



# **ATTACHMENTS**

## ORDINARY MEETING

Thursday 19 February 2026

10:00

Council Chambers

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#### **11 ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING**

##### **11.3 Response to Request for Comment - Environmental Impact Statement – Willavale Park Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) (State Significant Development)**

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ABN 81 011 241 552

## Upper Lachlan Shire Council

All correspondence addressed to the General Manager, PO Box 42, Gunning NSW 2581

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**Taralga Office:** Taralga Community Service Centre, Orchard Street, Taralga NSW 2580

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28 January 2026

NSW Department of Planning and Environment  
Energy Assessments  
4 Parramatta Square  
12 Darcy Street  
PARRAMATTA NSW 2150

Dear Nicholas,

**Re: Request for comments on the Environmental Impact Statement Willavale Park Battery Energy Storage System (SSD 78100252)**

Thank you for the opportunity for Upper Lachlan Shire Council to provide advice on the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Willavale Park Battery Energy Storage System.

Additionally, Council supports the comments/submission made by Goulburn Mulwaree Council (GMC) and seeks additional resources from the NSW Government to enable a more comprehensive and strategic approach to the consideration of the overall impact SSD projects are having on the local community and its infrastructure.

Please note that this submission has been prepared by Council officers. The exhibition period provided did not permit sufficient time for a report to be presented to Council for endorsement, within the exhibition window. The matter will be presented to Council at the 19 February 2026 Ordinary Meeting of Council.

A supplementary submission will be prepared for Council and submitted to the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (the Department) following this Ordinary Council meeting.

Council have reviewed the EIS and Goulburn Mulwaree Council submission, and have identified the following items for the consideration of DPHI in its assessment of the project:

### Visual Impact

Council is concerned regarding the visual impact of the proposed development upon the surrounding rural landscape. The EIS assesses the visual impact of the proposed BESS on the surrounding rural landscape and nearby viewpoints.

The site is located in a rural setting characterised by open paddocks, scattered vegetation, and transport corridors. Visual sensitivity is moderate due to low population density and limited public viewpoints. The key viewpoints are intermittent views of infrastructure from passing vehicles on the Hume Highway and higher visibility from Wollongong Road due to proximity and limited screening vegetation. Nearby rural properties will experience a low to moderate impact depending on distance and vegetation cover. Project elements affecting visual impact include the battery containers and associated infrastructure, perimeter fencing, security lighting, internal access roads and ancillary buildings.

Recommendation:



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- That the applicant considers additional buffer plantings to minimise the visual impacts of the development.
- That the applicant addresses any potential concerns from nearby residents regarding visual intrusion.
- A Landscape and Visual Mitigation plan be prepared in consultation with Council prior to commencement of the project including a commitment to maintain screening vegetation through the operation life of the project.

### Biodiversity Impacts

The Biodiversity Development Assessment Report (BDAR) has been certified by a BAM-accredited assessor. The BDAR appropriately describes the proposed development, outlines the requirement for biodiversity assessment, and includes finalised Biodiversity Offset Scheme (BOS) credit reports. The assessment was undertaken using the Small Area Assessment Module of the Biodiversity Assessment Method (BAM), with adequate justification provided for its use. Supporting documentation includes site maps, diagrams, and identification of IBRA regions, Sub-IBRA units, and Mitchell Landscapes, consistent with BAM requirements.

Following a detailed review of the BDAR, Upper Lachlan Shire Council staff agree with the Concerns raised by GMC Staff in relation to survey timing, data accuracy, and proposed mitigation measures.

These issues have implications for the validity of the BAM data, Plant Community Type (PCT) determination, and biodiversity impact assessment.

### Recommendation:

- Conduct supplementary vegetation surveys during mid-spring (September/November) to accurately capture species richness and abundance. Update BAM data sheets and VIS calculations accordingly.
- Revise PCT classification to reflect actual species composition and update photographic documentation to accurately represent plot context.
- Schedule targeted fauna surveys during spring (September–December).
- Implement proper microbat survey protocols using acoustic monitoring.
- Expand assessment to include additional threatened microbat species.
- Repeat frog surveys during BAM-required seasonal periods.
- Develop and implement a natural area restoration plan for parts of the site to:
- Enhance habitat for native flora and fauna.
- Improve landscape connectivity.
- Provide screening vegetation for visual, noise, and dust mitigation.



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- Deliver long-term biodiversity gains beyond compliance requirements.

