

I would like to make a submission to VEA's Bellambi Heights BESS project SSD- 33344237

I object to this planned industrial project.

Battery Energy Storage Systems use lead, lithium and cobalt, all of which are hazardous materials that cannot be suppressed or extinguished by ordinary fire control methods.

The fire that occurred in Geelong at a BESS in July 2021 proves how dangerous it would be for nearby residents. A battery pack burning for three days and requiring evacuation of residents is obviously dangerous and should not be placed within 6.5km of Gulgong, let alone within 4km of over 70 rural dwellings. There is also the question of toxic fumes affecting wildlife and domestic animals and potentially affecting the viability of productive farming land nearby by any subsequent contamination (eg from a burning battery pack).

The construction workforce, in concert with other "renewable" projects in the local area will potentially stretch the local community's access to rental accommodation. Located near to the historic town of Gulgong and the popular tourist destination of Mudgee where tourist accommodation is already limited, an influx of construction workers will decimate the limited availability of rentals. Tourism is recognised locally as significant portion of the area's income and any loss in this area will be felt throughout the community.

I request DPE listen to those most heavily impacted by this project (the residents near/around Gulgong) and consider the cumulative impact on the district by the multiple wind, solar and BESS projects already existing and proposed in this district.

This project, by a foreign owned profit-making entity (Singapore based VENA Energy), should be rejected.

Annette Piper