

Appendix J

Social Impact Assessment

PROJECT BOOST

Guildford West HV BESS – Social Impact Assessment

AUSCONNEX

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I, Dr Jamie Seaton, certify that this report contains information relevant to the SIA for the Project, and that the information is not false or misleading. I confirm the SIA was completed on 18 March 2026, and that I understand my legal and ethical obligations.

My qualifications and experience are listed below.

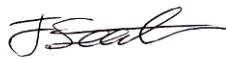
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Date: 18 March 2026



Dr Jamie Seaton

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Glossary

Term	Description
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
BESS	Battery energy storage system
CSEAP	Communications and Stakeholder Engagement Action Plan
CSEP	Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan
CTMP	Construction Traffic Management Plan
DPE	Former Department of Planning and Environment
DPHI	Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
FTE	Full time equivalent
LGA	Local Government Area
mG	Milligauss
the Project site	Guildford West HV BESS development area (approximately one hectare), see Figure 2-1.
SIA	Social Impact Assessment
Social baseline	Defines the current social and economics characteristics within the study areas for the SIA.
Social locality	A nominated area around the Project site where the Project's impacts to people may occur.
TGS	Traffic Guidance Scheme

1 Introduction

Aurecon Australasia Pty Ltd (Aurecon) have been engaged by Ausconnex to prepare a Social Impact Assessment (SIA) for the proposed Guildford West high voltage (HV) Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) (the Project) which is requirement of the Planning Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs).

1.1 Project background

Ausconnex is developing a BESS Project, located wholly within the property boundary of the existing Guildford West Transmission Substation at 120-130 McCredie Road, Guildford West (Lots A and C of DP 407949) (the Project site). The Project will have a capacity of up to 85 megawatts (MW) and an energy storage capacity of up to 340 megawatt-hours (MWh). The siting of the HV BESS located adjacent to the existing transmission substation minimises environmental impacts by co-locating energy transmission and energy storage infrastructure and maximising land use efficiency.

The Project is classified as a State Significant Development (SSD-83916959) as it involves electricity generating works with a capital investment value exceeding \$30 million, in accordance with Section 20 of Schedule 1 of the *State Environmental Planning Policy (Planning Systems) 2021*. The SSD Application is lodged under Part 4, Division 4.7 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act). This SIA has been prepared in response to the SEARs to support the required Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Project (refer to section 1.3 for further information).

1.2 Purpose and scope of this report

This SIA has been prepared in accordance with the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) *Social Impact Assessment Guideline* (SIA Guideline) (DPHI, 2025). This SIA report will assist in identifying any potential social impacts of the Project and provide recommendations to mitigate these impacts.

1.3 Secretary's environmental assessment requirements

The report has been prepared in accordance with the Planning Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) for the Project. The requirements specific to this assessment and where these aspects are addressed in this technical report are outlined in Table 1-1.

Table 1-1: Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements – Social

Key issues	SEARs to be addressed by the study	Where addressed in this report
Social	An assessment of the social impacts or benefits of the Project for the region and the State as a whole in accordance with the <i>Social Impact Assessment Guideline</i> (DPHI, 2025), including consideration of any increase in demand for community infrastructure services, and consideration of construction workforce accommodation.	Chapter 6 outlines construction impacts Chapter 7 outlines operational impacts Chapter 8 outlines decommissioning impacts Chapter 9 outlines cumulative impacts

2 Project Description

The Project involves the development, construction, operation and decommissioning of a grid-scale HV BESS (48 megapack battery units) with a capacity to supply up to 100 MW of power and the ability to store up to 200 MW hours of energy. The Project is proposed to be located in the existing 3.5 ha Guildford West Transmission Substation. The development footprint is approximately 2.31 hectares (ha) and includes the 33 kV grid connection and temporary construction facilities. The Project would include the following key components:

- Electrical infrastructure including:
 - an 85 MW/340 MWh HV BESS comprised of 60 lithium-ion battery containers;
 - 24 inverter stations each including an inverter, step up transformer and Ring Main Unit (RMU);
 - two auxiliary transformers;
 - six Core Support Enclosures (CSEs) for communications equipment;
 - 33 kV switch room/control room;
 - installation of two (2) x 33 kV underground cables and entry point for HV BESS cabling to connect to the Project to the existing Guildford Transmission Substation via new and existing conduits; and
 - one harmonic filter.
- other permanent ancillary infrastructure including:
 - minor excavation for fire water retention basin (up to 2 mbgl) and earth grading and levelling works to enable installation of concrete pads for the HV BESS modules and associated infrastructure (total earthworks volume approximately 1,100 m³ of cut and 3,400 m³ of fill);
 - operation and maintenance (O&M) building;
 - car parking;
 - security fencing, lighting, signage and lightning protection;
 - fire hydrants, fire detection and suppression equipment;
 - internal access road (about 6m wide) and existing driveway access off McCredie Road;
 - stormwater drainage system and water detention (for drainage and fire water containment purposes);
 - seven (7) x 5m high noise attenuation walls; and
 - perimeter landscaping.
- Temporary construction facilities including:
 - site office;
 - construction compounds and laydown areas;
 - construction workers parking areas (light vehicle only); and
 - stormwater and sediment controls for the Site.

During construction and operation, vehicular access to the secured BESS site will be from an existing access from McCredie Road to the Guildford West Transmission Substation. The access point for delivery of commissioning / decommissioning of BESS components and equipment is to be located at the northern end of the development footprint.

Figure 2-1 shows the concept design for the Project. The final Project configuration would be confirmed pending detailed design.

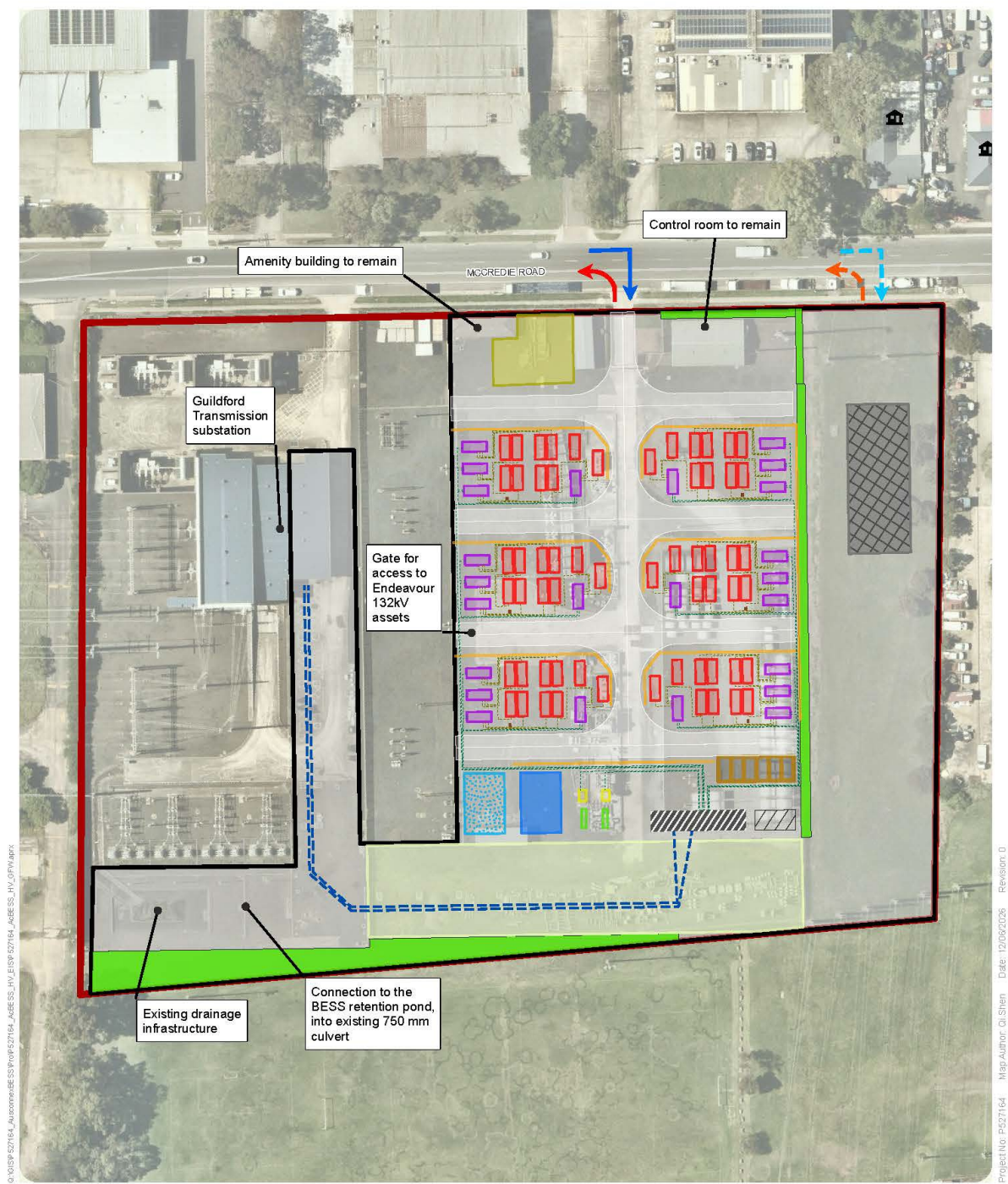


Figure 2-1: Proposed project layout

3 Methodology

The SIA has been guided by the following:

- NSW EP&A Act - which includes reference to social considerations forming part of the decision-making for development. The *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021* (2021 EP&A Regulation) specifies social aspects for consideration, as part of an environmental assessment, as discussed in Section 3.1.
- *Social Impact Assessment Guideline* (DPHI, 2025) which explains how to assess likely social impacts for State Significant Projects (the *SIA Guideline*).
- *Undertaking Engagement Guidelines for State Significant Projects* (DPHI, 2024).

3.1 SIA Guideline Methodology

This SIA was prepared using the following methodology consistent with the SIA Guideline:

- Determining the level of assessment for the Project.
- Identifying the social locality of social influence for the Project.
- Review of legislation and statutory requirements relevant to the social environment of the study area.
- Review of existing social environment to establish a social baseline.
- Identification, analysis and evaluation of the potential social impacts of the Project, and their significance.
- Identification of management and mitigation measures to address potential impacts.

3.2 Determining level of assessment

Scoping for the Project was carried out in accordance with the SIA Guideline to identify the appropriate level of SIA required. The SIA Guideline specifies four levels of social impact assessment (minor, standard and detailed levels of assessment, or 'not relevant') depending on the nature and scale of potential impacts and whether these impacts can be appropriately managed.

Based on the review of the SIA Guideline it was determined that the 'Standard' level of assessment would be most appropriate to the scope of the Project. The 'Standard' level of assessment is defined in Table 3-1 below.

Table 3-1: SIA Guideline 'Standard' level of assessment definition

Level of assessment	Definition
Standard	The project is unlikely to result in significant impacts on the matter, including cumulative impacts. While technical specialists will assess the Project's impacts on the matter, these impacts are likely to be: ■ well understood ■ relatively easy to predict using standard methods ■ capable of being mitigated to comply with relevant standards or performance measures.

Level of assessment	Definition
	Also, the assessment is unlikely to involve any significant uncertainties or require any detailed cumulative impact assessments.

3.3 Assessment stages

3.3.1 Social locality definition

According to the SIA Guideline, the SIA assesses social impacts within the social locality which is defined by where people are likely to experience those impacts.

The social locality for this SIA is the Guildford West - Merrylands West and Smithfield Industrial Statistical Area (SA)2 regions as defined by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (ABS Census 2021). This area has been selected based on areas and communities considered to be most likely directly impacted by the construction and operation of the Project. For cautionary purposes, given the Project site is located in the middle of the SA2 regions, both regions have been included in the social locality.

It is acknowledged that some impacts may not extend across the entire social location, while others – particularly indirect impacts – may extend further afield.

Figure 3-1 provides a graphical representation of the social location.



Social locality

3.3.2 Stakeholder consultation

The Project's Communications and Stakeholder and Engagement Plan (CSEP) in the Scoping Report (Aurecon, 2024) outlines the engagement activities implemented by the Project team to fulfil its consultation requirements.

It should be noted that a range of community and stakeholder engagement activities have been ongoing since April 2025. No stakeholder correspondence or community feedback has been received by the Project team since this time.

Whilst the local community members have not provided any feedback during engagement to date, communication channels will remain available for the community and stakeholders to provide feedback. Should they have any questions regarding the Project, they can contact the team. Further, this may increase following the Public Exhibition of the EIS.

Table 3-2 summarises the engagement and communication activities in line with the relevant requirements and planning stages

Table 3-2: Community and stakeholder engagement activities

DA process	Engagement activities	Status	Feedback received
Scoping report	- Implement the Project's CSEP - Project Community and Stakeholder Engagement Action Plan (CSEAP) - Guildford West HV BESS key messages and FAQs - Project email and 1800 number (1800 955 224) - Members of Parliament and Government stakeholder email notification (2 April 2025) - Project newsletter distributed to a 500m radius of the proposed site; letterbox-dropped to 442 receivers (5 February 2025). - Guildford West HV BESS Ausconnex website (4 April 2025 - https://www.ausconnex.com.au/bess-project/bess-project-guildford-west/)	Complete April-May 2025	Nil
EIS development	- Postcard invitation to online community information session (webinar); letterbox-dropped to same 500m radius, inviting residents and businesses to attend session (10 September 2025). - Online community information session (webinar) (23 September 2025). Recording publicly available on project website linked above. - Guildford West HV BESS key messages and FAQs - Ausconnex website update - Targeted stakeholder engagement (as required) - Preliminary Engagement Outcomes Report (EOR) - Project email and 1800 number (1800 955 224) batteries@ausconnex.com.au	July 2025- February 2026	Nil

DA process	Engagement activities	Status	Feedback received
Public exhibition of the EIS	- Update notification with invitation to face to face community information session – to be defined in consultation with Ausconnex team - Face to face community information session - Project email and 1800 number (1800 955 224) batteries@ausconnex.com.au - Ausconnex website update	February-April 2026	Not commenced
Review and respond	Final Engagement Outcomes Report (EOR)	Mid 2026	Not commenced

3.3.3 Establishing the social baseline

The social baseline defines the current social and economic characteristics in the social locality. It is used to inform the assessment of the Project's potential social impacts (both positive and negative).

The social baseline describes:

- demographic indicators;
- access and connectivity;
- economic and employment profiles; and
- community values and priorities.

These indicators have been selected as they are consistent with the ABS community profile and provide valuable reference points to consider impacts.

Ultimately, the social baseline identifies potential vulnerable populations that are more likely to experience social impacts as a result of the Project. "Vulnerable populations" are defined as groups and communities at a higher risk for poor physical, psychological or social health (National Collaboration Centre for Determinants of Health, 2022). These barriers are further intensified due to social, economic, political, and environmental components. Limitations due to illness or disability ethnic minorities, gender minorities, low-income populations, and those needing assistance can also influence the vulnerability of a population (Profile ID, 2025).

Data used to develop the Project's social baseline is comprised of publicly available information gathered from the following sources:

- ABS Census, 2021 (ABS, 2021a – ABS, 2021d);
- local, State and Australian Government websites and publications (see Chapter 4); and
- various online sources.

3.3.4 Social impact categories

An assessment of the Project's potential social impacts is made using the eight social impact categories defined in the SIA Guideline and reproduced in Table 3-3. The categories are often interrelated, and impacts may be experienced under more than one category. As such, impacts are captured under the category that is considered the most relevant. Interrelated impacts will be cross-referenced where appropriate to avoid repetition.

Where an impact is not considered relevant to the Project and no correspondence from external stakeholders has been received, then the impact category will not be assessed in the SIA. As such, 'decision-making systems' has not been assessed in this SIA.

Table 3-3: Categories of social impacts (DPHI, 2025)

Impact category	Description/explanation
Way of life	How people live, how they get around, how they work, how they play, and how they interact on a daily basis
Community	Composition, character, cohesion, function, and sense of place
Accessibility	How people access and use infrastructure, services and facilities, whether provided by local, State, or federal governments, or by for-profit or not-for-profit organisations or groups
Culture	Both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal culture, including shared beliefs, customs, values, and stories, and connections to country, land, waterways, places, and buildings
Health and wellbeing	Physical and mental health, especially for those who are highly vulnerable to social exclusion or substantial change, plus wellbeing of individuals and communities
Surroundings	Access to, and use of, services that ecosystems provide, public safety and security, access to and use of the natural and built environment, and its aesthetic value and amenity
Livelihoods	People's capacity to sustain themselves, whether they experience personal breach or disadvantage, and the distributive equity of impacts and benefits
Decision-making systems	Whether people experience procedural fairness; can make informed decisions; have power to influence decisions; and can access complaint, remedy and grievance mechanisms

3.3.5 Social impact evaluation

The evaluation of the Project's potential social impacts considered the likelihood of social impacts (shown in Table 3-4) and the magnitude of the predicted impacts (shown in

Table 3-5). These factors are considered together to determine the significance rating of any social impact, using the SIA Guideline matrix system (shown in

Table 3-6).

The final social impact rating is identified within each impact section in Chapter 6.

Table 3-4: Likelihood levels of social impacts

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

Table 3-5: Magnitude levels for social impacts

Magnitude level	Meaning
Transformational	Substantial change experienced in community wellbeing, livelihood, infrastructure, services, health, and/or heritage values; permanent displacement or addition of at least 20% of a community.

Magnitude level	Meaning
Major	Substantial deterioration/improvement to something that people value highly, either lasting for an indefinite time, or affecting many people in a widespread area.
Moderate	Noticeable deterioration/improvement to something that people value highly, either lasting for an extensive time, or affecting a group of people.
Minor	Mild deterioration/improvement, for a reasonably short time, for a small number of people who are generally adaptable and not vulnerable.
Minimal	Little noticeable change experienced by people in the locality.

Table 3-6: Social impact significance matrix

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

3.3.6 Recommended mitigation measures

Specific measures to avoid, minimise, mitigate or manage negative social impacts and measures to enhance positive impacts are recommended in Chapter 10. These were formulated based on the findings of the social baseline study and outcomes of the impact assessment. Recommended mitigation measures have been developed in proportion to the predicted impact using adaptive management principles, recognising that impacts may change over time, and that ongoing monitoring of impacts would provide the flexibility to accommodate such changes.

Impact mitigation measures recommended in technical studies commissioned for the EIS have been considered in the SIA and adopted where relevant.

3.4 Assumptions and limitations

Assumptions applied to complete this SIA include:

- The Preliminary SIA in Section 6.6 of the *Guildford West HV Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) Scoping Report* (Aurecon, 2024) has been used to inform relevant sections of this SIA.
- Data from the 2021 ABS Census is the latest and most comprehensive source of demographic data available to inform the social baseline (Chapter 5) for the population living in the social locality.
- The impact assessment of environmental matters including noise and vibration, landscape, and visual is based on information provided in the specialist technical impact assessments completed for the Project (see Sections 6 and 7).

Limitations for this SIA include:

- As indicated in Section 3.3.2, there has been no community feedback received about the Project from previous engagements. As such, the SIA involves a desktop assessment of the

Project's potential social impacts only. It relies on secondary data from the ABS Census, relevant literature, and local community plans.

- The 2021 Census was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic. Many areas of Australia were in lockdown, and movements within, into and out of Australia were tightly controlled, leading to a significant increase in people working from their homes. These changes in population movement, coupled with various access restrictions caused by the pandemic and associated health orders, may have impacted Census results and may not be illustrative of typical statistics shown in previous Census data.

3.5 Information and data sources

Information used to inform the SIA includes:

- Australian Census of Population and Housing (Australian Bureau of Statistics).
- Literature review of demographic trends and analysis in Australia to support observations in the social baseline analysis.
- Regional and local council strategic planning and legislation.
- The social infrastructure listed in 5.2.1 is indicative and based on data from council social infrastructure lists and Google Maps and is considered accurate. There may be unintended omissions due to unregistered facilities, those without a digital presence, or potential errors in base data.
- Relevant technical reports commissioned for the EIS including:
 - *Traffic and Transport Assessment* (Aurecon, 2026a);
 - *Noise and Vibration Assessment* (Aurecon, 2026b);
 - *Visual Impact Assessment* (Aurecon, 2026c);
 - *Statement of Heritage Impact* (Aurecon, 2026d);
 - *Electromagnetic Field Assessment* (Aurecon, 2026e); and
 - *Preliminary Hazard Analysis* (Aurecon, 2026f).
 - *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report* (Navin Officer, 2026)

4 Legislative and policy context

This section summarises the key legislation, policies and plans relevant to the Project.

The State and Cumberland City Council has regional and strategic plans that articulate their vision for the future of their community. The reviewed plans include:

- Integrated System Plan (ISP) 2024 (AEMO, 2024);
- NSW Electricity Strategy 2019 (DPE, 2019);
- Net Zero Plan Stage 1: 2020-2030 (DPE, 2020);
- NSW Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap (NSW Government, 2020);
- NSW Renewable Energy Planning Framework (DPHI, 2024);
- Cumberland City Council Community Strategic Plan 2017-2027 (Cumberland City Council, 2021);
- Cumberland City Council Community Strategic Plan 2025-2035 (Cumberland City Council, 2025);
- Cumberland 2030: Our Local Strategic Planning Statement (Cumberland City Council, 2020);
- A Metropolis of Three Cities – the Greater Sydney Regional Plan 2018 (Greater Cities Commission, 2018);
- Our Greater Sydney 2056 – Western Sydney District Plan 2018 (Greater Cities Commission, 2018); and
- Resilient Sydney Strategy 2018 (City of Sydney, 2018).

Table 4-1 summarises these plans.

Table 4-1: Relevant regional and local government policies and plans

Title	Description and relevant to the Project
National context	
Integrated System Plan (ISP) 2024 (Australian Energy Market Operator, 2024)	The ISP is a roadmap for the transition of the National Electricity Market (NEM) to meet future energy needs and enable a net zero economy by 2050. The ISP aims to increase battery storage capacity significantly by 2050. The Project would support these initiatives directly as it contributes to the increasing number of battery storage systems in NSW, providing more reliable energy for network consumers. Increased battery storage capacity provides additional grid flexibility and supports renewable energy projects which have more varied generation profile.
NSW policy	
NSW Electricity Strategy 2019 (Department of Planning, Industry & Environment, 2019)	NSW Government's plan for a reliable, affordable and sustainable electricity future that supports a growing economy. It explicitly recognises the way electricity is used and stored in battery storage systems and the potential for it to provide affordable and reliable energy. The Project would support these initiatives directly as it contributes to the increasing number of battery storage systems in NSW providing more reliable energy and supporting further renewable energy development. .

Title	Description and relevant to the Project
Net Zero Plan Stage 1: 2020-2030 (Department of Planning, Industry & Environment, 2020)	Lays out the foundation for NSW's action on climate change and goal to reach net zero emissions by 2050. It outlines the NSW Government's plan to protect our future by growing the economy, creating jobs and reducing emissions over the next decade. It supports a range of initiatives including energy efficiency technologies. The Project would support the transition to cleaner energy by storing power from renewable sources, reduce emissions and improving consistent and reliable energy supply at times of need.
NSW Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap (NSW Climate and Energy Action, 2020)	The Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap is the NSW Government's plan to transform our electricity system into one that is cheap, clean and reliable. The Roadmap coordinates investment in transmission, generation, storage and firming infrastructure as ageing coal-fired generation plants retire. The Roadmap includes actions that will work together to deliver 'whole-of system' benefits. It supports new battery storage and electricity reliability. The Project would support the transition to cleaner energy by storing power from renewable sources, reduce emissions and improving consistent and reliable energy supply at times of need.
NSW Renewable Energy Planning Framework (Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, 2024)	The Renewable Energy Planning Framework has been developed to help NSW transition to renewable energy. It includes guidelines for renewable energy generation and storage projects in NSW. The Project is subject to requirements of this Framework.
Local and regional context	
Our Greater Sydney 2056 – Western Sydney District Plan 2018	The Central City District Region Plan (Greater Sydney Commission, 2018) sets out a vision to improve the district's lifestyle and environmental assets. The region plan provides 10 planning priorities under 4 themes, as part of its framework for a liveable, productive and sustainable city. The main planning priority in the plan relevant to the Project is 'Planning priority C19 reducing carbon emissions and managing energy, water and waste efficiently'. The Project is an opportunity to grow the infrastructure composition for carbon avoidance and emissions savings within the Guildford West Transmission Substation site. This is to best support an onsite solution for managing energy and waste efficiently to minimise adverse environmental impacts, aligning with the objectives of the Central City District Region Plan.
Cumberland City Council Community Strategic Plan 2025-2035	The Community Strategic Plan 2025- 2035 (Cumberland City Council, 2025) sets out the main aspirations and priorities for the future of the Cumberland City Community, including the long-term vision for Cumberland City. The plan establishes 4 strategic directions: 1. Supporting a safe, healthy, creative and connected community; 2. Enhancing the natural and built environment; 3. Delivering sustainable safe and accessible infrastructure and services; and 4. Providing transparent, accountable and strong local leadership. The main goal in the community strategic plan relevant to the Project is 'Direction 2 Enhancing the Natural and Built Environment'. Objective 2.1 of the goal looks to

Title	Description and relevant to the Project
	celebrate the diverse built and natural environment and relates to Strategy 2.1.2 'Care for our natural environment to support a resilient and sustainable city. An indicator to measure the progress is, sustainable behaviours in the community. The Project is an effective on site solution providing new electricity technology which supports network resilience and enables increased use of renewable energy sources to supply western Sydney which is consistent with local sustainability objectives.
Resilient Sydney Strategy 2018	The Resilient Sydney Strategy 2018 is a program for metropolitan Sydney to build the capacity of individuals, communities, institutions, businesses and systems to survive, adapt and thrive in the face of chronic stresses and acute shocks. One of the key focus areas is to enable affordable access to renewable and resilient energy. In particular, it recognises the investment in complementary battery technology, which has the potential to provide local energy backup in times of peak demand, whilst also reducing our contribution to climate change. The Project aims to be an effective on-site electricity supply solution, capable of delivering a clean energy source to western Sydney with direct emission savings for its 20-year lifecycle, aligning to the need for investments in renewable energy projects.