Recommendation: Develop and implement a natural area restoration plan for parts of the site to:

- Enhance habitat for native flora and fauna.
- Improve landscape connectivity.
- Provide screening vegetation for visual, noise, and dust mitigation.
- Deliver long-term biodiversity gains beyond compliance requirements. In conclusion, the current BDAR underestimates biodiversity values and does not meet best practice standards for survey timing, data accuracy, and mitigation planning.

Council strongly recommends that the proponent address these deficiencies through revised surveys, updated PCT determination, improved fauna assessment, and inclusion of a comprehensive restoration strategy.

### Accommodation

Council is concerned regarding the housing of construction workers, and the impact of such demand upon the availability of housing in the locality, particularly considering the current low rental vacancies. The use of commercial accommodation will increase the likelihood of booking conflicts beyond major events and seasonal tourism peaks.

Council notes the proponents' willingness to explore opportunities to collaborate with surrounding SSD projects on shared or collocated accommodation options and refer the proponent to HumeLink's SIMP which incorporated a Dedicated Accommodation Coordinator – to manage social impacts under the dispersed accommodation model (<https://www.transgrid.com.au/media/emdcrl/el/humelink-east-noise-and-vibration-management-plan.pdf> (page 9)). The Dedicated Accommodation Coordinator role is envisaged to include dynamic scheduling of bookings, liaison with local governments and monitoring of availability during major events/holiday periods. This would also capture the demand for overnight and visitor accommodation bookings and ensure that there is minimal impact on this market. Collaboration with this role by all SSD projects in the region is recommended.

Recommendation:

- The applicant explore further opportunities in relation to workforce accommodation and provide an updated Workforce Accommodation Plan that has been developed in consultation with impacted LGA's.

### Water

Council advises that it has limited capacity to supply potable and non-potable water for this project. Council is unable to guarantee the supply of water required and the cumulative impact of water usage required to facilitate all the SSD within the LGA is of concern.



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Recommendation: The applicant is to provide information in relation to the proposed water usage and timely requirements so that a complete and thorough understanding of the impact on Council's water sources.

### Waste

The EIS for the proposal outlines waste management measures across the construction, operational, and decommissioning phases. The minimisation of waste and maximisation of recycling are critical to avoid placing undue pressure on Council's landfill facilities. Council raises concern regarding the waste impacts associated with this project and the significant cumulative waste impact of renewable energy developments in the LGA.

Recommendation:

- Prior to commencing construction, a Waste Management Plan detailing specific estimated waste volumes by type, recycling and reuse targets, licensed disposal facilities and transport routes is required to be prepared.

### Cumulative Impact

Council is concerned about the number and scale of State Significant Development (SSD) projects occurring across the Local Government Area (LGA) and surrounding regions. The impacts of these developments extend beyond individual project footprints and have the potential to result in long-term consequences for land use, regional and local infrastructure, the environment, and community amenity. At present, consideration of cumulative impacts is occurring on an ad-hoc basis, without coordinated oversight or clearly defined objectives.

There are currently more than 20 active SSD projects across the landscape, either operational or at various stages of the planning process. As a rural regional Council, the ongoing requirement to review Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs), Environmental Impact Statements (EISs), Responses to Submissions, and Modification Reports is placing significant pressure on Council's limited resources. This is occurring alongside Council's obligation to meet the Minister's Expectations Order 2024 for local development matters.

Given the scale of landscape transformation associated with SSD projects alone, it is timely for Council to advocate more strongly for assistance from the NSW Government. This is particularly important given that the majority of the benefits generated by these projects are realised outside the LGA. Support could include the provision of financial resources to enable the employment of additional specialist staff, or the commissioning of a strategic, region-wide study to assess the cumulative and on-the-ground impacts of SSDs. Similar approaches are already being implemented in regions designated as Renewable Energy Zones.

### Voluntary Planning Agreements

ULSC notes that there is reference to Community Benefits sharing with Upper Lachlan Shire Council within the Social Impact Assessment.

Council welcomes the opportunity to meaningfully discuss potential VPA arrangements.



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Any agreement would be subject to the Voluntary Planning Agreement framework, which would include a public consultation process and the endorsement of Council.

### Recommendation:

- Should the Department grant consent to this project, Council requests that a condition of consent be imposed requiring that the applicant enter into an agreement with Council in line with the Benefit Sharing Guideline as a minimum.

### Conclusion

The scale and pace of SSD within the Region demands more than isolated, project by -project assessment. Coordinated oversight is required and without this, the cumulative impacts remain poorly managed. The matters raised within the submission will require a complex assessment by DPHI and Council requests the issues be appropriately considered.

