



Kooyong BESS Scoping Report

Armidale, NSW

Request for Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs)

July 2025



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Abbreviations

ACHA	Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment
AEMO	Australian Energy Market Operator
AHD	Australian Height Datum
AHIMS	Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System
AOBV	Areas of Outstanding Biodiversity Value
ARTC	Australian Rail Track Corporation
ASC	Australian Soil Classification
ASL	Above Sea Level
LALC	Local Aboriginal Land Council
BAM-C	Biodiversity Assessment Method Calculator
BC Act	<i>NSW Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016</i>
BDAR	Biodiversity Development Assessment Report
BESS	Battery Energy Storage System
BSAL	Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land
CBF	Community Benefit Fund
CCEP	Community Consultation and Engagement Plan
CEEC	Critically Endangered Ecological Community
CEMP	Construction and Environmental Management Plan
CER	Clean Energy Regulator
CHMP	Cultural Heritage Management Plan
CICs	Critical Industry Clusters
CLM Act	<i>NSW Crown Land Management Act 2016</i>
CMA	Catchment Management Authority
DA	Development Application
DIRN	Defined Interstate Rail Network
DCCEEW	Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water
DCP	Development Control Plan
DNSP	Distribution Network Service Provider
DPE	NSW Department of Planning and Environment
DPHI	Department of Planning Housing and Infrastructure
DRG	NSW Department of Resource & Geoscience
DISR	NSW Department of Industry, Science and Resources
EDC	Estimated Development Cost
EEC	Endangered Ecological Community
EMP	Environmental Management Plan
EII Act	<i>Electricity Infrastructure Investment Act</i>
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EMF	Electric and Magnetic Field
EMS	Environmental Management System
EP&A Act	<i>NSW Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i>
EP&A Reg	<i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021</i>
EPA	NSW Environment Protection Authority
EPBC Act	<i>Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i>
EPI	Environmental Planning Instrument
EPL	Environment Protection Licence
ETL	Electricity Transmission Line
FAQs	Frequently Asked Questions
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
GDE	Groundwater Dependent Ecosystem
GW	Gigawatt
Ha	Hectare
ICNG	Interim Construction Noise Guideline
IPC	Independent Planning Commission
km	Kilometre
LALC	Local Aboriginal Land Council
LCVIA	Landscape Character and Visual Impact Assessment

LEP	Local Environmental Plan
LGA	Local Government Area
LGC	Large-Scale Generation Certificate
LLS	Local Land Services
LRET	Large-scale Renewable Energy Target
LSC	Land and Soil Capability
LSPS	Local Strategic Planning Statement
LCVIA	Landscape Character and Visual Impact Assessment
MNES	Matters of National Environmental Significance
MW	Megawatt
MVA	Megavolts
MWh	Megawatt Hour
MSD	Mine Subsidence District
NEM	National Electricity Market
NSW	New South Wales
O&M	Operations and Management
OEH	NSW Office of Environment and Heritage
OEMP	Operational Environmental Management Plan
PAC	Planning Assessment Commission
PBR	Preliminary Biodiversity Report
PCT	Preliminary plant community type
PHA	Preliminary Hazard Analysis
POEO Act	NSW <i>Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997</i>
PV	Photovoltaic
QLD	Queensland
RAP	Registered Aboriginal Party
REAP¹	Renewable Energy Action Plan
REAP²	Registered Environmental Assessment Practitioner
RET	Renewable Energy Target
REZ	Renewable Energy Zone
RF Act	NSW <i>Rural Fires Act 1997</i>
RFS	Rural Fire Service
RMS	NSW Roads and Maritime Service
SEARs	Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements
SEPP	State Environmental Planning Policy
SIA	Social Impact Assessment
SPIC	State Power Investment Corporation
SSD	State Significant Development
TEC	Threatened Ecological Community
TfNSW	Transport for NSW
TNSP	Transmission Network Service Provider
TIA	Traffic Impact Assessment
TMP	Traffic Management Plan
TSR	Travelling Stock Reserve
VPA	<i>Voluntary Planning Agreement</i>
WM Act	NSW <i>Water Management Act 2000</i>

Definitions

Applicant	Edify Energy Pty Ltd
Project	The development to which the application applies
Project Area	The entire lot(s) or part of a Lot that Edify Energy has access to and an agreement to develop with the landowner(s)
Impact Area	The specific area within the Study Area that Edify Energy proposes to develop and that will be directly impacted by the construction and/or operation of the project.
Study Area	The Study Area encompasses the Project Area, TransGrid substation land and site access road across Local Government Authority Road parcel.
Subject Land	The Subject Land, used for the for the purposes of the Preliminary Biodiversity Report (PBR) assessment encompasses the Study Area and roadside survey areas.
Associated landowner	A residence on privately-owned land where the landowner has reached or is in the process of reaching an agreement with the applicant regarding the Project and its impact management.
Non-associated landowner	A residence on privately-owned land where the landowner/s are not in a legal agreement with the applicant regarding the Project. The non-associated land does not form a part of the Project Area

Kooyong BESS

Scoping Report

Version	Date	Prepared By	Reviewed By	Comments
1	30 June 2025	E. Levi	A. Smith	For DPHI review
2	17 July 2025	A Smith	A Smith	Address DPHI comments

Approved for issue by

Adam Smith

Edify Energy

17 July 2025

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1 Introduction

1.1 Project Overview

Edify Energy Pty Ltd (herein referred to as Edify) proposes to develop, operate maintain and decommission a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) in the New England and North West Region of New South Wales (NSW), to be known as the Kooyong BESS (referred to as the Project). The Project is located in the Armidale Regional Local Government Area (LGA) approximately 6 km east of Armidale township. The Project location in the regional setting is shown in **Figure 1**.

The Study Area extends across a total area of approximately 57.5 hectares (ha), The Project Area covers 8.1 ha over one freehold land parcel as described in **Table 1** and illustrated in **Figure 2**. Site access is proposed to be via Eathorpe Road.

The Project includes infrastructure such as:

- BESS with a capacity of up to 200 megawatts (MW) / 800 megawatts hour (MWh)
- Electrical reticulation network
- Substation
- Site office and maintenance building
- Site access, access tracks, road and crossings
- Perimeter security fencing
- Temporary facilities such as laydown and storage areas

The Project proposes to connect to existing TransGrid Armidale 330 kilovolts (kV) substation, located on the following parcels adjacent to the Project Area (refer **Figure 2**).

- Lot 1 and 2 of DP 999496
- Lot 1 of DP1013556
- Lot 8 of DP112694
- Lot 847 of DP653684
- Lot 858 of DP755808

The objective of the Project is to increase dispatchable electricity, firming, and system strength services, for the electricity supply for NSW. Subject to necessary approvals, Edify anticipates construction to commence in FY 2028/29.

Table 1: Site Details

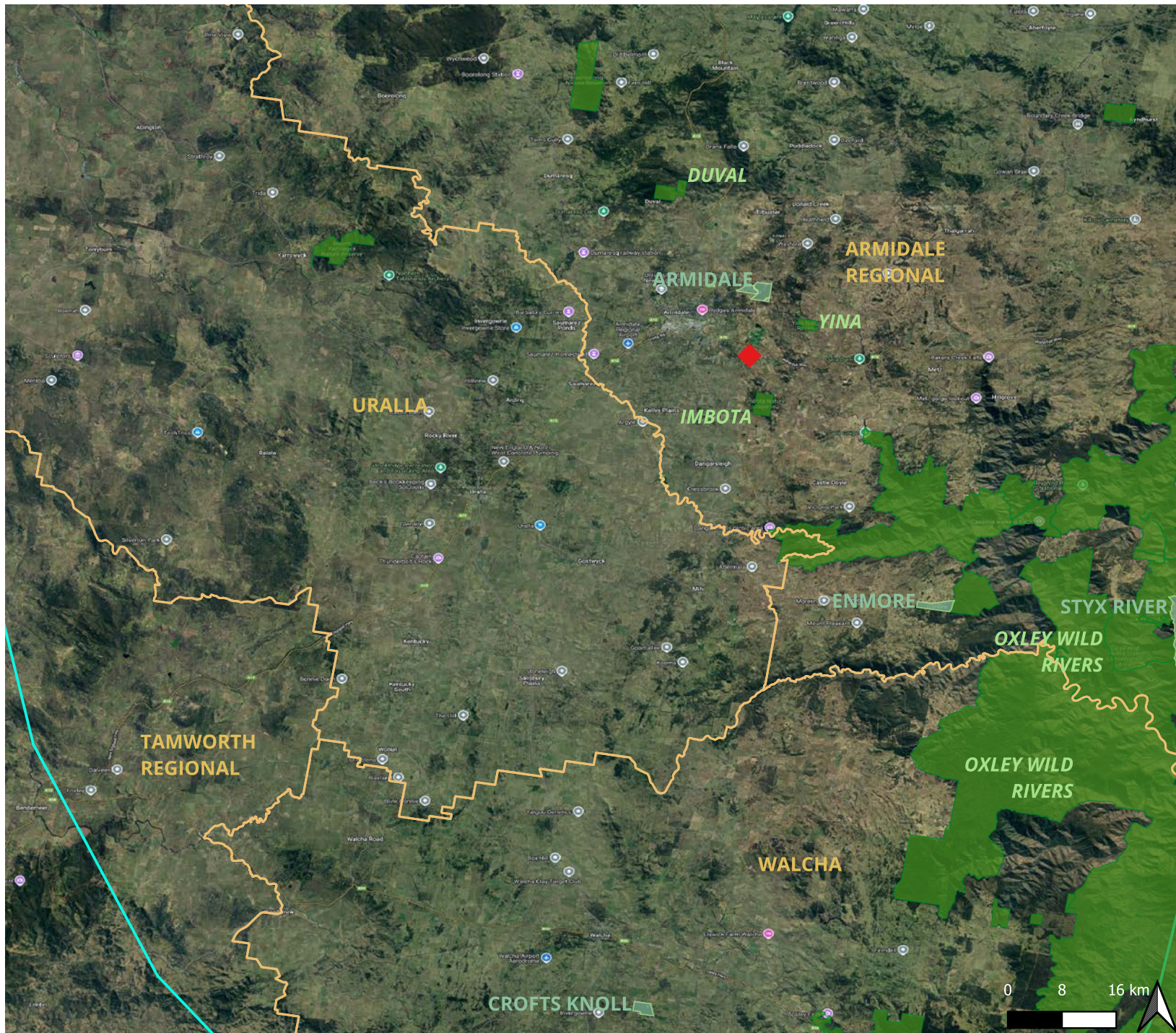
Project Aspect	Description
LGA	Armidale Regional
Address	112 Eathorpe Road, Armidale NSW, 2350
Lots	Project Area: • Lot 842 / DP 755808 • TransGrid land • Lot 1 and 2 of DP 999496 • Lot 1 of DP1013556 • Lot 8 of DP112694 • Lot 847 of DP653684 • Lot 858 of DP755808
Land Zoning	RU4 (Primary Production Small lots) SP2 (Infrastructure)
Project Area	8.1 ha
Grid Reference	Lat: 30°32'15.53"S Lon: 151°42'29.75"E

Table 2: The Applicant

Applicant details	Description
Applicant	Edify Energy Pty Ltd
ABN	85 606 684 995
Address	Level 4, 22 Darley Rd, Manly NSW 2095
Contact	02 8790 4048
Email	hello@edifyenergy.com.au kooyong@edifyenergy.com

1.1.1 Previous Developer Involvement

The Project Area was previously under development by Neoen Australia and was then known as 'Eathorpe BESS' Neoen submitted a Scoping Report to DPHI (dated 14 October 2022) and SEARs were published 17 November 2022. Neoen proposed the construction and operation of a BESS with an estimated capacity of up to 100 MW / 200 MWh across a total area of 65.6 ha.



Legend

- ◆ Project
- Local Government Area
- State Forest
- National Park and Reserve
- New England REZ

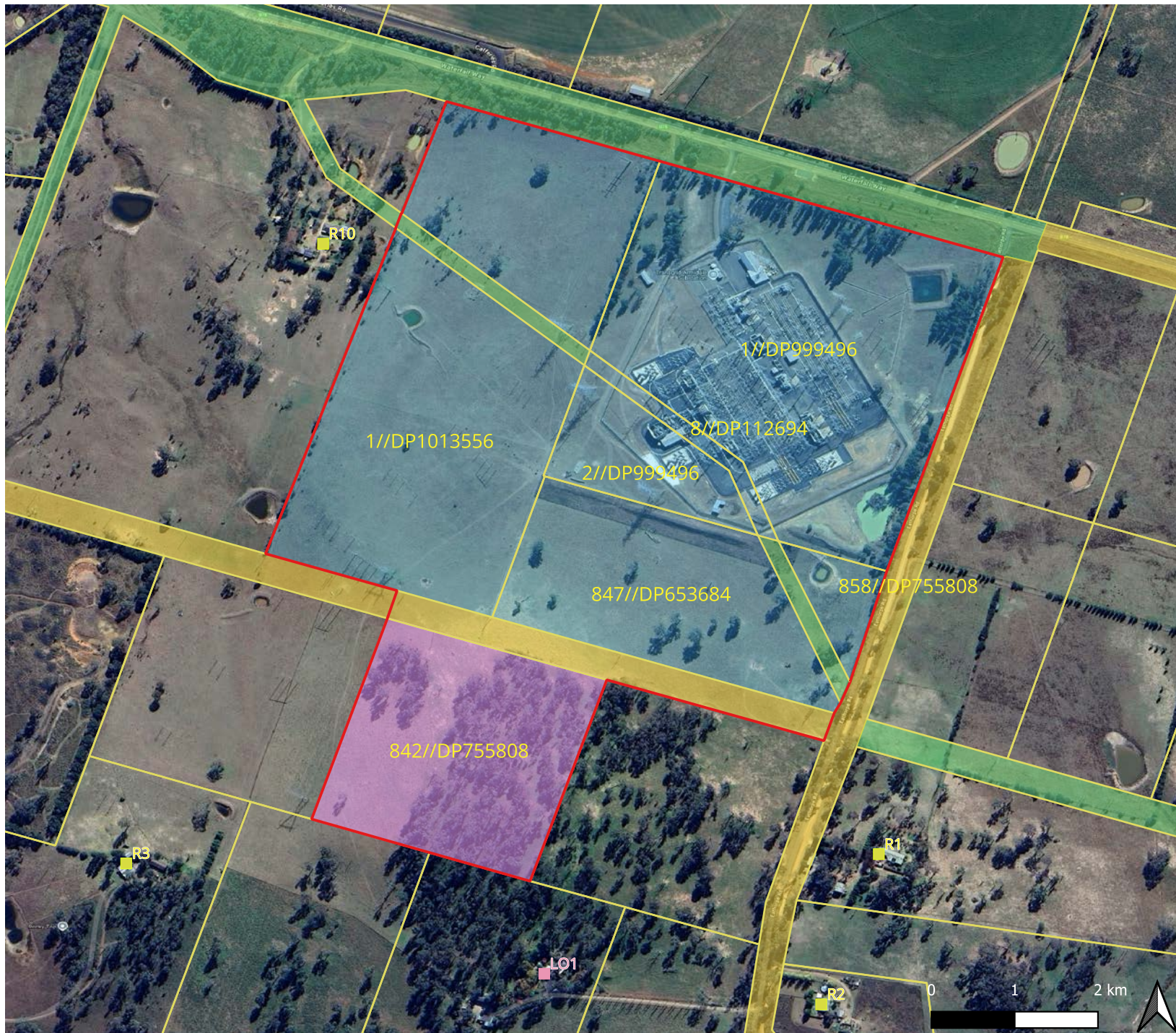
Baselayers

Google Hybrid Satellite

Figure 1: Project in Regional Setting

Kooyong BESS
Armidale, NSW

Scoping Report



Legend

- Study Area
- Project Area
- TransGrid Armidale Substation Land
- Local Government Authority Road
- Crown Land
- Land Cadastre

Baselayers

Google Hybrid Satellite

Figure 2: Proposed Project Area and Study Area

Kooyong BESS
Armidale, NSW

Scoping Report

1.2 Edify Energy Overview

Edify Energy is a proudly 100% Australian owned renewable energy and storage company, leading the industry in the deployment and operation of new energy generation, storage and grid infrastructure to support Australia's energy transition. Edify's details are provided in **Table 2**.

Delivering more than \$2 billion of investment in Australia, Edify has successfully developed and financed over 1 GW of utility-scale solar farms and battery energy storage systems and, in addition to projects currently in construction, is managing the operations of 6 solar farms and 4 battery energy storage systems that it has developed, financed and constructed. Collectively, its utility-scale solar farms produce enough electricity to power over 281,000 Australian homes and its battery storage systems provide system strength to the grid and are capable of powering 680,000 homes for up to 2 hours.



Figure 3: Edify's Key Focus Areas

The Edify business model supports the full lifecycle of renewable energy and storage project development and operation, including greenfield development, project structuring and financing, construction management and a full operational asset management offering.

Edify has a strong pipeline of renewable energy projects, including solar, storage, hybrid and hydrogen projects across the National Electricity Market (NEM) states in various stages of development that the successful candidate will have a key role in developing.

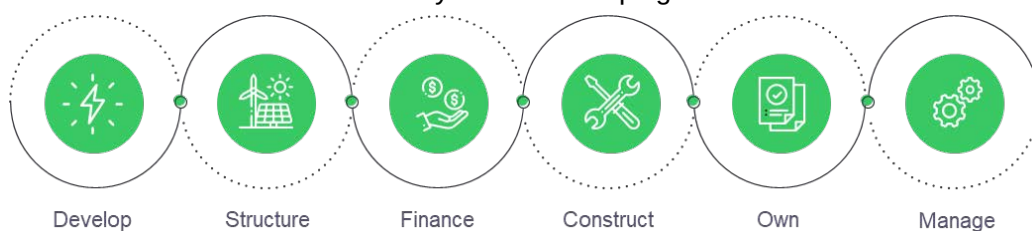


Figure 4: Edify's End-to-End Capabilities

1.3 Key Strategies to Avoid, Minimise or Offset Impacts

The Australian Government Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) and the NSW Government State Significant Development Guidelines (Appendices A and B), detail the requirement for developments to follow an impact mitigation hierarchy. The hierarchy is mainly viewed as the following three step process:

1. Avoid
2. Minimise and/or mitigate
3. Offset

This Scoping Report illustrates findings of preliminary social and environmental investigations, such as the Preliminary Biodiversity Report (**Appendix B**) and Potential impacts identified from this Scoping Report and supporting technical studies allows Edify to begin to address the first step in this hierarchy by avoiding potential impact areas/matters. Detailed studies undertaken as part of the EIS will further refine Edify's understanding of the Impact Area and continue to inform our application of the hierarchy.

1.4 Project Justification

The Project represents Edify's continued investment in renewable energy projects throughout regional NSW. similar to Edify's prior undertakings in the State, the development will be consistent with relevant guidelines, policies and plans and is expected to deliver several benefits including:

- The creation of direct and indirect local employment opportunities, including approximately 70 full-time equivalent (FTE) direct jobs during the peak construction period
- Approximately 3 permanent jobs during the operation of the Project (>30 years)
- Direct local investment via a Community Benefit Fund (CBF)
- Increased electricity storage capacity and grid support, which will assist in addressing the increasing energy demand in NSW and the expected shortfalls as coal-fired power stations retire
- Increased dispatchable electricity, firming, and system strength services, via the battery energy storage system
- A Voluntary Planning Agreement (VPA) contribution to be negotiated with the Armidale Regional Council (ARC).

The Project will have an Estimated Development Cost (EDC) of greater than \$30 million and therefore is considered a State Significant Development (SSD) under Section 4.7 of the NSW *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act). Edify will prepare a Development Application (DA) for the Project that is supported by an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). This will be submitted in accordance with Part 4, Division 4.1 of the EP&A Act. The NSW Minister for Planning or the Minister's delegate is the consent authority.

1.5 Purpose

The Scoping Report has been prepared in accordance with State Significant Development Guidelines – Preparing A Scoping Report (DPIE, 2022) to support a request to the Department of Planning, Housing, and Infrastructure (DPHI) for the Secretary’s Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs). The SEARs would guide the preparation of an EIS for the Project under Part 4 of the EP&A Act. It identifies the main issues and information requirements for the assessment, considering the values of the site, the nature and extent of potential impacts, planning and regulatory requirements and the results of early consultation. This allows the assessment to efficiently focus on the most important issues.

