

Bunyip North Energy Storage

Social Impact Assessment Summary

In October 2026, Environmental Resources Management (ERM), completed the Social Impact Assessment (SIA) Report for the proposed Bunyip North Battery Energy Storage System (the Project). This assessment looked at how the Project might affect local communities, both positively and negatively, and suggested ways to increase benefits and reduce challenges. The full report is available on the project website.

Project Overview

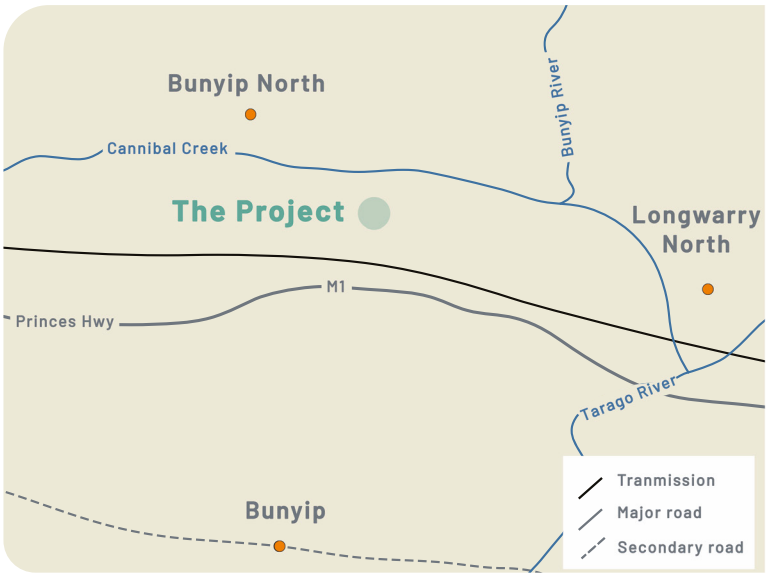
The proposed Bunyip North Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) is located in Bunyip North, Victoria. The project is being developed by RES and will provide battery storage to support the reliability of the electricity network and the transition to renewable energy.

The Project will include:

- battery energy storage units capable of storing and dispatching electricity to support the grid.
- associated electrical infrastructure, including inverters, transformers, underground cabling and connection equipment.
- supporting infrastructure such as access tracks, internal roads, drainage, fencing, landscaping and operational facilities.

The location was chosen for:

- Being close to transmission infrastructure needed to connect stored energy to the grid.
- Suitable access for construction, operation and maintenance activities.
- The ability to support electricity network reliability while minimising environmental and community impacts.





In planning for Australia's clean energy future, RES acknowledges its rich history. We pay our respects to the Bunurong People of the Kulin Nation, the Traditional Custodians of Country on which the Bunyip North Project is proposed.

We recognise their ongoing connection to land, water, wildlife and community and pay our respects to Elders past and present.

The Process

ERM gathered information from desktop research, feedback from community engagement undertaken between August 2025 and September 2026, 11 stakeholder interviews representative of different stakeholders within the community, and written correspondence from community members. This helped identify community needs, concerns, and potential benefits and impacts.





The Results

ERM identified eleven potential social impacts. None were rated as Major after enhancement measures or management measures were applied. Two impacts were rated Positive. Of the remaining nine, six have a Moderate residual rating in at least one phase, and three were rated Minor or Negligible.

A residual impact rating describes the impact expected to remain after measures to increase benefits or reduce negative impacts have been applied. The ratings should therefore be read alongside the measures outlined in this summary.

Table 1 provides an overview of the potential social impacts identified and assessed, including their residual impact rating after enhancement measures or management measures are applied.

