

Presentation notes #1/2

Having spent two decades living and working at [REDACTED] have developed a deep understanding of the Hume North BESS site and its environs, as well as the local plants and wildlife. This experience allows me to provide informed perspectives and meaningful input to the IPC.

The following are issues that are troubling me regarding the proposed BESS.

SSD PROCESS

The entire procedure is unnecessarily complicated. I've had to sift through thousands of pages, much of which is repetitive and mentally exhausting. The documents often refer to other sections, figures, or appendices, making it feel as if it's purposely designed to make people give up. My father, who was wise but unrefined, used to say, "Baffle them with bullshit." That seems to perfectly describe Foresight's approach here.

Explains

LANARK AS A SITE FOR THE BESS

Foresight already had a site for the BESS, directly opposite the driveway entrance to 32 Trout Farm Rd. We call this BESS 1. This site (BESS 1) had much lower biodiversity value than the site they are proposing now.

not a lot of shade at
The decision to buy Lanark was rushed, they were driving past the "For Sale" sign 5 days before close of EOI (Expression Of Interest). They had a brief inspection about 2 hours and then did not put their offer in until the real estate agent reminded them at 10 mins before closing.

We were told our property was going to be used for staff accommodation. If we knew the actual reason why Foresight purchased the land & house, we would not have sold to them.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

This engagement has been slanted, i.e. not a level playing field.

The room at Lake Hume for initial meeting was so small that people had to wait outside. There were a lot of Foresight staff at the meeting, and this could be intimidating.

Some people could not find the room, no signage to direct people where to go.

~~The EIS was difficult to read.~~

Foresight ignored my initial submission.

Website notifications did not occur.

Hope today is better

SITE PROBLEMS

-The block is too steep; the site of BESS 1 was much flatter.

- Access onto block from Trout Farm Rd is dangerous, cars & trucks speed down the hill, turning right into Lanark is a risky procedure.

-Moving around the block is dangerous if you get off the bitumen.

-There are easements; one for Trout Farm to access water tanks and an electricity easement behind the house.

-Council Zoning: The neighbouring property to the north, referred to as "Hawksview," is zoned RU2 and complies with all subdivision regulations. Advancement of the BESS project carries the potential to create significant land use conflicts

-Water to site, we had "Stock and Domestic" license, and town water. Neither is appropriate for a BESS

-Water from the site, any water that leaves 32 Trout Farm Rd, is going to end up in the Murray River, any contaminants in the water will also end up in the Murray, with potentially catastrophic outcomes.

- never transferred H₂O license.

-Habitat loss, Lanark was a "hotspot" for native fauna, there was probably no better wildlife friendly garden in the Lake Hume area.

ECOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT GENERALLY

-This is my major problem with the SSD process.

-BCS (Biodiversity, Conservation & Sciences) met Jacobs on site (32 Trout Farm Rd) in June 2023. Nobody with intimate knowledge of the area was included or consulted afterward.**Why not?**

-In my original submission (BESS2) I pointed out that many fauna species had been missed. Foresight was dismissive of my input.

-There has been frequent use of the word "exotic", there is no definition of this word in the EIS and subsequent reports. The word itself has connotations (as in exotic weeds) that are just not appropriate, better words would be "planted", of the planted vegetation most are NSW native species.

- The exceptions being fruit/nut trees.

ECOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT- BATS

The EIS said simply there were no bats, this cannot be true. We lived with many bats, some inside the house, there were so many. They would get caught in doors, windows, fans. Any summer evening bats could be seen doing circuits around the pond, driveway and big tree. Jacobs went looking for bats on a windy winter night. I suggested they go back on a warm summer night. They did not.

ECOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT- REPTILES

We saw a lot of snakes, we knew what to do in their presence, were never harmed by them. We often saw Red Bellied Black Snakes (~~my favourite~~) and Brown Snakes, once we saw a baby Tiger Snake (we think it was dropped by a bird). But most unusual was the **pink snake**, the first time I saw one it was in the house, not so keen on a snake in the house. Our boys caught it in a towel and an esky and escorted it outside. I saw four of these pink snakes in my time at Lanark, once Andrew Lucas held it while I filmed it. He put the film on I-naturalist. This has been **ignored** by foresight.

I believe that I could go back there now, lift a few rocks and find this fascinating pink snake. (I would love someone with expertise in reptiles look at this snake and give us an accurate identification.)

EIS says there are no rock on Lanark. There are rocks on Lanark, and there are snakes.

ECOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT- BIRDS

In my submission I noted that we saw and recognised 120 bird species at Lanark. Some of which had nests and babies there.

Breeding birds at Lanark

Australian White Ibis	Azure Kingfisher
Black Backed Magpie	Common Myna
Crested Pigeon	Diamond Firetail
Galah	Grey Fantail
Grey Shrike Thrush	King Parrot
Magpie Lark	Pacific Black Duck
Rainbow Bee-Eater	Red Rumped Parrot
Sacred Kingfisher	Sulphur Crested Cockatoo
Superb Blue Wren	Tawny Frogmouth
Welcome Swallow	Willy Wagtail
Yellow Rosella	21 species

The diversity of these breeding birds gives an idea of the value of the habitat at Lanark. These birds are not specifically rare or endangered, but there are a lot of them.

Lanark also had some rarer, vulnerable, endangered birds & critically endangered birds,,,read out loud

Barking Owl	Brown Treecreeper
Diamond Firetail	Dusky Woodswallow
Flame Robin	Gang Gang
Gold Finch	Little Eagle
Little Pied Cormorant	Purple Crowned Lorikeet
Swift Parrot	White Breasted Sea Eagle

The Diamond Firetail was the only vulnerable bird we observed breeding at Lanark. The other vulnerable/endangered birds are passing through, sometimes stopping for weeks. I am concerned that their habitat range will be reduced by the projected BESS.

Surely any habitat that supports such a variety of birds should be protected.

SQUIRREL GLIDERS

77
miss

Everybody's favourite.

We have seen these many times on Lanark.

We made entries into i-Naturalist, (under the name Rodney Martin) these have been ignored because we couldn't get a photo. It's not easy photographing gliders.

Usually seen at dusk, jumping between the big tree and the planted eucalypts in the driveway, then onto other planted trees (natives but not indigenous)

Squirrel Gliders eat insects, pollen, nectar & plant exudates.

Insects are found in all vegetation, the abundance & variety of vegetation at Lanark means the gliders are well catered for all year round. It is not pristine glider habitat, but it works.

Foresight/Jacobs noted gliders outside the project area, saying none were found inside the area. This is a nonsense because **gliders are constantly changing nesting sites**, if they use the same nesting site their predators become accustomed to their movements and so gliders are more likely to be eaten.

VICTORIA

Interesting fact, the postal address for Lanark has a 3691 postcode, even though the property is in NSW

We were very close to the river, the EIS mentions 350m.

There are homes on the other side of the river who will see the BESS and hear the BESS.

Have these people been consulted at all, is Wodonga Council entitled to a VPA also?

CONCLUSION

- *The necessity for a Battery Energy Storage System is clear and acknowledge as a vital step towards a reliable and sustainable energy future.
- *Selection of this site raises significant concerns; substantial risk of habitat destruction, threatening local biodiversity and undermining broader environmental objectives
- *It is imperative that the urgency for energy infrastructure does not come at the expense of irreplaceable natural habitats.
- *Alternative sites should be thoroughly investigated, to balance the pressing need for energy storage with responsible stewardship of the environment.
- *So, we can ensure that progress in energy infrastructure does not compromise our commitment to conservation and sustainability.

In short, I object to this project.

Thanks for giving me the opportunity to express my views.

Kaye Lucas, on behalf of John Lucas, Andrew Lucas and the extended Lucas family