Yours Sincerely

Hugh Waters  
Manager of Planning and Regulatory Services





# Willavale Park Battery Energy Storage System Environmental Impact Assessment

PREPARED FOR

X-ELIO<sup>+</sup>

X-Elio Willavale Park Pty Ltd

DATE

03 November 2025

REFERENCE

0668629



## DOCUMENT DETAILS

DOCUMENT TITLE	Willavale Park Battery Energy Storage System
DOCUMENT SUBTITLE	Environmental Impact Assessment
PROJECT NUMBER	0668629
DATE	03 November 2025
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AUTHOR	Frazer Bayliss
CLIENT NAME	X-Elio Willavale Park Pty Ltd

## DOCUMENT HISTORY

VERSION	REVISION	AUTHOR	REVIEWED BY	ERM APPROVAL TO ISSUE		COMMENTS
				NAME	DATE	
Draft	1.0	Frazer Bayliss	Tom Parry, Lucy Baker	Lucy Baker	25.07.2025	Draft
Final	2.0	Frazer Bayliss	Tom Parry, Lucy Baker	Lucy Baker	01.09.2025	Final
Final	3.0	Frazer Bayliss	Tom Parry, Lucy Baker	Lucy Baker	03.11.2025	DPHI comments addressed



SIGNATURE PAGE

# Willavale Park Battery Energy Storage System

## Environmental Impact Assessment

0668629



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CLIENT: X-Elio Willavale Park Pty Ltd  
PROJECT NO: 0668629      DATE: 03 November 2025      VERSION: FINAL 03

WILLAVALE PARK BATTERY ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEM

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WILLAVALE PARK BATTERY ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEM

## GLOSSARY

Terminology	Description
Applicant	X-Elio Willavale Park Pty Ltd
Project	Willavale Park Battery Energy Storage System
Project Area	The area to which this Development Application applies, which covers approximately 189.87 ha.
Development Footprint	The maximum area directly impacted by Project construction and operation of the BESS. This covers approximately 21.15 ha, including 5.47 ha of Wollongorang Road that requires upgrades.
Subject Area	Subject area for individual assessments will differ commensurate with the relevant legislation and guidelines for individual aspects

## LEGISLATION, POLICIES, AND GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

Terminology	Description
BC Act	<i>Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016</i>
EP&A Act	<i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i>
EP&A Regulation	Environmental Planning & Assessment Regulation 2021
CIA Guidelines	Cumulative Impact Assessment Guidelines for State Significant Projects'
Goulburn Mulwaree CSP	The Goulburn Mulwaree Community Strategic Plan 2042
Goulburn Mulwaree LEP	Goulburn Mulwaree Local Environmental Plan 2009
Goulburn Mulwaree LSPS	Goulburn Mulwaree Local Strategic Planning Statement
HIPAP 4	Hazardous Industry Advisory Paper No. 4 – Risk Criteria for Land Use Safety Planning
HIPAP 6	Hazardous Industry Planning Advisory Paper No. 6 – Guidelines for Hazard Analysis
IAP2	International Association of Public Participation
ICNG	Interim Construction Noise Guideline
NPI	Noise Policy for Industry
PBP 2019	Planning for Bush Fire Protection 2019
Planning Systems SEPP	State Environmental Planning Policy (Planning Systems) 2024
Regional Plan	The South East and Tablelands Regional Plan 2036
Resilience and Hazards SEPP	State Environmental Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards) 2021
RNP	Road Noise Policy



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## WILLAVALE PARK BATTERY ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEM

Terminology	Description
Solar Guideline	Large-Scale Solar Guideline
SSD Guidelines	State Significant Development Guidelines

## MANAGEMENT PLANS

Terminology	Management Plan
ACHMP	Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Management Plan
BMP	Biodiversity Management Plan
CEMP	Construction Environmental Management Plan
CNVMP	Construction Noise and Vibration Management Plan
CSES	Community and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy
ESCP	Erosion and Sediment Control Plan
PAMP	Pest Animal Management Plan
TMP	Traffic Management Plan

## GENERAL ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Acronym/ Abbreviation	Description
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACHAR	Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report
AEP	Annual Exceedance Probability
AHIP	Aboriginal Heritage Impact Permit
ALP	Australian Labor Party
APZ	Asset Protection Zone
BAM	Biodiversity Assessment Method
BDAR	Biodiversity Development Assessment Report
BESS	Willavale Park Battery Energy Storage System
CBF	Community Benefit Fund
CEEC	Critically Endangered Ecological Community
CER	Clean Energy Regulator
COP	Conference of Parties
DAFF	Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry



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## WILLAVALE PARK BATTERY ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEM

<b>Acronym/ Abbreviation</b>	<b>Description</b>
DCP	Development Control Plans
DPHI	Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EMF	Electromagnetic field
EMS	Environmental Management Strategy
EPI	Environmental Planning Instrument
EPL	Environmental Protection Licence
ERM	Environmental Resources Management Australia Pty Ltd
ESD	Ecologically Sustainable Development
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
FRNSW	Fire and Rescue NSW
GDE	Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GW	Gigawatts
ha	Hectares
HHA	Historic Heritage Assessment
IBRA	Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation for Australia
ISP	Integrated System Plan
km	Kilometre
kV	Kilovolt
kVA	Kilovolt-amperes
kW	Kilowatts
kWh	Kilowatt hours
LAIA	Land and Agriculture Impact Assessment
LALC	Local Aboriginal Land Council
LCA	Land Category Assessment
LCVIA	Landscape Character and Visual Impact Assessment
LGA	Local Government Area



## WILLAVALE PARK BATTERY ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEM

<b>Acronym/ Abbreviation</b>	<b>Description</b>
LGA	Local Government Area
LNP	Liberal National Party
LRET	Large-scale Renewable Energy Target
LSC	Land Soil Capability
LUCRA	Land Use Conflict Risk Assessment
MP	Member of Parliament
MW	Megawatts
MWh	Megawatt hours
NEM	National Electricity Market
NIA	Noise Impact Assessment
NML	Noise Management Levels
NSW	New South Wales
NSW	New South Wales
O&M	Operations & Maintenance
OSOM	Over Size, Over Mass
PCT	Plant Community Type
PMF	Probable Maximum Flood
PNTL	Project Noise Trigger Levels
RAPS	Registered Aboriginal Parties
RET	Renewable Energy Target
SA1	Statistical Area Level 1
SAII	Serious and Irreversible Impact
SCADA	Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition
SEARs	Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements
SPV	Special Purpose Vehicles
SSD	State Significant Development
SUA	Significant Urban Area
TEC	Threatened Ecological Communities



WILLAVALE PARK BATTERY ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEM

<b>Acronym/ Abbreviation</b>	<b>Description</b>
TIA	Traffic Impact Assessment
UCL	Urban Centres and Localities
UN	United Nations
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
VIS	Vegetation Integrity Score
VPA	Voluntary Planning Agreement
VPH	vehicle trips per hour




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## REAP DECLARATION

<b>EIS declaration</b>	
<b>Project details</b>	
Project name	Willavale Battery Energy Storage System
Application number	0668629
Address of the land	20542 Hume Highway, Wollogorang NSW
<b>Applicant details</b>	
Applicant name	X-Elio Willavale Park Pty Ltd
Applicant address	Level 7, 67 Palmerston Crescent, South Melbourne, VIC 3205
<b>Details of person by whom this EIS was prepared</b>	
Name	Frazer Bayliss
Address	Level 14 / 207 Kent Street, Sydney NSW 2000
Professional qualifications	Bachelor of Biology, Masters of Aquatic Ecology 5 Years experience
<b>Declaration by registered environmental assessment practitioner</b>	
Name	Lucy Baker
Registration number	142379
Organisation registered with	Planning Institute of Australia
Declaration	<p>The undersigned declares that this EIS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has been prepared in accordance with the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021;</li> <li>• Contains all available information relevant to the environmental assessment of the development, activity or infrastructure to which the EIS relates;</li> <li>• Does not contain information that is false or misleading;</li> <li>• Addresses the Planning Secretary's environmental assessment requirements (SEARs) for the project;</li> <li>• Identifies and addresses the relevant statutory requirements for the project, including any relevant matters for consideration in environmental planning instruments;</li> <li>• Has been prepared having regard to the Department's State Significant Development Guidelines - Preparing an Environmental Impact Statement;</li> <li>• Contains a simple and easy to understand summary of the project as a whole, having regard to the economic, environmental and social impacts of the project and the principles of ecologically sustainable development;</li> <li>• Contains a consolidated description of the project in a single chapter of the EIS;</li> <li>• Contains an accurate summary of the findings of any community engagement; and</li> <li>• Contains an accurate summary of the detailed technical assessment of the impacts of the project as a whole.</li> </ul>
Signature	
Date	03.11.2025





EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

# Willavale Park Battery Energy Storage System

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

This summary provides a non-technical overview of the Project and assessment outcomes only and should be read in conjunction with the environmental impact statement (EIS) and supporting technical reports.

Sustainability is our business

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## What is the Project?

