

Steel River East Battery Energy Storage System

Community update #2
November 2024



Ausgrid is in the early planning stage for a battery in Steel River Industrial Estate to add energy storage to the local electricity network.

We want to hear from the local community to help us better understand how the project might affect you.

We are proposing a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) to be next to the existing Ausgrid substation in the Steel River Industrial Estate, Mayfield West.

We are preparing the Environmental Impact Statement and want to connect with the local community and answer any questions you might have. The feedback we get from this consultation will help shape the project.

This community update outlines some of the potential environmental and community impacts of the project, and lets you know how you can learn more and provide your feedback.

This battery will store 400MWh of energy – that’s enough to power over 27,000 Ausgrid households a day.

As we switch to renewable sources like solar and wind power, we need more energy storage to make sure we have power when the sun isn’t shining, and the wind isn’t blowing. This will mean we can provide our customers with more sustainable, more reliable and more affordable power.

NSW needs six times more energy storage before 2030. Projects like the Steel River East BESS are important to help keep our electricity supply stable.



Steel River East BESS will be located next to the Ausgrid substation at 1 McIntosh Drive, Mayfield West. The site is surrounded by commercial and light industrial properties, with the nearest residential property 400m to the south.

Planning process

The Steel River East BESS project will be assessed as a State Significant Development, under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act (NSW) 1979*. An important step in the Steel River East BESS project's State Significant Development Application (SSDA) is talking to stakeholders and the community about the project and seeking their feedback. This helps us to better understand how a project may affect the environment and community and shape the project as we progress design.

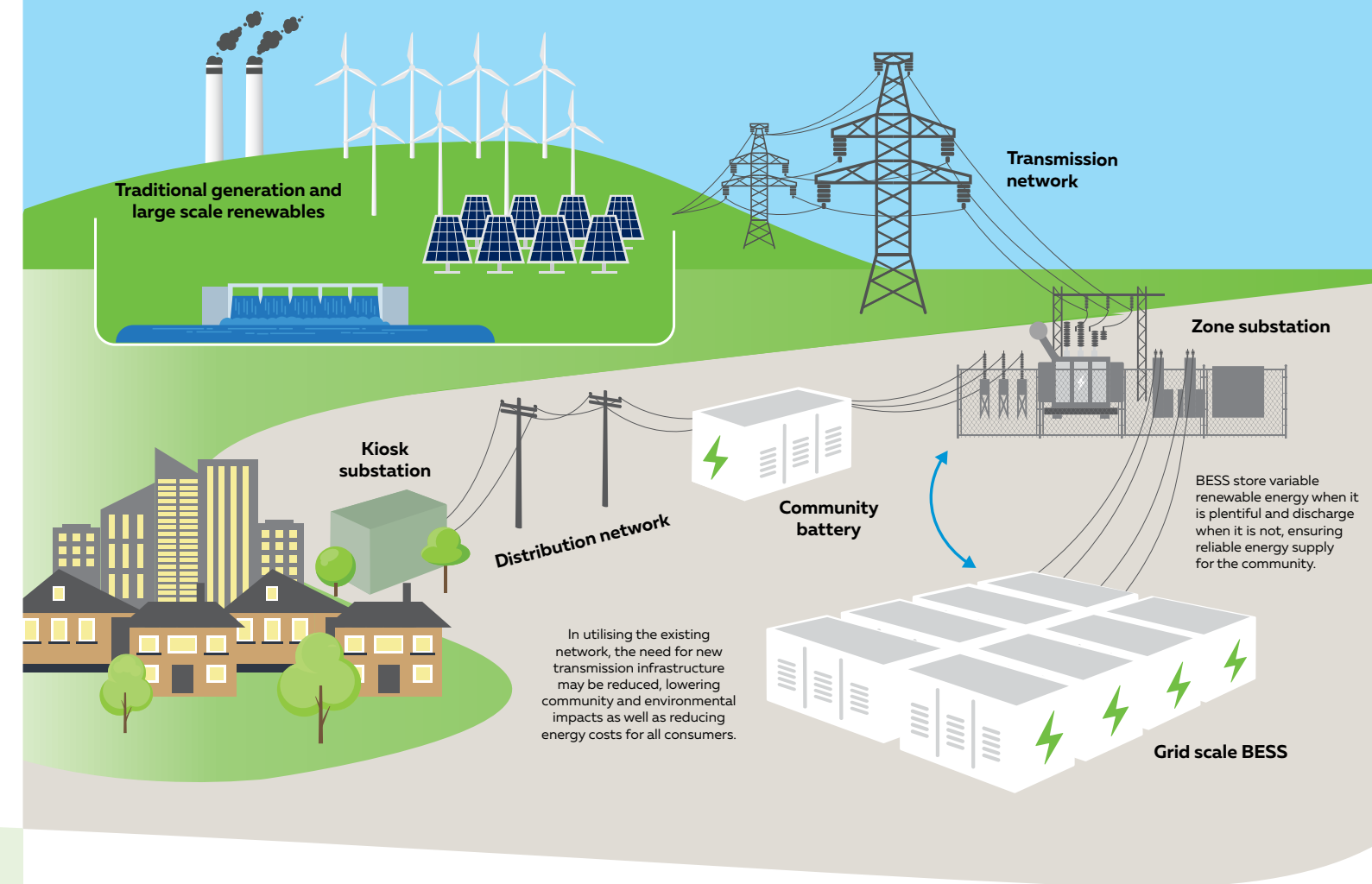
Ausgrid is now engaging with community and stakeholders. The results of these engagements will be reported on in an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) will be placing the EIS on Public Exhibition, where anyone from the public will be able to view it and lodge formal feedback on the development application.