5 Social baseline

This section provides the social baseline for the Project. It establishes an understanding of the existing characteristics, values, and way of life of people in the social locality without the Project. The baseline is considered in assessing how the Project's potential social and/or economic impacts might influence people in the social locality.

As noted in Section 3.2.1, the Project's nominated social locality is comprised of the Guildford West - Merrylands West and Smithfield Industrial SA2s.

5.1 Regional context

The Project is located within the Cumberland Local Government Area (LGA). Cumberland City covers more than 72 square km and is strategically located in the geographic heart of Sydney, less than 5km south of the Parramatta CBD and approximately 20km west of the Sydney CBD.

Cumberland is home to substantial industrial and employment lands accommodating a diverse range of jobs and services. The main industries in Cumberland contributing to local employment include manufacturing, transport, postal and warehousing, retail trade, construction, healthcare and social assistance, and education and training. The majority of land use in Cumberland is residential, with the second major contributor being industrial/employment.

Cumberland is generally well serviced by rail, with a major interchange at Lidcombe. The road network is also extensive and includes cross-regional connections through Woodville Road (north and south connection), M4 Motorway and Parramatta Road (east and west connection). The Cumberland community will also be serviced by the Sydney Metro West, which will terminate at Westmead, providing frequent services to both Parramatta CBD and Sydney CBD. There is also an extensive bus network servicing the Cumberland area.

5.2 Social locality baseline

Table 5-1 contains the social baseline attributed to the population in the social locality. Datasets for the Cumberland Local Government Area (LGA), and Greater Sydney populations are provided for comparative purposes.

Table 5-1 Social baseline

Data point	Social locality		Cumberland LGA		Greater Sydney	
	Figure	Percentage	Figure	Percentage	Figure	Percentage
Population	22,939	-	235,439	-	5,231,147	-
Median age	38	-	34	-	37	-
Over 65	2,830*	10.5%*	28,380	12.1%	794,713	15.2%
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	234*	1%*	1,516*	0.6%*	90,939	1.7%
Household income (weekly median)	\$1,542	-	\$1,678	-	\$2,077	-

Data point	Social locality		Cumberland LGA		Greater Sydney	
	Figure	Percentage	Figure	Percentage	Figure	Percentage
Unemployment rate	718*	8.9%*	7,816	8.3%	129,539	5.1%
Educational level (bachelor's degree and above)	3,190*	17.8%*	50,277	26.7%	1,423,358	33.3%
Owner-occupied dwellings (Owned Outright)	1,674*	24.1%*	16,770	23.4%	507,635	27.8%
Born overseas	11,727*	51.1%*	141,888	60.3%	2,260,410	43.2%
Average Household Size	2.4	-	3	-	2.7	-

* Figures do not include the Smithfield Industrial SA2 area data. Due to the small population, limited information is available from the ABS Census (ABS Census 2021).

The social locality had a usual resident population size of 22,939 in 2021. The median age of residents in the social locality was 38, which is higher than the Cumberland LGA and Greater Sydney (34 years and 37 years respectively).

The proportion of the social locality born overseas was 51.1%, which is significantly higher than Greater Sydney (43.2%). This may suggest a higher likelihood of culturally and linguistically vulnerable communities in the social locality.

In 2021, the proportion of dwellings owned outright in the social locality was 24.1%, which is lower compared to Greater Sydney (27.8%). This may indicate a likelihood of lower housing affordability and access to home ownership in the social locality. The average household size of the social locality was 2.4, which is relatively consistent with Cumberland LGA (3) and Greater Sydney (2.7).

Residents in the social locality had a median weekly household income of \$1,542, which is lower than the Cumberland LGA (\$1,678) and Greater Sydney (\$2,077). The unemployment rate of the social locality (8.9%) and Cumberland LGA (8.3%) is significantly higher than Greater Sydney (5.1%). This may indicate a less financially stable population, who may be more likely to be more vulnerable to the Project. The social locality had a significantly lower level of educational attainment, with only 17.8% of residents holding a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 26.7% in the Cumberland LGA and 33.3% across Greater Sydney.

5.2.1 Local social infrastructure and context

Key social infrastructure in the social locality includes:

- **Educational institutions:** The social locality has a range of primary and secondary schools including Guildford West Public School (approximately 1.2km east of project site), Sherwood Grange Public School (approximately 2.2km north of project site) and Merrylands High School (approximately 1.9km north of project site).
- **Early childhood education:** Several daycare and early learning centers are available to support families with young children including Guildford West Children's Centre (approximately 1km northeast of project site), Hillstop Child Care – Paton Street (approximately 2.5km north of project site) and Oz Education Guilford – Childcare and Preschool (approximately 2.9km east of project site).

- **Health Services:** The social locality is served by a variety of health facilities including On My Way Therapy Australia (approximately 2.4 km north of project site), The Naturopath (approximately 2.7 km north-west from the Project site) and Holyroyd Private Hospital (approximately 2.7km east of project site), offering general practice, holistic health and allied health services to residents.
- **Community facilities:** Key community venues include the Guildford Community Centre (approximately 2.7km east of the Project site) providing spaces for events and gatherings that foster social connections with the community.
- **Sports and recreation:** The social locality has numerous sporting facilities such as Guildford West Sportsground (immediately adjoining the Guildford West Transmission Substation site boundary) which offers access to outdoor recreational activities including soccer, baseball, netball and tennis. There are also extensive park options with open fields including Tait Street Park (approximately 2.1km west of the Project site) and Long Street Park (approximately 2.9km west of the Project site).
- **Places of worship:** A variety of places of worship are located throughout the social locality, = the Holroyd Uniting Church (approximately 2km east of the Project site), the Calvary Church – Smithfield (less than 1km west of the Project site) and Daarul Arqam Mosque (approximately 3.1km north-east of the Project site).

Key Areas of community interest in the social locality include:

- **Guildford Leagues Club** (located approximately 2km east of the Project site) attracts a range of community members as a vibrant hub for entertainment and dining.
- **Central Gardens Nature Reserve** (located approximately 2.5km north of the Project site) offers a pond, walking track, playground and barbecues facilities, attracting both residents and visitors to enjoy the local environment.
- **Linwood House** (located approximately 2.3km east of the Project site) is a historical landmark listed on the NSW State Heritage Register. This infrastructure has previously served as a local history museum, children's home and school. It now offers a space for community meetings, exhibitions and events.

Figure 5-1 illustrates the location of local social infrastructure in the vicinity of the Project site.

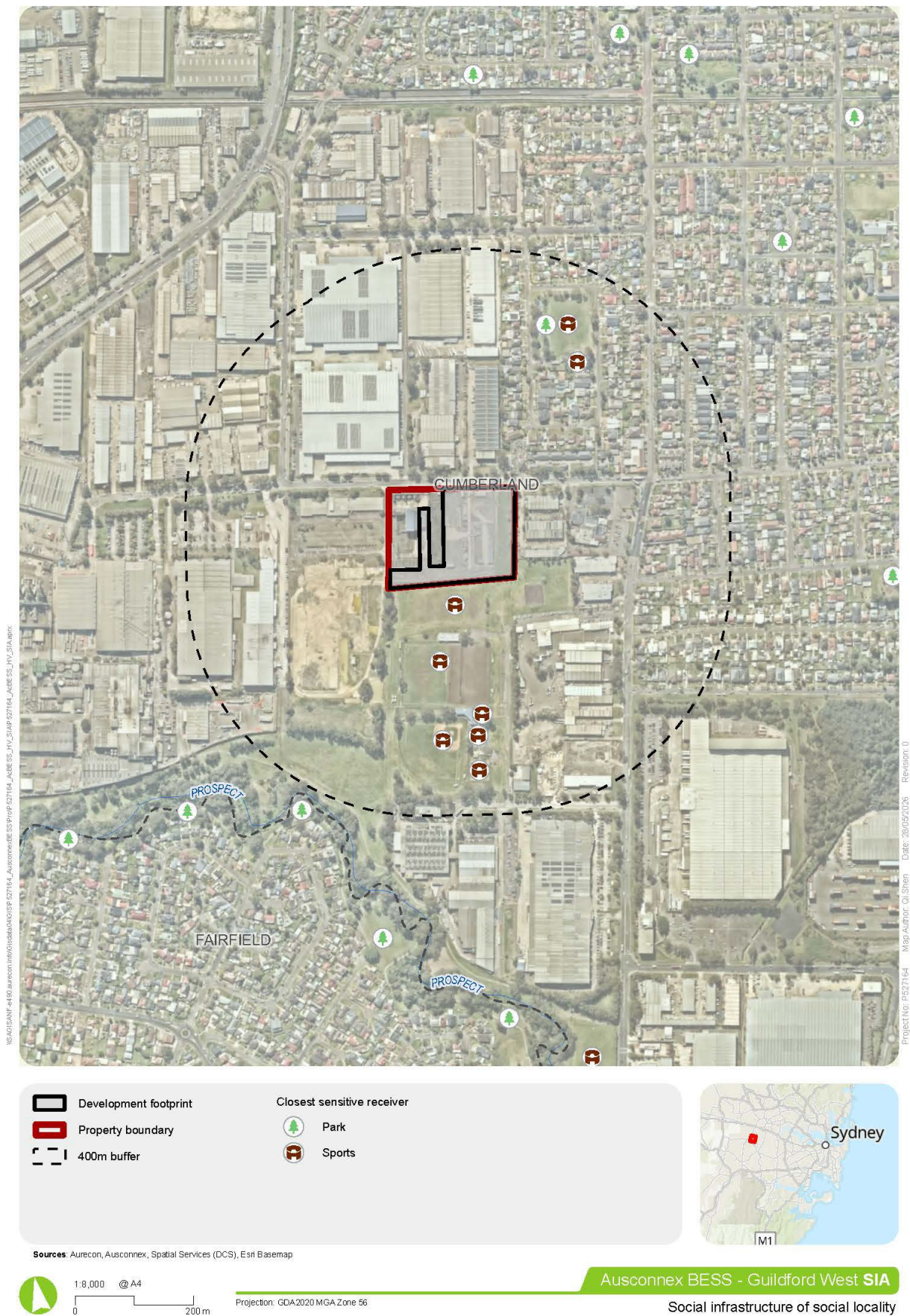


Figure 5-1: Social infrastructure

5.2.2 Existing local road network

The Project site is accessible via McCredie Road which borders the northern boundary of the existing Guildford West Transmission Substation and development footprint. McCredie Road is a single-lane, two-way road classified as a local road by Transport for NSW (TfNSW) to the west of Fairfield Road. The road has a posted speed limit of 60 kilometres per hour (kph). The preferred haulage route from Port Botany to site will be along classified roads already approved for Oversize Overmass (OSOM) vehicles. Cumberland Highway (A28) (Warren Road) is a state classified road to the south of the development footprint via Stuart Road and provides connectivity between Wahroonga to Liverpool.

5.2.3 Surrounding land use

The Project is proposed on land zoned E4 – General Industrial under the Cumberland LEP 2021. Surrounding land uses include E4 – General Industrial land to the north, east and west which includes industrial warehouse operations and RE1 - Public Recreation to the south. An area of R2 – Low Density Residential aligns to the north-eastern extent of the development footprint, across McCredie Road – a classified roadway. Refer to Figure 5-2.