The Willavale Park Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) (the Project) involves the construction, operation and decommissioning of a battery energy storage system and associated infrastructure. The Project aims to support the provision of cheap, reliable and clean electricity for homes and businesses in NSW.

The Willavale Park BESS would support the stabilisation and reliability of electricity supply by storing energy generated by solar, wind and low-carbon alternatives, releasing it during peak times. This would assist in reducing carbon emissions and human induced climate change, supporting the ongoing clean energy transition. The Project will also provide significant economic benefits to the regional and state economy.

The Project is located along the Hume Highway, approximately 22 km west of Goulburn and 25 km east of Gunning. The land is used for agricultural activities and is situated within the Goulburn Mulwaree Local Government Area.

The BESS will be constructed in a fenced compound that will also include the substation, switching station, operation & management facility and construction and laydown area.

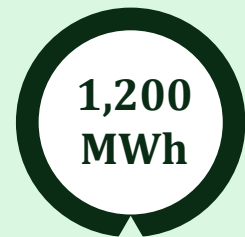
The Project intends to use a Tesla Megapack BESS model comprised of 324 lithium-ion battery units, with a total targeted electricity storage capacity of 300 MW / 1,200 MWh. The BESS will be pre-assembled and pre-tested, meeting the required Australian Standards and legislated safety requirements

The Project has gone through a design process that considers community and stakeholder feedback, and constraints identified during detailed environmental, heritage, hazard and social studies.

The Project would connect to the existing 330 kilovolt (kV) Yass-Marulan transmission line.



**Battery Storage**



**Energy Delivery**



**Development Footprint**



**ERM**

Willavale Park BESS Executive Summary

# Who we are? **X-ELIO**

Elio Willavale Park Pty Ltd (as Trustee of X-Elio Willavale Trust) is a wholly owned company of X-Elio.

X-Elio is a global leader in renewable and sustainable energy development and has successfully delivered renewable energy projects globally. X-Elio has recently entered the Australian renewable energy market, acting as developer for renewable energy generation and storage projects.

X-Elio is committed to best practice community and stakeholder engagement, and has a strong focus on Greenhouse Gas reduction and the preservation and improvement of the ecosystem.

## Project Description



Located at 20541 Hume Highway



Development Footprint of 26.14 ha.



A BESS with a capacity of up to 360 MW / 1,200 MWh.



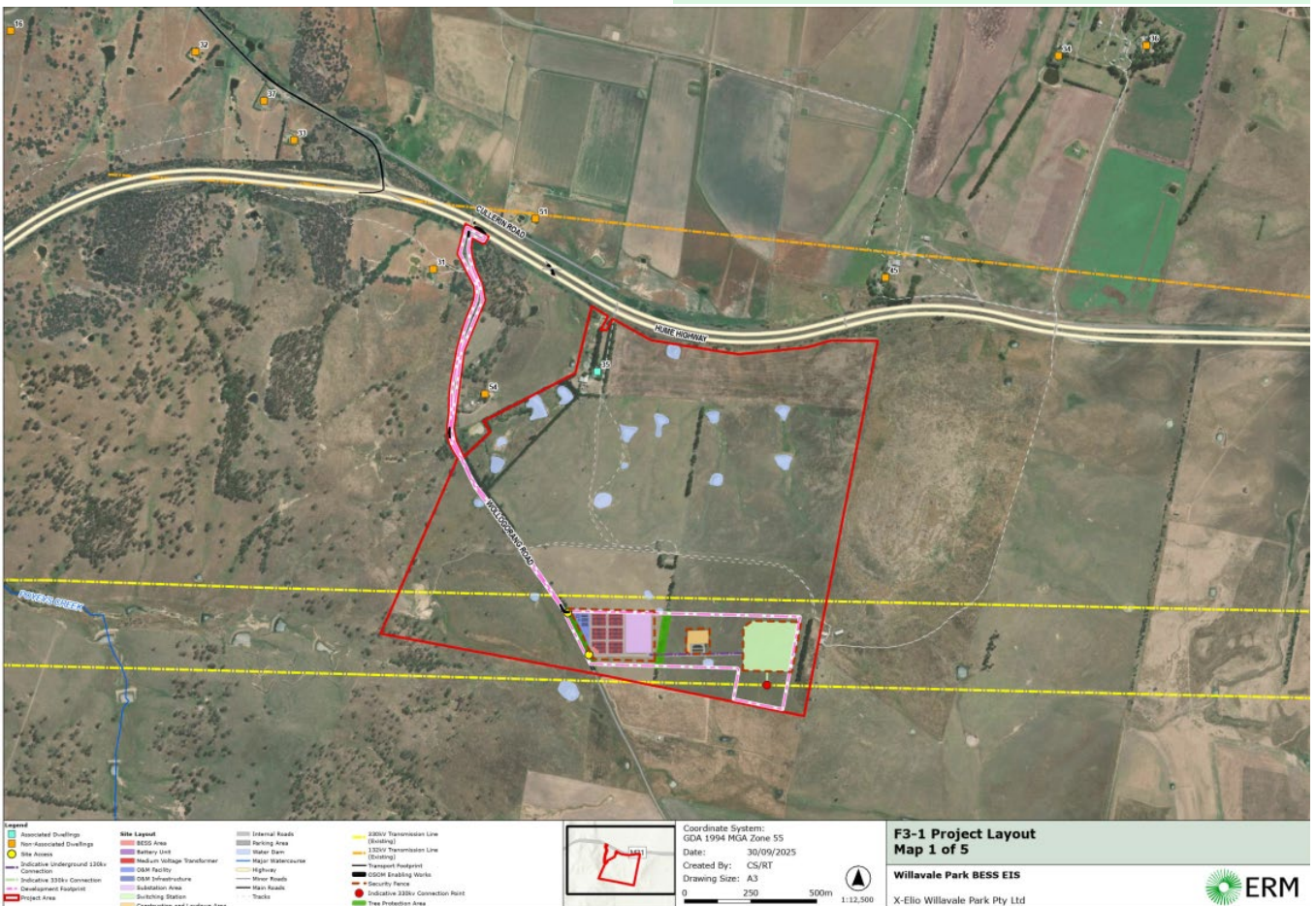
Site access and localised road upgrades and site access on Wollogorang Road



