

BRIEFING DETAILS

BRIEFING DATE / TIME	Thursday, 12 October 2023, 1:00pm – 2:45pm.
LOCATION	MS Teams Teleconference

BRIEFING MATTERS

- PPSHCC-239 – Port Stephens – DA 16 -2023 - 383 – 1 - 1154 Clarence Town Road, Seaham 2324 Battery Energy Storage System (BESS)
- PPSHCC-240 – Port Stephens – DA 16 -2023 - 382 – 1 - 1154 Clarence Town Road, Seaham 2324 Battery Energy Storage System (BESS)
- PPSHCC-241 – Port Stephens – DA 16 -2023 - 384 – 1 - 1154 Clarence Town Road, Seaham 2324 Battery Energy Storage System (BESS)
- PPSHCC-242 – Port Stephens – DA 16 -2023 - 385 – 1 - 1154 Clarence Town Road, Seaham 2324 Battery Energy Storage System (BESS)
- PPSHCC-243 – Port Stephens – DA 16 -2023 - 386 – 1 - 1154 Clarence Town Road, Seaham 2324 Battery Energy Storage System (BESS)
- PPSHCC-233 – Port Stephens – DA 16 -2023 - 470 – 1 - 103 Cabbage Tree Road, Williamtown 2318 Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and associated works

PANEL MEMBERS

IN ATTENDANCE	Alison McCabe (Chair), Ryan Palmer and Giacomo Arnott
APOLOGIES	Tony McNamara, Roberta Ryan
DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	None

OTHER ATTENDEES

APPLICANT REPRESENTATIVES	Mark Ihlein, Kerry Nichols, Aprajita Gupta, Ron Lucerne-Knight and Rob Ashdown, Ian Boake, Patrick Gardiner, Renton Parker
COUNCIL ASSESSMENT STAFF:	Ryan Falkenmire, Rean Lourens, Courtney Sargent
DEPARTMENT STAFF	Leanne Harris and Holly McCann

KEY ISSUES DISCUSSED
Planning Panels Secretariat

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COUNCIL BRIEFING:

PPSHCC-239, PPSHCC-240, PPSHCC-241, PPSHCC-242 and PPSHCC-243:

- 5 separate development applications on one site, each with a 5 mega-watt capacity.
- Overview of the site and surrounding context, two existing dwellings, relatively flat, cleared where BESS are to be located and flood prone and vegetated through the middle of the site.
- Each DA contains the access road and supporting infrastructure.
- Internal referrals underway including EHO, ecology and engineering.
- There are engineering issues with the access road and flood standard which will require filling and may have potential ecological impacts.
- NSW Office of Water referral outstanding.
- Council requires a clear survey plan, clarification of easements and additional stormwater details.
- More information on operational noise (including the cooling system) is required.
- Ausgrid have not identified any issues.
- A hazard analysis has not yet been provided. Council needs to better understand safety measures, battery failure and possibly electromagnetic assessment.
- Notification has just finished and 2 submissions have been received to date.
- The submitted landscape plan is not sufficient.
- Council had concerns with the applicant's approach of submitting 5 applications with an overall cost of \$85 million and possible SSD triggers.

PPSHCC-233

- 1 BESS, 4.98 mega-watt capacity.
- BESS is located in the middle of the site, to the rear of an existing shed and dwelling.
- Overview of the APZ, landscaping and access road from Cabbage Tree Road.
- Site constraints - proposing to fill as the land is subject to flooding and is mapped as bushfire prone (grassland).
- Council has issued an RFI -require further noise impact assessment and further information in terms of flood risk assessment.
- Ausgrid have not identified any issues.
- Department of Defence have raised concerns in relation to glare and lighting, recognising that the facility will need to comply with CASSA requirements.
- No submissions received.
- There is a lack of detail about how the facility will connect to the Ausgrid network and likely impacts of this.
- No visual impact assessment provided.
- Landscape plan insufficient.
- Clarification and need for an Acid Sulphate Soil management plan and minor contamination investigation is required.

APPLICANT BRIEFING

- Overview of the development / battery systems
- Applicant explained the separate applications on the Clarence Town Rd site is to align with commercial operations and leasing arrangements with each BESS to operate independently with a separate connection to the network.
- Applicant currently considering RFIs and more details is being provided in relation to
 - visual impact analysis based on survey information and use of Colourbond 'haze' rather than white,

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- lighting details,
- proposed liquid cooling system - closed system to maintain a constant temperature,
- decommissioning - supplementary information and plan to be provided, including site remediation plans, noting that at this stage decisions about decommissioning are still quite some time away,
- inbuilt fire suppression system,
- preliminary hazard analysis, and
- cumulative impact assessment.

Only shared facility will be access, and APZ

PANEL COMMENTS

- The Panel expects the applicant to provide factual and accurate supporting information for each of the DAs, including accurate survey and visual analysis with RLs, full details of any proposed landscaping and detailed engineering including civil plans, earthworks etc.
- With the 5 DAs on the one site the Panel advises that it will consider these applications concurrently and will need to assess cumulative impacts (ie hazard analysis, stormwater, visual analysis etc) and will want to understand staging and shared / individual infrastructure arrangements (APZs, access road, water supply tanks, fencing etc). Clear plans are required to articulate these arrangements with all the batteries to be located on the plans.
- It is noted that if approved the first DA will need to provide all the base / shared infrastructure.
- The Panel will consider the cumulative impacts of all application on the site and from known DAs and SSDs in the locality.
- The Panel want a clear understanding of lighting impacts and request consideration be given to minimal lighting given the rural nature of the sites.
- Risks associated with fire and hazard were discussed at length and need to be duly considered in the assessment of the applications, including the adequacy of gravel access roads for the types of emergency vehicles that will be used.
- The Panel want a clear understanding of what happens in times of flood when sites are potentially inaccessible for periods of time.

The Panel expect the applicant to respond efficiently to Council's RFIs and will look to schedule further briefings if required.

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