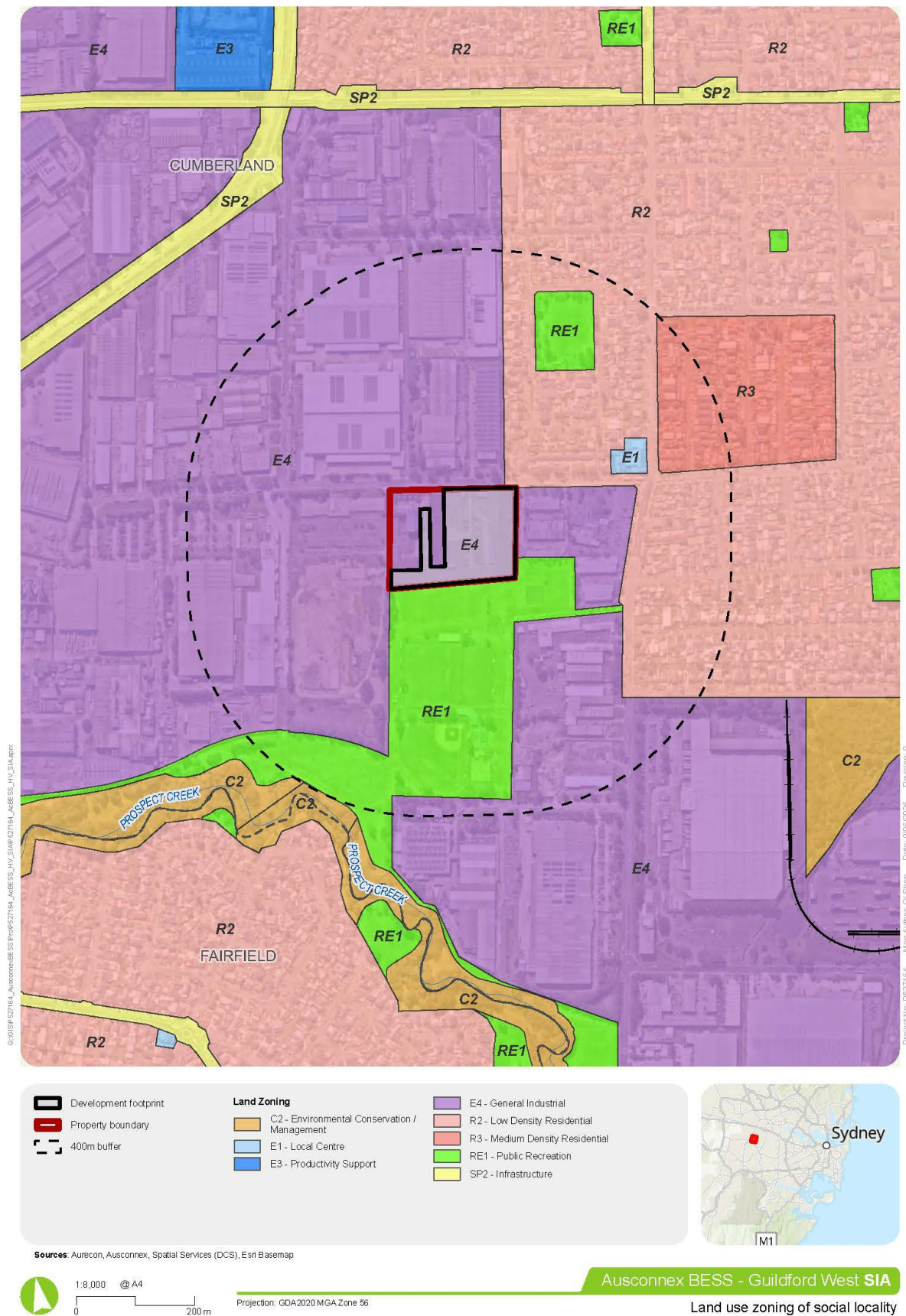


Figure 5-2: Land use zoning of social locality

5.3 Media search

A high-level media search was undertaken to inform this study by identifying community sentiment about BESS projects in the media to date. The topics raised in the media articles are described separately below. A summary of the articles and social media posts used to inform this research, including references, are in Appendix B.

5.3.1 Economic impact

Cost of living: Media discourse highlights Guildford West's geographical importance as a gateway to Greater Western Sydney and reflects the sentiment of regional communities on funding for renewable energy projects. There is significant community interest in the cost of living and affordability of the transition and its impact at the ground level.

Infrastructure: Areas of Western Sydney have a strain on infrastructure and are experiencing a lag in community development despite forecasted housing growth, indicating ongoing upgrades are necessary to support the area.

Local investment in renewables: The Cumberland City Council area, which contains Guildford West, has entered a decade-long contract with a renewable energy supplier to support 250 council facilities, demonstrating its commitment to the transition and gaining local community support.

5.3.2 Community health and safety

Lithium-ion battery fires: Emergency services have shared concerns over increasing residential lithium-ion fuelled fires across NSW over the last year, increasing safety concerns regarding BESS developments and materials.

Young children: Community members have expressed concerns on the liveability of Western Sydney particularly for young children, highlighting traffic safety hazards and an absence of green space and public schools. This contributes to discussions on where development priorities lie.

Traffic: Residents are highly interested in improving road safety especially at pedestrian crossings near intersections.

5.3.3 Environmental concerns

Native species: Community members in Western Sydney cite concerns for the impact of major infrastructure development projects on native species.

6 Construction impacts

This section identifies the Project's potential social impacts during construction, having regard to the social locality (Figure 3-1 in Section 3.2.1) and social baseline (Chapter 5). In some instances, impacts may be applicable to the Project's construction and operational phases.

The social impacts below use the categories defined in Section 3.2.4 as per the SIA Guideline. Any recommended mitigation and management measures are discussed in Chapter 10 of this report.

6.1 Way of life

As per the SIA Guideline, "way of life" is defined as "how people live, how they get around, how they work, how they play, and how they interact on a daily basis" (DPHI, 2025). This includes typical behaviours, activities, travel patterns, habits, values, and customs that define how an individual or group lives, interacts, and experiences life.

Construction activities can disrupt the daily activities of people living and working near the Project site, with impacts in the form of visual and amenity disturbance (noise, vibration, dust) and traffic congestion. For residents of nearby homes located to the north-east across McCredie Road and visitors of Guildford West Sportsground construction noise, vibration and dust may negatively impact their experiences.

The *Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment* (Aurecon, 2026b) found that the nearest residential receivers are about 68 metres away from the BESS units. The assessment concluded that the construction noise criteria would be exceeded at the nearest residential receivers (R2 - 3 or 4 properties facing McCredie Road, Guildford West NSW 2161) and active recreation receivers (A2 - Holyrod Soccer fields / Guildford West Sportsground, Foray St, Guildford West NSW 2161). However, construction noise predictions are based on a highly conservative approach for a typical construction itinerary and equipment to assess worst-case impacts. As construction activities will occur at varying distances from sensitive receptors, actual noise levels are expected to be lower than predicted in the *Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment* (Aurecon, 2026b). Additionally, OSOM movements during out of hours will have some adverse impacts but are expected to remain within permissible limits according to the Road Noise Policy. These impacts can be mitigated by measures contained in the *Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment* (Aurecon, 2026b), including construction of appropriate noise barriers and use of exhaust silencing devices on machinery.

The visual presence of construction machinery, vehicles and construction workers on the Project site may also impact how people perceive the landscape character and visual attractiveness when onlooking the site. This is discussed in detail in Section 6.6 Surroundings.

The way people get around may also be impacted as a result of construction activities. The *Traffic and Transport Impact Assessment* (Aurecon, 2026a) concludes that the local road network has sufficient capacity to accommodate additional traffic flows resulting from the Project therefore no significant disruption to traffic patterns or safety are predicted. Traffic impacts are discussed in further detail in Section 6.3 Accessibility.

Construction impacts such as noise and traffic are anticipated to be minor once mitigants are applied and temporary in nature. Considering the existing environment and surrounding land uses, the overall impacts on the way of life for people living and working in the social locality is considered to be low (Table 6-1).

Table 6-1: Evaluation of social impact – Way of life (Construction)

Impact category	Likelihood	Magnitude	Overall impact significance	Comments and mitigation
Way of life (construction)	Possible	Minor	Low	Overall, impacts to the way of life during the Project's construction would be low . Mitigation measures for potential impacts on construction noise and vibration and construction traffic is presented in Chapter 10 of this report and in the Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment (Aurecon, 2026b) and Traffic and Transport Impact Assessment (Aurecon, 2026a).

6.2 Community

As per the SIA Guideline, “community” is defined as “composition, character, cohesion, function, and sense of place” (DPHI, 2025). This can be a group of people who share common characteristics, goals or interact with each other in a specific geographic area such as local volunteers and sports teams.

The Project is considered compatible and consistent with the E4 – General Industrial zoning with the site being used for electrical grid infrastructure since the 1950s. Given the predominant industrial land use in the social locality (refer Section 5.2.3), the Project's construction impacts on the community are expected to be minor and unlikely to be different to the existing community characteristics. In turn, impacts to community composition and community cohesion are anticipated to be of negligible significance (Table 6-2). Should the Project proceed, ongoing community and stakeholder engagement efforts to provide advanced notice of construction work would contribute to mitigating potential impacts on the community.

Table 6-2: Evaluation of social impact – Community (Construction)

Impact category	Likelihood	Magnitude	Overall impact significance	Comments and mitigation
Community (construction)	Unlikely	Minimal	Negligible	Overall, impacts to the community during the Project's construction would be negligible . Early and ongoing community and stakeholder engagement to inform them of Project updates would contribute to mitigating potential impacts on the community. Mitigation measures are presented in Chapter 10 of this report and in the CSEP.

6.3 Accessibility

As per the SIA Guideline, “accessibility” is defined as “how people access and use infrastructure, services and facilities, whether provided by local, State, or federal governments, or by for-profit or not-for-profit organisations or groups” (DPHI, 2025). This includes the changes to the demand, availability and ease of accessing social infrastructure during the construction of the Project.

The Project is located within a highly urbanised area, characterised by a variety of land uses including industrial, recreational, residential and related road infrastructure with significant traffic volumes. As indicated in Section 5.2.1, most social infrastructure in the social locality is quite dispersed, offering a mix of open spaces and sporting facilities.

The *Traffic and Transport Impact Assessment* (Aurecon, 2026a) found that construction activities are projected to generate a maximum of 120 light vehicle trips daily (i.e. total two-way movements), including those of full-time and other workers accessing the site, along with around 30 heavy vehicle movements entering and exiting the site each day. A total of 62 OSOM vehicle movements are anticipated during the construction period for the transportation of the BESS components and equipment. However, the traffic assessment indicates that the road network can effectively accommodate these additional movements without significant disruption to local traffic flow or safety.

OSOM movements would be undertaken outside of standard hours and as such would not have an impact on peak traffic movement. Traffic management will be required to facilitate safe entry and exit movements of OSOM vehicles for all road users, particularly where manoeuvres involve crossing traffic lanes or pedestrian paths. To support these movements, on-street parking at the site frontage will need to be temporarily restricted during the OSOM movement.

The current site layout provides eight dedicated staff parking spaces for operational phase only. On-street parking appears to be available further along McCredie Road near the intersection with Sturt Street on the right-hand side, and also on the left-hand side closer to the Project site, where longer vehicles may be accommodated.

The *Traffic and Transport Impact Assessment* (Aurecon, 2026a) recommends development of a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP), which will detail construction worker parking and develop any required strategy to manage parking demand throughout the construction period. This will include identification of suitable on-site and off-site parking, coordination of carpooling or public transport options, and arrangements with nearby private lots to minimise impacts on the surrounding on-street parking network during construction.

Access to and use of social infrastructure via public transport within 400 m of the Project site has the potential to affect those who often travel via public transport, particularly those who do not own a car. The *Traffic and Transport Impact Assessment* (Aurecon, 2026a) found that there are several bus stops located within a 400-metre radius of the Project location with the nearest stop being directly opposite the site entrance on McCredie Road. The CTMP will include measures to maintain safe pedestrian access to bus stops near the site frontage due to worker or construction activities trip generation and parking, supported by a Traffic Guidance Scheme (TGS) by an accredited traffic controller. The TGS will specify traffic control measures such as signage, barriers, and spotters to protect pedestrians and cyclists during peak construction activities and ensure safe access to the nearby bus stops and minimise any disruption to services during the 15-month construction period.

The *Traffic and Transport Impact Assessment* (Aurecon, 2026a) does not anticipate any significant impacts to active transport users given there are no dedicated shared paths or cycling facilities in the immediate vicinity of the Project site. According to the traffic assessment, the impact of construction traffic on rail services is expected to be minimal.

Considering the traffic assessment findings, the relatively small scale and nature of the construction activities, the estimated workforce (35-40 FTE) and the surrounding industrial land uses at the Project location, the Project's impacts to the demand, availability, and access to social infrastructure (including the road network) in the social locality is expected to be of low significance (Table 6-3).

Table 6-3: Evaluation of social impact – Accessibility (Construction)

Impact category	Likelihood	Magnitude	Overall impact significance	Comments and mitigation
Accessibility (construction)	Possible	Minimal	Low	Overall, impacts to accessibility during the Project's construction would be low . Should the use of OSOM vehicles be used during construction, traffic management measures will be implemented. Mitigation measures are presented in Chapter 10 of this report and in the CSEP.

6.4 Culture

As per the SIA Guideline, “culture” is defined as “both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal culture, including shared beliefs, customs, values, and stories, and connections to country, land, waterways, places, and buildings” (DPHI, 2025).

6.4.1.1 Non-Aboriginal culture

There are no registered heritage items located within the Project site. There are no registered heritage items located within 500 m of the Project site. There are two SHR items within the broader area, the Pipehead, water supply canal and associated works (SHR #01629) located approximately 650 m north of the Project site, and Linnwood (SHR #01661) located 1.7km east of the Project site. There are several locally listed heritage items situated to the east and west of the Project site, however the closest is over 850 m southwest and would not be impacted by the Project if it proceeds.

As concluded in the *Statement of Heritage Impact* (Aurecon, 2026d) report, the Project would not result in an adverse impact, direct or indirect to the existing setting, landscape or views to the Project site. As there are no registered non-Aboriginal (historic) heritage items located within 500 m of the Project site, any impact to heritage within the vicinity is negligible. Recommendations to ensure that any unexpected impacts to historic heritage values, primarily archaeological remains are managed are presented in Chapter 10 and in the *Statement of Heritage Impact* (Aurecon, 2026d) report.

6.4.1.2 Aboriginal culture

There were no Aboriginal sites identified within a 200m buffer of the Project site, as outlined within the *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report* (ACHAR) (Navin Officer, 2025) for the Project. As previous disturbance has been observed across the entirety of the Project, given its historical use as a site for electrical infrastructure dating from 1958, there is no proposed harm to Aboriginal objects from the Project. Therefore, the proposed HV BESS infrastructure and associated construction works are not anticipated to impact on Aboriginal sites or places (Aurecon, 2026d).

Overall, the potential for the Project to yield impacts to cultural connections in the social locality during construction is negligible (Table 6-4).

Table 6-4: Evaluation of social impact – Culture (Construction)

Impact category	Likelihood	Magnitude	Overall impact significance	Comments and mitigation
Culture (construction)	Unlikely	Minimal	Negligible	Overall, impacts to culture during the Project's construction would be negligible . Mitigation measures for potential impacts on non-Aboriginal heritage are presented in Chapter 10 of this report and in the Statement of Heritage Impact (Aurecon, 2026d).

6.5 Health and wellbeing

As per the SIA Guideline, “health and wellbeing” are defined as “physical and mental health, especially for those who are highly vulnerable to social exclusion or substantial change, plus wellbeing of individuals and communities” (DPHI, 2025). In the context of the Project, this includes individuals in the social locality who are aged over 65 years, and / or have a need for assistance, and / or suffers from long-term health conditions and / or psychological distress. This also includes individuals or households who are under more financial stress and unstable employment conditions (refer to Chapter 5).

Construction activities could result in a temporary reduction in amenity (surroundings, noise and vibration, dust, air quality and traffic congestion) which may impact the mental and/or physical health of people in the social locality. Impacts could range from mental health, sleep disturbance, cognitive performance, increased levels of fatigue, stress, anxiety, sleep disturbance and annoyance (EN Health, 2018). Given the comparatively lower weekly income, education level and outright home ownership levels, in addition to higher unemployment rates, it is feasible that some vulnerable populations reside in residences near the Project site and therefore more likely to be impacted from construction activities (refer to Chapter 5).

As discussed above, the *Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment* (Aurecon, 2026b) indicated that construction noise will exceed at the nearest residential and active recreational receivers during standard construction hours. Mitigation measures, such a noise barriers and exhaust silencing equipment, will be implemented to manage any potential impacts of construction noise, presented in Chapter 10 and in the assessment report.

The assessment also found that construction vibration is unlikely to cause structural damage or adversely affect human comfort based on experience of similar developments and an assumed list of typical vibration inducing equipment.

Considering the social baseline and the potential for a comparatively higher proportion of vulnerable people living in the social locality, these people may be more likely to have actual and/or perceived health and wellbeing impacts from construction noise and vibration. However, noise and vibration mitigation measures coupled with early and ongoing community and stakeholder engagement to inform them of Project construction activities would contribute to mitigating potential impacts on perceived health and wellbeing concerns. As such, the Project's potential overall impacts to health and wellbeing are assessed to be of low significance (Table 6-5).

Table 6-5: Evaluation of social impact – Health and wellbeing (Construction)

Impact category	Likelihood	Magnitude	Overall impact significance	Comments and mitigation
Health and wellbeing (construction)	Possible	Minor	Low	Overall, impacts to health and wellbeing during the Project's construction would be low. Early and ongoing community and stakeholder engagement to inform them of Project construction activities would contribute to mitigating potential impacts on perceived health and wellbeing impacts. Mitigation measures for potential impacts on health and wellbeing are in Chapter 10 of this report and in the Noise and Vibration Assessment (Aurecon, 2026b) and in the Communications and Stakeholder and Engagement Action Plan and the CSEP.

6.6 Surroundings

As per the SIA Guideline, “surroundings” is defined as “access to, and use of, services that ecosystems provide, public safety and security, access to and use of the natural and built environment, and its aesthetic value and amenity” (DPHI, 2025). This includes changes in land uses, amenity (landscape and visual, noise and vibration), and air quality surrounding the Project location as a result of construction activities.

Landscape and visual amenity

A total of three representative viewpoints were assessed in the *Visual Impact Assessment* (Aurecon, 2026c). The assessment identifies that during construction, visual impacts are expected to be very low to moderate. Construction activity including site clearance, surface works and installation of BESS components and noise walls would be noticed by residents adjacent to the site on McCredie Road and recreational users within Holroyd soccer fields / Guildford West Sportsground.

Given the Project is located within an existing highly modified environment and the Project is being undertaken wholly within the existing transmission substation landscape and visual amenity impacts are not predicted to result in significant impacts to people in the social locality and their overall experience of their surroundings.

Noise and vibration

If the Project proceeds, its surrounding industrial and commercial businesses would most likely experience construction noise caused by equipment and machinery, construction vehicles and construction workforce. As discussed in Section 6.1, construction noise may also be experienced by the nearby residential receivers located at McCredie Road, however the *Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment* (Aurecon, 2026c) proposes a noise strategy including combination of walls and at-source noise attenuation.

In summary, based on the existing noise environment, standard construction hours, scale of construction activities and implementation of mitigation measures (described in Chapter 10) it is predicted that the Project would have low impacts on surrounding receivers (see Table 6-6).

Table 6-6: Evaluation of social impact – Surroundings (Construction)

Impact category	Likelihood	Magnitude	Overall impact significance	Comments and mitigation
Surroundings (construction)	Possible	Minor	Low	Overall, impacts to the surroundings during the Project's construction would be low . Mitigation measures for potential impacts on the surroundings are presented in Chapter 10 of this report and in the <i>Visual Impact Assessment</i> (Aurecon, 2026c) and the <i>Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment</i> (Aurecon, 2026b).

6.7 Livelihoods

As per the SIA Guideline, “livelihoods” is defined as “*people’s capacity to sustain themselves, whether they experience personal breach or disadvantage, and the distributive equity of impacts and benefits*”. This includes changes to financial and / or economic wellbeing to which an individual obtains resources and assets such as income or employment to main their quality of life.

6.7.1 Potential negative impacts

Impacts to the livelihood of an individual or community in the social locality during construction depends on their current financial situation. Given the comparatively lower household income and higher unemployment rates in the social locality, these individuals are more likely to be under financial stress (refer to the social baseline in Section 5.2). Further, the comparatively lower average household size (likely to include elderly households) in the social locality suggests a higher likelihood of being disadvantaged during the construction of the Project.

While there was no technical assessment prepared which directly links the presence of construction activities with devalued properties, the perception of decreased property values may impact the livelihoods and wellbeing of relevant landowners and stakeholders in the social locality

Overall, the Project’s impacts to livelihoods in the social locality during construction is forecasted to be of low significance (negative) relating to potential financial vulnerabilities (Table 6-7).

6.7.2 Potential positive impacts

The construction of the Project may generate opportunities for the employment of approximately up to 40 individuals. The construction workforce would be sourced from Greater Sydney as far as practicable. Given the comparatively higher unemployment rates in the social locality, it is anticipated that a local workforce would be available to fulfil some of the Project’s construction workforce positions. If this scenario is realised, the Project would potentially benefit the livelihoods of people in the social locality by providing job opportunities and an income source to financially support their livelihoods. Additionally, employing a local workforce would help minimise pressure on local infrastructure and accommodation resources.

As the workforce would be sourced from within the Greater Sydney region and employees would travel to the Project site from their homes, there is no temporary accommodation associated with the Project and no anticipated increase in local demand for temporary accommodation.

The additional construction workers would also positively contribute to the surrounding hospitality and retail businesses by increasing expenditure on food, drinks and other products such as from Crown on McCredie, Oregano House 216, the Cheesecake Shop and other nearby businesses. This may produce some net economic benefits to these local businesses.

In summary, the Project is anticipated to have a positive social impact of high significance due to the potential benefits for the local workforce and community. As discussed in Chapter 2 of the EIS, there is also forecast to have a positive impacts on livelihoods relating to grid reliability and stabilisation for the broader community.

Table 6-7: Evaluation of social impact – Livelihoods (Construction)

Impact category	Likelihood	Magnitude	Overall impact significance	Comments and mitigation or enhancement
Livelihoods – negative (construction)	Unlikely	Minor	Low (negative)	Overall, impacts to livelihoods during the Project's construction would be low (negative). Early and ongoing engagement with residential landowners to inform them of Project's construction activities would contribute to mitigating potential impacts on their livelihoods. Mitigation measures for potential impacts are in Chapter 10 of this report.
Livelihoods – positive (construction)	Almost certain	Moderate	High (positive)	Positive impacts to livelihoods during the Project's construction would be high (positive). The construction of the Project may generate opportunities for the employment of approximately 35-40 individuals. As the workforce would be sourced from within the Greater Sydney region and employees would travel to the Project site from their homes, there is no temporary accommodation associated with the Project and no anticipated increase in local demand for temporary accommodation. The Project's construction would also have positive impacts on livelihoods including employment and educational opportunities towards renewable energy. Where possible, the use of workers from the local area will enhance the benefit of the Project in the Social Locality.

7 Operational impacts

7.1 Way of life

Impacts to the way of life for people living and working in the social locality once the Project is operational would be minimal as the overall function of the site remains for the purpose of electricity storage and generation.

The visual character of the Project is consistent with the existing Guildford Wes Zone substation and visually compatible with the surrounding built form. Therefore, is predicted that if the Project is approved, the daily activities and way of life for surrounding residents, businesses and visitors would largely be similar to the existing conditions.

The *Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment* (Aurecon, 2026b) indicates that unmitigated noise levels are likely to exceed the relevant noise criteria at 38 of 509 nearby residential properties during nighttime period. This is most likely to affect residents north-east of the site across McCredie Road.

The assessment concluded that the implementation of all feasible noise mitigation measures incorporated into the Project design would bring noise within acceptable limits except for two properties (125 and 127 McCredie Road, Guildford West, NSW). These properties shows negligible residual noise exceedances (less than 2.0 dB above the stipulated criteria). The assessment found that these low exceedances are not expected to cause any perceptible disturbance to the affected receivers, and no further mitigation measure are required at this stage in accordance with the New South Wales Noise Policy for Industry.

Table 7-1: Evaluation of social impact – Way of life (Operational)

Impact category	Likelihood	Magnitude	Overall impact significance	Comments and mitigation or enhancement
Way of life – negative (operational)	Possible	Minor	Low (negative)	Overall, impacts to the way of life during the Project's operation will be (negative). The operational BESS components may generate noise levels above noise criteria which may affect some people's way of life. However, noise walls and reduced fan cycles will be implemented to ensure impacts will be at acceptable levels, generally. . All other aspects of the way of life for surrounding receivers are expected to remain unchanged to existing baseline conditions. Mitigation measures for potential impacts on way of life are presented in Chapter 10 of this report and in the Visual Impact Assessment (Aurecon, 2026c) and the Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment (Aurecon, 2026b). All other operational and maintenance details would be outlined in the Operational Environmental Management Plan (OEMP). All other aspects of the way of life for surrounding receivers are expected to remain unchanged to existing baseline conditions.

7.2 Accessibility

In its operational phase, the Project would be remotely monitored with maintenance visits only, as required. It is not expected to provide barriers or hinder an individual or communities' ability to access social infrastructure in the social locality.

As stated in the *Traffic and Transport Impact Assessment* (Aurecon, 2026a) once operational, the BESS is anticipated to have a minimal impact on network capacity and local access, given it is remotely operated and monitored 24 hours, 7 days per week. Operation and maintenance staff would be required during standard day time hours (including for annual performance capacity testing) and potentially out of hours for any emergency response work. In addition, on-site parking would be provided for Project personnel which would alleviate any general traffic, public transport and public carparking demand.

In summary, the Project's operation is expected to have a negligible impact on accessibility in the social locality, preserving the surrounding road network conditions for residents, workers and visitors. Refer to Table 7-2.

Table 7-2: Evaluation of social impact – Accessibility (Operational)

Impact category	Likelihood	Magnitude	Overall impact significance	Comments and mitigation
Accessibility (operational)	Very unlikely	Minimal	Negligible	Overall, impacts to the accessibility during the Project's construction would be negligible . All other operational and maintenance details would be outlined in the Operational Environmental Management Plan (OEMP).

7.3 Culture

If the Project becomes operational, it is not expected to have additional or different impacts on cultural connections to those already occurring at the Project site.

The Project's *Statement of Heritage Impact* (Aurecon, 2026d) report states that its operational impacts are expected to be low or nil. This is due to the lack of identified heritage significance of the Project site, including low historical archaeological potential. If further groundbreaking works are required as a part of future operation of the HV BESS, any unexpected impacts to historical archaeology would be managed via the Unexpected Finds Procedure.

Overall, the potential for the Project to yield impacts to cultural connections in the social locality during operation is considered to be negligible (refer to Table 7-3).

Table 7-3: Evaluation of social impact – Culture (Operational)

Impact category	Likelihood	Magnitude	Overall impact significance	Comments and mitigation
Culture (operational)	Very unlikely	Minimal	Negligible	Overall, impacts to culture during the Project's operation would be negligible. Mitigation measures for potential impacts on Culture are presented in Chapter 10 of this report and in the Statement of Heritage Impact (Aurecon, 2026d) report. All other operational and maintenance details would be outlined in the Operational Environmental Management Plan (OEMP).

7.4 Health and wellbeing

As discussed in Section 7.1, the *Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment* (Aurecon, 2026b) concludes that unmitigated noise levels are likely to exceed the relevant noise criteria at 38 nearby residential properties (closest being 68 meters from the BESS units). Mitigation measures such as noise walls and reduced fan cycles would be implemented to reduce impacts and any receiver concerns.

The presence and proximity of a HV BESS facility to nearby residences and businesses may also lead to perceived health concerns such as electromagnetic fields (EMF) and hazardous substances relating to batteries, both of which may impact mental, emotional and physical wellbeing. These can manifest in anxiety, stress, unhealthy behaviours and overall reduced quality of life (Ferrer, 2015).

The *Electromagnetic Field Assessment* (Aurecon, 2026e) report found that the contribution of the proposed 33kV underground feeders to the magnetic field environment is predicted to be well within the International Commission on Non-Ionising Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) guideline level of 2,000 milligauss (mG) for general public exposure and 10,000 mG for occupational exposure. Further, the *Preliminary Hazard Analysis* (Aurecon, 2026f) concludes that subject to the implementation of recommended risk mitigations, technical and operational safeguards, all identified hazards can be effectively managed to reduce residual risk, making significant off-site consequences unlikely.

Ongoing and continued community engagement activities will convey factual information about the HV BESS facility, EMF and hazardous substances, and mitigations measures in place to inform and educate the community on potential risks and impacts relating to the Project.

Based on the above considerations, the Project is predicted to create a social impact of low significance on health and well-being in the social locality (see Table 7-4).

Table 7-4: Evaluation of social impact – Health and wellbeing (Operational)

Impact category	Likelihood	Magnitude	Overall impact significance	Comments and mitigation
Health and wellbeing (operational)	Possible	Minor	Low	Overall, impacts to health and wellbeing during the Project's operation would be of low significance. Mitigation measures for potential impacts on health and wellbeing are presented in Chapter 10 of this report and in the Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment (Aurecon, 2026b), Preliminary Hazard Analysis (Aurecon, 2026f),

Impact category	Likelihood	Magnitude	Overall impact significance	Comments and mitigation
				and in the Communications and Stakeholder and Engagement Action Plan. All other operational and maintenance details would be outlined in the Operational Environmental Management Plan (OEMP).

7.5 Surroundings

7.5.1 Potential negative impacts

Landscape and visual amenity

If it proceeds, the Project is not expected to have unacceptable impacts on landscape and visual amenity when viewed from nearby viewpoints. As discussed earlier, the *Visual Impact Assessment* (Aurecon, 2026c) explains that the Project is sited wholly within the existing Guildford West Transmission Substation and is consistent with the industrial landscape that is already visually dominated by electricity infrastructure. The key Project elements that may be visible are similar in height to the existing Guildford West Substation buildings and would therefore present limited visual contrast to existing electrical facility. Five meter noise walls would be implemented on the eastern and northern side of the BESS units and on the south of the indicative development footprint. The walls are considered to be consistent with the existing landscape and visual amenity surrounding the Project site. Some visual amenity would also be afforded through the existing mature trees along the eastern boundary of the site which would soften the appearance of the proposed noise walls.

Low and very low residual visual impacts are expected for properties along McCredie Road assuming the recommended mitigation measures are implemented. These ratings acknowledge the intervening built form, vegetation, heavy traffic activity, and parked cars that restrict visibility of the Site.

Based on the details described above, the Project is predicted to have minimal impacts on landscape and visual amenity.

Noise and vibration

As discussed in section 7.1, the *Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment* (Aurecon, 2026b) concludes that with suitable mitigation measures operational noise would be within acceptable limits for all properties, except for 2 properties, which show negligible residual noise exceedances. A noise monitoring program would also be established to ensure operational noise stays within acceptable standards of human comfort.

The *Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment* (Aurecon, 2026b) found that operational vibration impacts are expected to remain below thresholds for structural damage and human comfort in accordance with relevant international standards and NSW guidelines at all times during the day.

With recommended measures and monitoring program in place, the Project's impact on surroundings is forecast to be of low significance for people in the social locality.

7.5.2 Potential positive impacts

Landscape and visual amenity

The potential visual impacts are within an existing highly modified environment and the presence of electrical, industrial and road infrastructure. There is some surrounding visual amenity afforded through mature trees along the eastern boundary of the site.

The *Visual Impact Assessment* (Aurecon, 2026c) identifies there is opportunity to further mitigate visual impacts through planting to the perimeter of the Project site, which would assist in softening the visual appearance of the proposed noise walls. Following the implementation of recommended mitigation measures, residual visual impacts for users of Holyrod soccer fields / Guildford West Sportsground are anticipated to be reduced from moderate adverse visual impacts to low beneficial. As views of the noise walls will be direct, the application of layered screen planting would improve the visual amenity for recreational users of the sports ground.

Table 7-5: Evaluation of social impact – Surroundings (Operational)

Impact category	Likelihood	Magnitude	Overall impact significance	Comments and mitigation or enhancements
Surroundings – negative (operational)	Possible	Minor	Low (negative)	Overall, negative impacts to the surroundings during the Project's operation would be low (negative). While operational noise levels have been assessed to exceed noise criteria, noise walls and reduced fan cycles would be implemented to ensure impacts would be at acceptable levels. Mitigation measures for potential impacts on the surroundings are presented in Chapter 10 of this report and in the Visual Impact Assessment (Aurecon, 2026c) and Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment (Aurecon, 2026b). All other operational and maintenance details would be outlined in the Operational Environmental Management Plan (OEMP).
Surroundings – positive (operational)	Likely	Minimal	Low (positive)	Overall, positive impacts to the surroundings during the Project's operation would be low (positive).

7.6 Livelihoods

7.6.1 Potential positive impacts

Throughout the operational life of the Project, two workers would be required for maintenance, with potential for additional workers employed to fulfil ad hoc operational activities and site visits. Assuming these operational workers would be sourced from the social locality, the Project would benefit their livelihoods by providing a source of income which they may spend a proportion of locally.

An additional Project benefit for livelihoods relates to energy supply across the wider LGA. The Project is expected to improve grid stability and energy reliability if it proceeds, especially during peak demand periods or emergencies. This would create a positive livelihood impact to communities by ensuring consistent power supply, supporting local businesses, and contributing to the overall livelihood of the community.

In summary, the Project's operation will have an impact of medium significance on livelihoods for any employees during the construction period and broader benefit in the social locality through improved energy security. Refer to Table 7-6 for details.

Table 7-6: Evaluation of social impact – Livelihoods (Operational)

Impact category	Likelihood	Magnitude	Overall impact significance	Comments and enhancements
Livelihoods (operational)	Almost certain	Minor	Medium (positive)	Overall, the Project's impacts to livelihoods would be of medium (positive) significance, as it would contribute to the financial livelihood of operational workers whilst improving grid stability and energy reliability across the wider LGA. Where possible, the use of workers from the local area will enhance the benefit of the Project in the Social Locality.

8 Decommissioning impacts

In the case of decommissioning non-functional battery systems, it is expected that the Project site will be restored to its original condition. Components would be safely handled and transported to licensed facility for recycling or disposal. The standard construction hours established for the Project would also apply to the decommissioning process, with any OSOM movements to occur out of hours.

Impacts from the decommissioning phase are likely to be temporary in overall duration and its effects are expected to be short-term once the decommissioning is complete. Channels for community and stakeholder feedback would continue to be available throughout the decommissioning phase of the Project in accordance with the Communications and Stakeholder and Engagement Action Plan and the CSEP. This may include work notifications distributed to residences and businesses in the social locality via letterdrop / email / published on Ausconnex Website to provide overview of current and upcoming decommissioning activities. The notifications would provide advanced notice of potential disruption (e.g. traffic changes or noisy works) to assist in reducing the impact on people.

9 Cumulative impacts

Cumulative impacts may arise from the interaction between this Project and other projects in the area. When considered in isolation, individual project impacts may be considered minor, however these can become more substantial when the impact of multiple projects on the same receivers is considered cumulatively. These impacts would generally be limited to increases in traffic, ambient noise levels, hazards and risks, and residential amenity impacts.

The SIA presents a **Standard** level of assessment of potential social and economic impacts associated with the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Project in accordance with the SIA Guideline (Section 3.1). As such, only those projects within the social locality have been considered for cumulative impacts. Assessment of cumulative impacts has been informed other relevant technical assessments given there has been no community feedback on the Project to date raising concerns about cumulative impact. Table 9-1 is an overview of other projects in the social locality that have the potential to create cumulative impact.

Table 9-1: Summary of cumulative impacts from others local projects

Project	Approximate distance from Project and key features	Project status/overlap	Potential cumulative impacts
Project Pluto Data Centre (SSD-69223466)	150m west of the indicative development footprint and adjoins the western boundary of the Site. Key features: Construction, fit out and operation of a 68MW data centre with a maximum building height of 25.77m and total gross floor area of 29,444m²	Assessment Works anticipated to commence in January 2026 and take 36 months to complete. Overlap in construction as BESS program is anticipated to commence January 2027 with a 15 month timeframe and 20 years operation.	Worst-case scenario of continuous noise emissions from the project during the overlapping operation period.
Smithfield Battery Energy Storage System (SSD-59325460)	830m west of the indicative development footprint. Key features: Construction and operation of a 65MW/130MWh battery system.	Under construction (determined 7 May 2024) Works commenced January 2025 and anticipated to be operational by December 2025. Overlap in 20 year operation.	No cumulative impacts are anticipated.
Smithfield Cogeneration Facility (DA94/162)	900m west of the indicative development footprint.	DA and Modification 1 & 2 determined (modification determined 6 November 2024).	No cumulative impacts are anticipated.
Britton Street Multi-Level Warehouse (SSD-67368956)	1.2km northwest of the indicative development footprint. Key features: - Demolition of on-site structures - Construction and 24/7 operation of a multi-level	Assessment Construction anticipated to commence Quarter 3 of 2025 and take up to 24 months to complete. Potential overlap in construction as BESS program is anticipated to commence January 2027 with a 15 month timeframe and 20 years operation.	No cumulative impacts are anticipated.

