

Heywood BESS FAQs

April 2025



The Project

What is the project?

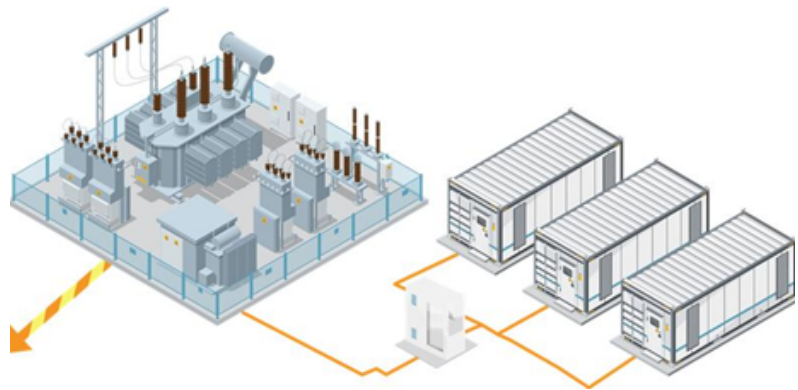
Atmos Renewables (Atmos) is proposing a utility-scale battery energy storage system (BESS) located north of the Heywood Terminal Station, at 100 Golf Course Road (the Site).

This project aims to provide additional stability and storage for the national electricity market (NEM), by charging electricity from the grid ready for discharge at other times when needed. The conceptual capacity is expected to be up to 300MW / 1,200MWh.

What does a BESS development look like?

The typical BESS development components include:

- Battery units, inverters and transformers arranged in modular blocks. A typical battery unit is approximately 3 – 3.5m tall and will be screened by landscaping outside a perimeter fence.
- Safety management systems such as temperature control, ventilation, and fire control systems.
- Internal substation and transmission connection to a nearby terminal station (in this case, an underground cable to the Heywood Terminal Station).





Project Advantages

A BESS (Battery Energy Storage System) is a technology used to store electricity for later use. It provides various benefits which are outlined below:

- Store excess electricity allowing it to be used when there is peak demand.
- Provide backup power during outages.
- Provide grid support by smoothing voltage fluctuations, improving grid stability. The BESS can quickly discharge stored energy to stabilize the grid when there's a spike in demand, or absorb excess energy when demand is low, helping maintain a stable frequency on the grid.
- Reduced carbon emissions by reducing the reliance on fossil fuels.

In summary, a BESS offers numerous advantages in terms of grid stability, renewable energy integration, energy cost reduction, environmental impact, and operational flexibility. It plays a crucial role in modernizing the energy grid and promoting the transition to clean energy systems.



Insurance

Will neighboring landowners insurance premiums increase?

BESS technology is designed with multiple layers of safety, including fire suppression systems, secure enclosures, hardstand areas and cleared protection zones. As long as they comply with stringent regulations that ensure safe operation, BESS Projects do not pose a significant risk to neighbouring properties and therefore will not increase insurance premiums for neighbours.

The Insurance Council of Australia put out a statement in May 2024 advising that they are not aware of any instances where Insurance Council members have been unable to provide insurance or have increased premiums as a result of a farm (or a neighbouring property) hosting energy infrastructure.