We are currently preparing an EIS and expect it will be on public exhibition in early 2025.

ONGOING COMMUNITY CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

We are here

- 1 **Late 2024**
 - Submit Scoping Report to NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Industry and request SEARS
 - Prepare Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)
- 2 **Early 2025**
 - Submit EIS to NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Industry
 - EIS Exhibition
- 3 **Mid 2025**
 - Project determination
- 4 **Mid to late 2025**
 - Start construction



Understanding the possible impacts

We want to understand the potential impacts on our project's neighbours and the local community. Our studies and management plans on the below impacts will be made available during the EIS Public Exhibition.



Noise

A BESS requires fans to keep the batteries cool. These fans can create some noise depending on the weather and outside air temperature. We are currently preparing a Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment that will test how much noise is created by our units. This assessment will also report on how we will manage noise during construction and how we will make sure noise stays within the accepted levels set out by the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA).



Traffic and transport

Steel River Industrial Estate has good access from Industrial Drive and well-designed roads for increased numbers of truck movements and traffic associated with construction. Ausgrid is preparing traffic studies and will create a Traffic Management Plan for both the construction and operation of the BESS. We know that managing access carefully is important for our neighbours and their customers, staff and visitors.



Local environment

The proposed site for the BESS is covered in thick vegetation, including many weeds. We are proposing to clear the site and remove some trees. We chose the Steel River East substation site for a BESS because there will be limited environmental impact. We anticipate no significant effects on local vegetation or wildlife. Ausgrid is working with environmental and planning authorities to manage impacts on drainage and land contamination onsite.



Safety and hazards

At Ausgrid, we have high safety and reliability standards. If an idea or initiative doesn't meet these standards, it simply won't proceed. A fire from a BESS is rare. In the unlikely event of a fire, most are very small and affect only one unit of the battery. BESS are designed, tested and fitted with automatic safety systems to reduce the risk and impact of fire. Ausgrid is working with the relevant fire safety authorities to make sure that hazard management plans are in place before the batteries are switched on.

What is a BESS?

A Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) is a group of large rechargeable batteries, connected to form one very large battery. BESS collect energy, store it when there is a lot and then release it when there is high demand for electricity. These large batteries are critical to ensuring the reliability of electricity supply for households and businesses.

By connecting BESS to our existing substations, we are reducing the impact on our communities and the environment, and decreasing the need to build more large transmission and distribution lines, which helps reduce costs and makes electricity more affordable.

Ausgrid is also connecting community batteries to our network infrastructure.

Community batteries are the same technology, at a smaller size and help manage energy from roof top solar, locally.

The benefits of BESS include:



Enabling more renewable energy



Reducing the need for new transmission lines



Local construction jobs



Improving grid stability and reliability



Enabling more affordable electricity

Get involved

Information sessions

We are holding a series of pop-up information sessions and invite you to come to them to learn more about the project.



Saturday 16 November 2024
10am – 12pm

Mayfield Library,
104 Hanbury Street, Mayfield



Tuesday 19 November 2024
3pm – 5pm

Mayfield East Shopping Village,
Maitland Road, Mayfield



Wednesday 20 November 2024
10am – 12pm

Warabrook Shopping Centre,
3 Angophora Drive, Warabrook

Tell us what you think

We want to hear from local community members about our project and answer your questions.

You can meet our project team at an upcoming information session. You can also complete a survey to provide your feedback.



Survey is available at our project website at: yoursay.ausgrid.com.au/steelrivereastbess

Survey closes Sunday 8 December 2024.

Who is Ausgrid?

Ausgrid is a distribution network service provider. We operate, maintain, repair and build the electricity network in Sydney, the Central Coast and the Hunter. We distribute electricity to your home or business, maintain existing infrastructure, and invest in new technologies to make the network more sustainable, reliable and affordable. We also need to make sure the network is ready for our customers' future needs.

Find out more

There are many ways you can stay up to date with the project and have your say by visiting our project website at yoursay.ausgrid.com.au/steelrivereastbess

The website includes:

- upcoming community engagement opportunities
- project information, facts sheets, and newsletters
- recorded online presentations about the project, delivered by our Project Team.

We want to hear from local community members about our project and answer your questions.

Register to stay up-to-date or contact our project team for more information.



yoursay.ausgrid.com.au/steelrivereastbess



1800 574 044

Monday to Friday 9am to 4:30pm



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If you need an interpreter, please call the Translating and Interpreting Service on **131 450** and ask them to call the project team on **1800 574 044**. The interpreter will then help you with translation.