Project	Approximate distance from Project and key features	Project status/overlap	Potential cumulative impacts
	warehouse buildings across two allotments.		
Demast Sludge Dewatering Plan (SSD-72775222)	1.2km west of the indicative development footprint. Key features: Upgrade to an existing Sludge Dewatering Plant to increase processing capacity.	Response to Submissions Potential overlap in construction as BESS program is anticipated to commence January 2027 with a 15 month timeframe and 20 years operation.	No cumulative impacts are anticipated.

The SIA identifies appropriate mitigation and management measures in Section 10 of this report and in the Visual Impact Assessment (Aurecon, 2026c) and Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment (Aurecon, 2026b) if any other projects were to emerge and there be unforeseen cumulative impacts. These measures include implementation of a CTMP to minimise traffic impacts, noise monitoring program during BESS operations and ongoing community information coordinated via a Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan (CSEP).

Further discussion of cumulative impacts is contained in other EIS documentation.

10 Recommendations

This section provides a summary of identified social impacts and their corresponding mitigation measures to improve the outcomes of the Project.

A summary of mitigation measures recommended in technical reports commissioned for the EIS that are relevant to the SIA are in Table 10-1. Further measures are included in respective technical reports.

Table 10-1: Recommended mitigation measures

Potential social impacts	Management measure
All social impacts	Early and ongoing community and stakeholder engagement to inform them of Project updates would contribute to mitigating potential impacts on the community. An updated <i>Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan</i> (CSEP) will be implemented to provide timely and accurate information about the Project to the community.
Way of life	The community would be notified of all work outside standard hours, which has the potential to impact noise-sensitive receivers with complaints managed through the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). For example, this includes noise nuisance complaints. Detailed noise and vibration mitigation measures are presented as part of the noise assessment within the EIS including a noise wall and targeted mitigation measures to ensure noise and vibration impacts will be at acceptable levels. Public notification shall be given prior to any road or footpath closures to local residents, Cumberland City Council and emergency services.
Community	Early and ongoing community and stakeholder engagement in accordance with the Communications and Stakeholder and Engagement Action Plan (CSEAP) and CSEP to inform the community of Project updates would contribute to mitigating potential impacts on the community.
Accessibility	The Traffic and Transport Impact Assessment (Aurecon, 2026a) recommends that, prior to construction, a CTMP is prepared and implemented, including access arrangements, construction worker parking, heavy and OSOM vehicle movements, emergency access and coordination with relevant authorities. Within the CTMP, OSOM vehicle movements to and from the Project area should be scheduled to minimise traffic disruption to the surrounding road network. This may include, but is not limited to: ■ Scheduling the movement of construction material, equipment and waste will occur outside of peak periods where practical. ■ Scheduling heavy vehicle deliveries to be evenly dispersed as far as practical to minimise convoying or platoons and queuing outside the Project area or on the road network. During detailed design, a construction workers parking strategy shall be developed, and included in the CTMP, by the contractor to: ■ Identify and coordinate public transport (such as bus) and carpooling options; and ■ Identify suitable worker off-site parking arrangements or parking locations surrounding the Site to avoid impact to the existing on-street parking.
Culture	The Statement of Heritage Impact (SOHI) (Aurecon, 2026d) recommends that: ■ In the event of unexpected historical finds during groundbreaking works, operational works and decommissioning works, the Unexpected Finds Procedure as outlined in Appendix A of the Statement is to be followed. The procedure is to be included in the CEMP and OEMP for the Project.

Potential social impacts	Management measure
	A non-Aboriginal (historic) heritage awareness induction is to be provided to all contractors prior to construction works commencing. A heritage consultant is to present the training to ensure that all contractors are aware of the history of the Project site, likely historical archaeological find types, statutory obligations and what to do following the discovery of unexpected historic heritage finds.
Health and wellbeing	The community would be notified of all work outside standard hours, which has the potential to impact noise-sensitive receivers. The Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment (Aurecon, 2026b) recommends a range of measures to reduce the impacts of noise and vibration, including: - Careful scheduling of high-noise activities to occur within standard construction hours where possible. - Implementing buffer zones between heavy plant and sensitive receptors. - Providing an environmental induction to all employees, contractors, and subcontractors covering site operating and delivery times, nearby sensitive receivers, scheduling of noise- or vibration-generating works, designated parking and loading/unloading areas, and environmental incident procedures The Preliminary Hazard Analysis (Aurecon, 2026f) recommends series of key technical and safety management measures to reduce the risk of physical harm. The assessment further recommends that a safety management system be implemented prior to the commencement of commissioning or operation of the Project and maintained throughout the Project lifecycle. This system should include: - Comprehensive, documented installation and operating procedures, with a regular audit/review system. - Comprehensive, documented inspection and maintenance procedures with a regular audit/review system. - Work Health and Safety Management Plan. - Asset Management Plans and assurance activities.
Surroundings	The Visual Impact Assessment (Aurecon, 2026c) recommends the following management measures to minimise visual impacts of the Project: - Prior to construction, site hoarding be installed to the south and east Site boundaries, to reduce the visibility of construction activity. - All site lighting be designed to minimise glare and spill into adjacent residential and public areas. - The area of construction disturbance be limited including, where possible, earthworks, storage and laydown areas be located in cleared or otherwise disturbed areas away from public interfaces and entrance to the Site. - To help integration with the surrounding landscape the noise walls be constructed in a muted palette with further consideration of finishes and construction materials to deter graffiti. - Where feasible and practical, established layered canopy screen planting buffer using native species to the east boundary, at a mature height of 5-6m, to views from residential dwellings to the north and from Guildford West Sportsground to the south. - Where feasible and practical, native planting at a mature height of 3 m, to the north and northeast property boundary, to soften the impact of the walled lengths from residential

Potential social impacts	Management measure
	dwellings to the north, providing a beneficial visual buffer to the Project and beneficial streetscape appearance of the Project. The community would be notified of all work outside standard hours, which has the potential to impact noise-sensitive receivers. The Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment (Aurecon, 2026b) recommends noise nuisance complaints to be managed through the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). Detailed noise and vibration mitigation measures are presented in the Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment (Aurecon, 2026b), including the noise walls and equipment silencers to ensure noise and vibration impacts will be at acceptable levels.
Livelihoods	Where possible, use workers from the local area to enhance the benefit of the Project in the Social Locality. Early and ongoing community and stakeholder engagement in accordance with the Communications and Stakeholder and Engagement Action Plan and CSEP to inform the community of Project updates would contribute to mitigating potential impacts on the community. The community would be notified of all work outside standard hours, which has the potential to impact noise-sensitive receivers.

11 Conclusion

This SIA has been prepared in accordance with the SIA Guideline (DPHI, 2025) to support the EIS.

The SIA involves a **Standard** level of assessment of potential social impacts associated with the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Project. It also identifies appropriate mitigation and management measures to address the identified social impacts.

During construction and operation, all negative social impacts are considered to be of **Negligible** or **Low** significance following the implementation of mitigation measures. These measures are outlined in Chapter 10 and within the respective specialist technical reports supporting the EIS. Ongoing consultation with communities and stakeholders regarding the Project is necessary to minimise impacts during the construction and operation of the Project.

The SIA also highlights long-term positive impacts to ‘way of life’ and ‘livelihoods’ once operational through improved grid stability and energy reliability, especially during peak demand periods or emergencies. This enhancement benefits communities by ensuring consistent power supply, supporting local businesses, and contributing to the overall livelihood of the community. Additionally, the proposal aligns with the local strategic long-term aspirations of the Cumberland City Council to enhance the natural and built environment and deliver sustainable infrastructure.

