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Attention: Jonatan Thovar  
Senior Project Development Manager  
Shizen Australia Pty Ltd

Delivered by email to: [jonatan.thovar@shizenenergy.net](mailto:jonatan.thovar@shizenenergy.net)

Dear Jonatan

## **VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT – BATTERY ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEM, PORTION OF LOT 1001 (NO. 237) ORANGE SPRINGS ROAD, REGANS FORD.**

### **Background and purpose**

The purpose of this letter is to provide advice on a visual impact assessment for Shizen’s proposed battery energy storage system (BESS) within a portion of Lot 1001 (No.237) Orange Springs Road, Regans Ford in the Shire of Gingin (herein known as ‘the site’).

Shizen proposes the establishment of a South West Interconnected System (SWIS)-connected, BESS with a capacity of approximately 300 MW / 2250 MWh of storage (herein known as ‘the project’). An existing 330 kV Western Power transmission corridor (Pinjar–Cataby) traverses the site and an existing substation is directly adjacent to the south of the site.

Visual Impact Assessment (VIA) is guided by *Visual Landscape Planning in Western Australia – a manual for evaluation, assessment, siting and design* (WAPC, DPLH, 2007) (the guidelines). The purpose of this guidance document is to assist in planning decision making at a local and state level for the recognition and protection of the landscape character of an area. This manual has been consulted to provide a VIA for this project which is a common practice for development applications for renewable energy projects in Western Australia.

### **Site analysis**

The site is located on gently undulating terrain with elevations ranging approximately between 82 m and 86 m Australian Height Datum (AHD) (DPIRD 2019). Contours within the site are widely spaced.

The landform is relatively uniform and lacks steep slopes, defined drainage lines, or pronounced depressions within the site. This differs to the surrounding land to the east and southeast which rises more steeply, with closely spaced contours ascending to over 140 m AHD, indicating a prominent hill or ridge system. Overall, the site occupies a lower slope or valley floor position within a broader undulating landscape and is characterised by gentle topography typical of modified agricultural land.

Whilst the surrounding areas to the east are more elevated, they do not have receptors that will be impacted by this project.

## Landscape Character and key visual indicators

In the absence of any publicly available landscape character mapping from the Shire of Gingin, the following landscape characters have been assigned in consultation with the guidelines for VIA.

The site is a working olive plantation within a large 491.3 ha landholding of which the BESS facility will occupy an enclosed 12.7ha portion on land currently zoned General Rural under the Shire of Gingin's Local Planning Scheme No. 9. To facilitate the footprint of the BESS facility, there is no native vegetation to be removed as the project lies directly within the olive plantation and the entry to the facility will be constructed from Orange Springs Road. A wide strip of native vegetation occurs as a buffer between the site's boundary and the Brand Highway. This vegetation is not being removed.

Attached is a cross section that demonstrates the height of the project in relation to the adjacent Brand Highway.

### Rural landscape character

The area surrounding the site predominantly demonstrates a rural landscape character where local receptors such as farming operations and minimal individual habitable buildings such as the olive plantation infrastructure are in excess of 1km distance from the closest point to the project's footprint. A major transmission line and communications tower currently dominate the skyline for the SWIS infrastructure.

**Plate 1** below demonstrates the rural characteristic of the area from Orange Springs Road.



*Plate 1: Rural landscape character looking south from Orange Springs Road into the olive plantation towards Brand Highway. SWIS infrastructure in the distance where the existing Western Power substation is located.*

### Natural landscape character

Immediately adjacent to the Brand Highway is considered a natural landscape character that acts as a fully native vegetative buffer between the site and the closest receptor, Brand highway. **Plate 2** below demonstrates the natural landscape character, and the photograph is taken at the entry to the Western Power substation showing the buffer off the trees which is approximately 142m in width.



The native vegetation whilst varying in height from low understorey to 2-3m high understorey, 6m high middle storey and in excess of 10m high trees completely obscures the project from the Brand Highway (**Plate 3**) and minimises the impact from surrounding areas further east where the elevation may be higher, but receptors are limited, and include the Red Gully BESS project.



*Plate 2: Natural landscape character looking west from Brand Highway into the entry to the Western Power substation which is on the southern boundary of the project's footprint.*



*Plate 3: Natural landscape character directly adjacent to the site taken along Brand Highway demonstrating varying vegetation heights to buffer any visual impact.*

## Managing the visual landscape character

The Brand Highway is a major highway to the northwest of the state. The visual amenity will not be impacted when driving north or south on this road due to the large native vegetation buffer. The surrounding area to the east whilst elevated has minimal local receptors with a viewshed to this site.