Overview of Social Impact Assessment Results

- 11 potential social impacts assessed
- Up to 75 construction jobs and 5 operational jobs
- Local purchasing is expected to benefit businesses in both phases.
- Two impacts rated Positive
- Six impacts rated Moderate in at least one phase
- Three impacts rated Minor or Negligible

Potential Social Impact	Construction Phase residual impact rating	Operational Phase residual impact rating
Creation of local jobs: up to 75 jobs during construction and 5 jobs during operation.	Positive	Positive
Economic benefits for local businesses: purchase of local goods and services.	Positive	Positive
Reduced community cohesion: non-local workforce, potential to increase pressure on services. Mixed local attitudes toward renewables.	Moderate	Moderate
Reduced trust and confidence in community engagement: meaningful, direct, and transparent engagement – focused on building trust, responding to stakeholder concerns, and maintaining clear communication is essential to managing social impacts and fostering community support.	Moderate	Moderate
Accommodation of non-local workforce: demand from construction workers on local short-term accommodation. Expected to be manageable due to the small workforce and accommodation demand is likely to be spread across larger regional centres.	Minor	Negligible
Skills shortages: short-term skills shortages during construction due to demand for specialist renewable energy, electrical, civil and construction skills. Recommended measures include appropriate workforce planning, local training pathways and targeted upskilling initiatives.	Minor	Negligible
Pressure on local services: potential for increased construction workforce and increased demand on local infrastructure, goods, services and social facilities.	Minor	Negligible
Land use concerns and property values: perceptions the project is incompatible with existing rural and agricultural land uses and potential to devalue surrounding property. Research on renewable energy projects and property values shows mixed results.	Minor	Moderate
Social amenity: concerns about protection of rural character, agricultural land, visual, light and noise impacts. Recommended measures focus on reducing visible, physical and day-to-day disruption from the Project, while keeping nearby residents and communities informed.	Minor	Moderate
Cultural heritage: No known heritage places are in the Project Area. The Moderate construction rating reflects the potential for unexpected finds, which will be managed under the Cultural Heritage Management Plan.	Moderate	Negligible
Community health and safety: perceived or actual risks associated with BESS infrastructure, fire and emergency response, construction traffic, heavy vehicle movements, noise and lighting. Recommended measures focus on managing actual safety risks and community perceptions of risk associated with construction and operation of the BESS.	Moderate	Moderate

How the Project will maximise benefits and reduce impacts

Subject to receiving the required government approvals, the Project will implement measures such as:

- Local Employment Plan and local content initiatives
- Training and job readiness programs
- Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan
- Cultural Heritage Management Plan.
- Traffic Management Plan
- Worker Code of Conduct
- Environmental Management Plans for construction and operation.

The Project will also monitor these measures to make sure they're effective.

The Project will also consider community benefit initiatives identified in the SIA including:

Community Benefit Fund: A flexible funding mechanism to support locally identified priorities, such as community events, social cohesion initiatives, infrastructure improvements, environmental projects and community resilience. It is intended to deliver transparent, long-term and locally responsive benefits.

Neighbour Shared Benefit Scheme: A targeted benefit-sharing mechanism for immediate neighbours, likely based on proximity to the Project and level of potential impact. It aims to provide direct, proportionate and transparent benefits to nearby landholders, while supporting trust and social acceptance.

Community Infrastructure Support: Support for new or upgraded community infrastructure within the Primary Social Study Area, including projects that respond to community needs, strengthen local capacity, improve shared facilities, and deliver social, environmental or economic outcomes.

Upskilling / Worker Transition: Initiatives to support local workforce development, skills pathways and participation in the energy transition. This could involve training, vocational education, partnerships with education providers and opportunities for local workers, First Nations communities and businesses.

Small Business Procurement Participation: Support to help local and regional small businesses participate in renewable energy procurement processes. This initiative focuses on improving supplier readiness, local industry capability, access to contracting opportunities and broader local economic development.

Educational Partnerships: Partnerships with schools, TAFEs or other education and community organisations to support renewable energy learning, skills development, career pathways, environmental education and long-term community capacity building.

To view more information about the proposed Bunyip North BESS, please visit the project website: bunyipnorth-energystorage.com



Contact the Team

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🌐 bunyipnorth-energystorage.com

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Or scan the QR code

We welcome your questions and feedback — contact our Project Team by email, or visit the website to learn more and register for updates.