This Scoping Report intends to:

- Justify the development in relation to policy and market frameworks (**Section 2**)
- Describe the Project and the site (**Section 3** and **Section 6**)
- Identify statutory approval requirements (**Section 4**)
- Provide a summary of consultation undertaken to date and proposed further engagement (**Section 5**)
- Identify key potential environmental issues associated with the Project (**Section 6**)
- Conclude with remarks and identification of key issues raised in preparation of the Scoping Report (**Section 6**)

2 Strategic Context

2.1 Strategic Justification

Electricity generation is the largest individual contributor of greenhouse gas emissions in Australia, accounting for 45.3 % of emissions in the 2022-23 reporting year (Australian Government Clean Energy Regulator, 2024). This proposal supports the decarbonization of this emissions-intensive sector by providing a firmed and dispatchable supply of renewable energy, critical for replacing aging thermal power generators nearing the end of their operational lifespan.

This Project contributes to the decarbonisation of these emissions intensive sector, by storing surplus renewable electricity and discharging it when needed, reducing reliance on traditional thermal power generation. By improving grid stability and ensuring a consistent supply of renewable energy, the Project plays a crucial role in the transition to a low-emissions electricity system.

Table 3 provides an overview of key relevant policies, plans, and strategies, along with the Project's alignment with each.

Table 3: Project's Alignment with Key Strategic Plans and Policy Framework

Plans, Policies	Description	Project's alignment
The Paris Agreement	The Paris Agreement is a legally binding international treaty on climate change, adopted at the 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP21) in Paris. It aims to limit global warming to well below 2°C, preferably 1.5°C, compared to pre-industrial levels. Australia is a signatory and has committed to net zero emissions by 2050.	The Project plays a critical role in integrating renewable energy into the grid by storing excess generation and providing firming capacity to ensure reliable power supply. By stabilizing the grid and reducing reliance on fossil-fuel-based firming solutions, the Project helps Australia meet its emissions reduction targets, including a 50% cut in emissions by 2030 and net zero by 2050, in line with Australia's commitments under the Paris Agreement.
Commonwealth Climate Change Act 2022	The Climate Change Act refers to legislation enacted by governments to establish legal frameworks for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and addressing climate change. In Australia, the Climate Change Act 2022 sets binding emissions reduction targets including 43% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 (from 2005 levels) and net zero emissions by 2050.	The Project reduces reliance on fossil fuels, supports coal plant retirements, and ensures a reliable, low-emission energy supply, aligning with the Act's decarbonization goals.
Renewable Energy Target (RET)	The Clean Energy Regulator (CER) introduced the Renewable Energy Target (RET) in 2001, an Australian Government scheme designed to reduce	The Project enhances the reliability of renewable generation by reducing curtailment, supporting grid stability, and enabling firmed supply. This

Plans, Policies	Description	Project's alignment
	emissions of greenhouse gases in the electricity sector and encourage the additional generation of electricity from sustainable and renewable sources. The initial target was 44,000GWh later revised to 33,000GWh of renewable energy generation by 2020. Under the RET, large-scale renewable energy generators earn Large-Scale Generation Certificates (LGCs) for every MWh of electricity produced. Electricity retailers purchase these certificates to meet their legal obligations, submitting them to the CER to comply with the scheme.	strengthens the overall effectiveness of the Large-scale Renewable Energy Target (LRET) by ensuring that renewable energy is consistently and efficiently stored and dispatched to the grid when needed.
Integrated System Plan 2024 (ISP)	The 2024 ISP developed by the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) is a 20-year roadmap for Australia's energy transition. It outlines the optimal development path for generation, storage, and transmission to achieve net zero by 2050, ensuring reliability and affordability. The plan highlights the urgent need for new infrastructure, including renewables and storage (BESS), to maintain energy security.	Located within the New England REZ, the Project contributes to the optimal development path outlined in the ISP by enhancing grid stability, reducing transmission congestion, and supporting energy security. Additionally, it aligns with the ISP's goal of accelerating investment in low-emission technologies to meet Australia's net zero by 2050 target.
NSW Climate Change Act 2023	The Climate Change Act 2023 is legislation enacted by the NSW Government to establish a legal framework for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and enhancing climate resilience. Passed with multi-party support on 30 November 2023, the Act sets ambitious emissions reduction targets for NSW including 50% reduction from 2005 levels by 2030, 70% reduction from 2005 levels by 2035 and net zero emissions by 2050. Additionally, the Act outlines guiding principles for climate action, emphasizing the importance of considering impacts, opportunities, and the necessity for timely intervention in NSW.	The Project supports the NSW Climate Change Act by enhancing renewable energy reliability through energy storage and dispatch, reducing reliance on fossil fuels, and contributing to NSW's emissions reduction targets of 50% by 2030, 70% by 2035, and net zero by 2050.
NSW Government Net Zero Plan	The Plan is a commitment to taking decisive and responsible action on climate change (DPIE, 2020). The Plan has the goal of reducing the State's	The Project supports these objectives by enhancing grid reliability, enabling greater renewable energy integration, and reducing reliance on fossil fuel-

Plans, Policies	Description	Project's alignment
Stage 1: 2020–2030 (the Plan)	emissions by 35% by 2030, compared to 2005 levels, whilst supporting regional investments that total \$7 billion and create approximately 1,700 regional employment opportunities (NSW Government, 2020).	based firming capacity while supporting economic growth and job creation in the renewable sector.
NSW Electricity Strategy 2019	The NSW Electricity Strategy (2019) provides a framework for ensuring a reliable, affordable, and sustainable electricity supply as the state transitions away from coal-fired power. It focuses on improving energy reliability through a reserve target, attracting private investment in renewables, firming capacity such as BESS, and upgrading transmission infrastructure. The strategy also aims to lower electricity costs by increasing competition and efficiency while supporting Renewable Energy Zones (REZs) to drive emissions reduction.	By facilitating energy storage and firming capacity, the Project aligns with this strategy by enhancing grid stability, integrating renewable energy, and contributing to NSW's long-term energy security and emissions reduction goals.
NSW Electricity Infrastructure Investment Roadmap 2020	The NSW Electricity Infrastructure Investment Roadmap (2020) outlines the state's strategy for transitioning to a cleaner, more reliable, and affordable energy system by replacing retiring coal-fired power stations with renewable energy. It focuses on developing REZs, expanding firming capacity such as Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS), upgrading transmission infrastructure, and attracting private investment to accelerate the transition.	Located in the New England REZ, as shown in Figure 1 , the Project supports coal plant retirements by leveraging existing infrastructure, renewable resources, and a skilled workforce.
New England Renewable Energy Zone (REZ)	The New England REZ is a key initiative by the NSW Government to expand the state's renewable energy capacity in the New England region. Officially declared in 2021, the New England REZ is planned to deliver up to 8 gigawatts (GW) of renewable energy, making it the largest REZ in NSW. It plays a vital role in supporting the state's clean energy transition and driving regional investment in solar, wind, and energy storage projects.	Situated within the boundaries of the New England REZ, the Project is designed to integrate seamlessly with the existing infrastructure and development plans (Figure 1). The Project aligns with the objectives of the REZ by contributing to the region's renewable energy capacity.

Plans, Policies	Description	Project's alignment
New England Northwest Regional Plan 2036	The New England North West Regional Plan 2036 is the NSW Government's strategic blueprint for guiding land use planning and development across the New England North West region through to 2036. It encompasses 12 local government areas, including Armidale, Tamworth, Moree Plains, Narrabri, and Inverell. The Plan identifies the region as a key area for the development of renewable energy, particularly due to its high-quality solar and wind resources, available land, and strong existing infrastructure links.	The Project contributes to the Plan's goals by enabling greater integration of renewable energy, enhancing grid reliability, and promoting economic diversification through investment in clean energy infrastructure. It supports sustainable development while maintaining compatibility with surrounding land uses and protecting valuable agricultural and environmental resources.
Armidale Regional Local Environmental Plan 2012	The Armidale Local Environmental Plan 2012 (Armidale LEP) aims to <i>'facilitate development for a range of business enterprises and employment opportunities'</i> (Clause 1.2(2)(c)). It also aims to <i>'to ensure that development is sensitive to both the economic and social needs of the community, including the provision of community facilities and land for public purposes,'</i> Clause.1.2(2)(d))	The Study Area is zoned <i>RU4 Primary Production Small Lots</i> and <i>SP2 Infrastructure</i> (Land Use Table, zone RU4 objectives). The Project supports the objectives of both zones. It aligns with the RU4 zone by encouraging diversity and employment opportunities in primary industry enterprises—particularly those suited to smaller lots or more intensive uses—while minimising potential land use conflicts. It also supports the SP2 zone by facilitating infrastructure development that is compatible with, and reinforces, the intended purpose of the zone, without detracting from the provision of infrastructure.
Draft Armidale Region Advancing Our Region Community Plan 2025–2034	The Draft Plan sets out a long-term vision for a connected, sustainable, and prosperous region. Key objectives of the Plan include promoting sustainable infrastructure, reducing environmental impacts, encouraging innovation, and fostering economic resilience. The Plan supports the development of infrastructure that enables the transition to renewable energy, enhances climate resilience, and contributes to a low-carbon future. It also places emphasis on creating local job opportunities, improving community wellbeing, and ensuring that future growth aligns with environmental and social values.	The Project directly supports the goals of the Draft Plan by delivering critical energy infrastructure that enables increased uptake of renewable energy, reduces emissions, and supports grid stability. The Project represents a low-impact, future-focused investment in clean energy, aligning with the Plan's focus on innovation, sustainability, and regional economic development. Additionally, the Project's efficient use of rural-zoned land and proximity to existing grid infrastructure further reflect the Plan's aim for smart, sustainable land use and infrastructure planning.

2.2 Project Justification

2.2.1 Contributions to the National Electricity Market

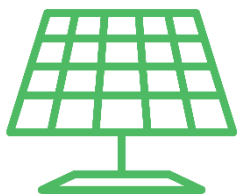


The Project will utilise proven battery technologies, which would aid in storing and managing energy flows to the grid during times of grid constraints (e.g. charging from renewable electricity created in daylight hours such as solar energy) and peak electricity demand (discharging). This dispatchable capability allows the Project to decouple its output from typical, weather dependent generation profiles, by allowing the Project to service periods of high demand when it is most needed, independent of weather conditions, particularly during evening hours.

The NEM is undergoing significant change, with several major energy generators scheduled to reach the end of their lifespan and are likely to be retired. The first of such large generators to retire occurred recently at the 1,260 MW Liddell coal-fired Power Station which was decommissioned earlier in 2023. This closure will likely be followed by 2,880 MW Eraring Power Station, 1,320 MW Vales Point Power Station, 2,715 MW Bayswater Power Station and 1,400 MW Mount Piper Power Station. There is a risk that without new investment in sufficient generation capacity, these retirements have the potential to lead to interruptions in energy security. The Project will support the grid by providing up to 200 MW / 800 MWh of battery storage, ensuring reliable energy supply and enhancing the integration of renewable generation into the NEM.

While grid capacity constraints can pose challenges for utility-scale renewable energy projects in NSW, the Project benefits from strong connection options within the Project Study Area. The transmission network has sufficient capacity and system strength to support power export to the regional NSW grid, enhancing reliability and stability.

2.2.2 Contributions to Electricity Prices



In Q4 2023, the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) reported a significant decline in wholesale electricity prices across the NEM, averaging \$48 per megawatt-hour, which represents a 48% reduction from the same period in 2022. This price drop was largely attributed to an increasing share of renewables in the grid. However, the growing share of renewable energy has also led to a rise in negative price occurrences, highlighting the volatility in the market. Rystad Energy identified Australia's NEM as the most volatile power market globally, citing extreme price fluctuations within single hours. To mitigate these challenges, increased energy storage is crucial.

Batteries will play a key role in stabilizing the grid by storing excess renewable energy during periods of oversupply and releasing it when demand peaks. This will help smooth out price fluctuations, improve grid reliability, and ensure that the benefits of low-cost renewable energy reach consumers more consistently, potentially driving retail prices even lower.

2.2.3 Socio-economic Benefits



Armidale's economy is in high-value agriculture and education, making it an ideal location for sustainable investment. Renewable energy development offers a complementary industry that can support local jobs, infrastructure, and long-term regional resilience

One of the most immediate benefits is job creation. Many skilled workers, such as engineers, electricians, plant operators, and maintenance personnel, face potential unemployment due to coal plant closures. The Project is expected to generate up to 70 FTE jobs during peak construction in regional NSW, along with indirect employment opportunities across the supply chain.

During operation, the Project will create approximately 3 FTE jobs, plus additional indirect employment opportunities over its expected 30-year lifespan. It also provides a pathway for retraining and reemployment, helping workers transition into roles in battery storage, renewable energy operations, and electrical grid management. By offering local employment, the Project helps retain skilled workers in Armidale and strengthens the regional economy. Partnerships with TAFEs, universities, and training providers will further support upskilling programs, ensuring workers have the necessary skills for careers in the clean energy sector.

The Project will also boost local businesses and supply chains by increasing demand for construction services, electrical suppliers, mechanical services, and transport providers. Many businesses that currently support the coal industry can pivot to servicing BESS infrastructure, ensuring continued economic participation. Additionally, increased economic activity will benefit local restaurants, hotels, and retail stores, as both construction and operational workers spend within the community. Local contractors and service providers will also have opportunities to secure long-term maintenance contracts.

Beyond direct economic benefits, the Project will contribute to the Community Benefit Fund, which can be invested in local infrastructure and services, such as education, healthcare, and road improvements. These financial contributions will support long-term regional development and improve public services.

The Project also promotes land use diversification, offering farmers an additional income stream alongside traditional agriculture. Given the region's vulnerability to droughts and climate variability, leasing land for energy storage provides financial stability, reducing reliance on seasonal agricultural yields. By supporting renewable energy projects, the Project strengthens regional resilience and ensures sustainable land use.

2.2.4 Site Suitability



The Study Area is considered highly suitable for the development of a BESS for several reasons. It is located within the boundaries of the New England REZ, supporting the ongoing development of the REZ and aligning with its strategic objectives. The Project is also situated near existing transmission infrastructure, ensuring efficient grid connection and minimising the need for additional transmission infrastructure, further reducing environmental and land use impacts.

The broader region already hosts several existing and proposed renewable energy projects, including utility-scale battery energy storage systems, demonstrating its suitability for large-scale renewable development. The site is readily accessible via Waterfall Way (Grafton Road) and Eathorpe Road, providing convenient access for construction and operations.

The Project is compatible with existing land uses in the area and aligns with local planning provisions. It is consistent with the RU4 Primary Production Small Lots zoning, supporting the objective to enable sustainable primary industry and other compatible uses and the SP2 Infrastructure by delivering essential energy infrastructure that aligns with and supports the zone's intended purpose, without impeding the provision or functionality of other infrastructure services. Additionally, the site is in a remote and lightly populated area, with limited nearby receptors within 1km, minimising potential impacts on surrounding communities.

Key considerations for site selection are detailed within the NSW Solar Energy Guideline. The key site constraints with justification as to why the site is suitable is detailed in **Table 4** below:

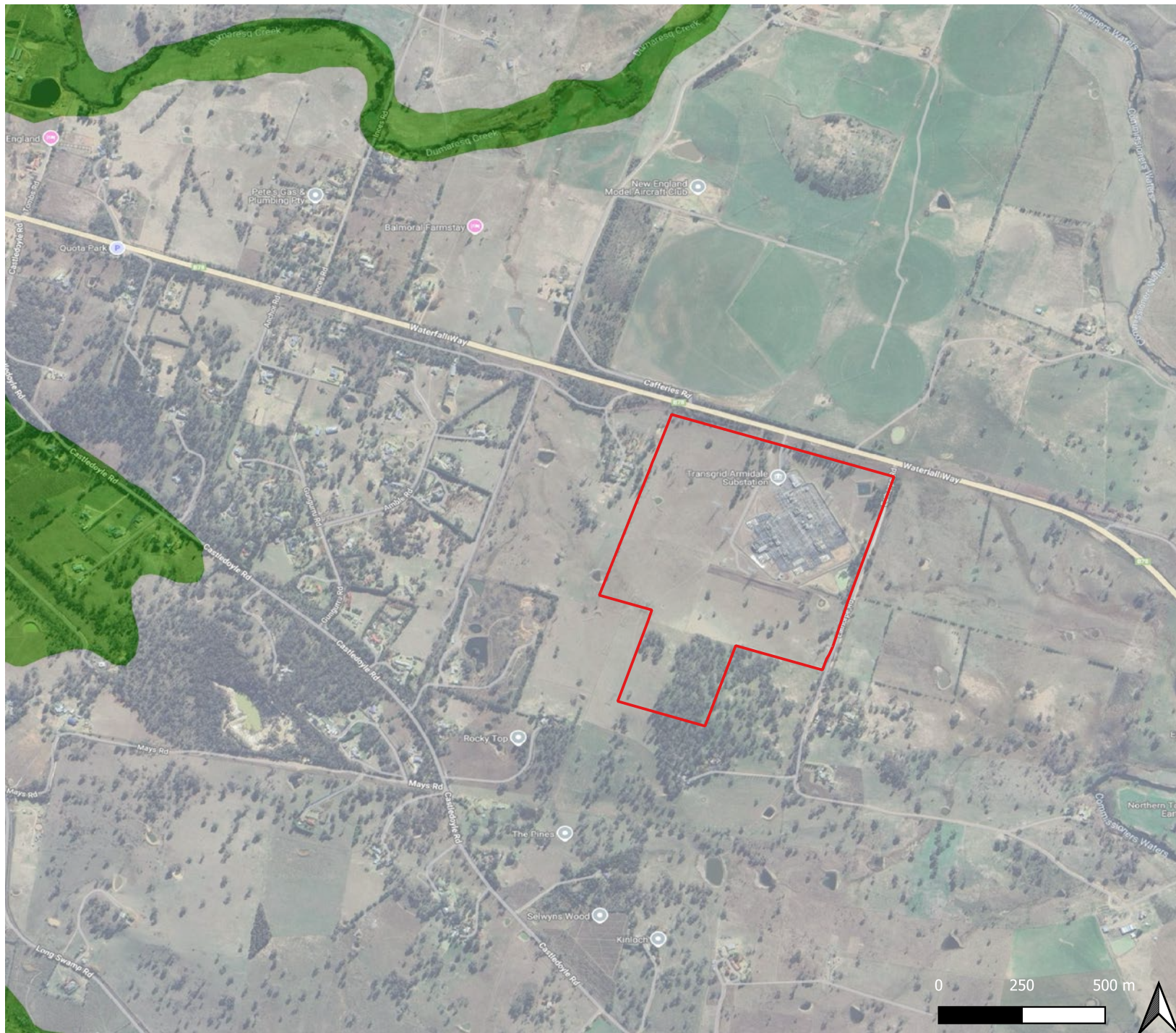
Table 4: Key Site Constraints with Justification

Areas of constraint	Site justification
Alternative area of involved property: Where a Project is located on a portion of a substantially sized property, options analysis of site suitability, in particular constructability and environmental planning factors are assessed across the entire property.	The Project Area was selected based on the following key factors: - Proximity to existing substation - Accessibility to the site via a main road - Minimal removal of native vegetation - Minimal environmental impacts
Visibility and topography: Sites with high visibility, such as those on prominent or high ground positions, or sites which are in a valley with residences with elevated views looking towards the site. This is particularly important in the context of significant scenic, historic, or cultural landscapes.	The Project Area and surrounds encompasses relatively flat terrain to undulating terrain. Early and continued engagement with the surrounding community will form part of the in-depth assessment into the potential amenity impacts. Edify will prepare a detailed Landscape Character and Visual Impact Assessment (LCVIA) as a part of the EIS to illustrate the potential viewpoints of the Project from private and public viewpoints. Mitigation measures recommended by the LCVIA report to reduce any potential visual impact, such as planting vegetation screening, will be discussed with affected landholders.
Biodiversity: Areas of native vegetation or habitat of threatened species or ecological communities within and adjacent to the site, including native forests, rainforests, woodlands, wetlands, heathlands, shrublands, grasslands and geological features.	Edify have prepared a preliminary Biodiversity assessment to identify initial constraints and guide the Scoping Report, a Biodiversity Development Assessment Report (BDAR) will be prepared for the Project as part of the EIS process to inform micro-siting of infrastructure. The Project will consider the small area streamlined assessment module as the Project is likely to have minimal vegetation clearance, considering the land has been previously cleaned.
Agriculture: Important agricultural lands, including Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land (BSAL), irrigated cropping land, and land and soil capability classes 1, 2 and 3. Consideration should also be given to critical industry clusters (CICs), which are concentrations of highly productive industries within a region that are related to each other, contribute to the identity of that region, and provide significant employment opportunities.	BSAL is not mapped in the Study Area. The closest mapped BSAL is approx. 1.4 km west of the Study Area (refer Figure 5). There is no Class 1, 2, 3 or 4 land withing the Study Area. The Study Area has been mapped¹ to be on land classed as Land and Soil Capability class (LSC) 6 (very severe limitations) with Australian Soil Classification (ASC) being Kandosol (refer Section 6.6, Figure 13 and Figure 14).