## Summary and closing

Following a review of the landscape character and site assessment, the potential visual impact resulting from this project is considered negligible and will not detract from the rural and natural landscape characters surrounding this project. Managing the visual landscape character involves retaining all native vegetation along Brand Highway and siting the project such that it is offset approximately 700m from Orange Springs Road. Based on the negligible visual impact, no visual management measures are recommended.

Yours sincerely  
 Emerge Associates



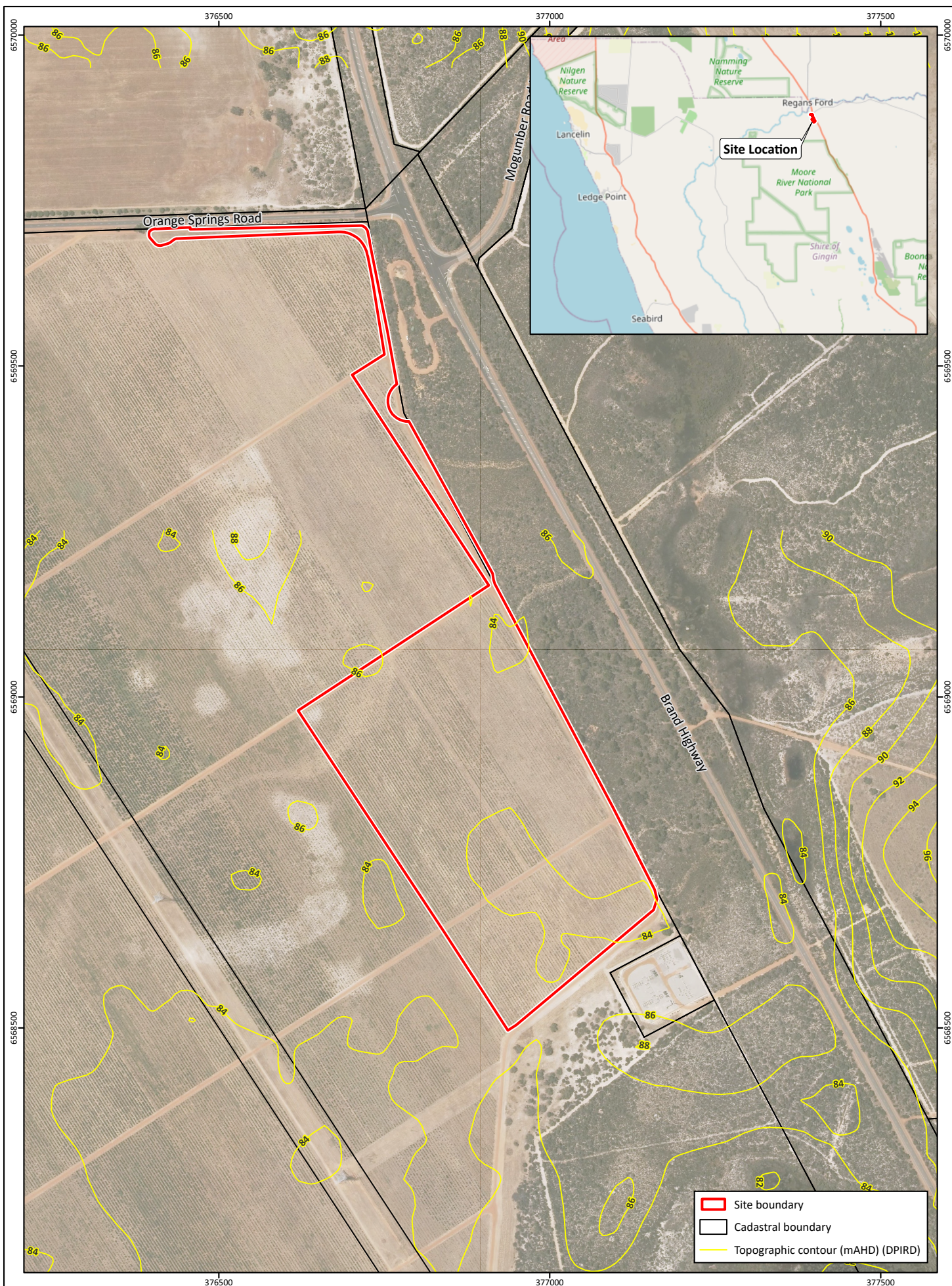
## Toni Burbidge

PRINCIPAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANT AND TEAM LEADER  
 ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

cc: Dane Gaunt – Rise Urban

Attachment: Figure 1 – Site location and topography  
 Figure 2 – Local receptors and landscape character  
 Visual landscape cross section