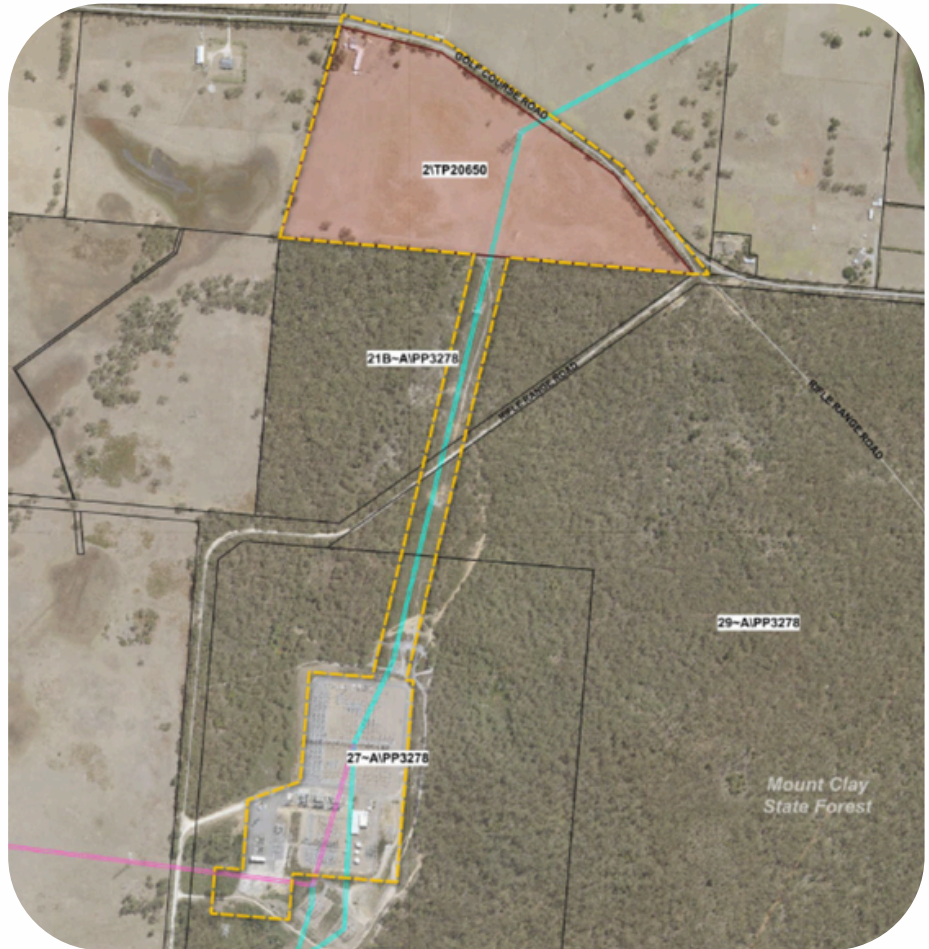
Atmos Renewables will maintain their own comprehensive insurance coverage to address any accidental events or risks associated with the battery facility. This insurance will cover potential damages, including those that could affect surrounding properties ensuring that neighbouring property owners are not financially impacted by any unplanned, offsite impacts. If you are a neighbouring landowner with further questions about insurance risks, we are happy to discuss additional ways to address your concerns.

Where is the Site?

The Site is 5 km south-east of Heywood, 2 km west of the Heywood Golf Course, on the north-west side of Mount Clay State Forest. It is surrounded by rural land generally used for agriculture and some rural residences.

The BESS will connect to the Heywood Terminal Station via an underground transmission cable, to be located within the existing 500kV cleared easement that runs between the Heywood Terminal Station and the site.

Atmos has secured an option to purchase the land, with the 18-hectare Site currently used for sheep grazing and an owner-occupied dwelling (that will be vacated).



Why has this location been selected?

The Site is suited to a BESS development due to its:

- Proximity to the Heywood Terminal Station, meaning no additional overhead transmission is needed
- Topography: The Site is generally level, reducing bulk earthworks
- Location in the Farming Zone away from high density residential areas and surrounded by rural/agricultural land
- Minimal environmental constraints: the Site is cleared of native vegetation
- Ability to meet EPA noise protocol limits

How much land is required for the Project?

The area of physical development for the BESS and infrastructure is approximately five hectares, subject to detailed design. The transmission connection (underground cable) will be approximately one kilometre long to reach the Heywood Terminal Station.

What technical work is informing the Project?

To ensure that the Project's design responds to its context, environmental considerations and neighbours, a suite of specialist technical investigations are being undertaken to inform the layout. These include engaging specialist consultants for:

- Hydrology (water runoff and drainage)
- Traffic & transport (appropriate and safe routes to site, access and parking)
- Ecology (flora and fauna)
- Cultural heritage (Cultural heritage management plan (CHMP))
- Noise
- Landscape and visual impact
- Fire and bushfire risk (hazard and risk analysis and management)
- Agricultural impact

Atmos is committed to avoiding, minimising and mitigating potential impacts. We will only proceed with the development if it can be planned and managed to satisfy all safety requirements.

How long will the BESS operate?

The Heywood BESS will have a design life of approximately 25 years. At the end of this period, it may be possible to extend the operations of the project for a further period. Decommissioning of the BESS will occur once the operational phase has finished.

What happens at the end of project operations?

The project will be decommissioned at the ultimate end of BESS life and the land restored to its previous state.

Decommissioning will involve de-energising and removing the BESS units and other above-ground infrastructure (e.g. maintenance buildings, and substations). Below ground infrastructure (cables) are typically de-energised and left in-situ. Areas are covered in topsoil and revegetated/restored. Atmos is fully responsible for decommissioning.



What approvals are required?

The Heywood BESS requires planning approval from the Minister for Planning. The planning permit assessment determines the appropriateness of the proposed land use and development to its location.

The Project will require other approvals, including grid connection and a cultural heritage management plan (CHMP). Atmos is committed to ensuring the Project considers, addresses and mitigates relevant considerations and risks.