Temporary construction facilities.



Grid connection via the existing 330 kV Yass-Marulan transmission line.



# Why is the Project needed?

Both the Commonwealth and NSW Governments have made commitments to increase renewable energy generation and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Willavale Park BESS will help facilitate clean energy transition, providing a reliable source of renewable energy storage, contributing toward reduced greenhouse gas emissions and the impacts of climate change.



## The long-term, regional benefits of the Project



Minimise adverse environmental impacts.



Recycle and reuse materials where practical and economically feasible.



Ensure quality, safety and environmental standards are maintained.



Benefits to local and regional economy, services and infrastructure.



Average construction workforce of 70, peak construction workforce of 100, and an operational workforce of five.



Benefits to the local community, through establishment of a Benefit Sharing Scheme, and procurement of local goods and service.



**ERM**

Willavale Park BESS Executive Summary

4

# What is the planning process?

**Willavale Park BESS requires approval under both NSW and Commonwealth environmental and planning legislation. Under NSW planning legislation, the Project is State Significant Development (SSD) and therefore requires approval under Part 4 of the NSW *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act).**

The Project may also require assessment and approval under the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) due to potential impacts on matters of national environmental significance. The Project will be referred under the EPBC Act prior to approval.

An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) has been prepared to outline the Project, its potential impacts (positive and negative), how these impacts are proposed to be mitigated, managed and offset.

The NSW Minister for Planning (or delegate) or the Independent Planning Commission (IPC) will decide if the Project gets approval to proceed. The IPC will be the approval authority if:

- Public objections to the Project exceed 50;
- Any reportable political donations are made by X-Elio; or
- If the local Council objects to the Project.





## 01

### Early Consultation

Prior to lodging a development application (DA) for an SSD project, the Applicant must consult with DPHI. Following consultation, the Applicant must prepare a Scoping Report to request the environmental assessment requirements (SEARS) for the project.

The SEARS will identify the information that must be included in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Project and the community engagement that must be undertaken.



## 02

### Prepare EIS

The applicant must prepare the EIS in accordance with the SEARS.

The purpose of the EIS is to assess the economic, environmental and social impacts of the project and help the community, government agencies and the consent of authority to make informed submissions or decisions on the merits of the project.



## 03

### Exhibit DA

All SSD DAs must be exhibited publicly for at least 28 days.

This acknowledges the importance of community participation in the SSD process and gives the community a right to have a say on these projects before a final decision is made.



## 04

### Respond to submissions

After exhibition, DPHI will publish all submission and ask the applicant to prepare a Submissions Report.

The purpose of the Submissions Report is to give the Applicant a chance to respond to the issues raised in submissions and help the consent authority evaluate the merits of the DA.



## 05

### Assess DA

After publishing the Submission Report, DPHI will assess the merits of the DA and prepare an Assessment Report.