¹ eSPADE v2.2 (nsw.gov.au)

Areas of constraint	Site justification
Two critical industry clusters – for the equine and viticulture industries – have been identified in the Upper Hunter region.	No CICs were mapped within the Study Area.
Natural Hazards: Areas subject to natural hazards, such as flooding and land instability.	The Study Area has not been identified as flood prone or mapped as bushfire prone ² . Edify will engage with Rural Fire Service and NSW Fire & Rescue when preparing the Bushfire Assessment to ensure the Project's design and water supply infrastructure is located and installed in accordance with fire authority requirements.
Resources: Prospective resources developments, including areas covered by exploration licences and mining and petroleum production leases. Renewable development applicants should seek advice from the Department of Planning, Division of Resources and Geoscience (GSNSW) about the coverage of resources related licences.	The Study Area is not covered by any exploration or mining leases.
Crown Lands: If any part of the Project or associated transmission or distribution infrastructure will cross Crown Lands, it may be subject to legislative requirements that restrict access to the land.	Crown land is located within the Study Area; however, based on the proposed network connection route, the Project is not expected to impact Crown Lands. Furthermore, there are no known travelling stock routes within the Study Area. Edify will engage with Crown Lands following the issuance of the SEARs to ensure appropriate stakeholder consultation is conducted in accordance with regulatory requirements.

² [Geocortex Viewer for HTML5 \(nsw.gov.au\)](https://www.nsw.gov.au/geocortex-viewer-for-html5) NSW Bush Fire Prone Lands



Legend

Study Area

Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land

Baselayers

Google Hybrid Satellite

Figure 5: Biophysical Strategic
Agricultural Land Mapping

Kooyong BESS
Armidale, NSW

Scoping Report

2.3 Site Features and Surrounding Land Use

2.3.1 Regional Community

The Study Area is located within the Armidale Regional LGA, approximately 470 km north of Sydney and 110 km inland from the coastal city of Coffs Harbour. It lies close to Waterfall Way and the New England Highway, key regional transport routes that connect inland NSW to the Mid North Coast and the broader Northern Tablelands region. Covering approximately 8,620 km², the Armidale Regional LGA is part of the New England region and is known for its strong agricultural base, cool climate, and high-altitude landscape. The region has long been a centre for wool and beef production and is also home to the University of New England, contributing to its identity as a hub for education and agricultural innovation. The area features a growing number of renewable energy projects and is included within the New England REZ, one of the state's designated areas for coordinated clean energy investment. The LGA had a population of 29,449 as at the 2021 Census (ABS, 2021), with the city of Armidale being the primary population centre. The surrounding landscape includes productive farmlands, native bushland, national parks, and highland rivers, contributing to the region's ecological value, tourism potential, and agricultural viability.

2.3.2 Local Community

The Project is in the locality of Armidale, a regional city in the Northern Tablelands of NSW, approximately 470 km north of Sydney. Armidale is the centre of Armidale Regional Council LGA and is known for its strong agricultural sector, including sheep and cattle grazing, as well as educational institutions and a growing renewable energy industry.

The Project is situated approximately 6 km east of Armidale (**Figure 1**), which had a population of 21,312 according to the 2021 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). Armidale provides a broad range of social infrastructure and services, including hospitals, schools and a university, public open spaces, aged care facilities, recreational amenities, and diverse accommodation options.

Smaller localities surrounding the Project include Dangarsleigh, Kellys Plains, and Saumarez Ponds, which are rural communities.

Other nearby towns that contribute to the region's agricultural productivity and rural character include:

- Hillgrove (20 km to the east of the Project): Located within the Armidale Regional LGA and near Oxley Wild Rivers National Park, it is a historic mining town with past gold and antimony operations, now a quiet rural area with some tourism linked to its mining heritage.
- Uralla (23 km southwest): Located within the Armidale Regional LGA, Uralla is a rural service town with a strong agricultural economy (sheep and cattle farming) and a growing focus on renewable energy, aligning with the region's clean energy transition.
- South Guyra (33 km north): Located within the Armidale Regional LGA, the small rural community south of Guyra is primarily focused on livestock farming, and part of the broader agricultural network of the New England region.
- Guyra (36 km north): Located within the Armidale Regional LGA, Guyra is a key agricultural hub known for livestock farming and large-scale horticulture, including one of Australia's largest tomato glasshouses, operated by Costa Group.
- Llangothlin (46 km north): Located within the Armidale Regional LGA, it is a small farming village north of Guyra, supporting cattle and sheep grazing, with a surrounding landscape of wetlands and grasslands.
- Walcha (51 km south): Located within the Walcha LGA, Walcha is a significant wool and cattle farming town with a strong agricultural identity, also known for its national parks and artistic community.

- Tingha (80 km northwest): Located within the Inverell LGA, Tingha is a former tin mining town now focused on small-scale farming, with a significant Indigenous community and cultural heritage.
- Glen Innes (88 km north): Located within the Glen Innes Severn LGA, it is a rural centre known for its Celtic heritage, wool and cattle farming, and its role within the New England REZ, supporting large-scale wind, solar and BESS projects.
- Tamworth (96 km southwest): Located within the Tamworth Regional LGA, the town is a major regional hub with a diversified economy, strong agricultural and manufacturing sectors, and home to the annual Tamworth Country Music Festival.
- Inverell (101 km northwest): Located within the Inverell LGA, Inverell is a growing regional town with an economy driven by agriculture (beef, sheep, and cropping) and sapphire mining, known as the "Sapphire City" due to its gemstone industry.

The Armidale region reflects a mix of historic charm, cultural diversity, and natural beauty, with a strong connection to land stewardship and sustainability. Its proximity to the Project provides access to skilled labour, regional services, and supports the ongoing economic and social vitality of the area.

2.3.3 Land Use

The Project is located within the Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation for Australia (IBRA) subregions of Armidale Plateau within the New England Tablelands region. The New England Tableland bioregion lies between the North Coast and Nandewar bioregions in northeast New South Wales, extending north just into Queensland. In New South Wales, the bioregional boundary extends from north of Tenterfield to south of Walcha. This bioregion includes parts of the MacIntyre, Clarence, Gwydir, Macleay, Namoi and Manning river catchments. The climate is mainly temperate to cool temperate, with montane climate at higher elevations. The north-eastern boundary has a warmer, sub-humid climate.

The Project Area has historically been used for grazing and is currently supporting grazing activities. Surrounding land uses include agricultural activities as well as non-agricultural sites such as:

- TransGrid Armidale substation situated adjacent to the Project
- Armidale Waste Management Facility & Recycling Centre (108 Long Swamp Rd, Armidale NSW 2350)
- Fire and Rescue NSW Training Centre (Mann St, Armidale NSW 2350)
- New England Model Aircraft Club (Cafferries Rd, Armidale NSW 2350).

The Project in the local context is shown in **Figure 6**.

2.4 Community Benefits

2.4.1 Voluntary Planning Agreement

The Applicant has begun early consultation with ARC, Edify has acknowledged the need for a Voluntary Planning Agreement (VPA) for the Project, and will progress these discussions during the EIS phase of the Project.

2.4.2 Community Benefit Funding

A CBF will be established by Edify and will align with the NSW Benefit-Sharing Guideline (DPHI, 2024).

Edify's Community Benefit Sharing Policy and application form are available on our website here [Our communities - Edify Energy](#)

3 Project Description

3.1 Study Area

The Study Area is entirely within the Armidale Regional LGA, located in a rural locality approximately 6 km from the Armidale town centre. Site access is proposed via Eathorpe Road, which connects to Waterfall Way (Grafton Road) which leads to the New England Highway, a key transport route in the region, located to the west of the Study Area.

The Study Area covers approximately 57.5 ha, located within the following land parcels (refer **Figure 2**):

- Project Area - RU4 (Primary Production Small lots):
 - Lot 842 of DP 755808
- TransGrid Substation - SP2 (Infrastructure):
 - Lot 1 and 2 of DP 999496
 - Lot 1 of DP 1013556
 - Lot 8 of DP 112694
 - Lot 847 of DP 653684
 - Lot 858 of DP 755808
- Local Government Authority Road parcel
- Crown Land

The Study Area encompasses key Project elements including the BESS, substation, site access, internal access road, electrical reticulation network, site office and maintenance building, fencing and other temporary infrastructure. A conceptual Project Layout is shown in **Figure 8**.

3.1.1 Impact Area

The Impact Area incorporate areas affected by construction and operation of the Project, as identified at the scoping stage. It includes Project infrastructure such as the BESS, substation, site office, maintenance building, site access, and access tracks. The Impact Area consists of agricultural land with flat paddocks, largely cleared of vegetation, except for some sections of remaining vegetation, which are mostly excluded from the Impact Area.

The access location and easement will be further evaluated during the BDAR, Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA), and other technical studies as part of the EIS, which will assess potential environmental and planning impacts and provide construction recommendations. The final development footprint and Impact Area will be refined during the EIS phase, considering the conclusions of these technical studies and feedback from the SEARs.

3.1.2 Project Nearby Receivers

The Project Area is owned by one landholder who reside on the property to the south of the Project Area, identified as 'LO1' in **Figure 9**. Property 'LO1' is excluded from the Project Area and has appropriate buffers in place.

There are 31 non-associated residential receivers within 1 km of the proposed BESS and 66 non-associated residential receivers between 1-2 km (refer **Figure 9** and **Table 5**). The closest sensitive receiver to the proposed BESS (R3) is located approximately 243 m to the southwest.

Table 5: Project Neighbouring Receivers (2 km Buffer)

Receiver ID	Distance to Project ³ (m)	Receiver ID	Distance to Project ¹ (m)	Receiver ID	Distance to Project ¹ (m)
R1	386	R34	1375	R67	1775
R2	439	R35	1132	R69	1976
R3	243	R36	1035	R70	1874
R4	542	R37	1036	R71	1683
R5	663	R38	1037	R72	1883
R6	586	R39	1110	R73	1940
R7	792	R40	1244	R74	1846
R8	892	R41	1185	R75	1495
R9	1016	R42	1324	R76	1828
R10	533	R43	1467	R77	1970
R11	838	R44	1504	R78	1684
R12	836	R45	1241	R79	1845
R13	784	R46	1042	R80	1567
R14	788	R47	1134	R81	1965
R15	734	R48	1374	R82	1704
R16	522	R49	1242	R83	1619
R17	662	R50	1431	R84	1750
R18	555	R51	1453	R85	1896
R19	980	R52	1390	R86	1590
R20	908	R53	1287	R87	1968
R21	946	R54	1055	R88	1534
R22	852	R55	1157	R89	1742
R23	775	R56	1019	R90	1943
R24	862	R57	1326	R91	1841
R25	745	R58	1157	R92	1629
R26	880	R59	1374	R93	1684
R27	818	R60	1440	R94	1663
R28	646	R61	1187	R95	1772
R29	968	R62	1500	R96	1802
R30	892	R63	1321	R97	1793
R31	844	R64	1540	R99	1531
R32	911	R65	1573		
R33	1062	R66	1903		

³ Closest distance from receiver to proposed BESS.

3.2 Conceptual Project Layout

The Project involves the construction of a battery storage system and associated infrastructure. The Project proposes to connect into the existing TransGrid Armidale 330 kV substation, located adjacent to the Project.

The Project design is flexible and would be designed to avoid impacts where feasible and minimise and mitigate environmental impacts if avoidance is not possible. The design will consider the results of the Scoping Report, requirements of SEARs and consultation with relevant stakeholders and the technical studies prepared as part of the EIS. The EIS will outline how these studies have informed the final design.

The conceptual Project layout is shown in **Figure 8**. This includes all land likely to be directly impacted by the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Project, including auxiliary construction facilities (site compound, laydown, stockpiling, etc.) and all considered options. It is noteworthy that the proposed footprint is indicative only and will be refined as part of the EIS process (considering environmental constraints and engineering studies), with Project infrastructure layout to be detailed in the EIS.

3.2.1 Battery Energy Storage System

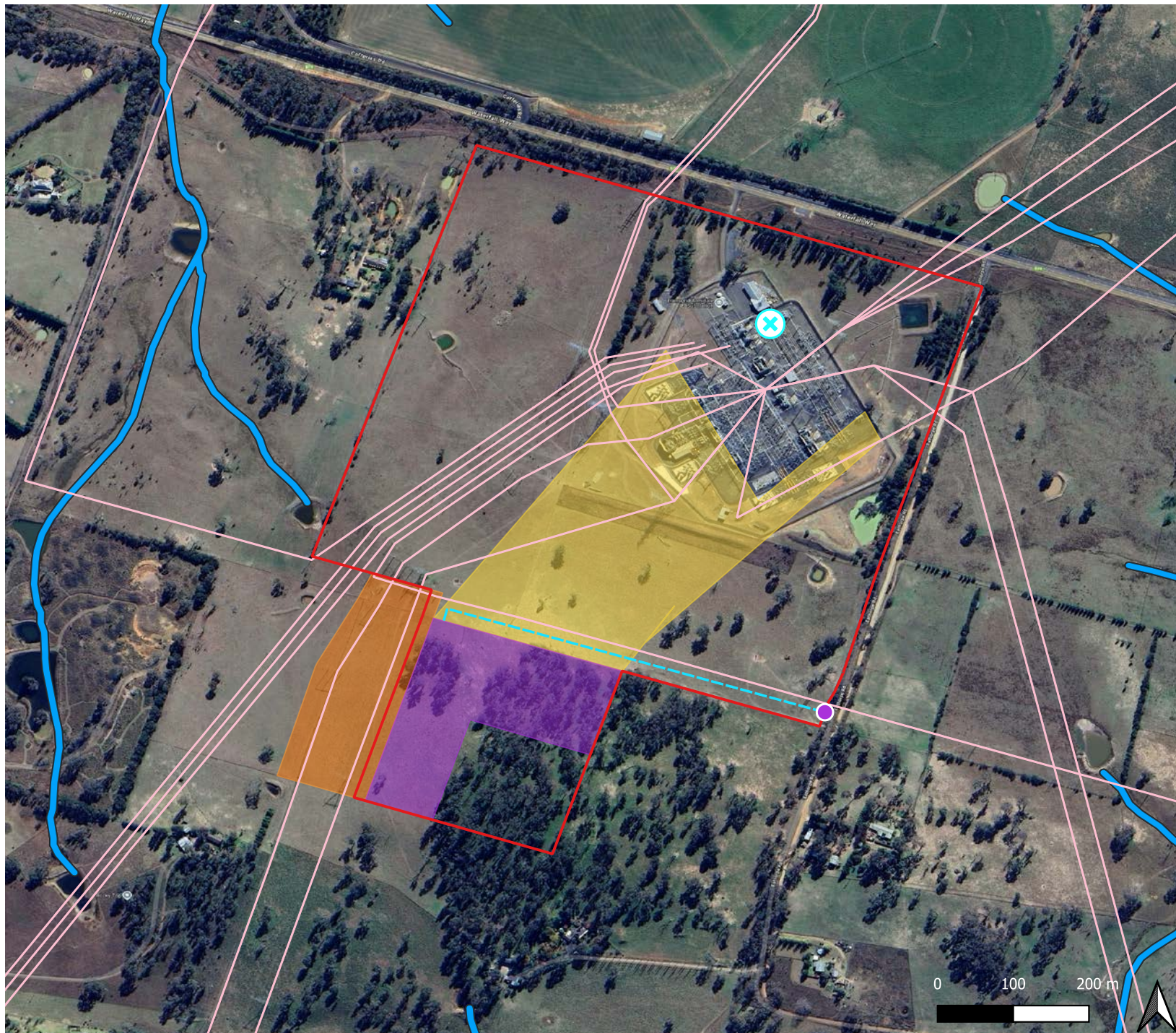
The BESS would typically consist of modules that provide a direct medium voltage AC interface and includes Medium Voltage (MV) switchgear, MV transformer, inverter, batteries, thermal management and controls. The modules would be either placed on a filled pad or elevated platform.

The BESS will be located within the Impact Area and adjacent to the substation. The Project will utilise hermetically sealed, lithium-ion batteries housed in a secure, climate-controlled BESS. Subject to economic and technical considerations, the Project would include an approximate of up to 200 MW / 800 MWh rated capacity battery storage system, with an enclosure design similar to **Figure 7**.

The size and configuration of the BESS will be determined through an economic and technical assessment conducted during the Project's EIS and Connection Application phase with TransGrid and the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO). Edify has established commercial relationships with Tier 1 battery suppliers with a proven track record in Australian energy storage applications.



Figure 7: Indicative BESS Project layout (Edify Koorangie BESS)



Legend

- Study Area
- Site Access
- Access Road
- BESS and Substation Area
- Proposed Transmission Easement Corridor
- ⊗ TransGrid Armidale Substation
- Electricity Transmission Lines
- Existing Transmission Line Easement
- Waterways

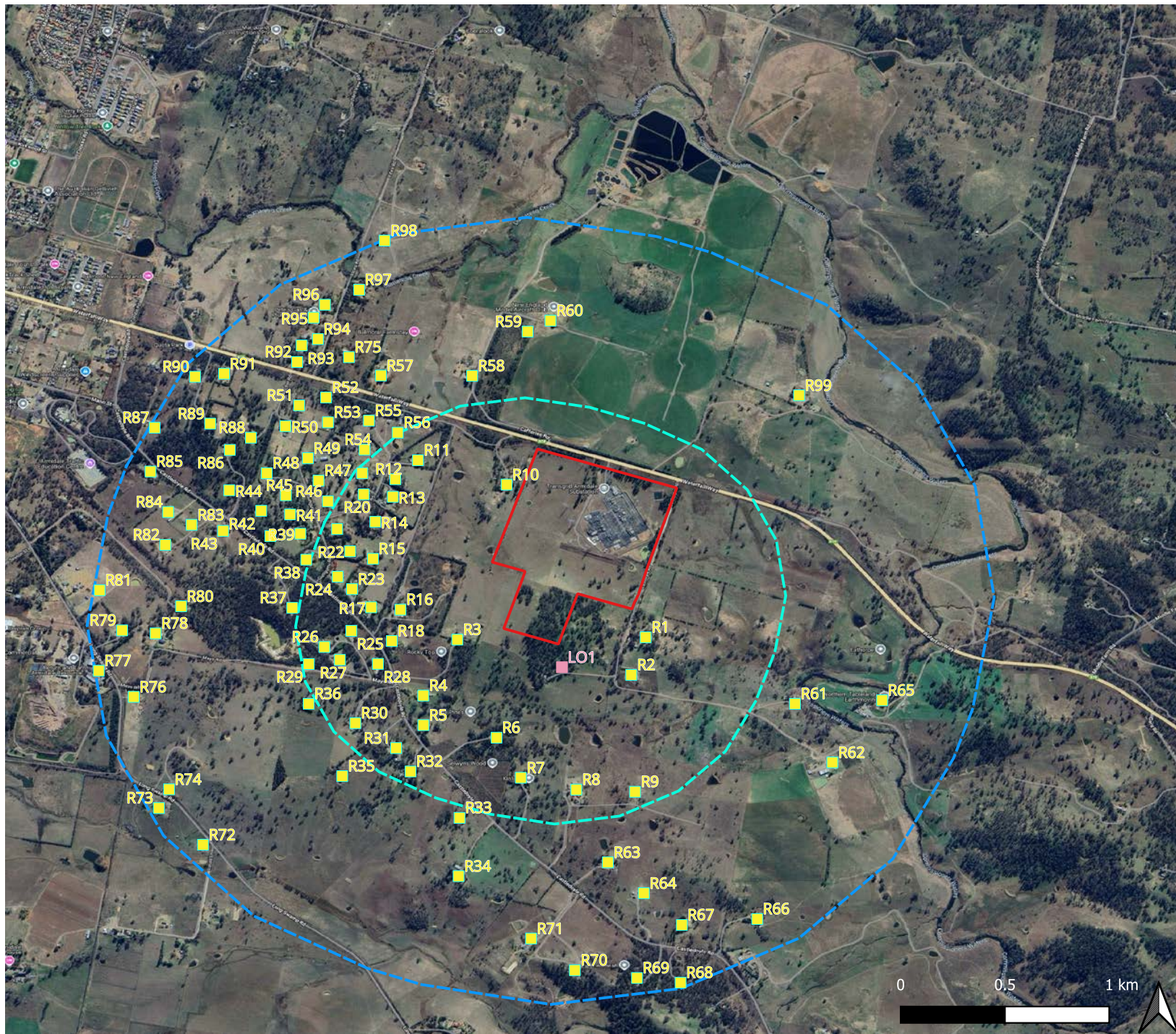
Baselayers

Google Hybrid Satellite

Figure 8: Conceptual Project Layout

Kooyong BESS
Armidale, NSW

Scoping Report



Legend

Study Area

Receivers

■ Associated

■ Non-Associated

1km Buffer of Proposed BESS

2km Buffer of Proposed BESS

Baselayers

Google Hybrid Satellite

Figure 9: Study Area in Relation to Nearby Receivers

Kooyong BESS
Armidale, NSW

Scoping Report

3.2.2 Electrical Reticulation Network

Each inverter will be connected to the central 33 kV switchboard by underground medium voltage cable reticulation. The cables will be installed in trenches not below 1m in depth and typically 1 m in width. The excavation will comply with the Soil and Erosion Sediment Control Report and Regulations for construction within New South Wales. The medium voltage switchboard will be connected through a step-up transformer and connect to the overhead 330 kV distribution line, owned and operated by TransGrid.