Cogency Australia (Cogency) have been engaged to support the planning permit application and community and stakeholder engagement. It is anticipated that a planning permit application will be lodged with the Minister for Planning in April.

Atmos have been undertaking technical site suitability assessments during the past year. Upcoming technical work and community engagement will inform the final design of the BESS and the planning permit application.

A significant number of stakeholders contribute to the assessment processes and must be satisfied to achieve approvals. These include:

- The Victorian Department of Transport and Planning (DTP)
- Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA)
- Country Fire Authority (CFA)
- Environment Protection Authority (EPA)
- Federal Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW)
- Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO)
- Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation (GMTOAC)
- Glenelg Shire Council
- Ausnet



What are the benefits for the local community?

The key community benefits of the Project include:

- Direct investment and local contracting opportunities, particularly in civil works and fabrication
- Contribution to a growing sector with other energy projects in the surrounding area, allowing critical mass in education, skills training and contracting opportunities
- A significant community benefit-sharing scheme (minimum of \$50,000/year for the life of the project), with opportunities for meaningful investment in Heywood organisations and projects, as well as the broader LGA
- Indirect and flow-on economic benefits, particularly during the construction period.
- Electricity market benefits, with energy storage contributions able to lower wholesale electricity prices.

Will there be community engagement undertaken?

- Atmos is a signatory to the Clean Energy Council's 'Best Practice Charter' and is committed to proactive stakeholder and community engagement. Atmos have already engaged with adjacent neighbours directly, and have mailed all neighbours within approximately 2.5 kilometres of the BESS to introduce the Project and offer to meet and discuss it.
- Atmos have already met with Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation (GMTOAC) and will continue to explore opportunities for support and collaboration, alongside undertaking a Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP).
- As the Project progresses, we will continue to make contact with people interested in the Project, and will host more public information sessions.

Atmos and Cogency hosted a stall at the Wood, Wine & Roses Festival on 22 February which provided an opportunity for anyone interested in the Project to speak with the project team.



When will the Project be constructed?

The Project is in a pre-application phase, with technical work being undertaken to inform the design and support a planning permit application. A planning permit approval (as well as grid connection and other approvals) are required before construction can commence. It is anticipated that construction could commence by the end of 2026.

What kind of jobs will the project create during construction and operation?

The project team is committed to ensuring the community benefits from the construction of the Heywood BESS by diversifying the regional economy with new local job opportunities. We will seek to prioritise local contractors during both construction and operation, including landscaping, civil earthworks, concreting, gravel supply, haulage, cranning, fencing, security, electrical and site management services.

If you are interested in providing goods and services to the proposed Heywood BESS, please register your interest via info@atmosrenewables.com.au or on our website at <https://atmosrenewables.com.au/contact/contractor-and-supplier-eoi-form/>

We do not expect to commence contracting opportunities until closer to anticipated construction commencement in late 2026.

How will the project be monitored and managed safely following construction?

The Heywood BESS will be monitored and managed by a dedicated operations team, ensuring compliance with environmental regulations and safety standards. Its operation will be subject to dozens of conditions on the planning permit, assisting in minimising risks in relation to fire, noise, hydrology, flora and fauna and cultural heritage.

Safety measures include rigorous site design, regular maintenance, and adherence to industry standards for battery storage and fire safety.



How long is the construction period and

Typically, a project like this will take 12-18 months to construct, with periods of higher or lower on-site activity. Construction will take place within certified hours, between 7am to 5pm Monday to Friday and 7am to 1pm on Saturdays. There will be no works on Sundays or public holidays. Some delivery of oversized components may be required by authorities to occur outside of these hours.

Will there be any traffic impacts?

During the construction phase, the level of traffic generated is expected to have a minimal impact on the broader road network. There is anticipated to be increased traffic on Golf Course Road from the corner of the Henty Highway to the Site turn off (~1km) during the construction period. The majority of traffic generated by the project will be generated during the construction / installation phases associated with trade persons, facility staff and deliveries.

During the future operational phase, the level of traffic generated will be significantly reduced due to the low employee intensity requirements of the facility, and traffic will have a negligible impact on the surrounding road network.

Atmos will prepare a Traffic Management Plan within a broader Construction and Environmental Management Plan, to ensure that construction period access is safely managed. At peak construction, approximately 100-150 construction jobs will be created.

What are the mitigations to manage construction traffic?