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Appendices



Appendix A SIA Scoping Worksheet

Social Impact Assessment (SIA) Worksheet					Ausconnex Guildford West HV BESS													
PROJECT ACTIVITIES	CATEGORIES OF SOCIAL IMPACTS	POTENTIAL IMPACTS ON PEOPLE		PREVIOUS INVESTIGATION		CUMULATIVE IMPACTS		ELEMENTS OF IMPACTS - Based on preliminary investigation					ASSESSMENT LEVEL FOR EACH IMPACT				PROJECT REFINEMENT	MITIGATION / ENHANCEMENT MEASURES
Which project activity / activities could produce social impacts ?	what social impact categories could be affected by the project activities	What impacts are likely, and what concerns/aspirations have people expressed about the impact? Summarise how each relevant stakeholder group might experience the impact.		Has this impact previously been investigated (on this or other project/s)?	If "yes - this project," briefly describe the previous investigation. If "yes - other project," identify the other project and investigation	Will this impact combine with others from this project (think about when and where), and/or with impacts from other projects (cumulative)?	If yes, identify which other impacts and/or projects	Will the project activity (without mitigation or enhancement) cause a material social impact in terms of its: You can also consider the various magnitudes of these characteristics					Level of assessment for each social impact	What methods and data sources will be used to investigate this impact?			Has the project been refined in response to preliminary impact evaluation or stakeholder feedback?	What mitigation / enhancement measures are being considered?
		Is the impact expected to be positive or negative						extent i.e. number of people potentially affected?	duration of expected impacts? (i.e. construction vs operational phase)	intensity of expected impacts i.e. scale or degree of change?	sensitivity or vulnerability of people potentially affected?	level of concern/interest of people potentially affected?		Secondary data	Primary Data - Consultation	Primary Data - Research		
Construction impacts																		
Use of local roads for transportation of Project materials, equipment, components and workers	access	Potential temporary impacts from increased levels of traffic during construction could impact limited available on-street parking and traffic along local traffic routes.		Negative	Yes - other project	No	Not required	No	No	No	No	No	Standard Assessment	Required	N/A	Targeted research	No	Following consultation with Council and transport bodies, implement a traffic management plan to avoid impacts on surrounding business workers/visitors, residents, and existing bus operations in the area during construction hours Planned engagement with associated and non-associated residences and other stakeholders during construction so they are aware of construction schedules via engagement activities and project communication materials. Should the use of oversized and over mass (OSOM) vehicles be used during construction, traffic management measures will be implemented.
	access	Potential temporary traffic disruption during construction may change access to local services and facilities for surrounding business' and residents'.		Negative	Yes - other project	No	Not required	No	No	No	No	No	Standard Assessment	Required	N/A	Targeted research	No	Consultation with local Council, Transport for NSW and community on transport routes, local roads and services. The Traffic and Transport Impact Assessment (TTIA) has concluded little to no impacts from construction traffic. Should the use of oversized and over mass (OSOM) vehicles be used during construction, traffic management measures will be implemented. Conduct timely and appropriate community engagement so nearby businesses, residents and community institutions are aware of construction schedules and channels for raising and resolving concerns or complaints.
Construction of project components and additional infrastructure	surroundings	The Project might temporarily impact amenity of the locality. Construction activities will most likely impact environmental factors such as noise, vibration and air quality.		Negative	Yes - other project	No	Not required	No	No	No	Unknown	No	Standard Assessment	Required	N/A	Targeted research	No	Mitigation measures are contained within the NVIA report. Engage with stakeholder on potential construction impacts.
	livelihoods	Potential for local and regional business procurement, employment and training opportunities during construction. Local businesses stand to benefit from construction workers spending money locally in food, clothing and supplies outlets located within the vicinity of the Guildford West HV BESS project and nearby.		Positive	Yes - other project	No	Not required	No	No	No	No	No	Standard Assessment	Required	N/A	Targeted research	No	Nil- positive impact.
	way of life	Potential for changes to local amenity (e.g. noise, dust, vibration and visual changes) that would result from construction activities. However, given that the closest residential receivers are 200 m from the project site and the duration of construction is anticipated to be 21 months, it is unlikely that construction activities would result in detrimental impact on way of life.		Negative	Yes - other project	No	Not required	No	No	No	No	No	Standard Assessment	Required	N/A	Targeted research	No	Early and ongoing community and stakeholder engagement to inform them of Project updates would contribute to mitigating potential impacts on the community. Mitigation measures are presented in the Community and Stakeholder Engagement Action Plan and the Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan.
	livelihoods	An increase in local demand on temporary accommodation and services from the construction workforce may be experienced, however given the limited number of workforce (up to 40 FTE construction workers during peak periods) and the location of the Guildford West HV BESS project within the Greater Sydney area, this is unlikely to have a noticeable impact.		Negative	No	No	Not required	No	No	No	No	No	Standard Assessment	Required	N/A	Targeted research	No	Nil- unlikely to be an impact.
	surroundings	Construction activities have the potential to result in disruptions to the immediate surroundings, with the most likely impacts noted as increased levels of noise, traffic, and dust.		Negative	Yes - other project	No	Not required	No	No	No	No	No	Standard Assessment	Required	N/A	Targeted research	No	Early and ongoing community and stakeholder engagement to inform them of Project updates would contribute to mitigating potential impacts on the community. Mitigation measures are presented in the Community and Stakeholder Engagement Action Plan and the Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan.
	health and wellbeing	Adjacent and nearby residents and businesses may experience temporary impacts during construction related to, for example, increased traffic levels on particular traffic routes and increased ambient noise levels. A CEMP detailing construction phasing, including details on how construction impacts are proposed to be managed and mitigated will be prepared. Guildford West HV BESS project would comply with relevant guidelines and standards to manage and mitigate potential impacts from construction (ie traffic, noise and dust).		Negative	Yes - other project	No	Not required	No	No	No	Unknown	No	Standard Assessment	Required	N/A	Targeted research	No	Early and ongoing community and stakeholder engagement to inform them of Project updates would contribute to mitigating potential impacts on the community. Mitigation measures are presented in the Community and Stakeholder Engagement Action Plan and the Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES	CATEGORIES OF SOCIAL IMPACTS	POTENTIAL IMPACTS ON PEOPLE		PREVIOUS INVESTIGATION		CUMULATIVE IMPACTS		ELEMENTS OF IMPACTS - Based on preliminary investigation					ASSESSMENT LEVEL FOR EACH IMPACT				PROJECT REFINEMENT	MITIGATION / ENHANCEMENT MEASURES
Operational impacts																		
Continual operation of the project	health and wellbeing	Operational noise emissions from plant and equipment associated with the Guildford West HV BESS project have the potential to cause an increase in community anxiety related to noise within homes or property boundaries, including concerns related to sleep disruption. A detailed assessment of the potential for increases in ambient noise and/or impacts on sensitive receivers from operating noise, and any appropriate mitigation measures, will form part of a detailed consideration of noise in the EIS.	Negative	Yes - other project	Standard noise and vibration impacts assessed for all major projects.	No	Not required	Unknown	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Standard Assessment	Required	N/A	Targeted research	No	Ongoing community and stakeholder engagement to inform them of Project updates would contribute to mitigating potential impacts on the community. Mitigation measures are presented in the Community and Stakeholder Engagement Action Plan and the Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan. All other operational and maintenance details would be outlined in the Operational Environmental Management Plan (OEMP).
	way of life	Operational noise emissions from plant and equipment associated with the Guildford West HV BESS project have the potential to disrupt the daily activities in the ways people live, work and play.	Negative	Unknown		No	Not required	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Standard Assessment	Required	N/A	Targeted research	No	Ongoing community and stakeholder engagement to inform them of Project updates would contribute to mitigating potential impacts on the community. Engagement and consultation will be undertaken in accordance with the Community and Stakeholder Engagement Action Plan and the Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan. Mitigation measures are contained in the Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment. All other operational and maintenance details would be outlined in the Operational Environmental Management Plan (OEMP).
	access	Access to surrounding social infrastructure would have minimal impacts. Demand for carparking and the surrounding road network for residents, workers and visitors to access social infrastructure are not expected to be different from the existing conditions given the surrounding land uses and environment.	Negative	Yes - other project	Standard traffic impacts assessed for all major projects.	No	Not required	No	No	No	No	No	Standard Assessment	Required	N/A	Required	No	Ongoing community and stakeholder engagement to inform them of Project updates would contribute to mitigating potential impacts on the community. Engagement and consultation will be undertaken in accordance with the Community and Stakeholder Engagement Action Plan and the Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan. Mitigation measures are contained in the Traffic and Transport Impact Assessment. All other operational and maintenance details would be outlined in the Operational Environmental Management Plan (OEMP).
	surroundings	Operational noise emissions from plant and equipment associated with the Guildford West HV BESS project have the potential to disrupt the daily activities in the ways people live, work and play.	Negative	Yes - other project	Standard noise and vibration impacts assessed for all major projects.	No	Not required	Unknown	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Standard Assessment	Required	N/A	Targeted research	No	Ongoing community and stakeholder engagement to inform them of Project updates would contribute to mitigating potential impacts on the community. Engagement and consultation will be undertaken in accordance with the Community and Stakeholder Engagement Action Plan and the Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan. Mitigation measures are contained in the Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment. All other operational and maintenance details would be outlined in the Operational Environmental Management Plan (OEMP).
	surroundings	Changes to landscape and visual character with the presence of the Project.	Negative	Yes - other project	Standard visual impacts assessed for all major projects	No	Not required	No	Yes	No	Unknown	No	Standard Assessment	Required	N/A	Required	No	Landscaping and urban design elements will be incorporated to minimise the visual dominance and visual intrusiveness of the Project. Mitigation measures are contained in the Visual Impact Assessment.
	culture	Impacts to culture in the social locality once the Project is operational would be minimal. The presence of the Project is not expected to have additional or different impacts on cultural connections to the site.	Negative	Yes - other project	Statement of Heritage Impact	Unknown		Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Standard Assessment	Required	N/A	Targeted research	No	Any protocols would have been implemented during the construction phase and unlikely to have cultural potential or discovery.
	livelihoods	Improved access to a reliable local energy supply during peak periods due to increased capacity and a reduction in the risk of power disruptions and outages leading to local energy supply reliability, whilst also supporting the wider NEM by accelerating the transition to renewable energy.	Positive	No		No	Not required	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Standard Assessment	Required	N/A	Required	No	Ensure accurate project updates and information on communication channels and engagement activity materials (eg project webpage, newsletter, project 1800 number) is implemented during the construction and operation stages.
Project updates and information sharing	decision-making systems	A perceived lack of ability for community or stakeholders to make informed decisions, or an inability to access enquiry/complaint mechanisms, could lead to frustration and mistrust from some sensitive receivers. Ausconnex has, to date, made a concerted effort to invite community feedback on the Guildford West HV BESS project, as detailed in Chapter 5. Community feedback will continue to be sought throughout the assessment process. In addition, engagement channels for community and stakeholder feedback will continue to be available throughout construction and operation of the Guildford West HV BESS project.	Negative	No		No	Not required	No	No	No	No	No	Standard Assessment	Required	Broad consultation	Required	No	Stakeholder engagement and consultation activities (eg community drop in sessions) to commence prior to the EIS stage and will continue throughout the Project development. Communication channels such as phone, email, project webpage for community information will be established to provide timely Project updates to the community and stakeholders. Consultation with community and agency stakeholders to continue throughout the Project development and EIS preparation stage. Maintain records of stakeholder consultation outcomes to demonstrate how Project planning and ongoing operation makes an effort to engage the community in the decision-making process.
Contribute to the state's renewable energy targets	community	The Guildford West HV BESS project has the potential to support the uptake of renewable energy in the NSW electricity grid, thereby meeting the needs of households, schools, hospitals, businesses and farms. The Guildford West HV BESS project will also help contribute to achieving the state's net zero targets in emissions by 2050 which is regarded as a positive planning outcome.	Positive	No		Unknown	Not required	Unknown	Yes	Unknown	No	Unknown	Minor assessment of the impact	Required	Limited if required (eg customers, local Council)	Not required	No	Stakeholder engagement and consultation activities (eg community drop in sessions) to commence prior to the EIS stage and will continue throughout the Project development. Communication channels such as phone, email, project webpage for community information will be established to provide timely and accurate Project updates to the community and stakeholders.

Appendix B Media Search

Media search methodology

Search engine: Google

Timeframe: within the last five years

Keywords searched: “renewable energy Guildford West” “renewable energy Cumberland” “traffic Guildford West” “infrastructure Guildford West” “Ausconnex Guildford West” “noise Guildford West” “Guildford West employment” “renewable energy Sydney” “Guildford West battery energy”

Social media search methodology

Social media platforms: Facebook

Timeframe: within the last five years

Keywords searched: “renewable energy” “energy” “traffic” “infrastructure” “development” “Guildford West” “Ausconnex” “noise” “employment”

Relevant Facebook groups

Group and link	Number of members	Accessibility
Guildford NSW and surroundings	4.3K	Private
Cumberland LGA Community Group	277	Private
Western Sydney Community Notice Board	210	Private
Western Sydney Enviro Network	222	Public

Media search

Publication, date and link	Headline	Key points
ABC Listen April 2025	Energy top of agenda for Western Sydney voters	- Energy is at the centre of the upcoming election. - Interviews with individuals from the Western Sydney Woodturners and Blacktown Uniting Church revealed divisive opinions on Labor’s plan to continue with the renewable energy transition and the Coalition’s support of nuclear. - Community members are concerned about the rising cost of energy.
Information Age February 2025	Sydney man dies in fire as battery blazes spike	- Sydney man inside their home in Guildford was killed by a fire, likely caused by an e-bike battery that was left on an incompatible charger overnight. - Trending increase in lithium-ion battery fires in NSW since the start of 2025. - Emergency services warn communities about the dangers of lithium-ion batteries found in e-bikes and e-

		scooters – noting that “if a fire involving a lithium-ion battery occurs, it literally becomes an explosive device.”
<u>The Saturday Paper</u> October 2024	Anti-renewables campaigners woo Western Sydney	- Hosted by the Guildford League’s Club - The National Rational Energy Network, an anti-renewables organisation coordinated an Environment and Energy Forum in Chris Bowen’s Western Sydney electorate. - Right-winged politicians and activists shared concerns and expressed negative sentiments on the roll-out of renewable energy projects – highlighting the experiences of regional communities regarding affordability and cost of living.
<u>Utility Magazine</u> May 2023	Landmark renewable energy deal for Cumberland	- Cumberland Council and energy retailer – Nectr entered an agreement that will supply renewable energy to 250 council facilities over the next 10 years. - Council has long term price and supply certainty whilst reducing their carbon footprint. - Finding opportunities to engage with local community and expand uptake of renewable in the area.
<u>ABC News</u> April 2021	Infrastructure struggling to keep pace with growth in Western Sydney’s urban sprawl	- After living three years in Austral – an hour drive from Sydney CBD – Gurnek Singh has not seen enough development in the area, whereby, “key infrastructure is struggling to keep up with rapid housing growth.” - Lagging delivery is failing to create a successful community including insufficient roads, bus services, schools, parks and footpaths. As well as no libraries or community centres. - Many residents out West are seeking to capitalise on the Western Sydney Airport and surrounds.

Social Media Search

Site, date	Post details	Summary
Facebook (Western Sydney Enviro Network) July 2025	“Creating road tunnels and bridges for our native species has to be an integral part of Western Sydney.”	Post from a community member highlights personal significance of accounting for native species in the development of large road infrastructure projects.
Facebook (Cumberland LGA Community Group) April 2025	“How dangerous is this, kids won’t see oncoming traffic if they cross here. They should be fined. Roundabout at Walpole & Warwick Road Merrylands. Absolute disgrace.”	Post indicates concern for safety regarding road infrastructure particularly for young children.

	<i>Included 3 images of the roundabout and surrounds</i>	
Facebook (Councillor Diane Colman Cumberland City Council) March 2025	“Exciting times at @holroyd_rangers with the season kick off for the Women's Premier League at the newly renovated Guildford West Sports Ground. It was great to see the ground open despite heavy rain over night thanks to new \$500k drainage works completed by @cumberlandcitycouncil I with the help of a \$100k grant from @finstagram2142 I was honoured to officially re-open the ground now renovations are complete with club VP Terry Baker. Thanks to club president Danny Rizk for building this great club and great win by our women, off to a great start for the season ⚽”	Post from councillor indicates community support on the improvement of local sports and recreation infrastructure.
Facebook (Guildford NSW and surroundings) May 2024	“FANTASTIC NEWS GUILDFORD NEIGHBOURS! We officially have a right turn traffic light at the Guildford Rd & Woodville Rd intersection!!! #TheRightWay” Comments “I was getting myself mentally and physically ready to cross at Red but then saw a bright green arrow pointing right! Was so happy I started clapping at the lights” “So many years! I was so scared to turn there! So dangerous, I always thought that they should put an arrow to turn right” “Been a long time coming, hopefully no more accidents by frustrated drivers”	Post indicates high levels of local support for a new traffic light installation that has improved safety of the area for both pedestrians and road-users.
Facebook (Guildford NSW and surroundings) February 2023	“Sign the petition! We need the right hand turn arrow at the lights!!” <i>Attached link to Legislative Assembly – ePetition – Right-hand turn arrow at the intersection of Guildford and Woodville Road, Guildford</i> Comments “I lived in Guildford for 38 years. The arrow on Woodville and Guildford Rd won't happen until so many deaths” Reply: “There's been so many petitions signed but it's likely they don't really care!! Just hoping they'd listen one day and add proper traffic lights”	Post and comments indicate high levels of frustration with Council regarding safety at an intersection in Guildford.

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