Temporary disturbances to vegetation from the underground installation of the cables will rehabilitate naturally.

3.2.3 Substation

An on-site high voltage substation may be required to connect the BESS to the national transmission network. Under this option, the on-site substation footprint will be approximately 80 m x 50 m. The substation will provide switching and protection of the electrical network and will be fenced separately from the BESS for safety and access reasons.

Alternatively, the BESS may connect directly to the existing Armidale Substation, subject to approval and augmentation of TransGrid's landholding and substation infrastructure. The direct connection to the existing substation will be owned and operated by the Network Operator, TransGrid. This will form part of the NEM.

3.2.4 Associated Infrastructure

The Project will include various supporting infrastructure essential for its operation and maintenance. This will encompass an Operations and Maintenance (O&M) building housing a site office, kitchenette, toilet, first aid area, meeting room, and reception area facilities, as well as and internal tracks connecting the BESS and other associated infrastructure. Additionally, perimeter fencing will be installed to ensure site security and safety.

During the construction phase, temporary facilities will be required to support site activities. These will include designated laydown areas for equipment storage, material stockpiling zones, and other necessary temporary infrastructure.

3.2.5 Ancillary Activities

Several ancillary activities will be undertaken to prepare the Study Area. These activities may include:

- Site clearance, earthworks, and land leveling
- Construction and/or upgrades of access roads
- Implementation of drainage and erosion control measures
- Installation of utility and service and sourcing of water (may include offsite or onsite water sourcing)
- Set up of designated waste management and recycling areas
- Implementation of environmental and safety controls, such as dust suppression, visual and noise mitigation, and traffic management measures.

3.3 Project Timing

Subject to approval, the Project's planning and approval process is anticipated to be completed by 2027. This process includes the preparation of a Scoping Report, an EIS and a Submissions Report.

Construction is expected to take place over a 12-month period, commencing in 2028/29FY, with operations anticipated to start in 2029/30FY. The most significant impacts are expected to occur during the construction phase, including potential disruptions related to site preparation, infrastructure installation, and associated activities.

3.3.1 Construction

The construction phase of the Project is expected to take approximately 12 months. During the peak construction period, a workforce of up to approximately 70 FTE personnel will be required onsite.

Minor earthworks would be required for the preparation of the site, including minimal site levelling, laying of access track and site drainage works. Due to the terrain of the Project Area, some site preparation and civil works are anticipated prior to construction. The site office components will largely be built off-site and transported to the site in modulated sections. Construction on-site will be limited to the unloading and joining together of the modulated sections and trenching of electrical and control cabling to the electricity grid and control room. Construction activities are planned to occur during standard construction hours.

3.3.2 Operation

The Project is expected to operate for a minimum of 30 years, depending on the nature of battery technology and energy markets. During the operational phase of the Project, approximately 3 FTE roles will support the Project's operation will be required.

The primary activities conducted on site will include day-to-day routine operations, maintenance of infrastructure, and general site maintenance and security. Operation of the BESS will also likely be supported by local contractors for tasks such as repairs, minor works, weed/vegetation management, fencing, and cleaning.

3.3.3 End of Life

After the initial operating period, a decision will be made to either decommission or re-power the facility, subject to approval requirements.

If the Project is to be decommissioned, all infrastructure shall be removed from site, including buried (cable) infrastructure) and the site will be rehabilitated to return to its existing land capability. The disposal and recycling of project infrastructure will be completed in accordance with contemporary waste management legislation and practices at the time of decommissioning. As far as possible, efforts will be made to reduce wastes disposed to landfill, in line with best practice sustainability principles.

Alternatively, the Project may be upgraded with new Battery technology. If upgrading the Project is agreed, an appropriate stakeholder consultation process will be undertaken, and all necessary approvals will be sought and aligned with relevant legislation at such time.

3.4 Estimated Development Cost

The Project would have an estimated capital investment more than \$30 million, identifying the Project as a State Significant Development under Part 4 of the EP&A Act.

A quantity surveyor's report would be prepared during the EIS process as part of the Project, which would confirm the Estimated Development Cost (EDC).

3.5 Subdivision

Engagements with TransGrid will be undertaken with respect to how the switchyard infrastructure is to be owned and operated. The area of land to be subdivided at the switchyard site is yet to be finalised

When land is leased from a landowner and the lease affects part of a lot or lots in a current plan, a subdivision under s.7A *Conveyancing Act 1919* (formerly s.327AA *Local Government Act 1919*, which is now repealed) is required when the total of the original term of the lease, together with any option for renewal, is more than five years. When the lease affects the whole lot in a current plan, the body of the lease identifies the area by lot and DP number with a subdivision not required.

As the Project will be executed via an option to purchase arrangement, subdivision for the purpose of the internal substation and battery facility may be required. An easement may be created by means of an appropriate dealing registered in the NSW Land Registry Service or by the inclusion in a Section 88B instrument lodged with a new deposited plan.

3.6 Alternatives to the Project

3.6.1 Alternative Sites

The chosen Project Area is highly suitable for a BESS due to its proximity to existing infrastructure, including road and transmission networks, the suitability of the land when environmental factors such as native vegetation, water courses and topography are considered.

After considering the above and other alternatives that offer viable capacity and available access to the transmission network, it was concluded that the proposed Project Area remains most suitable.

. The site was selected because it provides the optimal combination of:

- Low environmental constraints: the Project Area has been previously cleared of vegetation and is predominantly used for grazing, minimizing environmental impacts
- Favourable topography: the level terrain ensures cost-effective construction and ease of infrastructure development
- Suitable planning context: the Project Area aligns with local and state planning requirements, facilitating approvals and compliance
- Strategic road access: the Project Area is conveniently located near existing road networks, ensuring efficient transport and logistics
- Proximity to the transmission network: the Project Area has direct access to the grid, reducing costs and impacts associated with transmission connections
- Available grid capacity: the Project Area has been assessed to have sufficient capacity to support the Project.

The site is of a scale that allows for flexibility in design, allowing Edify to avoid ecological and other constraints that may be identified during the EIS process. Additional refinements to the Project layout will be assessed in the EIS process to further mitigate any potential constraints.

3.6.2 Alternative Technologies

Battery technology was selected over mechanical, thermal, or physical storage methods because it enables modular installation without major infrastructure or specialised landform features. Batteries also generally have lower weight and physical volume, and better scalability compared to other technologies.

3.6.3 The ‘Do Nothing’ Option

Not proceeding with the Project would forgo the benefits of the Project, resulting in:

- The loss of an energy storage solution that would enhance grid reliability and stability
- The loss of a system that supports renewable energy integration and further assists the Australian and NSW Governments in reaching their targets
- The loss of additional electricity supply support for the grid, reducing pressure on existing infrastructure mainly at peak time
- The loss of social and economic benefits, including direct and indirect employment opportunities.

While the ‘do nothing’ option would avoid any potential impact, the likelihood of significant negative consequences is considered low. The benefits of the Project are deemed to outweigh any potential impacts while contributing to ecologically sustainable development. Additionally, the Project would bring broader community advantages, including improving the efficiency of the electricity supply and transmission network. It also has the potential to reduce costs for consumers, align with national and state energy goals, and foster increased competition in the electricity market. Moreover, it would contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by supporting the transition away from fossil fuel-based power generation.

4 Statutory Context

The relevant statutory requirements for the Project are summarised in **Table 6**. This table has been set out in accordance with the *State Significant Development Guidelines - Preparing a Scoping Report (Appendix A)* and *State Significant Development - preparing an environmental impact statement (Appendix B)* to the state significant development guidelines (DPIE, 2022) (EIS Guidelines). The following matters are considered:

- Power to grant consent (i.e., approval pathway)
- Permissibility
- Other approvals consistent with the Project
- Commonwealth approvals
- Approvals not required (pursuant to Section 4.41 of the EP&A Act), and
- Mandatory matters for consideration.

Table 6: Statutory Requirements

Approval	Requirement
Power to grant consent	
EP&A Act	The EP&A Act is the key environmental legislation in NSW that governs the planning approval process for developments. Under Section 4.15 of the Act, when assessing SSD, consent authorities must consider factors outlined in the relevant environmental planning instruments (EPIs), such as State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPPs) and LEPs. The authority must take these into account to determine whether the development should proceed.
State Environmental Planning Policy (Planning Systems) 2021 (Planning Systems SEPP)	Section 4.36(2) of the EP&A Act states that: • “A State environmental planning policy may declare any development, or any class or description of development, to be State significant development.” Under Clause 20 of Schedule 1 of the Planning Systems SEPP, development for electricity generating works or co-generation, including projects using gas, coal, biofuel, waste, hydro, wave, solar, or wind power, qualifies as SSD if: • “has an estimated development cost of more than \$30 million” Given that the Project is an electricity storage facility with an estimated EDC of more than \$30 million, it meets the criteria outlined in Clause 20 of the Planning Systems SEPP. As such, the Project is classified as SSD under Section 4.7 of the EP&A Act. This classification triggers the relevant assessment and approval processes for SSD, ensuring that the Project undergoes a thorough evaluation, including environmental assessments and public consultation. Section 4.5(a) of the EP&A Act outlines the consent authority for SSDs. For SSD, the Independent Planning Commission (IPC) is the consent authority, unless the development is of a type that is specifically assigned to the

Approval	Requirement
	Minister. The IPC becomes the consent authority when certain conditions are met, as outlined in Clause 2.7 of the Planning Systems SEPP. These conditions include: • The local council objects to the development in accordance with the mandatory community participation requirements in Schedule 1 of the Act • At least 50 submissions (excluding those from the council) object to the development as per the community participation rules • The development application involves a person who has disclosed a reportable political donation under Section 10.4 of the Act If none of these criteria are triggered, the DPE would determine the SSD application on behalf of the Minister.
Permissibility	
State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021 (T&I SEPP) Armidale LEP	The permissibility of the Project is determined by the T&I SEPP. Under Clause 2.36(1) of the T&I SEPP, electricity generating works can be carried out with development consent on land within prescribed rural, industrial, or special use zones. The Study Area is zoned RU4 - Primary Production Small Lot and SP2 - Infrastructure under the Armidale LEP, which is a prescribed rural zone, making the Project permissible with consent as per Clause 2.36(1) of the T&I SEPP. Additionally, Clause 2.35 of the T&I SEPP defines the Project as 'electricity storage', which includes both electricity generation and electricity storage. Since the Project falls within the criteria of Clause 2.36(1)(b), it is permissible with consent on land within the RU4 and SP2 zones, as it is classified as a prescribed rural zone under the SEPP.
Other State and Environmental Planning Policies that may be relevant	
SEPP (Resilience and Hazards) 2021 (Resilience and Hazards SEPP)	Chapter 3 of the Resilience and Hazards SEPP regulates hazardous and offensive developments. Its key objective is to ensure that consent authorities have sufficient information to assess whether a proposed development is hazardous or offensive and to impose conditions that mitigate potential adverse impacts. A preliminary risk screening assessment will be conducted in accordance with the <i>Hazardous and Offensive Development Application Guidelines – Applying SEPP 33</i> (Department of Planning, 2011). If this screening identifies the Project as potentially hazardous, a Preliminary Hazard Analysis (PHA) will be prepared in line with relevant Hazardous Industry Planning Advisory Papers to further evaluate risks and necessary mitigation measures.
Electricity Infrastructure Investment Act (2020) (EII Act)	The Study Area is within the New England REZ. The New England REZ was formally declared by the Minister for Energy under Section 19(1) of the NSW <i>EII Act</i> on 17 December 2021.

Approval	Requirement
	The Project aligns with the NSW and Commonwealth Government's objective for energy security and reliability and emissions reductions and will contribute to the continued growth of renewable energy generation and storage capacity in the New England REZ.
Other approvals consistent with the Project	
Overview	Sections 4.41 and 4.42 of the EP&A Act outlines that the approvals listed below cannot be refused if necessary for carrying out an approved SSD and are to be consistent with the terms of the development consent for the SSD.
<i>Fisheries Management Act 1994</i>	A permit under the <i>Fisheries Management Act 1994</i> to block fish passage or dredge or carry out reclamation work on water land will not be required pursuant to Section 4.41 of the EP&A Act.
<i>Heritage Act 1977</i>	An approval under Part 4, or an excavation permit under Section 139, of the <i>Heritage Act 1977</i> will not be required pursuant to Section 4.41 of the EP&A Act. There are no listed heritage items within the Study Area.
<i>National Parks and Wildlife Act 1979</i>	An Aboriginal heritage impact permit under Section 90 of the <i>National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974</i> will not be required pursuant to Section 4.41 of the EP&A Act. There is potential for Aboriginal sites to occur within the Study Area. Any Aboriginal heritage sites identified within the Study Area will be avoided as far as practicable through the design process.
<i>Rural Fires Act 1997</i>	A bushfire safety authority under Section 100B of the <i>Rural Fires Act 1997</i> will not be required pursuant to Section 4.41 of the EP&A Act. However, a bushfire assessment in accordance with NSW Rural Fire Service <i>Planning for Bushfire Protection 2019</i> will be carried out to inform the EIS.
<i>Water Management Act 2000</i>	A water use approval under Section 89, a water management work approval under Section 90 or an activity approval (other than an aquifer interference approval) under Section 91 of the <i>Water Management Act 2000</i> pursuant to Section 4.41 of the EP&A Act, or an aquaculture permit under Section 144 pursuant to Section 4.42 of the EP&A Act. Any works near or within the watercourse on the northern boundary of the Impact Area will be carried out in accordance with DPIE's various guidelines for controlled activities.
Coal Mine Subsidence Compensation Act 2017	Approval under section 22 for undertaking development within a Mine Subsidence District (MSD) pursuant to Section 4.42 of the EP&A Act. The Project is not within a mine subsidence area

Approval	Requirement
<i>Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997</i>	Section 48 of the <i>Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997</i> requires an environment protection licence (EPL) to undertake scheduled activities at any premises. Scheduled activities are defined in Schedule 1 of the <i>Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997</i> and include the following premise-based activities that apply to the Project: “17 Electricity generation (1) ...general electricity works, meaning the generation of electricity by means of electricity plant that, wherever situated, is based on, or uses, any energy source other than wind power or solar power. (2) Each activity referred to in Column 1 of the Table to this clause is declared to be a scheduled activity if it meets the criteria set out in Column 2 of that Table.” The table referred to in Schedule 1, Clause 17 specifies ‘general electricity works’ with capacity to generate more than 30 megawatts of electrical power’. The Project will have a capacity that is greater than 30 MW and will therefore require an EPL.
<i>Roads Act 1993</i>	Under Section 138 or Part 9, Division 3 of the <i>Roads Act 1993</i>, a person must not undertake any works that impact on a road, including connecting a road (whether public or private) to a classified road, without approval of the relevant authority, being either Transport for NSW or local council, depending upon the classification of the road. The interaction of the Project with the local and regional road network will be addressed in the EIS.
<i>Pipelines Act 1967</i>	The <i>Pipeline Act 1967</i> regulates the construction, operation, and licensing of pipelines in NSW. As the Project does not involve the construction or operation of water pipelines, no licensing will be required.
Commonwealth approvals	
<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> (EPBC Act)	The EPBC Act aims to protect matters of national environmental significance (MNES). If an action will, or is likely to, have a significant impact on any MNES, it is deemed to be a ‘controlled action’ and requires approval from the Commonwealth Environment Minister or the Minister’s delegate. A search of the Commonwealth Protected Matters Search Tool indicates: • World Heritage properties – Not identified within the vicinity of the Subject Land • National Heritage places – Not identified within the vicinity of the Subject Land • Wetlands of international importance (listed under the Ramsar Convention) – Not identified within the vicinity of the Subject Land

Approval	Requirement
	- Listed threatened ecological communities and species– 3 TECs and 4 listed species were identified as having the potential to occur within the Subject Land - Migratory species protected under international agreements – There are no migratory species listed under the EPBC Act which are known or predicted to occur within the vicinity of the Subject Land - Nuclear actions (including uranium mines) - The Project would not constitute a nuclear action - Commonwealth marine areas – The Project would not affect any Commonwealth marine areas - The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park – The Project would not affect the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park - A water resource, in relation to coal seam gas development and large coal mining development – The Project would not constitute these types of developments.
<i>Native Title Act 1993</i>	The Commonwealth <i>Native Title Act 1993</i> recognises and protects native title rights in Australia. It allows a native title determination application (native title claim) to be made for land or waters where native title has not been validly extinguished, for example, extinguished by the grant of freehold title to land. Claimants whose native title claims have been registered have the right to negotiate about some future acts, including mining and granting of a mining lease over the land covered by their native title claim. Where a native title claim is not registered, a development can proceed through mediation and determination processes, though claimants will not be able to participate in future act negotiations. A search of the National Native Title Tribunal website indicates no native title claims, land use agreements, applications, or determinations within the Study Area.
Other NSW approvals	
<i>Water Management Act 2000</i>	A water access licence under section 56 may be required for extraction of water required for the Project, this will be assessed in the EIS phase.
<i>Conveyancing Act 1919</i>	Section 23G of the Conveyancing Act may also apply if subdivision for the purpose of construction, operation, and maintenance of a substation is required. An easement established under section 88B is likely to be required for the connection to the TransGrid substation.
Mandatory considerations - Considerations under other legislations	
<i>Environmental Planning and Assessment</i>	Section 190 of the EP&A Reg provides the requirements for an EIS. These requirements will be considered in the EIS phase of the Project.

Approval	Requirement
<i>Regulation 2021 (EP&A Reg)</i>	
Section 1.3 of the EP&A Act	Relevant objectives of the EP&A Act are: (a) to promote the social and economic welfare of the community and a better environment by the proper management, development, and conservation of the State's natural and other resources, (b) to facilitate ecologically sustainable development by integrating relevant economic, environmental, and social considerations in decision-making about environmental planning and assessment, (c) to promote the orderly and economic use and development of land, (d) to promote the delivery and maintenance of affordable housing, (e) to protect the environment, including the conservation of threatened and other species of native animals and plants, ecological communities, and their habitats, (f) to promote the sustainable management of built and cultural heritage (including Aboriginal cultural heritage), (g) to promote good design and amenity of the built environment, (h) to promote the proper construction and maintenance of buildings, including the protection of the health and safety of their occupants, (i) to promote the sharing of the responsibility for environmental planning and assessment between the different levels of government in the State, (j) to provide increased opportunity for community participation in environmental planning and assessment. The above will all be considered in the EIS.
Section 4.15 of the EP&A Act	Pursuant to Section 4.15 of the EP&A Act the consent authority must consider the following relevant matters for consideration: • Environmental planning instruments for the Project including: – Planning Systems SEPP – T&I SEPP – Armidale LEP – Other SEPPs as relevant to the Project • Relevant development control plans for the Project including:

Approval	Requirement
	– Armidale Development Control Plan (DCP) 2024⁴ • Likely impacts of the development, including environmental impacts on both the natural and built environments, and social and economic impacts in the locality • The suitability of the site for the development • Planning agreements and statutory regulations • Any submissions made in accordance with the EP&A Act or the regulations • Public interest. The above will all be considered in the EIS.

⁴ [armidale-regional-council-development-control-plan-2024.pdf](#)

5 Community Engagement

Edify is a long-term owner and operator of renewable energy projects. This makes a significant difference in the community engagement approach since Edify is establishing relationships with communities during the development phase that will endure for the lifetime of the projects.

Community and stakeholder consultation will be integral to the Project. Edify has begun consultation with a wide range of relevant Local Government and State government agencies, neighbours, community groups and other interested parties.

In accordance with the NSW DPE Social Impact Assessment (SIA) Guidelines (DPE, 2023), Edify has conducted the first phase of the SIA. This involved SIA scoping and initial assessment, as well as refining and planning for further engagements with local stakeholders. The SIA Worksheet is provided in **Appendix B**.

