

Ridgely Creek Battery Energy Storage System

State Significant Development SSD-48756517

Submission

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A 130 MW / 260 MWh battery energy storage system 10km west of Parkes.

Exhibition Start-End Date 11/07/2024 - 07/08/2024

<https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/projects/ridgely-creek-battery-energy-storage-sy>

Comment

This submission amends and extends content in the 'Appendix T Historic heritage report' (38 page PDF dated 14 May 2024 at 10:08) by AREA Environmental & Heritage Consultants, Dubbo.

19th century occupation

The authors mentions Burrawang (Pastoral Run Number 498 Barrawang) which was in County Cunningham and to the west of the project area. Relying on the Reuss & Browne 1860 map (Appendix T, Figure 3-1), their report states:

In 1860 the project area appears to be on Melposa station (Figure 3-1). This is an approximate location based on recorded landform and it is possible that the project area is located on the neighboring Beggan Plains, however no records could be located for this property. (Appendix T, page 5)

Reuss & Browne's 'Beggan Plains' must be Brolgan Plains (Pastoral Run Number 84, also misspelled Brogan Plains). That holding is mentioned in the 1898 *Western Champion* and by Fredericks 2020. The map has 'Boolgan Cr' for Brolgan Creek, which is generally west of Ridgely Creek, its tributary. The red square on Appendix T Figure 3-1 (indicating the project lot) looks to have been placed a little too far to the west.

The run boundaries on the Reuss & Browne 1860 map are indicative and not accurate in detail, and its spellings are rife with mistranscription (eg Cumming for Gunning Ridge, Melposa for Milpose, Nelunglong for Nelungalong (later Nelungaloo), Yarrabondi for Yarrabandi, Goobong for Goobang, Munginrobra for Mugincoble).

Indeed it was not 'Melposa' which covered the project area, but rather 'Brogan Plains Back', the eastern part of Pastoral Run 148 Gunningbland. Figure 1 is an excerpt from the pastoral plan around the project area, just inside the southeast of 'Brogan Plains Back'. (Note also that Ridgely Creek is shown there as 'Ridgery'.)

In 1899 James Christie made applications to the Parkes Land Board for Improvement purchases which were refused in the interest of mining This suggests that the project lot (Lot 504 DP750152) was subject to mining activities at the turn of the century. (Appendix T, page 8)

Evident in Figure 1 is that the project lot had been within the Billabong Gold Field and 'reserved from C.P.'; that is, Conditional Purchase was not allowed. Then as shown on the 1901 parish map (excerpted in Appendix T Figure 3-4) James Christie held C.P. 91.19 (i.e. from 1891?) in a Special Area which had been proclaimed on 2 January 1891. Numerous mining tenements are shown on that 1901 parish map but none near that Special Area. I doubt there has been any mining activity on the project lot.

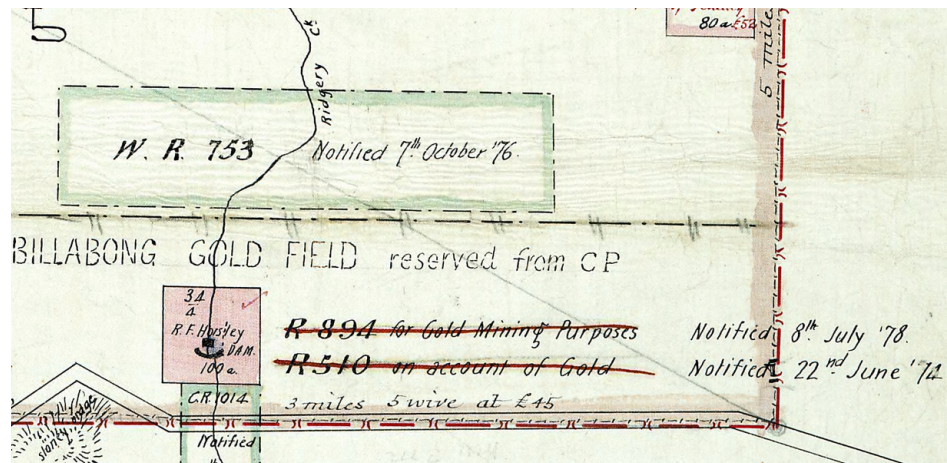


Fig. 1: Excerpt from 1880s Gunningbland pastoral plan from <https://hlrv.nswlrs.com.au/> The project area is near the annotation '3 miles'.

