

Application for an Electricity Generation Authority

**Wandoan BESS Project Co Pty Ltd as trustee for Wandoan
BESS Project Trust**

Information Paper

**February
2021**

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Table of contents

1. Background.....	3
2. Consideration of an Application.....	4
3. The applicant	5
4. The proposed generating plant.....	5
5. Approvals for construction of the generating plant	6
6. Submissions	7

1. Background

Wandoan BESS Project Co Pty Ltd as trustee for Wandoan BESS Project Trust (the applicant—ACN 637 801 542) has applied to the Regulator for a generation authority under section 179 of the *Electricity Act 1994* (the Act). Under the Act, the Regulator is the Director-General of the Department of Energy and Public Works (the Department), being the chief executive of the department that administers the Act.

The application is for a proposed battery energy storage system – the Wandoan South Battery Energy Storage System (Wandoan South BESS) – located 35km south-west of Wandoan, within the Western Downs Regional Council local government area of Queensland.

The generation authority, if issued, will authorise the operation of the plant and its connection to Powerlink’s transmission network via Powerlink’s Wandoan South Substation.

The plant will have a total nameplate rating of 123.42 Megawatts (MW) and will consist of 34 inverter units and 21,896 battery modules. The total storage size of the project will be 150MWh.

The applicant will own and operate the plant and will appoint a third-party contractor to provide engineering, procurement, and construction services (EPC) and ongoing operation and maintenance of the plant.

Subject to receipt of all necessary approvals (including this generation authority), the applicant anticipates the plant will be complete and operational in August 2021.

2. Consideration of an Application

Section 180 of the Act provides that the Regulator may issue a generation authority only if satisfied:

- (a) the applicant will operate the generating plant stated in the application;
- (b) the generating plant will be able to provide electricity of a quality suitable for the transmission grid or supply network stated in the application;
- (c) the applicant is a suitable person to be a generation entity;
- (d) the owner or proposed owner of the generating plant (whether or not the applicant) is a suitable person to be the owner; and
- (e) the applicant meets the additional criteria prescribed under a regulation.
(Note that no additional criteria are prescribed by regulation).

In deciding whether the applicant is a suitable person to be a generation entity, or the owner or proposed owner of the generating plant (whether or not the applicant) is a suitable person to be the owner, the Act states the Regulator may consider:

- (a) the person's previous commercial and other dealings and the standard of honesty and integrity shown in the dealings;
- (b) any failure by the person to perform commercial or statutory obligations and the reasons for the failure;
- (c) the person's criminal history;
- (d) if the person is a corporation – the matters mentioned in paragraphs (a) to (c) for persons who are shareholders, directors or holders of other interests in the corporation;
- (e) for the applicant – the applicant's competence to be the operator; and
- (f) additional matters prescribed by regulation.
(Note that no additional matters are prescribed by regulation).

Further, the Act provides that, in deciding whether to issue the generation authority, the Regulator must consider:

- (a) the objects of the Act;
- (b) relevant government policies about environmental and energy issues and the likely environmental effects of building and operating the generating plant; and
- (c) additional matters prescribed under a regulation.
(Note that no additional matters are prescribed by regulation).

Section 179A of the Act also stipulates that, before issuing a generation authority, the Regulator must invite interested persons to make submissions about the application for the authority and the Regulator must consider the submissions made.

3. The applicant

The information set out in sections 3 to 5 of this Information Paper was provided by the applicant as part of its formal application to the Regulator for a generation authority.

The applicant will be the operator and owner throughout the 30-year operational lifetime of the generating plant. EPC services and ongoing operation and maintenance activities will be contracted to a third party.

Vena Energy Ltd owns both Wandoan BESS Project Co acting trustee of Wandoan BESS Project Trust (registered as an Australian proprietary company limited by shares on 2 December 2019) and Vena Energy Services (Australia) Pty Ltd. The latter limited company will serve as the asset manager and provide some operation and maintenance activities.