5.1 Community Engagement Plan

Edify has prepared a Community Consultation and Engagement Plan (CCEP) during early phases of the Project to provide a framework to further engage with the community and stakeholders about the Project and ensure opportunities to provide input into the assessment and development process are understood. The CCEP is aligned with the SIA Guidelines and the Undertaking Engagement Guidelines for State Significant Projects Stakeholders (DPHI, 2024) and is provided in **Appendix D**.

The primary objectives of the CCEP include:

- Transparent communication: providing clear, timely information about the Project, ensuring transparency in decision-making, and keeping stakeholders informed.
- Stakeholder engagement: actively consulting with communities, Indigenous groups, and agencies to capture concerns and diverse perspectives.
- Managing social impacts: identifying potential social impacts on infrastructure, housing, and employment while incorporating community feedback into mitigation strategies.
- Inclusivity and accessibility: ensuring engagement is culturally appropriate and accessible to all.
- Building trust: maintaining long-term relationships with communities through continuous engagement, feedback mechanisms, and demonstrating responsiveness to concerns.
- Regulatory compliance: meeting NSW planning requirements by documenting engagement efforts and ensuring alignment with guidelines.

The CCEP identified stakeholders as those potentially being impacted by the Project or having an interest in the Project itself. The CCEP will set out the Project's community engagement approach and minimum requirements with interested parties including representative bodies. The key stakeholders identified or anticipated to be affected by the Project include:

- Landowners (associated and non-associated)
- Local community and community groups
- Local businesses
- Aboriginal community and agencies
- Infrastructure owners
- Armidale Regional Council
- Government agencies

As the CCEP is implemented, the following activities will occur:

- Keep the residents and broader community informed in all stages of the Project through media avenues including advertisements in local radio and newspaper.
- Face to face meetings with adjacent landholders, stakeholders and residents as required.
- A Project website that will be updated at each Project milestone and email address to inform the broader community.
- Preparation and dissemination of a feedback form to better understand the community's sentiment toward battery storage and the development of the Project. This will be made available at meetings and on Edify's Project website.
- Hold an information session during the development stages providing access to technical studies and Project information.
- Develop and implement a benefit sharing scheme in consultation with the community and stakeholders.
- Establishment of a register to record contact with stakeholders including potentially affected landholders.

Measures to reduce adverse impacts and promote positive impacts would be identified in the EIS and appropriate management plans developed for the Project. Agency consultation would also take place in accordance with any requirements of the SEARs.

5.2 Aboriginal Community Consultation

Edify Energy acknowledges the Study Area incorporates the land of the Anaiwan People as the traditional owners of the lands encompassing the Study Area and the broader vicinity where the Project is situated, and as such will be inviting the Anaiwan people to participate in and be an integral part of the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment (ACHA) for the Project, and will also work with the Anaiwan People to support their involvement in the Project's design development and ensure opportunities for benefit sharing

The NSW DPHI acknowledges that Aboriginal people are the primary determinants of the significance of their heritage. It is acknowledged that Aboriginal people should be involved in the Aboriginal heritage planning process and are the primary source of information about the value of their heritage. This includes the best management and conservation measures for Aboriginal heritage and the way in which their cultural information (particularly sensitive information) is used (OEH, 2011:2). Edify considers that proactive engagement and consultation with the local Aboriginal community is regarded as an integral part of the process of investigating and assessing Aboriginal cultural heritage.

As the Project's SEARs are being requested to inform the forthcoming EIS process, consultation with the Aboriginal community will be commenced under the due legislative process and accordingly undertaken as part of EIS studies. Aboriginal community consultation undertaken for this project will follow the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Consultation Requirements for Proponents (DECCW, 2010) (Consultation Requirements). The Consultation Requirements outline a four stage Aboriginal consultation process and mandate specific timeframes for each stage.

5.3 Consultation to date

5.3.1 Landowners

Adjacent landowners and those situated within 1 km of the Project have been initially contacted on 23rd June 2025 via registered mail containing Project specific materials such as an introductory letter, concept site map, Q&A and FAQ's, to inform them about the Project and offer them the possibility to meet Edify's Project team. Following the registered mail, various calls and emails will continue to be shared with neighbouring landholders.

The Q&A sheet provided to the community inquiries by drawing from our extensive experience in previous projects, focusing on key discussion points such as:

- Visual amenity changes to the site
- Fragmentation and isolation of agricultural land
- Site access roads and their usage
- Insurance and neighbouring landholders
- Alternative sites and other potential projects occurring in the area
- Edify has set up a dedicated email kooyong@edifyenergy.com for the Project and will set up a Project website where all public documents will be available.

Edify's Project Development Manager plans to conduct site visits starting in H2 2025 and continuing throughout the Project's proposed timeline into 2026. During these visits, the Edify will aim to meet with most of the stakeholders and any additional individuals who are available for consultation.

During the EIS phase, Edify plans to meet with the local community of the Project and will maintain regular emails, calls, and letters with these stakeholders. Furthermore, Edify will identify and maintain regular contact with any non-associated receiver or community group that wishes to be updated on a regular basis. All stakeholders will be encouraged to visit Edify's dedicated Project website, to receive regular updates once the website is established during the EIS phase.

Refer to Appendix D stakeholders consultation plan and records.

5.3.2 Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC) and other representative Aboriginal parties

In advance of the submission of this Scoping Report, Edify Energy have engaged with the Armidale LALC.

An initial email was sent on 30 April 2025 to introduce the Project, understand any Aboriginal cultural heritage values in the area where the Project is located, and ensure respectful consultation prior to submitting the Scoping Report.

Edify will follow up with regular Project updates. Details of engagement are provided in **Appendix D**.

5.3.3 Infrastructure Owners

5.3.3.1 TransGrid

Edify will liaise with TransGrid once connection studies commence.

5.3.4 Armidale Regional Council

Edify initiated early engagement with ARC (email 17 April 2025) to introduce the Project, Edify advised that the previous developer is no longer proceeding and that Edify has now secured the landowner's support.

On 1 May 2025, Edify held an online meeting with ARC to introduce the Kooyong BESS project, outline key Project details, and discuss early concerns. Topics included biodiversity, traffic and site access, community engagement, CBF, local accommodation, and waste management. Council raised local infrastructure considerations and Edify committed to addressing cumulative impacts in the EIS.

As the Project progresses, Edify will establish meetings with Council representatives as required, to provide Council with an update on the Project, and gather feedback on the initial planning efforts that support this Scoping Report. Edify will continue to share correspondence with Council as the planning process matures.

5.3.5 State and Federal Members

In conjunction with community member engagements, a letter of information was emailed on to the office of the Federal Member for the New England Electorate (Barnaby Joyce) as well as the Member of Parliament of NSW for the Northern Tablelands (Mr Brendan Moylan) on 18 June 2025 (see **Appendix D**).

5.4 Future Engagement

Future engagement for the Project will be guided by the principles outlined in the SIA Guidelines and Undertaking Engagement Guidelines for State Significant Projects and it will be consistent with the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) guidelines, ensuring that community input is considered throughout the Project's development. The primary objective of this engagement is to ensure transparent communication, address community concerns, and involve stakeholders throughout the Project's lifecycle. All engagement activities will be recorded at Edify's Community Engagement Register.

The key engagement actions to be undertaken for the Project include:

- **FAQs:** A comprehensive Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) will be developed and made available on the Project website and during in-person events. The FAQs will provide clear, consistent answers to common queries about the Project, its potential impacts, and its benefits. This will help ensure that the community has access to valuable information and can easily find answers to their questions without having to wait for a personal response.
- **Project website:** A dedicated website will be established to provide up-to-date information on the Project, including key milestones, expected impacts, and community resources. Regular updates will be posted to ensure the community remains informed.
- **Meetings:** One-on-one consultations with landholders affected by the Project will be conducted to identify concerns, using phone calls, emails, and in-person meetings. Meetings will also be held with government agencies, utilities, industry groups, and Aboriginal stakeholders to ensure collaborative input on environmental and cultural heritage assessments.
- **Letterbox drop:** A key part of ongoing community engagement will involve letterbox drops to nearby stakeholders. These will ensure that community members, especially those without regular access to online information, are kept informed of the Project's progress, upcoming milestones, and any significant developments. Letterbox drops will occur at critical points during the Project to share updates, invite

people to events (such as information sessions), and provide information on how the community can participate in the engagement process.

- **Media:** Media releases will be issued to inform the public about key developments and milestones in the Project. These may include local newspapers, radio stations, and other media outlets and will be designed to provide updates on the Project's progress, outline important upcoming activities, and address any community concerns or questions.
- **Drop in and community information sessions:** These sessions will be held to engage local community, landholders, and interest groups. These will provide details on the Project, particularly anticipated impacts of the Project based on technical assessments and construction phase.
- **Fieldwork:** Consultation with Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs) and on-site surveys will be undertaken to gather information on Aboriginal cultural values, ensuring that these values are incorporated into the Project planning. This collaborative approach will help ensure that Aboriginal heritage is respected and preserved throughout the process.
- **Feedback Mechanisms:** Opportunities will be provided for the community to submit feedback with clear processes for how this feedback will influence the Project. Mechanisms may include email, phone calls, online platforms, meetings and sessions.

Table 7 summarises Edify's proposed engagement actions for the different phases of the Project.

Table 7: Consultation and Community Engagement Guide

Phase	Actions/Tools
Pre-lodgement and development of EIS	FAQ's Project Website Meetings – one on one Presentations Project email address Letterbox drops Media Feedback collation and mitigation options
EIS public exhibition and determination	FAQ's Drop-in session(s) Letters Letterbox drop status update Community Information Sessions
Post approval (assuming approval granted)	Letters Letterbox drop status update Local Contractor Presentation and EOI Register
Construction and commissioning	Local consultation with landowners and neighbours Local Contractor Presentation and EOI Register Local Council Presentations FAQ's Drop-in session(s) Letters Letterbox drop status update Support to landowner team

The effectiveness of the engagement activities will be regularly monitored and adjusted based on community feedback. The engagement process will be reviewed to ensure that concerns are being addressed and that stakeholders remain involved in decision-making. This will include evaluating participation rates, the quality of feedback, and the impact of consultations on the Project's design.

This ongoing and adaptive engagement process will ensure that the community and stakeholders are well-informed, involved, and their concerns are reflected in the development of the Project.

6 Preliminary Environmental Assessment

A preliminary environmental assessment has been conducted in accordance with Scoping Report Guidelines (DPIE, 2021) and Cumulative Impact Assessment Guidelines for State Significant Projects (DPIE, 2022) to assist in the identification of key environmental matters that would require detailed assessment within the EIS. Risks were identified for both the construction and operation phase of the Project and analysed in relation to their possible consequence and likelihood of occurrence. From this analysis, some environmental matters were deemed to be key issues on the basis that they had the potential, without suitable mitigation, to have a significant impact on the environment.

The assessment is based on a desktop review to identify potential high-level constraints and major risks to the Project. A preliminary constraints map is provided in **Figure 11**.

This will be used to guide further detailed investigations and ultimately the site infrastructure layout. Constraints mapping will also be refined based on these investigations prior to submission of the EIS.

A summary of the key environmental, social and economic impacts is provided in following Sections. The intent of the discussion is to demonstrate an understanding of the issues that require further environmental assessment and likely mitigation measures for these key issues.

Table 8 summarizes each matter and its proposed level of assessment. Detailed assessments will include environmental aspects that present a potential higher level of sensitivity to the development, and other aspects which require detailed assessment, but are not considered to pose a higher level of sensitivity.

Table 8: Consultation and Community Engagement Guide

EIS proposed level of assessment	Environmental, social and economic matters
Detailed	Biodiversity Aboriginal Heritage Traffic and Transport Visual and Landscape Noise and Vibration Hazards and Risks Social
Standard	Historic Heritage Agriculture, Land and Soils Air Quality Waste Management

6.1 Biodiversity

6.1.1 Existing Environment

A Preliminary Biodiversity Report (PBR) was undertaken by Environmental Resource Management (ERM) for the Project to inform this report and is provided in **Appendix B**. The PBR provides an overview of the vegetation and biodiversity values recorded within the Subject Land, and an assessment of those impacts.

For the purposes of the PBR assessment the Subject Land consists of the Study Area and the roadside survey areas, covering a total area of 61.4 ha as shown in **Figure 11**. Where the roadside survey area consists of land within the existing road easement along Eathorpe Road and Waterfall Way where potential vegetation trimming/clearing may occur. All works will remain within the defined Development Footprint, within a total area of 24.67 ha, as shown in Figure 2-2 of the PBR, and includes Lot 842, site access road, proposed transmission easement corridor and road easement along Eathorpe Road and Waterfall Way. The design of the Project will be located to avoid and minimise impacts on biodiversity values, as informed by the outcomes of the PBR.

6.1.1.1 Landscape Context

Table 9 provides a summary of the landscape context for the Project. Key environmental considerations include the presence of regulated native vegetation, groundwater-dependent ecosystems, and mapped biodiversity values in nearby areas.

Table 9: Landscape Context of the Study Area

Aspect	Findings
IBRA Region/Subregion	Located on the Armidale Plateau Subregion of the New England Tablelands IBRA bioregion
Mitchell Landscapes	Dingo Spur Meta-sediments
Geological Features	The Subject Land contains minor rocky outcrops that are not part of a Threatened Ecological Community (TEC) and are considered unsuitable for threatened species, including the Brush-tailed Rock-wallaby and cave-dwelling microbats. Reptile use is also unlikely, and no impacts to significant geological features such as caves, crevices, or cliffs are expected.
Connectivity	The Subject Land is in a fragmented agricultural landscape with limited habitat connectivity, primarily through scattered paddock trees and roadside or urban plantings. It lies 2.54 km north of Imbota Nature Reserve and 3.3 km south of Yina Nature Reserve. Existing conditions already limit connectivity to mobile fauna such as birds and bats, and the Project is not expected to further impact habitat connectivity.
Hydrology & Wetlands	The Project is within the Macleay River catchment, no mapped hydro lines or wetlands are present within the Subject Land. Two first-order streams are located nearby, Commissioners Waters (approximately 883 m east) and Dumaresq Creek (1,077 m north). No wetlands are present within the broader Assessment Area. Artificial water features on-site include a farm dam and a stormwater runoff pool near the existing TransGrid substation, which will remain undisturbed.

Aspect	Findings
Areas of Outstanding Biodiversity Value (AOBV)	No registered AOBVs within the Subject Land.
Native Vegetation Regulatory Map	As shown in Figure 10, the Project Area includes: - Category 1 (Exempt land - applies to land cleared before 1990) - Category 2 (Regulated land - remains partially cleared but retains native vegetation) - Land Excluded from LLS Act (within TransGrid land) Clearing is restricted in Category 2 areas unless proven otherwise. No further vegetation clearing since 1990.

6.1.1.2 Plant Community Types

The BSR identified two Plant Community Types (PCTs) within the Subject Land:

- 43.54 ha of PCT 3359 - New England Hills Stringybark-Box Woodland
- 2.39 ha of PCT 3363 - Western New England Blakelys Red Gum-Box Grassy Forest
- The remaining 15.47 ha of the Subject Land was cleared of vegetation and does not contain any identifiable PCTs.

The following PCTs were identified within the Development Footprint:

- 16.78 ha of PCT 3359 - New England Hills Stringybark-Box Woodland
- 1.62 ha of PCT 3363 - Western New England Blakelys Red Gum-Box Grassy Forest
- The remaining 6.27 ha of the Development footprint was cleared of vegetation and does not contain any identifiable PCTs.

6.1.1.3 Threatened Ecological Communities

Two Threatened Ecological Communities (TECs) have the potential to be associated with PCT 3359 and PCT 3363 within the Subject Land (along Eathorpe Road). However, field survey confirmed that only PCT 3363 conforms with the criteria to form part of the critically endangered ecological community White Box - Yellow Box - Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland and derived native grassland set out in the BC Act and EPBC Act:

- 2.39 ha (BC Act listed) - White Box – Yellow Box – Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Derived Native Grassland in the NSW North Coast, New England Tableland, Nandewar, Brigalow Belt South, Sydney Basin, South Eastern Highlands, NSW South Western Slopes, South East Corner and Riverina Bioregions
- 2.39 ha (EPBC Act listed) - White Box - Yellow Box - Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Derived Native Grassland.

6.1.1.4 Flora and Fauna

Targeted fauna surveys were conducted by ERM within the Subject Land on 13 to 16 June 2022, 25 to 28 October 2022, and 16 to 20 January 2023, recording:

- Fauna - 4 listed species recorded:
 - Little Eagle (*Hieraaetus morphnoides*) – dual credit species;

- Masked Owl (*Tyto novaehollandiae*) – dual credit species;
 - Large Bent-winged Bat (*Miniopterus orianae oceanensis*) – dual credit species, and
 - Southern Myotis (*Myotis macropus*) – candidate species.
- No listed flora or migratory fauna species were identified during the field survey.



Draft native vegetation regulatory map

Legend

- Cadastre
 - Local Land Services Regions
 - Local Government Area
 - Werriwa & Monaro CEEC Advisory Layer
 - Land excluded from LLS Act
- Draft native vegetation regulatory map**
- Category 1-exempt land
 - Category 2-regulated land
 - Category 2-vulnerable regulated land
 - Category 2-sensitive regulated land
 - Category 2-sensitive and vulnerable regulated lands areas of overlap

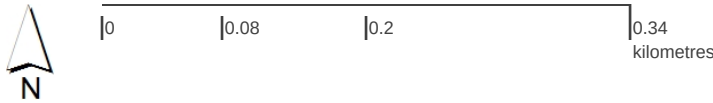
The draft native vegetation regulatory map is prepared by the Department of Planning and Environment under Part 5A of the Local Land Services Act.

Mapping of category 2–vulnerable and category 2-sensitive regulated lands was published on 25 August 2017 and is in-force.

Mapping of category 1–exempt and category 2-regulated lands was published on 5/10/2022 and will remain draft until a final map is published

The NVR Map is updated from time to time. This extract was current as at the date stamp displayed below the map image.

Imagery © Department of Customer Service 2020



If you require further information, would like a Category Explanation Report or wish to enquire about a Map Review please contact us at map.review@environment.nsw.gov.au

Map extract date: 13-May-2025

6.1.1.5 Threatened Species

Threatened flora and fauna species were surveyed in accordance with the *Surveying Threatened Plants and Their Habitats* guideline, relevant threatened fauna survey guidelines, and NSW BioNet survey specifications. Survey effort requirements were met for all candidate threatened species, with the exception of *Caladenia amnicola*.

The following threatened fauna species were recorded within the Subject Land:

- Little Eagle *Hieraaetus morphnoides*
- Masked Owl *Tyto novaehollandiae*
- Large Bent-winged Bat *Miniopterus orianae oceanensis* (probable)
- Southern Myotis *Myotis Macropus* (possible)

No candidate threatened flora species were recorded within the Subject Land.

6.1.1.6 Matters of National Environmental Significance

Table 10 summarises the Matters of National Environmental Significance (MNES) relevant to the Project.