20th century occupation

After James Christie, by 1909 FJ Glasson (1871–1935) was listed in the 1909 *Sands* directory as owning *Hazelwood*, the earliest mention of the property name that I'm aware of. Glasson advertised a clearing sale in September 1911 (*Western Champion*). Presumably the next owner was T Francis, who is reported to have exchanged *Hazelwood* with LR Trewin in 1913 (references in Appendix T).

In the 1920's the property was owned by the Hodges who lived there until 1924. (Appendix T, page 8)

Edwin Hodges (1853–1939) bought *Hazelwood* in 1916 (*Forbes Advocate* 18 August 1939). Then the family of AG & FM Carr had *Hazelwood* from 1924 to 1948. It was acquired by J Aitken, who sold it to D & D Nash in 1950.

Despite these records of sale, the property remained listed under The Commercial Banking Company of Sydney Ltd through the 1972 Land Titles Charting Maps (Appendix T, pages 8–9)

The bank would have held a mortgage over the property, and even if discharged the title may not have been changed while the mortgage was still registered.

D & D Nash sold the farm to J Broderick in 1978, who renamed it *Oklahoma*, the name still shown on the 2017 edition of the 8531-N PARKES topographic map. Broderick put the property to auction in September 1988 (*Australian Financial Review*), with no sale. Around 1993 the property was sold to the Fisher family, who renamed it *Ponderosa*.

Nearby infrastructure

Historical aerial photographs from 1973 show Lot 504 DP750152 has been mostly cleared of trees (Appendix T, page 9)

Supplementing Appendix T Figures 3-8 (1973) and 3-9 (1993) are official aerial photographs of April 1955 (CAC66), 1963 (Figure 2), and 1967 (Figure 5), These show trees later removed from the paddock east of the subsequent substation.

A dam is located in the paddock surrounded with a couple of mature trees. No buildings were located on the site. (Appendix T, page 9)

There has been other farm infrastructure nearby, closer than the dam. In 1965 a bore was sunk in the southwest corner of the paddock containing the project area (shown in Figures 3 and 4).



Fig. 2: Excerpt from 1963 aerial photograph 1342_03_019 <https://portal.spatial.nsw.gov.au/>



Fig. 3: Aerial view to northeast of sinking of bore 1965



Fig. 4: View to west of bore equipped with pump jack, tank, and trough (© 1966 D Nash)



Fig. 5: Excerpt from December 1967 aerial photograph CAC7016 1622

Discernible on the 1967 aerial photograph (Figure 5) is a dot at the location of the 1965 bore (on the west of the project area). Around 1978 the equipment was removed from the bore; hence it is not visible in the 1993 photographs covering the project area (Figure 7).

A December 1969 aerial view is in Figure 6.

Current aerial photography (Figure 8) shows a waterhole extending northwest from the bore location. This would also receive the fall of water from the project area west to Ridgely Creek.

General comment

The study appears to be based solely on published sources and ones available on the Internet (such as Trove). The several misspellings 'Parks' of the town name are an indication of low local engagement. Had the authors made personal contact with nearby residents, or the Parkes & District Historical Society, they would likely have learnt of additional relevant historical information.



Fig. 6: Aerial view to southwest. The project area is the greener patch before the road. (© 1969 D Nash)



Fig. 7: View to northeast from Henry Parkes Way, showing 'For Sale' signs. The project area is on the right. (© 1993 D Nash)



Fig. 8: Excerpt from Google Maps 2024

Additional references (in year order)

‘HOMESTEAD SELECTIONS’ *Western Champion* 21 January 1898, p.14

<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112287561>

‘Clearing Sale’ *Western Champion* 11 August 1911, p.14

<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article111914968>

‘PARKES PIONEER Death Last Sunday Mr. Edwin Hodges’ *Forbes Advocate* 18 August 1939, p.3

<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article218384425>

Australian Financial Review 14 September 1988

<https://www.afr.com/property/rural-briefs-19880822-k2yu4>

Fredericks, Dan. 2020. ‘Brolgan’ posted on History Parkes blog on 30 June 2020

<https://historyparkes.org/2020/06/30/brolgan/>