

In response to requests and questions from Council and the Somerset community during the Development Application process, we have conducted additional assessments and developed strategies to minimise visual impacts on the surrounding area.

The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has been updated as part of the project's Development Application (DA) process. Community feedback has played a key role in shaping the project design, ensuring that potential visual impacts are carefully considered. The updated LVIA outlines the mitigation measures that will be implemented to minimise impacts on the surrounding landscape.



What is a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA)?

The LVIA is an objective assessment of how the BESS project may affect landscape and the scenic qualities of the area. The LVIA identifies where key public and private viewpoints are located and how the BESS may impact these views. It guides the project by providing strategies to retain and protect landscape character and scenic amenity when viewed from these key public and private locations.

What did council and the community request?

Council requested additional assessment to ensure that the BESS will have no unreasonable adverse impacts to the landscape and scenic qualities of the area. The Council also requested assessment of additional key viewpoints and that photomontages illustrate the development when viewed from the locations at the beginning (Day 1) of BESS operations, as well as once the vegetative screen has grown/matured.

As part of the additional LVIA, a mail drop was undertaken to surrounding properties to request access to take photographs so that the visual impact to adjacent properties can be assessed. Adding additional private viewpoints has allowed us to consider how the BESS can be seen from private land, and how this will be screened by vegetation.

Key takeaways

- The BESS project has been halved in size from 800MW to 400MW following community feedback and further project design.
- The project will plant trees and shrubs (vegetative screen) to minimise views of the BESS.
- The landscape plan will investigate plantings that allow for the screen to establish and advance to target heights as soon as possible.
- Fire safety requirements will inform the screening design and species choice.
- Vegetative screens will be installed as soon as practicably achievable.
- The BESS project will be visually obscured by native vegetative screening that blends in with its surrounding context.

What's next

We are committed to following-through on the requirements of the report as the project progresses. These will include:



Detailed design: The project will undertake detailed design to implement the landscape screening strategy, including species selection and staging.



Operational plans: The project will finalise an Environmental Management Plan to address the establishment of landscaping, including regular maintenance and monitoring.



Regulatory oversight: All measures will align with relevant guidelines and environmental regulations.



Ongoing community engagement: We will engage with the community and consult with near neighbours regarding landscape outcomes.

We appreciate your continued engagement and remain committed to listening to the community and keeping you informed as the project progresses.

Assessment outcomes

The LVIA report concludes that without screening, the project may be visible from both public and private viewing locations when viewed from the north, south and east of the Project. This is from distances that are relatively close; within and up to 1km from the BESS.

A **landscape screening strategy** has been developed to ensure **no adverse visual impacts**.

This strategy will ensure that the distinctive and attractive natural landscape qualities of the Somerset Region are retained and protected.

Implementing the vegetative screening will shield views of the BESS site from key public and private viewing locations.

The LVIA's findings state that the BESS would produce **minor to negligible effects** to its surrounds with the installation of a vegetative screen.



View towards the site from the south-east, near Esk-Kilcoy Road.

Year 1: Initial Vegetation



Year 2: Intermediate Growth



Final Landscape Plan

What does the landscape screening strategy propose?

To ensure that the project is integrated in to the landscape, the BESS will be screened from:

- Public road viewing corridors including Esk Kilcoy Road and Gregors Creek Road; and
- North, south and east rural residential zones that are accessed from New Country Road, Sienna Place, Koala Court, Kookaburra Crescent and Esk Kilcoy Road.

Species selection: Native species selected to integrate into the surrounding environment.

Growth rates: Fast growing species will establish rapid screening.

Mature plantings: Vegetative screens will be installed where practical, relocated or mature plant stock will be ordered and ready for installation. Large, advanced plant stock will be preordered ready for installation. This will allow for the screen to establish and advance to target heights as soon as is practical. Species selected will also consider bushfire requirements.

Planting area: Vegetation buffers to be established around the BESS area, subject to detailed design and ongoing consultation with near neighbours.

Regular maintenance: The project is committed to undertake proactive maintenance of the landscape screen to ensure effective screening. Where possible, local contractors and suppliers will be engaged to support ongoing maintenance, providing opportunities for local businesses.

Further information

Please contact hazeldean@enervest.com.au for specific queries or to subscribe to project updates.

You can also visit our website at enervest.com.au/project/hazeldean-bess/