The search was undertaken with a 10km buffer

Table 10: Matters of National Environmental Significance

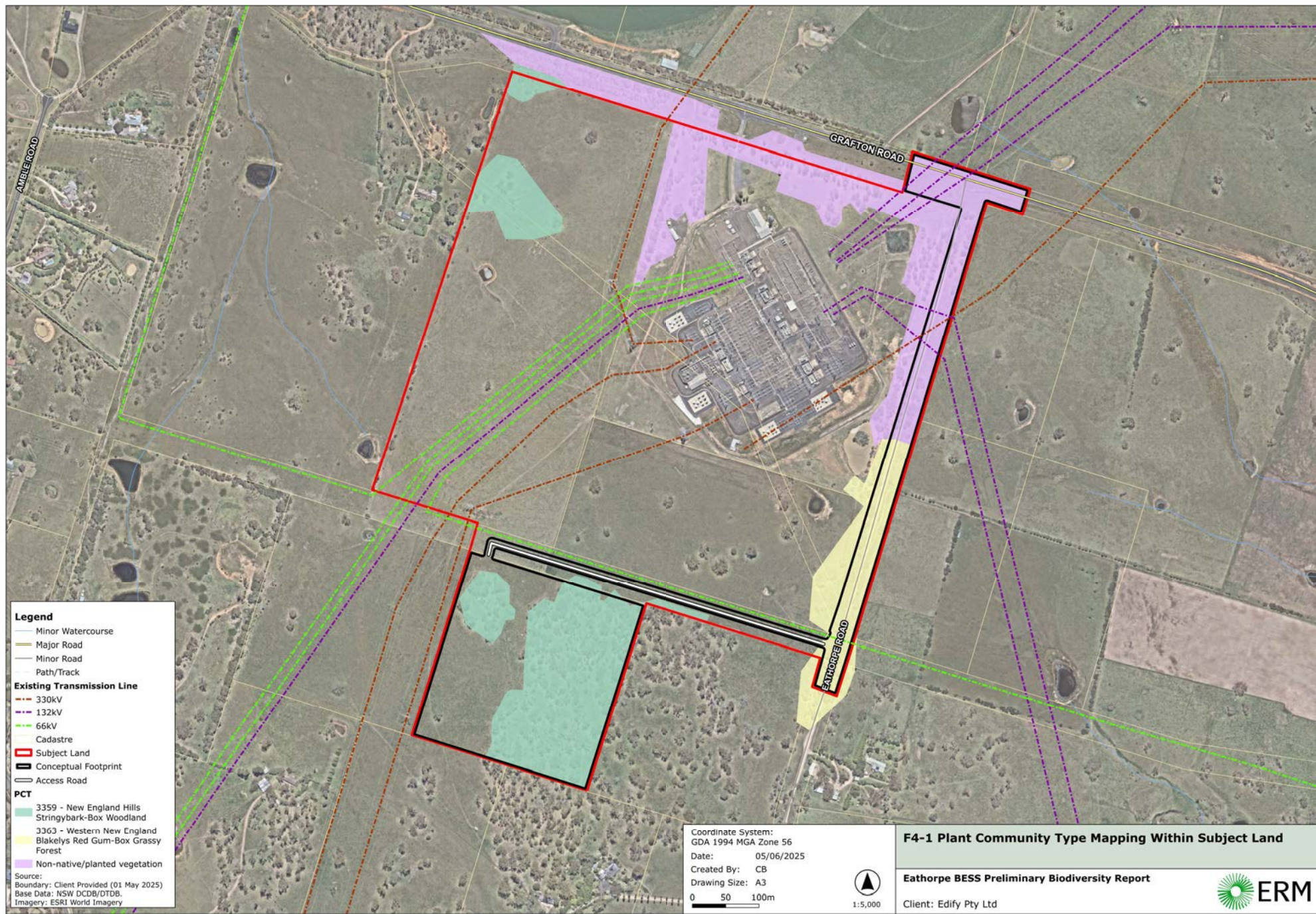
MNES	Relevance to Project
World Heritage Properties	One World Heritage Area (Gondwana Rainforest) within 10km buffer of search area.
National Heritage Places	One National Heritage Place (Gondwana Rainforest) within 10km buffer of search area.
Wetlands of International Importance (Declared Ramsar Wetlands)	Not within proximity to a Declared Ramsar Wetland. The closest records are greater than 100 km from the Subject Land.
The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park	Does not occur within the Subject Land or within 50 km radius.
Commonwealth Marine Area	Not within proximity to a Commonwealth Marine Area.
Listed Threatened Ecological Communities (TEC)	Three (3) EPBC Act-listed TEC • New England Peppermint (<i>Eucalyptus nova-anglica</i>) Grassy Woodlands • Upland Wetlands of the New England Tablelands (New England Tableland Bioregion) and the Monaro Plateau (South Eastern Highlands Bioregion) • White Box-Yellow Box-Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Derived Native Grassland The presence of White Box-Yellow Box-Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Derived Native Grassland has been confirmed. No other EPBC Act TECs occur within the Subject Land.

MNES	Relevance to Project
Listed Threatened Species	Four (4) EPBC Act-listed species are considered likely to occur based on records in the locality and the presence of preferred habitat: • Koala (<i>Phascolarctos cinereus</i>) (Endangered); • Narrow-leaved Black Peppermint (<i>E.nicholii</i>) (Vulnerable); • Brown Treecreeper (<i>Climacteris picumnus victoriae</i>) (Vulnerable); • Diamond Firetail (<i>Stagonopleura guttata</i>) (Vulnerable).
Listed Migratory Species	No EPBC Act-listed Migratory bird species have been recorded on the Subject Land, and none are considered known or likely to occur based on the Likelihood of Occurrence Assessment.

6.1.2 Potential Impacts and Further Assessment

Impacts to biodiversity within the Subject Land will be assessed through a BDAR during the EIS phase, supported by targeted field surveys to determine the extent of impacts.

Additionally, the BDAR will include application of Stage 2 of the Biodiversity Assessment Method (BAM) to demonstrate how the Project meets the "No Net Loss" requirement under the NSW Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 and proposed amendments under the *Biodiversity Conservation Amendment (Biodiversity Offsets Scheme) Bill 2024*. This process involves applying the mitigation hierarchy to quantify residual impacts and calculate the Project's offset liability in biodiversity credits. A biodiversity offset strategy will be prepared to demonstrate how these offsets will be delivered.



6.2 Aboriginal Heritage

6.2.1 Existing Environment

The Project is located on the traditional lands of the Anaiwan people, the recognised Traditional Custodians of the southern New England Tablelands. Their ancestral Country encompasses the region around Armidale, Guyra, Uralla, Walcha, and Bendemeer, and includes a landscape of highland plains, river systems, and culturally significant sites. Anaiwan Country holds deep cultural, spiritual, and historical significance. It features a range of Aboriginal cultural heritage values, including scarred trees, artefact scatters, stone tools, and ceremonial sites, many of which remain important to Anaiwan people today. The land is deeply connected to Anaiwan identity, lore, and ancestral knowledge systems.

The Anaiwan people experienced significant disruption due to colonisation, including dispossession, frontier violence, and loss of access to Country. Despite this, the community has demonstrated resilience and continues to maintain cultural practices and a strong spiritual connection to their land. These sites are tangible expressions of Anaiwan cultural continuity, many of which remain important to Anaiwan people today as they serve as places of teaching, ceremony, and reflection. The land itself is considered a living entity, intrinsically linked to Anaiwan ancestral knowledge systems and stories passed down through generations.

The Anaiwan people have occupied and cared for their Country for tens of thousands of years, developing complex social structures, language, and sustainable land management practices finely attuned to the rhythms of the environment. This enduring relationship with the land has shaped their cultural practices, seasonal movements, and intergenerational knowledge systems. However, colonisation brought profound disruptions to Anaiwan life, including dispossession of land, frontier violence, the destruction of cultural sites, and enforced assimilation policies. These actions resulted in the erosion of language and disconnection from traditional practices. Despite these hardships, the Anaiwan community has shown remarkable resilience and strength. Today, Anaiwan people continue to revitalise language, uphold cultural practices, and assert their rights to land and heritage. Their enduring connection to Country remains central to community identity and wellbeing.

Recognising the ongoing custodianship and contributions of the Anaiwan people is vital in respecting the cultural landscape in which the Project is situated. Meaningful engagement with the community provides an opportunity to honour their heritage, incorporate traditional knowledge, and support efforts to protect and celebrate Anaiwan culture for future generations.

A search of the Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System (AHIMS) on 14 April 2025 identified 5 Aboriginal sites recorded near the Project Area (1km buffer). No Aboriginal places were declared in the Project Area.

Refer to AHIMS search results in **Appendix E**.

6.2.2 Aboriginal consultation

Edify has initially engaged with Armidale LALC on 30th April 2025 via email to provide information on the proposed Project and introduce the Edify Project Manager and the Kooyong BESS site (refer **Appendix D**).

During the EIS phase, additional consultation with Aboriginal stakeholders will be undertaken in accordance with clause 80C of the *National Parks and Wildlife Amendment (Aboriginal Objects and Aboriginal Places) Regulation 2010* following the consultation steps outlined in the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Consultation Requirements for Proponents provided by OEH/NSW Heritage. A summary of the consultation process includes:

1. Registration and initial consultation and registration of Aboriginal community members.
2. Review of survey methodology by Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs).
3. Completion of field work and reporting.
4. Review of report by RAPs.
5. Report finalisation.

6.2.3 Potential Impacts and Further Assessment

Landforms, vegetation, and soils over much of the Project site have been heavily disturbed by paddock levelling, grazing, and clearing for agriculture. This is likely to reduce the potential for Aboriginal heritage places of significance in the affected areas. It is noted that field assessment is required to confirm this and that any Aboriginal heritage sites, items, artefacts identified would be a moderate to high constraint, requiring impact mitigation.

Construction has the potential to disturb unknown sites of Aboriginal cultural heritage significance. Impacts during operation and decommissioning are expected to be minimal.

An Aboriginal cultural heritage assessment report (ACHAR) and associated stakeholder consultation will be completed as part of the EIS. This would include further consultation with the Anaiwan people as well as any other relevant stakeholders in accordance with the *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Requirements for Proponents* (DECC 2010). Should any Aboriginal heritage sites be identified that may be potentially affected by the Project, mitigation measures will be determined in accordance with the *Guide to Investigating, assessing, and reporting on Aboriginal Cultural Heritage in NSW* (OEH, 2011).

The required mitigation measures will be implemented during construction activities through a specific Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) as part of the Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) that would be prepared for the Project. Similarly, any ongoing management and mitigation measures would be implemented through an Operational Environmental Management Plan (OEMP).

6.3 Access, Traffic and Transport

6.3.1 Existing Environment

The Study Area is situated approximately 470 km by road from Sydney, 469 km from Brisbane, and around 340 km from Newcastle. It is expected that the primary battery components will be shipped to an appropriate port and then transported to the site via the regional road network.

Construction and operational access to the site is proposed to utilise the existing road infrastructure, including Waterfall Way and Eathorpe Road. Entry to the Project is currently proposed via a Local Government Authority Road parcel off Eathorpe Road, although this access arrangement will be subject to further evaluation as part of the EIS process.

Additionally, the Project will require the construction of internal access tracks across the Study Area to support maintenance activities throughout the life of the Project.

6.3.2 Potential Impacts and Further Assessment

During construction there will be a temporary increase in traffic along Eathorpe Road and Waterfall Way and surrounds as components are brought to site and construction workers travel to/from the site. This will indirectly lead to some increase in localised noise levels during the main construction period. Traffic management during construction will also need to consider activities during key agricultural activities such as harvesting periods, peak tourism seasons and the associated vehicle movements and their timing. In addition, site access will require the establishment of a new access track to accommodate the delivery of materials to site.

Traffic impacts during operations will be minimal, with approximately 3 FTE staff. Traffic is predicted to be limited to employee vehicle movements for full-time staff, plus a small number of vehicle movements associated with ongoing maintenance and associated activities performed by local contractors/consultants.

During the decommissioning phase, a temporary increase in construction traffic would be expected as infrastructure is removed.

A detailed TIA will be prepared as part of the EIS, implementing the SEARs requirements provided by DPHI, ARC and Transport for NSW. The TIA will identify the impacts and assess the significance of any impacts on the road network and community during construction, operation, and decommissioning phases. The TIA will also consider the requirement for road upgrades, including turn treatments for main access off Eathorpe Road. The required mitigation measures would be implemented during construction and operational activities through implementation of a Traffic Management Plan (TMP) that would be prepared for the Project for each relevant phase.

Edify will assess the Port of Newcastle and Port Botany as potential transport route options during the EIS phase.

6.4 Visual Amenity and Landscape Character

6.4.1 Existing Environment

The landscape character of the Armidale region is shaped by its elevated position on the New England Tablelands, featuring broad plains, undulating hills, granite outcrops, and creek-lined valleys. The topography provides a mix of open views and visual enclosure, with remnant native woodlands and riparian vegetation interspersed across an otherwise cleared agricultural landscape. The local area is already characterised by existing power infrastructure including the TransGrid Armidale Substation to the north of the proposed BESS, and a number of transmission lines that traverse the Study Area, and other transmission lines that extend north and east from the TransGrid Armidale Substation.

The Study Area is located at an elevation of between around 1034 m Australian Height Datum (AHD) and 980 m AHD, with a gradient sloping towards the northeast of the Study Area.

Land use in the region is dominated by agriculture, primarily grazing and cropping, with scattered rural dwellings, sheds, and fencing forming the typical built form. The town of Armidale provides a more concentrated urban environment, known for its heritage buildings and civic spaces.

The Project is located approximately 3.1 km north of Imbota Nature Reserve, 3.6 km southwest of Yina Nature Reserve, and 4 km south of Armidale Pine Forest. The TransGrid Armidale Substation is situated within the northern part of the Study Area. Other nearby localities include the New England Model Aircraft Club (0.8 km north), the Fire and Rescue NSW Training Centre (2.2 km west), and the Armidale Waste Management Facility and Recycling Centre (2.2 km southwest) (refer **Figure 6**).

There are 31 potentially sensitive receivers within 1 km of the proposed BESS, and 66 potentially sensitive receivers between 1-2 km (refer **Figure 9** and **Table 5**). The closest sensitive receiver to the BESS (R3) is located approximately 243 m to the southwest.

6.4.2 Potential Impacts and Further Assessment

The topography of the area and patches of vegetation would likely provide visual screening of the Study Area from most sensitive receivers and road users. The Project would be consistent with the existing TransGrid Substation and transmission line electrical infrastructure located in close proximity to the Project, which helps maintain the visual character of the area, ensuring that views are not significantly altered.

An assessment of the level of visual disturbance would be undertaken as part of the EIS. The EIS would also consider the potential for the BESS to affect local landscape character. Additional consultation with specific affected residences would be undertaken to identify the nature and significance of impacts and the need for mitigation measures.

A landscape and visual impact assessment, including photomontages and community consultation, would be prepared as part of the EIS to investigate visual impacts and mitigation options. The assessment would also include consideration of cumulative impacts with major projects in the vicinity of the Project.

6.5 Noise

6.5.1 Existing Environment

The existing noise environment is of a typical rural area, where land use in the locality is predominantly agricultural. Sources of background noise would include the existing Armidale Substation and vehicle use along surround roads, in addition to equipment used on adjacent rural landholdings.

Residential receptors are identified to be scattered in the vicinities of the Project. There are 31 potentially sensitive receivers within 1 km of the proposed BESS, the closest sensitive receiver to the BESS (R3) is located approximately 243 m to the southwest. (refer **Figure 9** and **Table 5**).

6.5.2 Potential Impacts and Further Assessment

Noise impacts, for the most part, only occur during construction (generated by construction vehicles and machinery), with minimal noise likely to be generated during operation. Edify and the construction contractor will adopt best practice mitigation measures during construction such as standard work hours and regular vehicle and machinery maintenance to reduce the risk of adverse noise impacts.

During the operation of the Project, low level noise would be potentially produced by the substation and switchgear, battery (HVAC), and any maintenance works undertaken at the site.

A construction and operational noise assessment would be undertaken as part of the EIS to assess potential noise impacts. The assessment would be undertaken in accordance with the *Interim Construction Noise Guideline* (DECC, 2009) and *NSW Noise Policy for Industry* (NSW EPA, 2017).

6.6 Agriculture, Land and Soils

6.6.1 Existing Environment

6.6.1.1 Land and Soil Capability

A Land and Soil Capability (LSC) assessment scheme⁵ is a system used to evaluate the inherent physical capacity of land to sustain various uses and management practices without causing degradation to soil, land, air, and water resources. This scheme is particularly important for sustainable land management and planning. The LSC assessment scheme considers several biophysical features of the land and soil, such as landform position, slope gradient, drainage, climate, soil type and characteristics.

These features are used to derive detailed rating tables for a range of land and soil hazards, including water erosion, wind erosion, soil structure decline, soil acidification, salinity, waterlogging, shallow soils, and rockiness. Each hazard is rated on a scale from 1 (best, highest capability land) to 8 (worst, lowest capability land). The final LSC Class of the land is determined by the most limiting hazard.

The soil within the Study Area is expected to be highly disturbed due to its historical use for livestock grazing. Land and Soil Capability (LSC) mapping from the NSW Department of Planning and Environment's (DPE) eSPADE database indicates that the Study Area is predominantly classified as:

- Class 5: Land with severe limitations for high impact uses such as cropping, generally more suitable for grazing. These soil limitations need to be carefully managed to prevent long-term degradation (refer **Figure 12**).
- Class 6: Land with very severe limitations for a wide range of uses, including cultivation, with few management practices available to overcome these constraints. The majority of the Project elements will be located within this land classification.
- No Class 1, 2, 3, or 4 land is present within the Study Area.
- Additionally, there are no mapped saline soils or acid sulphate soils within the Study Area.

The LSC classification of the Study Area and surroundings is illustrated in **Figure 13**.



Figure 12: Example Class 5 (left) and Class 6 (right) Land⁶ (not proposed Study Area).

⁵ <https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/-/media/OEH/Corporate-Site/Documents/Land-and-soil/land-soil-capability-assessment-scheme-120394.pdf>

⁶ [Land and soil capability assessment scheme \(nsw.gov.au\)](https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/land-and-soil-capability-assessment-scheme)

6.6.1.2 Australian Soil Classification

A search of the Australian Soil Classification (ASC) Soil Type Map of NSW (DCCEEW, 2017) reveals that the Study Area is dominated by Kandosol (Ka) and Kurosols (Ku) soils, as shown in **Figure 14**.

Generally, Kurosols are characterized by dense, clay-rich subsoils that are compacted, limiting water infiltration and root growth. The surface often develops a hard crust, which can impede water movement, though cracks may form when dry. Chemically, these soils are sodic and alkaline, with high sodium levels that impair soil structure and reduce nutrient availability for plants. These conditions make Kurosols unsuitable for most intensive agricultural practices, though they can support scrubland, grassland, and salt-tolerant species, such as eucalypts and grasses.

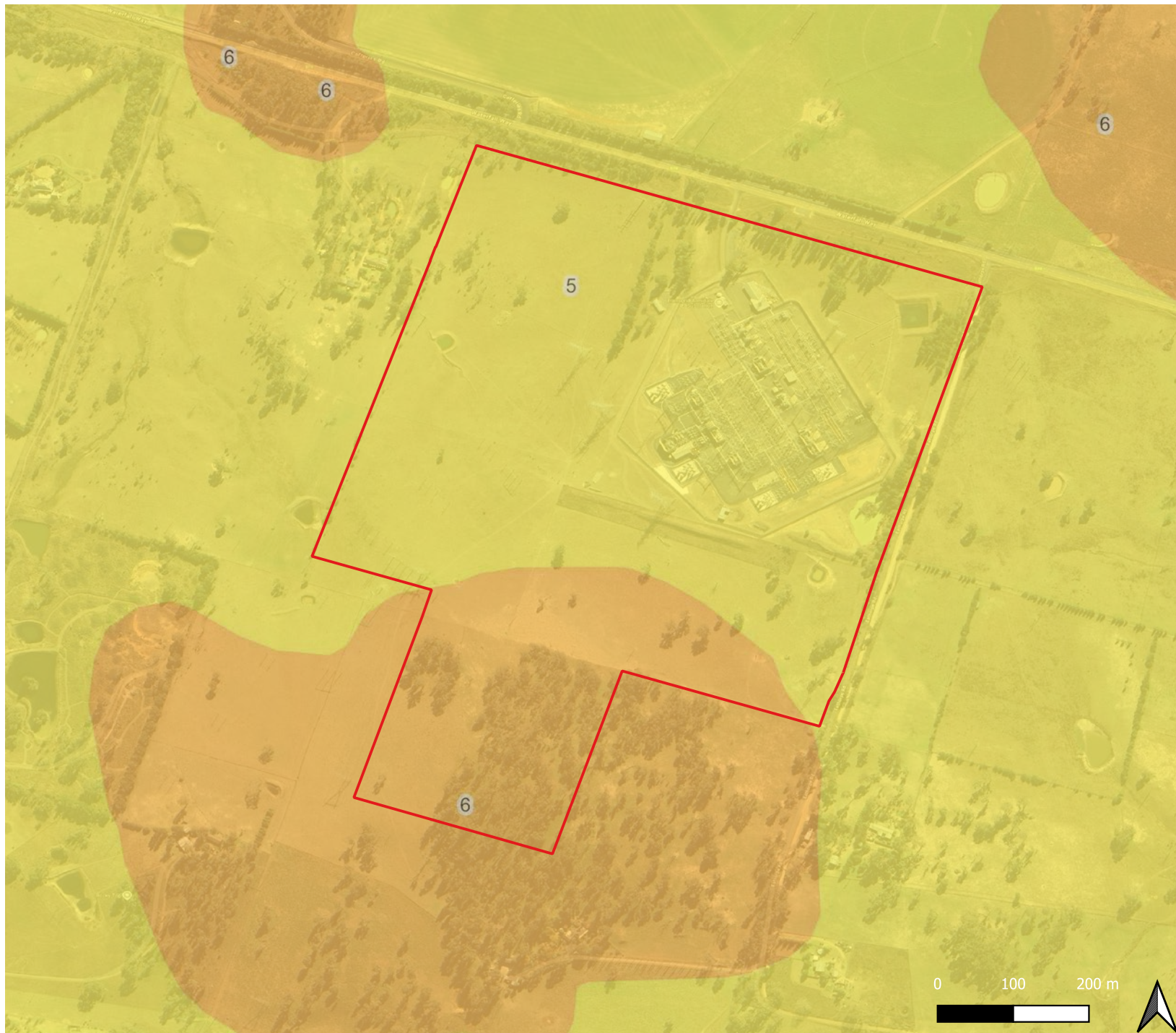
In terms of land use, grazing is feasible, but these soils require careful management because of their low fertility and drainage issues. Additionally, the physical properties of Kurosols, coupled with the potential for surface crusting, make them more susceptible to erosion during heavy rainfall events.

