural Heritage walkover was conducted during the visit, attended by Orange LALC representative Dougie Sutherland and Lilita Malcolm of Virtus Heritage. Findings from the walkover will be provided in a preliminary technical investigation report to be prepared by Virtus.

This meeting provided valuable input into the project's fire management and heritage planning processes and reinforced the importance of ongoing collaboration with Orange LALC, Virtus Heritage, and the RFS in the lead-up to EIS submission.

4.8 Online engagement interactions

4.8.1 Online SIA and Community Benefits surveys

Online SIA and Community benefit surveys were developed to gather community input and identify key concerns in preparation for the EIS application for the Molong Battery Project.

The surveys were open from Monday 23 June 2025 to Sunday 13 July 2025 and aimed to collect feedback on the potential social impacts (both positive and negative) and community benefit opportunities for the Project. The purpose of the surveys were to incorporate community perspectives into the Project's planning process, address any concerns, and identify areas requiring targeted mitigation to ensure alignment with local expectations and maximise opportunities for community benefits.

Feedback captured from the surveys, along with proposed mitigation measures, are captured as part of the Project's Social Impact Assessment.

In addition to the online surveys, the project Facebook account has had active campaigns on project key features, impacts and upcoming events and updates. Each campaign gained between 3000 – 6000 views within the set geographical area (Molong township and 17 km surrounds). While the campaigns mainly targeted Molong residents, posts would have also reached any transient stakeholders. Comments and messages were monitored and responses were made promptly.



5.0 Reporting and monitoring

Stakeholder interactions and feedback collected throughout the engagement period were recorded and managed using Consultation Manager, a secure stakeholder relationship management system. This platform enabled the project team to systematically capture comments, questions, concerns, and sentiment expressed by stakeholders across all engagement activities.

The use of Consultation Manager ensured that feedback was accurately documented, traceable, and accessible for analysis. This approach supported the identification of recurring themes, emerging issues, and community priorities, enabling a transparent and evidence-based reporting process. It also provided a clear record of engagement to support the preparation of the EIS and future planning activities.

6.0 Recommendations and actions

Effective engagement and communication strategies are critical to ensuring the ongoing success of the Molong Battery Project. Future engagement efforts should prioritise active listening to community feedback, acknowledging and addressing concerns, and incorporating stakeholder input into project planning and decision-making in the approvals phase. By fostering transparency and inclusivity, Stor-Energy can build trust and strengthen its relationship with the Molong community.

Establishing and maintaining strong relationships with the community, local stakeholders, and key organisations will be essential to navigating project complexities and achieving shared outcomes. These partnerships will not only help mitigate potential challenges but also ensure that the Project delivers tangible benefits to both the community and the environment.

Based on the engagement program delivered to date and the insights gathered, the following recommendations and future considerations have been identified to guide the next stages of the Project's development.

6.1 Engagement approach

6.1.1 Addressing health, safety, and battery fire concerns

Concerns about battery safety, including the risk of fires and potential radiation exposure, were raised by community members, particularly those living near the project site with young families. To address these concerns, it is recommended that Stor-Energy develop and distribute an easy to understand factsheet outlining the battery's safety systems, fire management protocols, and compliance with national and state regulations, outside those already outlined in the Technical Factsheet.

The factsheet should be supported by in-person opportunities for community members to ask questions directly, such as future drop-in sessions or small group meetings with concerned residents. Further, collaboration with local emergency services, including the RFS, should continue to ensure site-specific emergency response plans are in place. Consideration should be given to including the RFS in community briefings to strengthen credibility and community confidence in the safety approach.



Proactive and consistent communication of battery safety features, particularly fire suppression systems, enclosure design, and operational monitoring, will be key to addressing misconceptions and building trust within the community.

6.1.2 Transparency on project ownership and accountability

Questions were raised about who owns Stor-Energy and who will ultimately be responsible for the battery project over the long-term. In response, it is recommended that Stor-Energy publicly share a project governance overview, clearly outlining the company's structure, key personnel, and responsibilities across the construction, operation, and decommissioning phases.

This overview could be made available on the project website and in community collateral and should include information on Stor-Energy's track record, relevant experience, and ongoing commitments to transparency and compliance. Where appropriate, third-party partnerships or contractors involved in the project should also be identified.

Providing this level of transparency will support stakeholder confidence in the project's integrity and demonstrate that Stor-Energy is accountable to the community and regulators alike.