This may include further community engagement, requesting additional information from the Applicant, seeking advice from Government agencies and independent experts and preparing recommended conditions of consent.



## 06

### Determine DA

The independent Planning Commission or a delegate of the Minister of Planning will be the consent authority for the DA.

They must evaluate the merits of the DA against the matters in section 4.15 of the EP&A Act and may approve the DA (subject to modifications or conditions) or refuse it.

## Design Strategy

The Project has been designed in consideration of environmental, social and engineering constraints, and significantly, guided by the outcomes of engagement with key stakeholder groups.

Key drivers to minimise and avoid environmental and social impacts included:

- **Avoid** – in the first instance, all efforts were made to avoid potential environmental and social impacts;
- **Minimise** – where potential impacts could not be avoided, design principles aimed to minimise environmental and social impacts, as far as feasibly possible;
- **Mitigate** – mitigation strategies will be implemented to manage the extent and severity of remaining environmental and social impacts; and.
- **Offset** – environmental and social offsets will only be used following all efforts to first avoid, minimise and mitigate environmental impacts

## Design Evolution

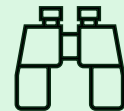
**Avoid Biodiversity Impacts** – The Project was initially proposed as a solar farm development. However, the solar facility has been fully removed from scope to reduce the Development Footprint and avoid potential impacts to native vegetation and associated biodiversity values. Knowledge of biodiversity values has informed design, with the Development Footprint preferentially utilising low conservation value land, demonstrating a significant avoidance of native vegetation and local biodiversity value.



**Protect Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Values** – Aboriginal cultural heritage values have been identified within the Project Area and impacts have been avoided where practicable, ensuring their preservation.



**Minimise Visual Impacts** – Site selection and Project layout natural topographical and vegetation features to minimise impact on visual amenities.



**Minimise Land Disturbance** - Site selection considered topographical features and proximity to the existing transmission line to ensure that construction and operation of the BESS would require minimal works.



**Upgrade of Local Infrastructure** - Inclusion of the External Road Works Study Area into relevant assessments to ensure that potential impacts of upgrades along Wollogorang Road are thoroughly assessed and appropriate mitigation actions are determined. Upgrades to this road are supported by surrounding neighbours



**Support Agricultural Enterprise** – Project design avoids all farm dams, which are to be retained to support continued agricultural practices.



## Anticipated Development Timeline

### Q2 2026

Mobilisation and site establishment



### Q1 2027

Construction and installation of infrastructure



### Q2 2028

Commissioning of infrastructure



### Q3 2026

Earthworks, construction of roads, foundations and conduits



### Q1 2028

Plant energisation and connection



## Community and Stakeholder Engagement

### Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborate and Empower.

X-Elio is committed to ensuring that concerns and comments from the public are considered, and that attempts are made to avoid, minimise, or mitigate potential impacts from the Project where possible. Engagement was based on the principles of authenticity, responsiveness and transparency, and underpinned by the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) Quality Assurance Standard as the engagement best practice guideline

Engagement interactions have been recorded since Project inception. These engagements have been facilitated through various activities, including community information events, letters, meetings, emails and phone calls. Additionally, a Project website has been established to provide Project updates and respond to Project enquiries:

Project Website: [Willavale Park BESS](#)

Throughout the engagement activities, the Project development team received feedback on a variety of issues from the community and regulators. This feedback has considered in Project design and evolution.

X-Elio recognises the importance of consistent, targeted and meaningful engagement. It will continue to create opportunities for stakeholders and the local community to provide input and feedback throughout the planning approval process, construction and operations.

All interactions to be recorded in X-Elio's stakeholder and feedback database.



# Biodiversity

**The Project would predominantly be situated on non-native grasslands. Impacts to biodiversity features have been avoided, where possible, minimising impacts on native vegetation and habitat. No Serious and Irreversible Impacts are anticipated.**

The extent of native vegetation within the Project Area is 2.98 ha, with a single Plant Community Type (PCT) identified:

- PCT 3376 - *Southern Tableland Grassy Box Woodland* (2.95 ha); and
- PCT 3747 - *Southern Tableland Western Hills Scribbly Gum Forest* (0.13 ha).