6.6.2 Potential Impacts and Further Assessment

- Construction of the Project might involve vegetation removal and earthworks, exposing the natural ground surface and subsurface, which may increase the risk of soil erosion. Additionally, all agricultural activities within the Impact Area will be temporarily discontinued during this phase. Erosion hazard can be minimised to an acceptable level via adoption of appropriate drainage, erosion and sediment control practices, management measures for which will be incorporated in the construction environmental management plan (CEMP) for the Project.

At the end of its operational life, the Project will be decommissioned, with all above and below-ground infrastructure removed. The land is expected to be restored to its previous agricultural use, as battery projects typically do not cause significant permanent impacts to soil or landform. Consequently, the adverse impacts on land use and resource availability are expected to be low and limited to the operational period.

The impact on agricultural production in the locality and region is expected to be low, temporary, and confined to the Impact Area. The EIS will further assess the Project's effects on agricultural resources, land productivity, and surrounding areas.



Legend

Study Area

Land and Soil Capability

Most Limiting LBC

- 1 - Very slight to negligible limitations
- 2 - Slight but significant limitations
- 3 - Moderate limitations
- 4 - Moderate to severe limitations
- 5 - Severe limitations
- 6 - Very severe limitations
- 7 - Extremely severe limitations
- 8 - Extreme limitations
- Not assessed (9S)
- Water (9S)

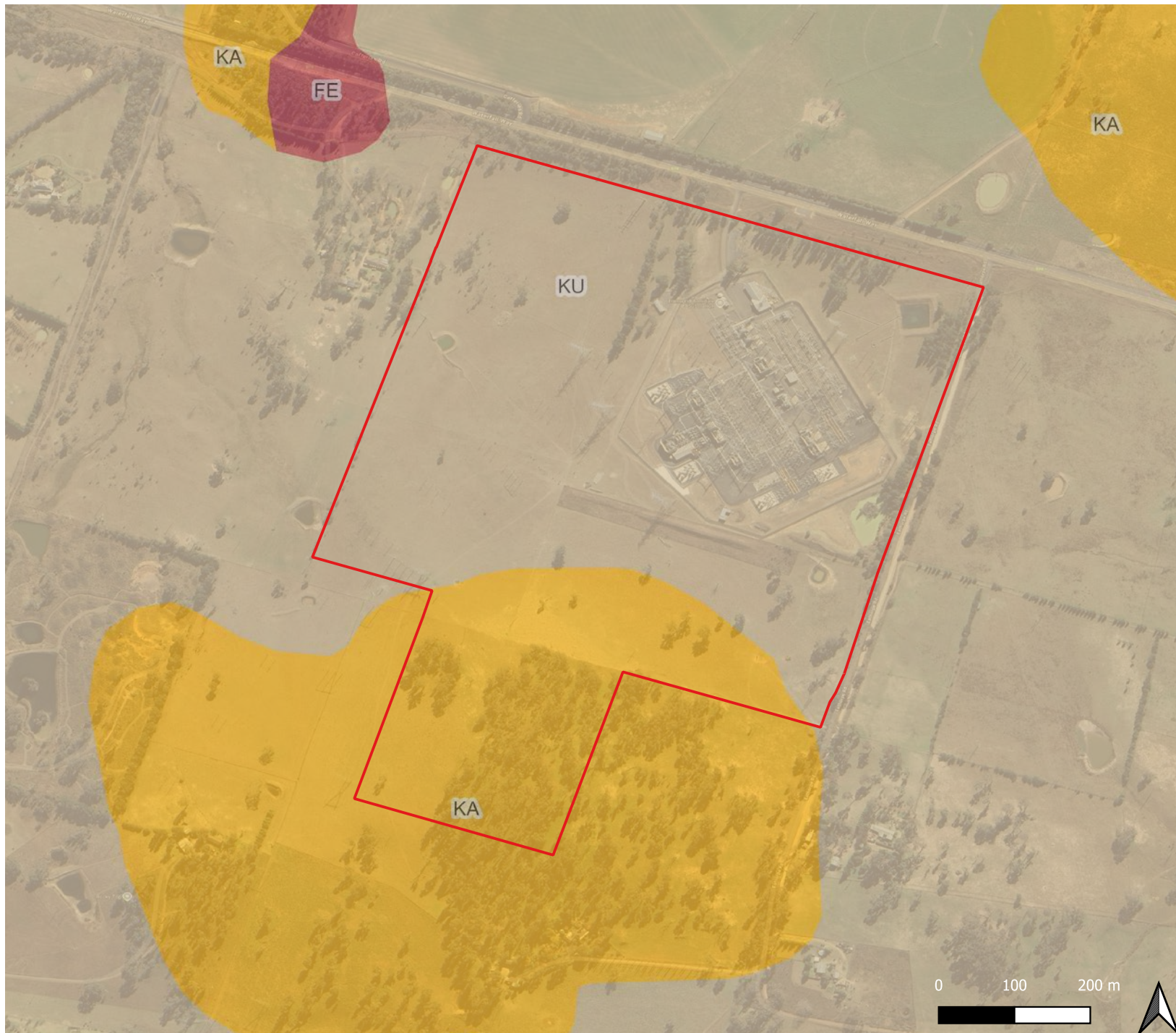
Baselayers

Google Hybrid Satellite

Figure 13: Land and Soil Capability of the Study Area

Kooyong BESS
Armidale, NSW

Scoping Report



Legend

Study Area

Australian Soil Classification

Dominant ASC - Order

- Anthrosols (AN)
- Calcarosols (CA)
- Chromosols (CH)
- Dermosols (DE)
- Ferrosols (FE)
- Hydrosols (HY)
- Kandosols (KA)
- Kurosols (KU)
- Kurosols - natric (KUn)
- Organosols (OR)
- Podosols (PO)
- Rudosols (RU)
- Rudosols - alluvial (RUa)
- Sodosols (SO)
- Tenosols (TE)
- Vertosols (VE)
- Not assessed
- Water

Baselayers

Google Hybrid Satellite

Figure 14: Australian Soil Classification of the Study Area

Kooyong BESS
Armidale, NSW

Scoping Report

6.7 Site History and Contamination

6.7.1 Existing Environment

The Project Area comprises partially cleared farmland currently used for grazing livestock. The immediate surroundings are characterised as follows:

- North: Open cleared land and TransGrid's Armidale Substation
- South: Partially cleared land
- East: Open cleared land and a TransGrid transmission line easement
- West: Partially cleared land followed by Eathorpe Road
- Southwest: The nearest dwelling is located approximately 150 metres from the Project Area and is associated with the landowner

6.7.1.1 Site History

Edify purchased a LotSearch EnviroPro Report (**Appendix F**) for the Project Area. The LotSearch report aggregates data from over 700 current and historical datasets to provide a detailed overview of site history, environmental risk and planning information available of the Project Area and surrounds. Key components of the report include:

- Contaminated Land Registers: Information on sites known or suspected to be contaminated, as recorded by state environmental regulators.
- Historical Land Use Data: Insights into past activities on the site that may have led to contamination, such as industrial operations.
- Regulatory Notices and Licenses: Details of any environmental licenses, permits, or notices issued for the site, indicating regulated activities or required remediation.
- PFAS Investigation Sites: Identification of areas under investigation for per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) contamination.
- Groundwater Restrictions: Information on any limitations on groundwater use due to contamination concerns.
- Environmental Audits: Records of environmental audits conducted on or near the site, providing insights into historical assessments
- Historical Aerial Imagery: Recorded imagery from 1940s to identify historical land use changes over time

A review of the LotSearch Report identified the following sites of interest in proximity to the Project Area; these are shown on **Figure 15**.

- One (1) PFAS Investigation and Management Program:
 - Armidale Fire and Rescue Station located approximately 1.9 km northwest.
- One (1) EPA Licensed Activity:
 - Armidale Sewage Treatment Plant located approximately 766 m north.
- Three (3) former licensed activities under the Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997 (POEO Act), which have been revoked or surrendered:
 - Application of herbicides – Waterway throughout NSW, approximately 224 m south.
- One (1) Local⁷ Heritage Item
 - Site of an Abattoir "Wongalea" 821m Northeast

⁷ Armidale Regional Local Environmental Plan 2012

Legend



-  Project Area
-  Local Heritage Register
 - Site of Abattoir "Wongalea"
-  EPA POEO Licensed Activities
 - Armidale Sewage Treatment Plant
-  EPA PFAS Investigation Program
 - Armidale Fire and Rescue Station
-  EPA Former Licensed Activities
 - Waterways through out NSW
-  TransGrid Armidale Substation
-  1km Buffer of Proposed BESS

Baselayers

OSM Standard

Figure 15: Lotsearch Report Point of Interest

Kooyong BESS
Armidale, NSW

Scoping Report

The LotSearch Report confirmed the following were **not** present within or near the Project Area:

- No Commonwealth, National or State Heritage items
- No contaminated sites notified to the NSW EPA.
- No NSW EPA Notices (Penalty, Clean-up, or Prevention) issued.
- No waste or liquid waste facilities.
- No Defence sites or unexploded ordnance.
- No dry cleaners, garages, or service stations.
- No current mining or exploration licences (historical licences have been surrendered).
- No potentially contaminated businesses mapped in the Project Area or its surrounds, based on UBD directories from 1950, 1961, 1970, 1982, or 1991.

6.7.1.2 Historical Aerial Imagery

Historical aerial imagery from 1943, 1956, 1962, 1970, 1979, 1987, 1994, 2006, 2014, and 2023 indicates no significant changes to the Project Area over this period. The land has consistently remained a partially cleared parcel, with no evidence of development that could potentially cause contamination.

6.7.2 Potential Impacts and Further Assessment

While the LotSearch Report did not identify any current contaminated sites or high-risk land uses within the Project Area or its immediate surrounds, a Preliminary Site Investigation (PSI) is proposed in relation to the sites outlined above and shown on **Figure 15**. This PSI will help ensure that the project design and construction proceed with full awareness of any potential environmental constraints or legacy impacts from nearby activities.

As part of the EIS process, Edify (or its appointed environmental consultant) will undertake a site walkover to identify any visual indicators of contamination, such as odours, stressed vegetation, or evidence of discharges. In addition, consultation with Armidale Regional Council will be undertaken to confirm there have been no recent or undocumented changes in land use or environmental incidents that could influence site suitability or pose a risk to the project.

6.8 Social

6.8.1 Existing Environment

The Project is located within the Armidale LGA, in the Northern Tablelands of New South Wales. The region is centred around the city of Armidale, which serves as the principal service and administrative centre for the surrounding rural areas. As of the 2021 Census, the Armidale Regional LGA had a population of approximately 29,820 people, with the urban centre of Armidale home to many residents.

Armidale is well known for its educational, cultural, and agricultural character. It is home to the University of New England (UNE) and several major schools, contributing to a significant student population and a high level of educational attainment. The area has a diverse economy, with key industries including education and training, agriculture (particularly grazing and cropping), public administration, retail, and health care. Tourism and renewable energy are also emerging sectors, supported by the region's natural beauty and its location within the New England Renewable Energy Zone (REZ).

The region is culturally significant, with a strong Aboriginal heritage, particularly that of the Anaiwan people, the Traditional Custodians of the land. Approximately 8.4% of the LGA's population identifies as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, which is higher than the NSW average. The area is also socially diverse, with residents born in a range of countries and speaking a variety of languages, though the majority speak English at home.

Armidale offers a range of social infrastructure, including hospitals, aged care facilities, schools, recreational centres, public libraries, and transport connections via road and air. Social wellbeing in the area is generally strong, although challenges persist in terms of access to services in more remote parts of the LGA, cost of living pressures, and youth employment.

The community is generally engaged with sustainability and environmental initiatives, and there is an existing awareness of renewable energy developments in the region. Public interest in such projects tends to centre on potential benefits such as local employment, educational opportunities, infrastructure upgrades, and environmental stewardship, balanced with considerations around land use compatibility, visual amenity, traffic, and community consultation.

Nearby urban centres include,

- Uralla, located approximately 25 km southwest of Armidale, is a smaller township with a population of around 2,370. It is known for its heritage architecture and community spirit, and supports a mix of agriculture, retail, and tourism. Uralla provides services to the surrounding rural communities and may contribute workforce and ancillary services to the Project.
- Guyra, situated around 37 km to the north of Armidale, has a population of approximately 1,983. The town plays a key role in the local agricultural economy, particularly for potato farming and greenhouse horticulture. Guyra offers essential services and housing and may support the Project through local contracting and supply chains.

6.8.1.1 Population

According to the 2021 Census, the Armidale Regional Local Government Area (LGA) had a population of approximately 29,820 people. The city of Armidale itself, serving as the principal urban centre, had a population of around 23,967.

Age Structure:

- Median Age: 37 years, slightly younger than the New South Wales average of 39 years.

- Youthful Demographic: Notably, 8.0% of the population were aged 15–19 years, and another 8.0% were aged 20–24 years. This reflects the city's role as an educational hub, housing institutions like the University of New England.

Cultural Diversity:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples: Represent 7.6% of the population, which is more than double the state average of 3.4%.
- Country of Birth: 74.0% of residents were born in Australia. The most common countries of birth for those born overseas were Iraq (2.4%), England (2.0%), India (1.1%), Nepal (1.1%), and New Zealand (1.0%).
- Languages Spoken at Home: 78.6% of people spoke only English at home. Other languages included Kurdish (1.1%), Nepali (1.1%), and Mandarin (0.7%).

Religion:

- The most common religious affiliations were No Religion (36.1%), Catholic (16.7%), and Anglican (16.1%).

Socioeconomic Indicators:

- The unemployment rate in the Armidale Regional LGA was 5.4%, slightly below the national average of 6.0%.

Education and Employment:

- Armidale's status as an educational centre is underscored by the presence of the University of New England and several secondary schools.
- Key employment sectors include education and training, health care and social assistance, retail trade, and agriculture

6.8.1.2 Economic Profile

Armidale is a regional city located in the Northern Tablelands of New South Wales, approximately halfway between Sydney and Brisbane. Armidale serves as a key service centre for the broader Northern Tablelands region. The local economy is diverse and underpinned by key sectors including education, agriculture, public administration, and emerging opportunities in information and communications technology (ICT) and renewable energy.

Education is a major economic driver for Armidale. The city is home to the University of New England (UNE), a significant regional employer and one of Australia's leading distance education providers. UNE attracts many domestic and international students, contributing to the local economy through employment, accommodation, retail, and services. TAFE NSW and a range of public and private schools also provide substantial employment opportunities and support the development of the region's skilled workforce.

The agricultural sector is a traditional and ongoing strength of the Armidale economy. The region supports extensive livestock grazing, particularly sheep and cattle, and is well known to produce prime lamb, wool, and beef. There is increasing diversification into broadacre cropping, horticulture, and value-added agribusiness. Local producers are adopting sustainable farming practices and innovative approaches to land management, supporting long-term economic and environmental resilience.

Armidale hosts a range of state and federal government agencies, which play a critical role in supporting regional service delivery and providing stable employment. Key offices include the NSW Department of Regional NSW and Services Australia, along with local government services provided by Armidale Regional Council. The public administration and safety sector is one of the largest employers in the region.

Armidale has been designated a digital hub within the NSW Government's regional development strategy. The early rollout of the National Broadband Network (NBN) and the establishment of the NSW Department of Education's ICT Directorate have helped foster growth in the digital economy. The city is increasingly attractive to remote workers, start-ups, and tech-enabled businesses, supported by high levels of digital connectivity and an educated workforce.

Retail remains an important sector, servicing both the local community and surrounding rural areas. While regional retail faces ongoing challenges from online competition and larger metropolitan centres, local businesses benefit from the steady demand created by students, professionals, and visitors. Tourism is a modest but growing contributor to the economy, with opportunities focused on natural attractions, heritage tourism, ecotourism, and education-based visits. Nearby national parks, gorges, and waterfalls offer potential for further nature-based tourism development.

Armidale's workforce is characterised by a high level of tertiary education attainment, reflecting the presence of UNE and other educational institutions. Employment levels are generally in line with the state average, although seasonal and sectoral variations are observed, particularly in the education and agricultural sectors. The presence of government services and institutions provides a stabilising influence on employment.

Recent years have seen the emergence of several trends likely to influence Armidale's economic trajectory:

- Increased interest in renewable energy and sustainability initiatives
- A rise in tree changers and remote workers relocating from metropolitan areas, attracted by the region's lifestyle, climate, and digital connectivity
- A growing emphasis on the circular economy, including opportunities in waste management, recycling, and sustainable design.

6.8.2 Potential Impacts and Further Assessment

The Project is expected to contribute to regional economic diversification by attracting private investment into the clean energy sector. The development aligns with Armidale's emerging role as a digital and innovation hub and supports the broader transition to a low-carbon economy. Key social and economic benefits may include:

- Local employment and procurement: employment opportunities are expected during the construction phase, particularly in civil works, electrical installation, traffic management, and ancillary services. The Project may also stimulate demand for local contractors, suppliers, and service providers, generating flow-on economic activity across the region.
- Support for local businesses and services: increased local spending in accommodation, food services, fuel, and transport, delivering a short-term economic boost to local businesses
- Regional energy resilience: enhance grid stability and support the future integration of renewable generation, contributing to long-term energy security for the region
- Workforce development and skills pathways: support skills development, industry exposure, and future employment opportunities in the clean energy sector
- Community benefit sharing: direct financial contributions to support community-identified initiatives, infrastructure, or services, ensuring that local residents share in the long-term benefits of the Project, through CBF and VPA.

Based on Edify's experience, a number of social issues are commonly raised by local communities and stakeholders during project development. These issues will be further investigated through the Social Impact Assessment (SIA) to be undertaken as part of the EIS. Preliminary considerations include:

- Perceptions of safety and environmental risk: community members often express concern regarding potential fire hazards, chemical risks, and the adequacy of emergency response arrangements associated with BESS infrastructure
- Amenity impacts, including noise and visual: potential impacts on rural character, visual amenity, and acoustic environment are frequently raised, particularly by residents in proximity to the project
- Construction-phase disturbance and land use change: Temporary impacts such as increased traffic, dust, and noise during construction, along with concerns about the conversion of rural land to infrastructure use
- Decommissioning and long-term site management: Uncertainty regarding end-of-life battery disposal, waste management, and site rehabilitation.

Mitigation and management measures will be developed and assessed during the EIS phase to avoid, minimise, or offset potential impacts, and to support positive social outcomes where practicable.

A preliminary assessment of potential social and economic impacts of the Project has been carried out using the DPE SIA Scoping Worksheet and is provided in **Appendix C**.

6.9 Other Environmental Issues

There are a range of potential environmental issues associated with the Project which are not considered to be key issues. These are considered secondary issues for investigation, given the characteristics of the Project and the availability of appropriate safeguards for mitigation. These issues are outlined in **Table 11** below. The impacts and any required mitigation relating to these issues would be addressed at an appropriate level of detail in the EIS, and in response to relevant requirements outlined in the SEARs.

Table 11: Other Environmental Issues

Existing Environment	Potential Impacts	Management and Mitigation
Historic Heritage		
A search of online heritage databases was undertaken on 30 April 2025. The following online databases were reviewed: • Australian Heritage Database • NSW State Heritage Inventory (SHI) • NSW State Heritage Register • Armidale LEP. The search indicated no records within the Study Area. Three items are within 2km of the Study Area, all listed under Armidale LEP: • Site of Commissioners Waters Inn: Listing LEP #A033 • Site of Brookstead fellmongery and woolwashing works, "Eathorpe": Listing LEP #A034 • Site of Abattoir, "Wongalea": Listing LEP #A032	Edify considers there to be a low risk of impact to heritage items as a result of the development of the Project.	The heritage status of the site would be assessed during fieldwork undertaken as part of the archaeological assessment (refer Section 6.2). Appropriate management measures would be implemented if required.
Hazard and Risk – Electric and Magnetic Fields (EMF)		
Existing powerlines produce EMF at the site. Additional infrastructure which forms part of the Project such as connecting powerlines and substation would produce additional electromagnetic emissions at the Study Area.	The substation, battery storage and network connection would be in the Impact Area. The EMF that would be generated by the proposed powerlines, battery storage and substation is expected to be below the guideline for public exposure and would not be expected to	The EMF levels of the proposed powerlines, battery storage and substation would be assessed as part of the EIS.