There will be various measures implemented to manage the increase in traffic along Golf Course road, these include:

- Direct engagement with the community: Providing advance notice to residents through letter drops and phone calls outlining expected traffic volumes and peak periods
- Traffic scheduling & restrictions: Where feasible, scheduling heavy vehicle movements outside of peak residential access times (e.g., school runs, peak commuting hours) to minimise disruption. If an event is on along Gold Course Road, there is the option to limit construction deliveries on event days
- Traffic Controllers & Signage: Temporary traffic controllers or clear signage in critical sections to enhance safety and awareness, particularly along Golf Course Rd
- Implementing reduced speed limits to improve safety and minimise disturbances
- Radio communications between construction vehicles at all times

Are road upgrades required for the project?

There are no road upgrades proposed for Golf Course road with traffic volumes to generally return to existing volumes once construction ceases.



Impacts and Risks

Will the BESS make noise?

Detailed noise studies are undertaken to ensure noise generated during BESS operation meet the applicable noise criteria at all nearby houses and businesses. This is 34dB at night (10pm to 7am), 39dB in the evening (6pm to 10pm) and 45dB during the day (7am to 6pm). Most people would consider 45dB to be hardly perceptible. It is the sound you may experience in a quiet library or office.

Mitigation measures implemented to reduce noise include orientating cooling fans away from houses and operating fans at lower speeds during cooler conditions (typically evening and night).

The project layout has been carefully designed to ensure compliance with the noise standards and minimise noise impacts on the nearest neighbours.

How do you address visual impacts?

A detailed assessment of visual impact has been undertaken, and photomontages (visualisations of the Site in a landscape photo) prepared to help assess the impact of the project from nearby dwellings and other public viewpoints. Landscaping or screen planting is the most effective strategy for mitigating the visual impact of this project.

Landscaping works at surrounding dwellings is a key measure to mitigate visual impacts from the project.

Are there any impacts to the environment?

The BESS has been purposefully located on land already cleared and disturbed for grazing use and avoids areas with high ecological value. Atmos are committed to low-impact development and flora and fauna studies have informed the design layout. The underground cable to the Heywood Terminal Station will utilise the existing transmission easement to avoid clearing trees within Mt Clay Forest.

The concept design has been informed by hydrology modelling to ensure that the hardstand drains to a constructed detention pond sufficiently large to capture all water runoff, with the ability to isolate the pond in case of any contamination from fire-water runoff. In the unlikely event of contaminated runoff, the detention pond will be isolated and emptied to an approved facility. This will ensure that there is no surface or groundwater contamination.

What is the level of risk to the facility from a bushfire burning within the Mt Clay Forest?

In assessing the risk of bushfire impact upon the facility, the fire risk assessment has considered the likely bushfire behaviour in the surrounding landscape. Within southeast Australia, the influence of the hot north westerly winds followed by a south westerly wind change dominates the elevated bushfire risk days. The bushfire will need to be burning under a south westerly wind influence to threaten the BESS area. It is acknowledged that bushfires can burn under other wind directions however these are expected to burn with less intensity due to the reduced temperatures and increased fuel moisture content.



What is the approach to fire risk management?

Fires associated with a BESS are rare but as with any electrical or industrial installation there is a small fire risk. BESS facilities are designed to prevent fires and meet the requirements of CFA guidelines. The CFA Guidelines are focussed on preventing fires from leaving an energy facility and spreading into the surrounding landscape.

BESS units are designed with non-combustible surface materials (e.g., gravel hardstands), separation distances between BESS components, fire suppression systems, firefighting infrastructure and water storage on site, and other monitoring and early detection sensors. An Emergency Response Management Plan will also be developed.

In consultation with the CFA, the BESS units are set back a minimum of 80 metres from Mt Clay State Forest on cleared agricultural land to minimise bushfire risk. The entire BESS footprint area will be hardstand with gravel finish, meaning zero vegetation within its perimeter.

Is Electric and Magnetic Fields (EMF) a risk ?

Operational electrical equipment, such as transmission lines, transformers and the electrical components found within BESS units, inverters produce EMF. The largest source of EMF is generally around the substations perimeters where transmission lines enter the compound. Battery and inverter components are enclosed which provides EMF shielding.

Studies show that EMF attenuates rapidly with distance and EMF levels at the security fence of a project are negligible. The project is not anticipated to have any off-site EMF impacts and electric fences 20m or more from BESS equipment will not be impacted by EMF fields.

How to get Involved

We want to ensure the Heywood BSSS benefits the local community and we value your input at this early stage.

To learn more about the Heywood BESS, please scan the QR code below or visit our website at:

www.atmosrenewables.com.au/project/heywood-bess/

If you have any questions or feedback, please contact us at:
HeywoodBESS@atmosrenewables.com.au

Atmos is committed to open and transparent engagement with the community and all interested parties. We take your thoughts, questions and comments seriously.



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