**Figure 1: Site Location and Topography**

**Project:** Visual Impact Assessment  
Reagans Ford BESS Project

**Client:** Shizen Energy Inc

**Plan Number:**  
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**Drawn:** GAR

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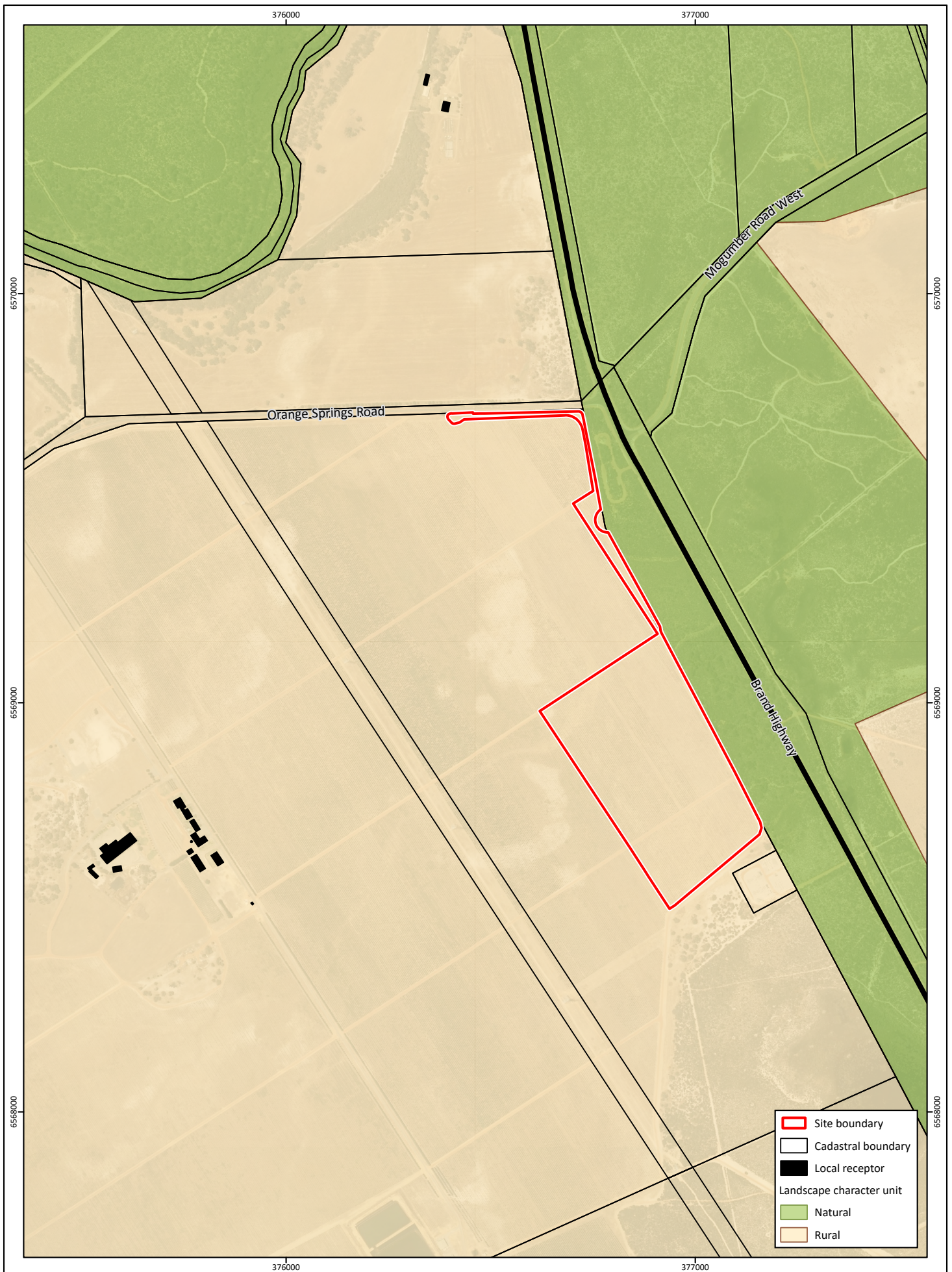
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GDA2020 MGA Zone 50







**Figure 2: Local Receptors and Landscape Character**

**Project:** Visual Impact Assessment  
Reagans Ford BESS Project  
**Client:** Shizen Energy Inc

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