6.1.3 Communicating battery lifespan and end-of-life management

Several stakeholders expressed interest in understanding the operational lifespan of the battery system and how its components would be managed at the end of life. These questions reflect broader public discourse on battery waste and environmental sustainability.

It is recommended that Stor-Energy develop targeted communication materials explaining the full lifecycle of the battery system, including expected duration of use, replacement schedules, and end-of-life recycling and disposal pathways. This should include references to relevant Australian standards and environmental legislation, particularly around the safe disposal of lithium-ion components and recovery of valuable materials.

Consider hosting a *Battery Lifecycle Q&A* online or in person to explain these issues in more depth, using visual aids such as process diagrams and case studies from other successful projects. This will help reinforce the project's environmental credibility and show alignment with best practice in sustainable energy infrastructure.

6.1.4 Leveraging regional energy integration

Stakeholders recognised the strategic value of the Molong Battery Project in complementing existing energy infrastructure in the region, including nearby solar, wind, and transmission projects. There is an opportunity to strengthen messaging around this regional energy integration.

It is recommended that Stor-Energy develop communication materials (e.g. infographics, videos, or posters) that clearly show how the battery system supports grid stability, energy security, and energy uptake across the region. These materials should be incorporated into future engagement events and updated regularly as the regional energy landscape evolves.

Framing the battery as a contributor to a broader energy ecosystem will help position the project as future-focused, necessary, and aligned with state and national energy transition goals.

6.1.5 Community Benefit Fund co-design

Community benefits was a consistently raised theme across engagement activities, with stakeholders expressing a desire for meaningful and visible legacy outcomes that reflect



Molong's character and priorities. To deliver on this expectation, it is recommended that Stor-Energy initiate a co-design process for the Community Benefits Fund.

It is recommended that this include opportunities for residents to submit project ideas, participate in decision-making processes, and help shape the fund's governance structure. Partnerships with Cabonne Council and local community organisations will be critical in ensuring that funding is appropriately directed and aligned with existing local plans and aspirations.

It is also recommended that clear communication of how feedback has shaped the fund's design and criteria be made available on the project website and social media channels and through other local channels such as Cabonne Council's social media. Providing updates on the delivery of funded initiatives will also be important for demonstrating long-term commitment.

6.1.6 Supporting local participation and procurement

Stakeholders expressed interest in contributing to the project through local business participation, volunteering, or supplying products and services. To support this, it is recommended that Stor-Energy develop and promote a local procurement strategy outlining how businesses and contractors can register interest and bid for work packages related to construction and operations.

This could be facilitated through an Expression of Interest (EOI) process advertised locally and on the project website and social media. Hosting a local supplier information session, either online or in Molong, would also provide further visibility and allow Stor-Energy to directly engage with regional capability.

Demonstrating clear pathways for local involvement will help ensure the project contributes to regional economic development and strengthens its social licence to operate.

6.1.7 Continuing relationships and targeted engagement

Stakeholders, including local leaders and near neighbours, expressed a desire to remain engaged as the project progresses. To support this, it is recommended that Stor-Energy implement a rolling engagement schedule that includes regular updates on approvals, construction timelines, and opportunities for project involvement.

Offering optional site visits or virtual site tours, once appropriate, may also help maintain transparency and community connection to the project.

6.2 Summary of actions and recommendations

A summary of the key actions and recommendations to guide future engagement for the Molong Battery Project is provided in Table 3. This table categorises key themes identified during the engagement process alongside actionable steps and recommendations to address them effectively.

Table 3 Key actions and recommendations

Key themes	Actions and recommendations
Health and safety concerns	• Develop an easy to understand factsheet addressing battery safety, fire risks, and electromagnetic radiation. • Continue engagement with the RFS and involve them in future community briefings. • Reassure stakeholders through transparent emergency response planning.



Key themes	Actions and recommendations
Project ownership and accountability	• Share an overview of Stor-Energy's ownership structure and delivery responsibilities. • Publish background on the company's track record and long-term management plans. • Clearly identify key project partners and roles across the project lifecycle.
Battery lifespan and end of life management	• Provide accessible information about battery lifespan and replacement timelines. • Explain end-of-life recycling processes and compliance with waste regulations. • Host a community information session focused on lifecycle and sustainability.
Integration with regional energy infrastructure	• Develop visual materials that demonstrate how the battery supports the regional energy network. • Highlight synergies with existing and planned wind, solar, and transmission assets.
Community benefit opportunities	• Co-design the Community Benefits Fund with input from residents and Council. • Establish transparent funding criteria and governance mechanisms. • Communicate how community suggestions have shaped funding priorities.
Local procurement	• Maintain regular project updates via website, email, and community notices. • Share milestone announcements and progress against the approval's timeline. • Offer guided site visits or virtual tours when safe and appropriate.
Environmental and land use considerations	• Provide updates on environmental assessments and mitigation strategies. • Incorporate local ecological knowledge into project design and rehabilitation. • Share how feedback has informed environmental planning decisions.