Existing Environment	Potential Impacts	Management and Mitigation
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have an adverse impact on human health.

Hazard and Risk – Environmental Hazards

Battery storage is proposed as part of the Project.	Batteries pose a potential fire or contamination risk to the Study Area.	A preliminary risk screening will be completed in accordance with State Environmental Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards) 2021 and Applying SEPP 33 (DoP, 2011), and a Preliminary Hazard Analysis (PHA) will be undertaken as part of the EIS. The PHA will be prepared in accordance with the Hazardous Industry Planning Advisory Paper No. 6, 'Hazard Analysis' and Multi-Level Risk Assessment (DoP, 2011). Consideration all recent standards and codes and verify separation distances to on-site and off-site receivers to prevent fire propagation and compliance with Hazardous Industry Advisory Paper No. 4, 'Risk Criteria for Land Use Safety Planning (DoP, 2011).
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Hazard and Risk - Bushfire

The Project Area has been predominantly cleared for agriculture. The Study Area has not been identified as being within a bushfire prone area as shown in Figure 16 .	The Project is unlikely to be affected by bushfire or pose a significant bushfire risk.	In addition to the PHA described above, the impacts and risks of a bushfire or gas explosion or leak would be assessed in the EIS. Risk of fire from proposed infrastructure will also be addressed in the EIS. Proactive engagement with both Rural Fire Service NSW and NSW Fire & Rescue will be undertaken during the EIS preparation phase.
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Utilities

Existing Environment	Potential Impacts	Management and Mitigation
Transmission Network Service Provider (TNSP) TransGrid and Distribution Network Service Provider (DNSP) Essential Energy, manage and operate the high voltage electricity network in this region of NSW. Both TransGrid and Essential Energy have restrictions on development within powerline easements. For instance, TransGrid guidelines state that activities and encroachments are prohibited within a transmission line easement, including 'the installation of fixed plant or equipment', and 'the placing of obstructions within 30 metres of any part of a transmission line structure or supporting guy wire'. Roads or tracks within 20 metres of the centreline of a transmission line above 132 kV are prohibited, although roads that cross the transmission line as a thoroughfare may be permitted.	The proposed works would involve works adjacent to the TransGrid Armidale Substation.	The EIS would assess the Project against the setback and approval requirements of TransGrid. The Project would be designed to comply with required setback, approval, and consultation requirements of both network operators.
Watercourses and Hydrology		
No watercourses occur within the Project Area (Figure 5). However, farm dams were identified within the Study Area. The Study Area is not subject to flooding impacts.	The Project does not include the extraction of groundwater; however, contamination from construction operations could have an impact on the quality of groundwater if adequate mitigation measures are not taken. The farm dams will be avoided as part of design of the Project elements.	The EIS would assess the impacts to hydrology during construction and operation and include a flood impact assessment and appropriate mitigation measures as required. The EIS will also include consideration of water use during construction and operation of the Project, including identifying available water sources.
Air quality		
The air quality in the region is expected to be good, typical of rural settings in NSW, characterized by low population density and few industrial pollution sources. The primary contributors to air pollution in the region are likely to be emissions	The construction of the Project is not anticipated to have a significant impact on air quality and would mostly be related to dust during dry	The mitigation measures would require a CEMP to be prepared to manage air quality impacts during the construction phase. There is an opportunity to improve local air quality by maintaining ground cover

Existing Environment	Potential Impacts	Management and Mitigation
from surrounding agricultural activities and road networks. Existing sources of pollution include vehicle emissions and smoke from seasonal burning. During colder months, solid fuel heating may cause localized reductions in air quality, particularly when temperature inversions occur overnight.	periods and vegetation removal. Impacts to air quality during operation would be negligible. The Project would contribute to improved air quality in the long term by supporting renewable energy developments that reduce greenhouse gas emissions.	vegetation under the panels. Water tanks will also be utilised during the Project's construction phase, to suppress potential dust impacts.
Waste Management		
N/A	The majority of waste generated will be during the construction period and may include green waste from cleared vegetation and general waste from construction material and activities associated with workforce. During the operation of the Project, waste generated would be minimal.	A Concept Waste Management Plan would be incorporated into the CEMP, applying the principles to avoid, re-use and recycle to minimise wastes. Whilst efforts have been taken to limit the quantity of vegetation disturbance, any cleared trees would be repurposed as fauna habitat where possible. Excavated soils for facilities and cable trenches would be re-used to level areas of depressions or rehabilitate any degraded areas on site.



Legend

Study Area

NSW Bush Fire Prone Lands

Baselayers

Google Hybrid Satellite

Figure 16: Bushfire Prone Land

Kooyong BESS
Armidale, NSW

Scoping Report

6.10 Cumulative Impacts

Several SSDs located within the Armidale Regional LGA could potentially lead to cumulative impacts with the development of the Project, particularly during the construction phase. **Table 12** below provides a summary of these projects, identified through the Major Projects website, and displayed in **Figure 17**.

Further analysis of the potential for cumulative impacts would be addressed in detail in the EIS in accordance with Cumulative Impact Assessment Guidelines for State Significant Projects (DPIE, 2021).

Impact interactions between the Project and identified SSD projects are likely to be limited to construction traffic and workforce accommodation, particularly where multiple projects are competing for the same accommodation. The key projects for consideration in the cumulative impact assessment are Armidale BESS, Oxley Solar Farm, and Gara BESS.

Table 12: Significant Projects in proximity to the Project

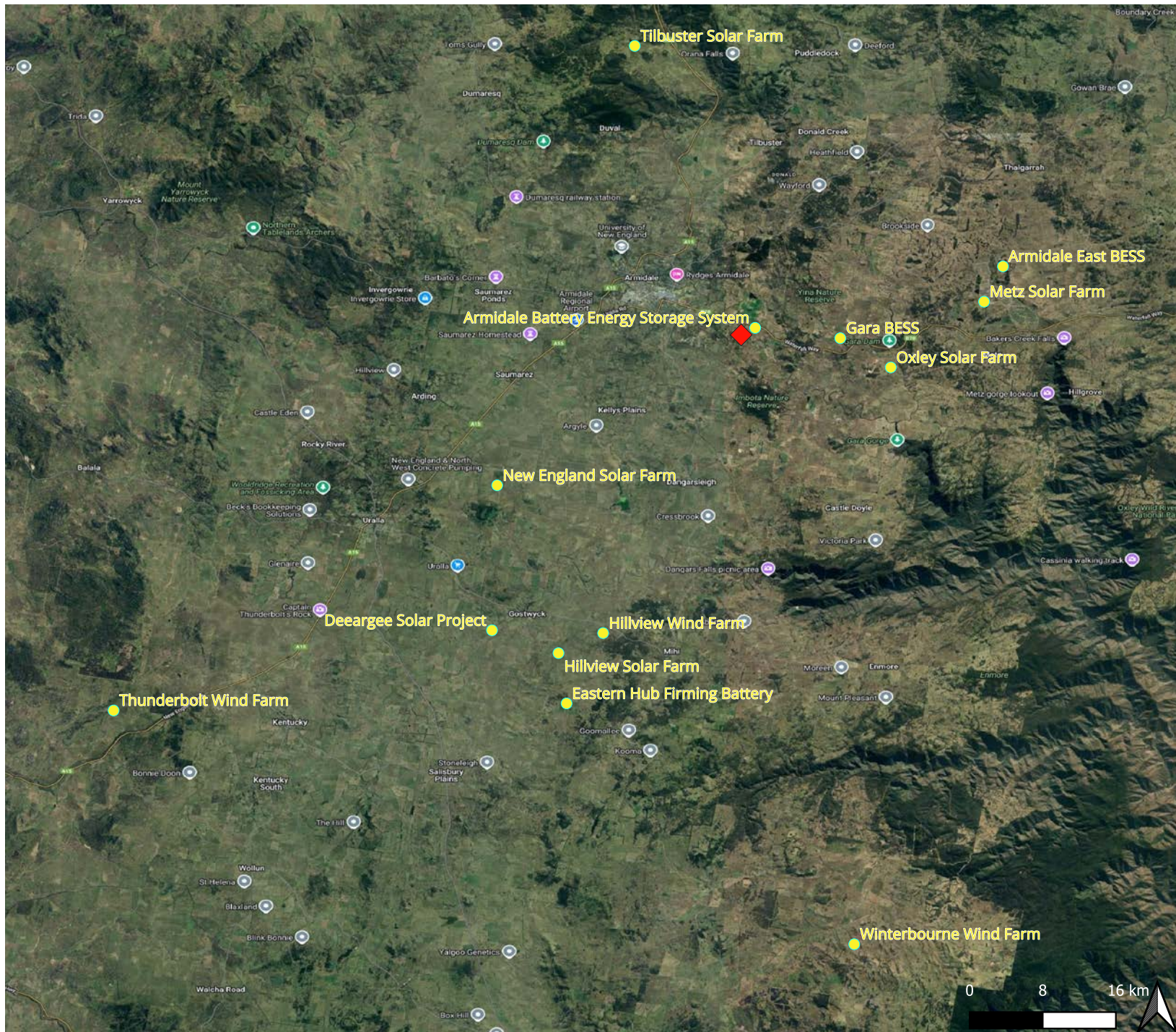
Project	Status ⁸	Description	Distance to Project	Cumulative Impact
Armidale BESS	Assessment SSD-23515853	Development of a 150 MW/300 MWh BESS facility with associated infrastructure. Construction is estimated to take approximately 24 months, to commence late 2025.	164 m to the east	Potential for construction and operation phases to overlap. Potential construction impacts that may require detailed assessment include biodiversity, traffic, visual, noise and social.
Gara BESS	Prepare EIS SSD-71680710	Development of a 400 MW/1760 MWh BESS facility with associated infrastructure. Construction is estimated to take approximately 11 months, to commence late 2025.	5.2 km to the east	Potential for construction and operation phases to overlap. Potential construction impacts that may require detailed assessment include traffic, and social. Low risk of cumulative visual and noise related impacts.

⁸ As of 22 April 2025

Project	Status	Description	Distance to Project	Cumulative Impact
Oxley Solar Farm	Approved SSD-69489708	Development of a 215 MW solar farm with up to 50 MW BESS and associated infrastructure. Construction is estimated to take approximately 12 to 18 months, commencement date is unknown.	8.1 km to the southeast	Potential for construction and operation phases to overlap. Potential construction impacts include traffic, and social. Low risk of cumulative visual and noise related impacts.
Metz Solar Farm and modification	Approved SSD- 7931	Development of a 100 MW solar farm and associated infrastructure. Operational.	12.8 km to the northeast	Potential for operation phases to overlap. Limited to non-cumulative construction impacts.
Armidale East BESS	Prepare EIS SSD-65058714	Development of a 500 MW / 1000 MWh battery energy storage facility with associated infrastructure. Construction is estimated to take approximately 18 months, to commence Q1 2026 Operations are anticipated to begin in Q3 2027.	15.0 km to the northeast	Potential for construction and operation phases to overlap. Potential construction impacts that may require detailed assessment include traffic, and social. Low risk of cumulative visual and noise related impacts.
New England Solar Farm and modifications (MOD 1 and MOD 2)	Approved SSD-9255	Development of a 720 MW solar farm, a 1400 MW/2800 MWh BESS. and associated infrastructure. Stage 1 is operational Stage 2 is under construction, estimated to take approximately 20 months to complete. Additional BESS construction will be dependent on the timing of the development of the New England REZ and associated infrastructure.	16.2 km to the southwest	Potential for construction and operation phases to overlap. Low risk of cumulative impacts.

Project	Status	Description	Distance to Project	Cumulative Impact
Tilbuster Solar Farm and modification	Approved SSD-9619	Development of a 150 MW solar farm, 30MWh BESS facility with associated infrastructure. Construction is estimated to take approximately 12 months, commencement date is unknown.	18.5 km to the northwest	Potential for construction and operation phases to overlap. Low risk of cumulative impacts.
Hillview Wind Farm	Prepare EIS SSD-78329994	Development of a 200-300 MW wind farm, 55 wind turbines and associated infrastructure. Construction is estimated to take approximately 30 months, and to commence in 2028.	21.7 km to the south	Potential for construction and operation phases to overlap. Low risk of cumulative impacts.
Hillview Solar Farm	Prepare EIS SSD-72447960	Development of a 272 MW solar farm and associated infrastructure. Construction is estimated to take approximately 24 months, to commence late 2027 to early 2028.	19.1 km to the south	Potential for construction and operation phases to overlap. Low risk of cumulative impacts.
Deeargee Solar Farm	Prepare EIS SSD-70753725	Development of a 320 MW solar farm, a BESS with a capacity of either 1400MW/2800MWh or 700MW/2800MWh and associated infrastructure. Construction is estimated to take approximately 24 months, to commence in 2027.	18.5 km to the south	Potential for construction and operation phases to overlap. Low risk of cumulative impacts.
Eastern Hub Firming Battery	Prepare EIS SSD-71860708	Development of a 1000 MW/ 4,000 – 8,000 MWh BESS and associated infrastructure. Construction is estimated to take approximately 18 months, to commence late 2027 to early 2028.	21.9 km to the south	Potential for construction and operation phases to overlap. Low risk of cumulative impacts.
Winterbourne Wind Farm	Response to Submissions SSD- 10471	Development of a wind farm with up to 117 wind turbines, , a BESS with a capacity of 100 MW. 200MWh energy storage and associated infrastructure.	38.8 km to the south	Potential for construction and operation phases to overlap. Low risk of cumulative impacts.

Project	Status	Description	Distance to Project	Cumulative Impact
		Construction is estimated to take approximately 52 months, to commence in Q3 2026.		
Thunderbolt Wind Farm	Approved SSD-10807896	Development of a wind farm with 32 wind turbines and associated infrastructure. Construction is estimated to take approximately 18 to 24 months, commencement date is unknown.	41.5 km to the southwest	Potential for construction and operation phases to overlap. Low risk of cumulative impacts.
Wongalea Battery Energy Storage System	Scoping Report submitted May 2025 SSD-85522708	Construction, operation, and decommissioning of a Battery Energy Storage System with a capacity of approximately 300 MW/1200 MWh, and ancillary infrastructure.	1.0km to the northeast	Potential for construction and operation phases to overlap. Low risk of cumulative impacts.



Legend

- ◆ Project
- Nearby State Significant Developments

Baselayers

Google Hybrid Satellite

Figure 17: Nearby State Significant Developments

Kooyong BESS
Armidale, NSW

Scoping Report

7 Conclusion

Edify proposes to develop a BESS with a capacity of 200 MW/ 800 MWh, in Armidale, NSW. The Project is located within the Armidale Regional LGA. The Project is known as the Kooyong BESS.

The Project is classified as SSD under Section 4.36 of the EP&A Act as it has an EDC greater than \$30 million and is for the purpose of an electricity storage facility it meets the criteria outlined in Clause 20 of the Planning Systems SEPP. Consequently, the Project will require development consent from the Minister for Planning (or delegate) or the IPC under Section 4.5(1) of the EP&A Act.

Batteries are playing an increasingly crucial role in the electricity market as coal-fired power stations are phasing out. By providing firm capacity, they help address the intermittency of renewable energy sources like wind and solar, ensuring a more stable and reliable electricity supply. Additionally, batteries contribute to improving grid stability and resilience, reducing fluctuations in power quality, and enhancing the overall efficiency of the energy system.

The Project is expected to deliver significant benefits at both the state and local levels. By enabling greater integration of renewable energy, it will support the transition to a cleaner energy mix, strengthen the broader electricity network, and help reduce wholesale electricity costs by increasing competition and optimizing energy dispatch. Locally, the Project will create employment opportunities, particularly during construction, and stimulate economic activity in surrounding communities. Furthermore, by enhancing the reliability of the grid, the Project will contribute to a more secure and sustainable energy future for households and businesses.

This Scoping Report together with desktop assessments and the Preliminary Biodiversity Assessment have been prepared to identify the Study Area, describe the Project, confirm the planning approval pathway, and identify the key environmental considerations. It aims to provide enough information to enable the DPHI to issue targeted and project specific SEARs for the EIS needed to accompany the SSD application. Key environmental issues identified based on preliminary investigations include:

- Biodiversity
- Aboriginal Heritage
- Access, Traffic, and Transport
- Visual Amenity and Landscape Character
- Noise
- Agriculture, land and soils
- Cumulative Impacts

These aspects will be assessed in detail in the EIS. Other issues, such as air quality, waste, soil values, and natural hazards, are likely to be addressed through appropriate mitigation and management measures. The relevance and importance of these issues will be reviewed throughout the EIS process.

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Appendix A Scoping Report Summary

Matter	CIA	Engagement	Relevant government plans, policies, and guidelines	Scoping Report reference
Level of Assessment -Detailed				
Biodiversity	Yes	General	Biodiversity Assessment Method (DPIE 2020) Commonwealth EPBC 1.1 Significant Impact Guidelines – Matters of National Environmental Significance (Commonwealth of Australia, 2013) Commonwealth EPBC 1.2 Significant Impact Guidelines – Actions on, or Impacting upon Commonwealth Land and Actions by Commonwealth Agencies (Commonwealth of Australia, 2013) Commonwealth Department of the Environment – Survey Guidelines for Nationally Threatened Species (various) Commonwealth Department of Environment – Survey Guidelines for Nationally Threatened Species Threatened Species Survey and Assessment Guidelines NSW Biodiversity Offsets Policy for Major Projects (Office and Environment and Heritage 2014) Framework for Biodiversity Assessment (Office and Environment and Heritage 2014)	Biodiversity
Heritage – Aboriginal	Yes	Specific	Guide to investigating, Assessing and Reporting on Aboriginal Cultural Heritage in NSW (OEH 2011) Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Consultation Requirements for Proponents (DECCW 2010)	Aboriginal Heritage

			Code of Practice for Archaeological Investigation of Aboriginal Objects in New South Wales (DECCW 2010)NSW Skeletal Remains: Guidelines for Management of Human Remains (Heritage Office, 1998)	
			Criteria for the Assessment of Excavation Directors (NSW Heritage Council, 2011)	
			Native Title Act 1993	
Traffic	Yes	Specific	Guide to Traffic Management – Part 3 Traffic Studies and Analysis (Austroads, 2013)	Access, Traffic and Transport
			Guide to Traffic Generating Developments Version 2.2 (RTA, 2002)	
Amenity - Visual	No	Specific	Guidance Note for Landscape and Visual Assessment (Australian Institute of Landscape Architects 2018)	Visual Amenity and Landscape Character
			Transport for NSW'S Guideline for landscape character and visual impact assessment (TfNSW, 2020)	
Hazards and risks	No	Specific	Hazardous Industry Planning Advisory Paper No. 6 – Guideline for Hazard Analysis (DoP, 2011a)	Other Environmental Issues
			Multi-Level Risk Assessment (DoP, 2011b).	
			Hazardous and Offensive Development Application Guidelines: Applying SEPP 33 (DoP 2011)	
Level of Assessment - Standard				
Amenity – Noise and vibration	Yes	General	NSW Interim Construction Noise Guideline (DECC 2009)	Noise
			NSW Noise Policy for Industry (EPA 2017)	
			NSW Road Noise Policy (DECCW 2011)	

			Assessing Vibration: A Technical Guideline (DECC 2006)	
			Construction Noise Strategy (Transport for NSW, 2012)	
Stakeholder Engagement	Yes	Specific	Social Impact Assessment Guideline for State Significant Projects 2022 (DPIE 2022)	Community Engagement
Heritage – Historical	Yes	General	Historical Archaeology Code of Practice (Heritage Council 2006)	Other Environmental Issues
Land resources	No	General	Land Use Conflict Risk Assessment Guideline (DPI 2011)	Agriculture, Land and Soils
			Biosecurity Act 2015	
Water resources	No	General	Managing Urban Stormwater: Soils and Construction Volume 1 (Landcom, 2004)	Other Environmental Issues
			Managing Urban Stormwater: Soils and Construction Volume 2 (Department of Environment and Climate Change, 2008)	
			Australian and New Zealand Guidelines for Fresh and Marine Water Quality (ANZECC / ARMICANZ, 2000)	
			Guidelines for instream works on waterfront land (NOW 2012)	
			Guidelines for riparian corridors on waterfront land (NOW 2012)	
			Guidelines for watercourse crossings on waterfront land (NOW 2012)	
Air quality	No	General	N/A	Other Environmental Issues
Waste	No	General	Waste Classification Guidelines (DECCW 2009)	Other Environmental Issues

Appendix B Preliminary Biodiversity Report

Appendix C Social Impact Assessment (SIA) Scoping Worksheet

Appendix D Community Consultation and Engagement Plan

Appendix E AHIMS Search

Appendix F LotSearch Report

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