Vena Energy currently builds, owns and operates over 11 gigawatts of renewable energy assets at various staged of development across Asia-Pacific. The Australian team is actively developing a pipeline of over 2,800 MW of renewable energy assets and to date have successfully secured Development Approvals for solar projects totalling 1,377 MW. In April 2019 Vena Energy Ltd completed commissioning of the 127 MW Tailern Bend Solar Farm in South Australia which has been in operation since.

4. The proposed generating plant

The generating plant (Wandoan South Battery Energy Storage System) will be located on Gadsby's Road, Woleebee, Queensland 4419 (Lot 5 on SP186409 and Easement G on SP261460), which is 35km south-west of Wandoan in the Western Downs Region.

The plant will have a total nameplate rating of 123.42 Megawatts (MW) and will consist of 34 inverter units and 21,896 battery modules. The total storage size of the project will be 150MWh.

The applicant has a Connection and Access Agreement in place with Queensland Electricity Transmission Corporation Limited (Powerlink) to connect to the transmission grid via Powerlink's Wandoan South Substation. A new 132 kV, 900 metre long underground cable will be built between Wandoan BESS substation and Powerlink's substation to accommodate the generation plant.

For the first 15 years of the generation plant's life, AGL Sales (Queensland Electricity) Pty Limited will apply to the Australian Energy Market Operator to register as both Scheduled Load and Market Generator, with the intention that AGL will have a dispatch rights for the plant.

5. Approvals for construction of the generating plant

A generation authority issued under the Act authorises its holder to operate the generating plant and connect it to the transmission grid or supply network.

It should be noted that a generation authority does not authorise or approve the construction of the generating plant and, indeed, that is not a matter within the jurisdiction of the Act or the Regulator. Section 26(2) of the Act states:

'a generation authority does not relieve its holder or anyone else from complying with laws applying to the development, building, operation or maintenance of generating plant'.

The proponent of the plant has the responsibility to obtain all approvals necessary for construction and ongoing operation of the plant, including relevant environmental and local government approvals.

All relevant development approvals have been obtained by the proponent. Western Downs Regional Council originally granted a Development Approval in August 2017 which was amendments in March 2018 and again in February 2020 for the final design of the plant.

A Cultural Heritage Management Agreement for the site was executed with the IMAN 4 Native Title group in October 2019. Various Cultural Heritage surveys were completed in 2019 and 2020 in consultation with representatives from the Iman People, resulting in the site being prepared for development in September 2020.

The project's flora and fauna assessment concluded that it is unlikely there will be a significant impact to local biodiversity values and that formal assessment and approval under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Commonwealth)* is not required.

6. Submissions

Submissions are invited from interested persons in relation to the application from Wandoan BESS Project Co Pty Ltd as trustee for Wandoan BESS Project Trust for a generation authority.

In particular, the Regulator is interested in matters that may impact on the suitability of the applicant to be a generation entity, as well as the other issues the Regulator must consider under the Act.

Please note that private personal and commercial-in-confidence information contained within a submission may be provided to a third party for the purpose of consideration of the application. In the case where the Regulator provides an opportunity for an applicant to respond to matters raised in a submission, the private personal information and commercial-in-confidence information of the person making the submission will not be provided to the applicant. The State of Queensland through the Department of Energy and Public Works (the Department) has taken steps to ensure the appropriate treatment of such information by departmental staff and contractors. By submitting a submission, you agree that your submission will be used by the Department and its contractors in reviewing and processing the applications.

All personal and commercial-in-confidence information will be stored at the office of the Department, and in accordance with the relevant privacy legislation. The Department's privacy statement can be found at: <https://www.dnrme.qld.gov.au/home/legal/privacy>. If you have any questions or queries you can email the Department's privacy unit at privacy@dnrme.qld.gov.au.

Submissions must be made in writing, and sent by email or mail to:

Mail

Attention: The Manager
Commercial
Department of Energy and Public Works
PO Box 15456
CITY EAST QLD 4002
Phone: 13 43 87

Email

energyregulation@dnrme.qld.gov.au

Closing date for submissions is 5.00pm on 26 March 2021.