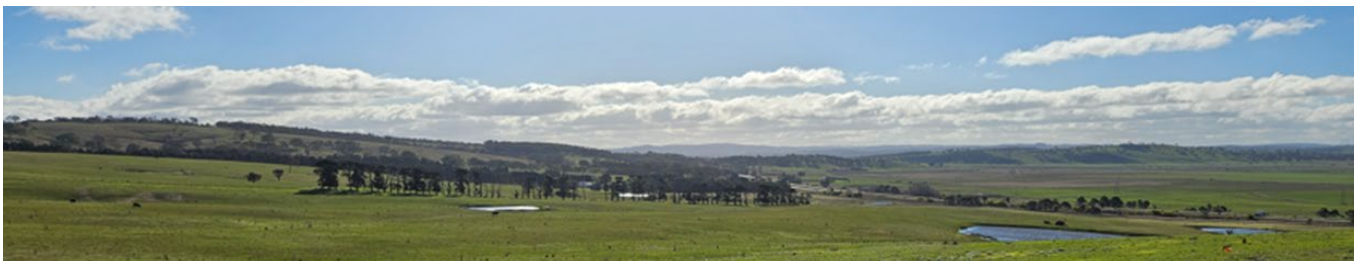
PCT 3376 is considered to be representative of the Threatened Ecological Community (TEC) *White Box – Yellow Box – Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland*, which is considered a Critically Endangered Ecological Community (CEEC).

The Project Area also comprises 2.33 ha of suitable habitat for Striped Legless Lizard (*Delma impar*), restricted to areas of native vegetation (0.36 ha) and non-native vegetation (1.97 ha) within Wollogorang Road reserve.

Despite avoidance and minimisation principles being applied, native vegetation and associated habitats will be directly impacted. In accordance with the Biodiversity Assessment Method (BAM), direct impacts to ecosystem credits and species credits would require offset:

- 1.12 ha of PCT 3376;
- 0.36 ha of native vegetation habitat for Striped Legless Lizard; and
- 1.97 ha of non-native vegetation habitat for Striped Legless Lizard (recommended)

Residual and indirect impacts that may occur because of the Project include introduction of pest species, increased predation, reduced viability of habitat, and fertiliser drift.



Impacts to biodiversity have been avoided or minimised through the design process. By refining the Project layout, direct disturbance of native vegetation, TECs and native species habitat has been minimised, with approximately 94 % of the Development Footprint situated on low conservation value land. This demonstrates a significant avoidance outcome for locally occurring biodiversity values.

Where the potential for impacts could not be avoided, mitigation measures have been proposed to manage the extent and severity of any residual impacts. The EPBC Act referral has been reviewed by DCCEEW (Commonwealth) and decision has been issued confirming that the Project is not a controlled action.

The Project has reserved opportunities for improved function of habitat, retaining areas of functional native vegetation. This will maintain ecological connectivity, reduce edge effects, and support long-term habitat viability for native flora and fauna species. Residual impacts on habitat will be offset by retiring biodiversity credits through the NSW Biodiversity Offset Scheme.

## Aboriginal Cultural Heritage

**ERM and GreenPulse would like to acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the Goulburn Mulwaree region and pay respects to their Elders past, present, and emerging. We acknowledge and respect their Indigenous knowledge systems and recognise continuing connection to lands, waters, culture, and community.**

The Project is located in the Pejar Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC).

An Aboriginal cultural heritage assessment has been prepared to assess the potential impacts of the Project on Aboriginal cultural heritage. Cultural heritage values for the Project Area were identified through detailed desktop investigations, consultation with local Aboriginal communities, and an aboriginal heritage survey. All Registered Aboriginal Party's (RAPs) were invited to provide feedback on cultural heritage significance, with a representative from the Pejar LALC assisting with the heritage survey.

Four sites of Aboriginal cultural heritage value are located with the Project Area, three artefact sites and one Culturally Modified Tree. Two of the identified sites could be impacted during the upgrade works to Wollogorang Road upgrades, and therefore the following mitigation measures would be implemented:

- Salvage works for the impacted artefact site, undertaken in consultation with RAPs; and
- A 5m buffer would be placed around the Culturally Modified Tree

The two other Aboriginal sites are located outside areas of disturbance, and therefore no impacts are anticipated. **As such, Aboriginal sites are preserved and protected.**

An Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Management Plan will be developed prior to construction in consultation with the RAPs and DPHI. This will record and describe the processes and procedures required to be implemented regarding Aboriginal cultural heritage.

15

RAPs  
Consulted

1

Salvaged  
Aboriginal Artefact

5m

Buffer zone

## Historic Heritage

There are no registered historical heritage sites, places or properties within the Project Area listed on relevant statutory heritage databases.

The Project Area has low archaeological potential, with any potential features, such as rubbish pits or postholes, unlikely to yield new historical insights or hold significant research value

**As such, the Project Area has low historic heritage value, and the Project will have negligible archaeological impact.**





















































































































































































































































































































































































































































































































