

## Hume North Battery Energy Storage System

### Project FAQs

August 2023

#### **1. What is a battery energy storage system?**

Battery energy storage systems (BESS) operate by charging from an energy source then storing that energy until it is required for use. They are an innovative technology in that they respond almost instantly to the needs of the energy market at any given time. This makes BESS a valuable asset as they can offer a stable source of energy supply when renewable energy, such as solar or wind energy, has variable output.

#### **2. Why does the region need more energy storage?**

The Australian and New South Wales (NSW) Governments are committed to increasing the use of clean, reliable energy to secure future energy supply across the country. With Liddell Power Station recently closing and other carbon-emitting, coal-fired power stations also now expected to be closed years ahead of schedule, NSW needs to rapidly grow its capacity to produce and store clean, renewable energy and achieve net-zero emissions targets by 2050.

#### **3. Who is Foresight?**

Foresight is a leading infrastructure and private equity investment manager, managing over 1.1 gigawatts of renewable energy generation capacity as well as investment funds and other assets. Foresight (formerly Infrastructure Capital Group) acquired Meridian Energy Australia and the unbuilt, previously approved Hume BESS development in Lake Hume Village in 2022. Foresight's Australia headquarters is in Sydney, NSW.

#### **4. Why is a BESS being considered for this location?**

Foresight is proposing to build a new 74MW / 148 MWh BESS at 32 Trout Farm Road, Lake Hume Village, on the land it acquired in 2022. The BESS would deliver a significant new energy-generating capability for the region, boost the local economy, reduce energy prices and contribute towards securing Australia's future energy supply. The proximity of the project site to the local road network, and Transgrid's existing transmission line, avoid the need for a longer transmission line or additional road infrastructure. The proposed Hume North BESS would have no impact on operation of the Hume Dam, or the Hume Hydro Power Station.

#### **5. Will the existing BESS approval in Lake Hume Village be surrendered?**

In 2020 the Department of Planning and Environment granted approval for a 20 MW / 40 MWh BESS at 62 Murray Street, Lake Hume Village. The proposed Hume North BESS at 32 Trout Farm Road would have a larger storage than the approved Hume BESS development, based on the known year-round energy ratings on the existing 132 kV transmission line. If the application for the BESS at 32 Trout Farm Road is approved, the existing approval for a smaller BESS at 62 Murray Street would be surrendered. Only one BESS will be built in the area.

#### **6. What approvals are required for the project?**

The project is seeking approval under Division 4.7 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act). The consent authority for Project would be the NSW Minister for Planning and Public Spaces or the NSW Independent Planning Commission.

#### **7. How will Foresight gather feedback from the community and stakeholders?**

We are committed to consulting the community and stakeholders at each key stage of the planning process and prior to submitting a planning application to the NSW Department of Planning and Environment. We will ensure that we consult with a wide range of community members in Lake Hume Village and its surrounds, including tourists and other visitors to the area.

**8. How would the construction process be managed to minimise disruption?**

The construction phase would be anticipated to last around 12 months, with all construction activities undertaken during standard daytime construction hours. It is expected that approximately 50 full time workers will be required during the peak construction period. The workforce would be sourced from the local area as far as possible. Accommodation for non-local construction staff is expected to be sourced through available short-term accommodation in the surrounding area.

There would likely be additional vehicles in the area throughout the construction period, including some heavy vehicle transportation. Trout Farm Road would be upgraded as the access point to the project area, to provide safe access for construction vehicles and equipment.

We will consult the local community, businesses and Transport for NSW early, to ensure that any transportation impacts are managed in a way that minimises disruption to residents and visitors to the area, and that any potential dust, noise, traffic or visual impacts are minimised as much as possible.

**9. What safety features are included in the design of the BESS?**

An inbuilt advanced Battery Management System regulates the battery to avoid it being overcharged, losing charge, or overheating. An assessment of any potential hazards, including bush fire, will be undertaken before the planning application is submitted, with the outcomes informing the subsequent design, construction, testing, operation, and maintenance of the proposed BESS. Construction and operation will meet all NSW Government safety regulations, with all plans developed in consultation with NSW Rural Fire Service, Fire and Rescue NSW, and Albury Council.

**10. How will the community benefit?**

The Hume North BESS would create local jobs during both construction and operation, and likely bring increased revenue for local businesses and services including in trades, accommodation, hospitality, and logistics.

**11. Would the BESS produce any noise, once operational?**

During operation, cooling fans used to maintain the temperature of the battery are likely to produce some noise comparable to that of a standard air conditioning unit. Once operational, noise levels would be monitored in line with NSW Government guidelines so that any noise is not considered intrusive to the average person. An assessment of likely construction and operation noise impacts, and recommended technology to avoid or minimise noise, will be undertaken before the planning application is submitted.

**12. What would the Hume North BESS look like?**

BESS facilities are typically containerised, modular systems. The Hume North BESS would be located at the maximum set back distance from nearby roads to minimise potential visual amenity impacts. The existing terrain would provide some screening between the BESS and surrounding areas. It would not likely be visible from Lake Hume and the associated recreation areas. During the planning process we will consult neighbouring landowners, the local community, businesses and key stakeholders on the proposed changes to the visual amenity and consider this feedback during the design process. If required, the Hume North BESS would include further vegetation screening.

**13. How would environmental concerns be managed?**

The proposed location at 32 Trout Farm Road, Lake Hume Village is considered to have a reduced environmental impact in comparison to the previously approved Hume BESS development. We will consult with local and regional environmental groups, as well as neighbouring landowners, businesses owners and the wider community, to ensure we are aware of all environmental concerns and that these are considered as part of the planning and approvals process. This will include ensuring the endangered squirrel glider population in the area is not negatively impacted.

**14. How do I find out more?**

Call our free community information line on 1800 061 321, or email [humbessenquiries@ForesightGroupau.com](mailto:humbessenquiries@ForesightGroupau.com). Our phone line is monitored Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm.