



# **Bendemeer** **Solar Farm** Project Amendments

**The Bendemeer Solar Farm, as part of the Bendemeer Renewable Energy Hub, will involve the construction, operation and decommissioning of a large-scale solar facility located in the New England region of NSW.**

The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Bendemeer Solar Farm was on public exhibition for 28 days in which the public could make submissions for the project, with this period closing on 23 August 2023.

Following the closure of the public exhibition period of the EIS, where 234 submissions were received, Metis Energy has prepared a Submissions Report .

### **Submission report inclusions**

Responses to public and government agency submissions received;

Actions that been taken since the EIS was exhibited;

A summary of Project amendments; and

Ongoing community and Government stakeholder engagement activities.

Feedback has been considered from these public submissions, as well as ongoing community engagement, and as such considerable amendments have been made to the proposed Bendemeer Solar Farm. These changes are to further reduce potential impacts in relation to visual amenity, noise, and biodiversity, as well as increased fire management initiatives.

The amendments include changes to the size and location of the solar array, BESS, substation, switchyard, O&M compound, internal roads, construction compound and laydown areas.

The project grid connection Alternating Current (AC) capacity remains the same at 200 MW, however the Direct Current (DC) capacity has been slightly reduced as a result of the layout amendment. The DC capacity is now 257 MW, down from 280 MW. The size of the Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) remains the same, however the footprint has been reduced by 40% to 1.9 ha with the design refinement.

The proposed project amendments are detailed in an Amendment Report, which is intended to be read in conjunction with the Submissions Report. The EIS, Submission Report and Amendment Reports will be assessed by NSW Department of Planning Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI (formerly DPE)) and a determination is expected to be made in the first half of 2024. Following DPHI assessment, the project is expected to be referred to the Independent Planning Commission (IPC) for assessment and final determination.

## Improvements to Environmental and Social Impacts

### Biodiversity

- 18% reduction in disturbance footprint of the project, equating to approximately 87 ha.
- 30% reduction to disturbance of native vegetation, equating to approximately 32 ha.
- 40% reduction to disturbance of Commonwealth listed Threatened Ecological Community, equating to approximately 25.0 ha.
- 31.5% reduction to disturbance of NSW State listed Threatened Ecological Community, equating to 32.8 ha;

# 40%

reduction to disturbance of Commonwealth listed Threatened Ecological Community

# 30%

reduction to disturbance of native vegetation

# 18%

reduction in disturbance footprint

### Visual

- Reduction of solar array area allowing for the retention and protection of existing screen vegetation throughout the Project Area. This will ensure immediate and long-term screening of Project from receivers to the north, south west and general surrounding area.
- Reduction of solar panel height and PV modules and array height reduced by 1.54 metres, which will provide additional reduction of potential views from a portion of the Oxley Highway to the north of the Project Area and areas to the west, southwest and north of Bendemeer village.
- Elimination of rare glint and glare impacts for all receptors through commitment to an operational control strategy on the PV module tracking system.

### Noise

Additional noise mitigation measures have been implemented across the site and around key infrastructure areas (e.g. BESS) to ensure noise levels are as low as possible and within compliance with the 'Noise Policy for Industry'. These measures include isolated noise walls close to equipment and sound suppression of ventilation systems.

### Bushfire Management

Static water tank storage has doubled from 1 x 100 kL to 2 x 100 kL, which exceeds NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) requirements .

Specific Asset Protection Zones (APZ) have been designed in the southwest portion and adjacent to the BESS to allow for the required minimum APZ.

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#### Want more information?

Call us on 0402 949 462, head to our website <https://www.bendemeerenergyhub.com.au/> Or send us an email [community@metisenergy.com](mailto:community@metisenergy.com)

**Bendemeer** Renewable Energy Hub



Figure 1

## Proposed Project layout (as presented in the EIS)

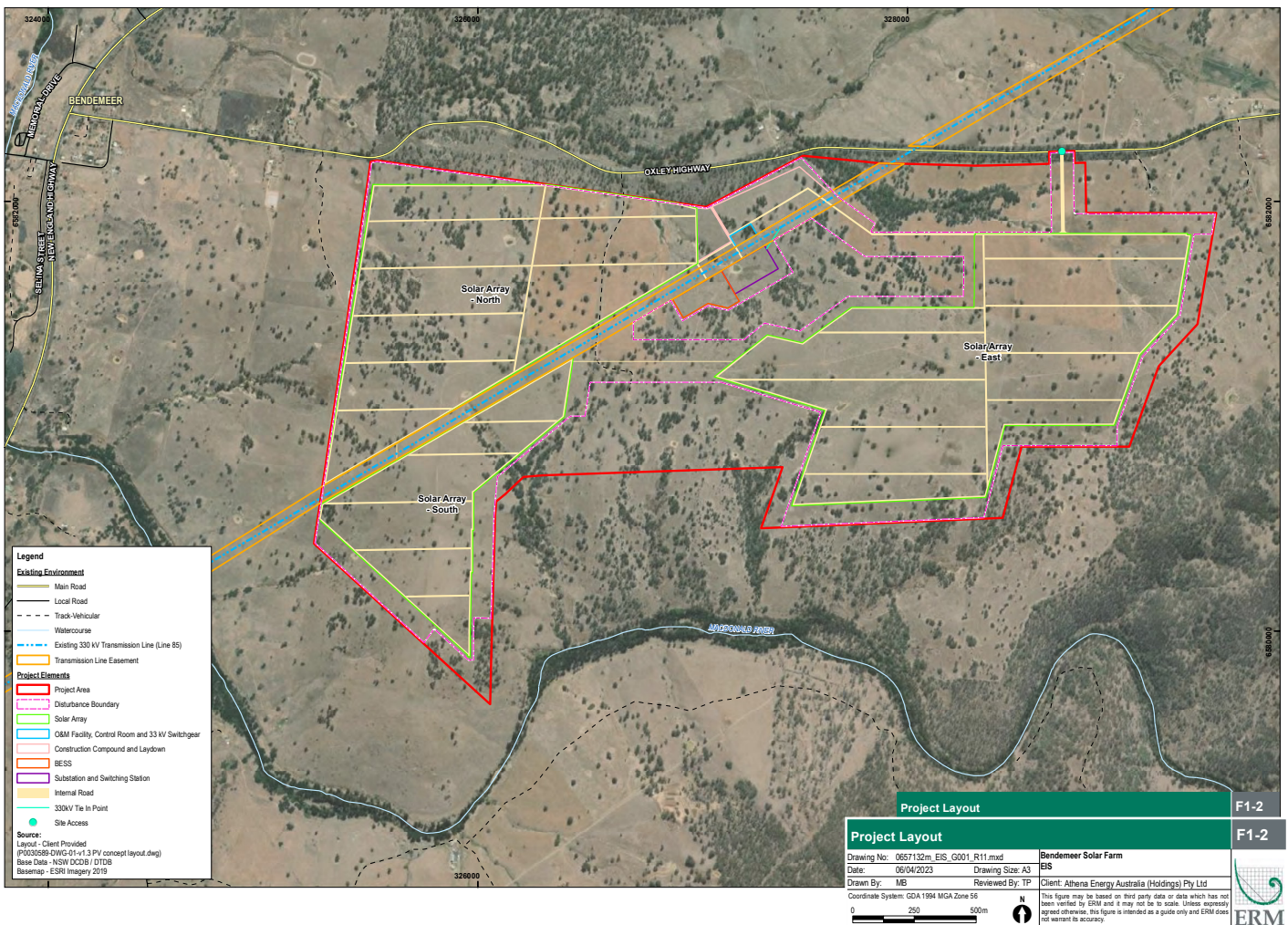
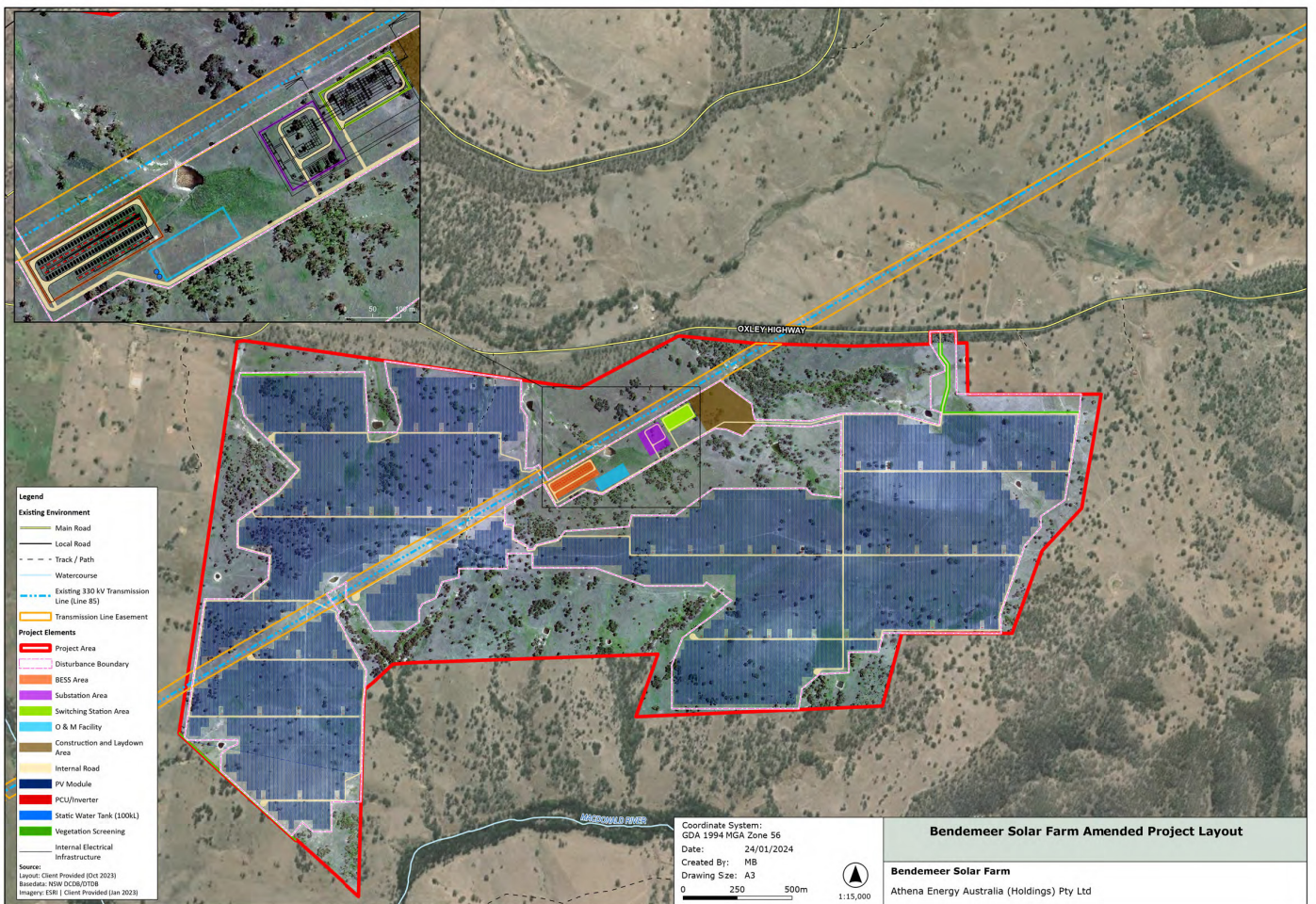


Figure 2

## Amended Project layout



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