Appendix A:

Example of Engagement
Collateral



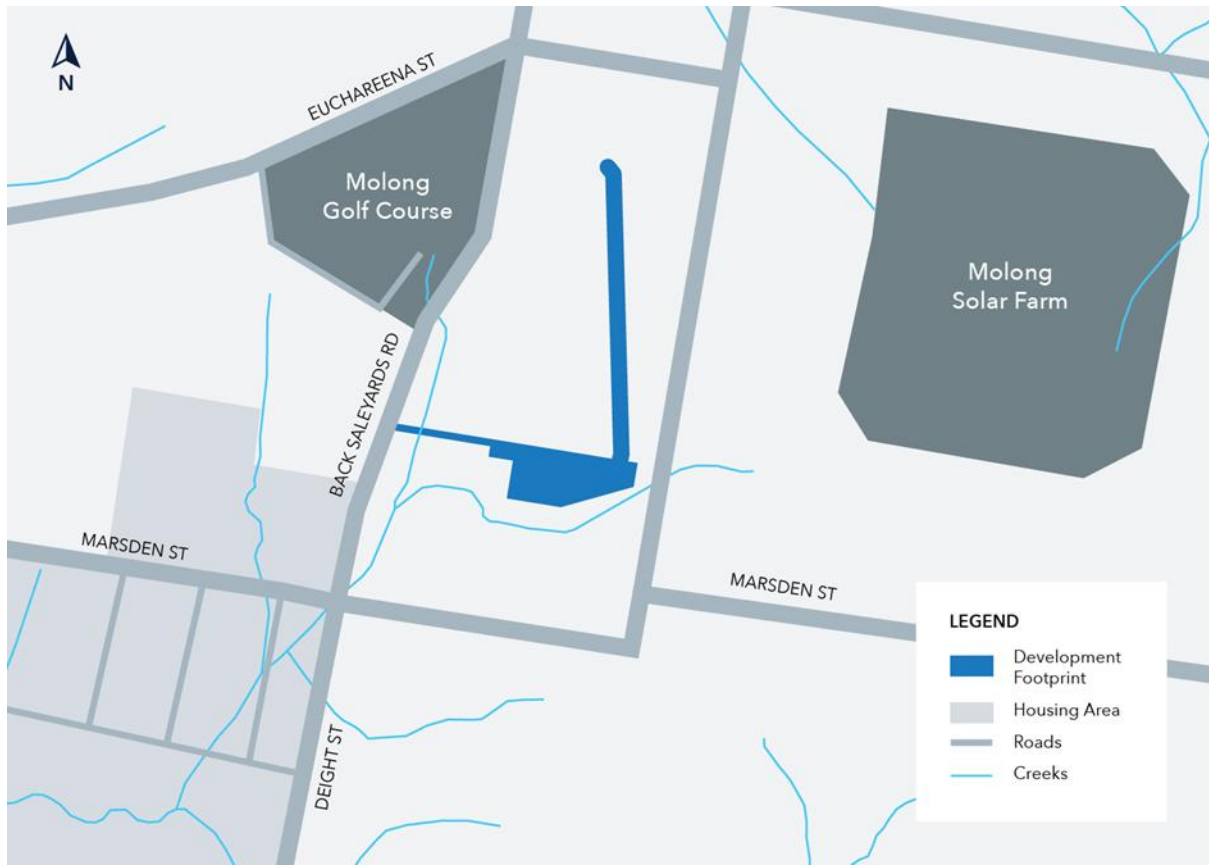
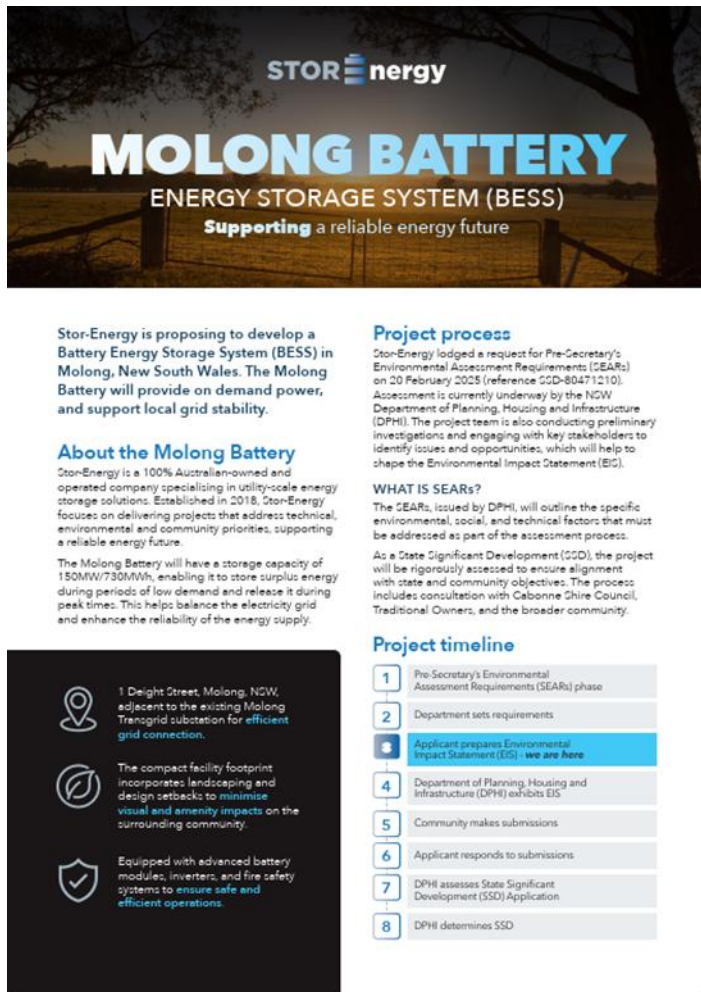


Figure A-1 Project site map



Figure A-2 Project Poster





STOR energy

MOLONG BATTERY

ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEM (BESS)

Supporting a reliable energy future

Stor-Energy is proposing to develop a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) in Molong, New South Wales. The Molong Battery will provide on demand power, and support local grid stability.

About the Molong Battery

Stor-Energy is a 100% Australian-owned and operated company specialising in utility-scale energy storage solutions. Established in 2018, Stor-Energy focuses on delivering projects that address technical, environmental and community priorities, supporting a reliable energy future.

The Molong Battery will have a storage capacity of 150MW/730MWh, enabling it to store surplus energy during periods of low demand and release it during peak times. This helps balance the electricity grid and enhance the reliability of the energy supply.

Project process

Stor-Energy lodged a request for Pre-Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) on 20 February 2025 (reference SGD-80471210). Assessment is currently underway by the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI). The project team is also conducting preliminary investigations and engaging with key stakeholders to identify issues and opportunities, which will help to shape the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

WHAT IS SEARs?

The SEARs, issued by DPHI, will outline the specific environmental, social, and technical factors that must be addressed as part of the assessment process.

As a State Significant Development (SSD), the project will be rigorously assessed to ensure alignment with state and community objectives. The process includes consultation with Cabonne Shire Council, Traditional Owners, and the broader community.

Project timeline

- 1 Pre-Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) phase
- 2 Department sets requirements
- 3 Applicant prepares Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) **we are here**
- 4 Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) exhibits EIS
- 5 Community makes submissions
- 6 Applicant responds to submissions
- 7 DPHI assesses State Significant Development (SSD) Application
- 8 DPHI determines SSD

- 1 Deight Street, Molong, NSW, adjacent to the existing Molong Tranogrid substation for efficient grid connection.
- The compact facility footprint incorporates landscaping and design setbacks to minimise visual and amenity impacts on the surrounding community.
- Equipped with advanced battery modules, inverters, and fire safety systems to ensure safe and efficient operations.

Figure A-3 Factsheet



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HOME ABOUT US COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES FAQ CONTACT

MOLONG BATTERY

PROVIDING ENERGY SECURITY AND RELIABLE POWER FOR NEW SOUTH WALES

Get In Touch

Figure A-4 Project Website



STORenergy

MO LONG BATTERY
Community Benefit Fund



The Molong Battery Community Benefit Fund will support local projects, initiatives, and groups that strengthen the Molong community. We'd love to hear from you - scan the QR code to find out more.

Figure A-5 Community Benefit Fund Poster





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Making
Sustainability
Happen

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