AusNet

Where to locate a community battery

Old Beechworth Gaol community battery launch.

How to find a community battery location using GridView

Choosing the right location is one of the most important steps in planning a community battery.

This factsheet explains what network factors to consider and how GridView can help you select possible locations. You should also consider other factors, such as land availability, planning approvals and community support.

GridView does not replace a technical connection assessment. Every community battery connection is different and needs to be assessed by us before it can be approved for connection to our network.

What to consider before choosing a location

Community battery size

Community batteries are mid-sized energy storage systems. They are larger than household batteries and smaller than grid-scale batteries. They can range from 30 kW to 1.5 MW.

For network connections, the key measure is power capacity, or kilowatts (kW). This shows how much power the battery can import from, or export to, the grid at a time. It is different from kilowatt hours (kWh), which shows how much energy the battery can store in total.

Where community batteries connect

To use our community battery connection process, the battery must connect to our low voltage network. This is part of the electricity system that supplies power to homes and most businesses.

A community battery can connect in two ways:

- Front-of-meter

  A front-of-meter battery connects directly to the electricity network on the network side of the meter. For example, it may be installed at the end of a street.

- Behind-the-meter

  A behind-the-meter battery connects to a specific site on the customer's side of the meter. For example, it may be installed at a sports facility, council building or community site.

What you want the battery to do

What you need the battery to do will influence where it connects. Use this table as a guide only. The right option will depend on your site, network conditions and project goals.

Battery objectives (examples)	Front-of-meter	Behind-the-meter
Back-up power		
Provide back-up power to one building	No	Yes
Provide back-up power to a whole street or neighbourhood	No	No
Make better use of excess rooftop solar		
Charge from excess rooftop solar installed on the same site	No	Yes
Charge from excess rooftop solar exported to the grid from nearby homes or businesses	Yes	Yes
Financial outcomes		
Generate income by selling electricity to the wholesale electricity market	Yes	Yes
Lower electricity costs for the site where the battery is installed	No	Yes, if you choose a suitable plan from a participating retailer
Lower electricity costs for nearby homes or the local community	Only through a participating retailer	Only through a participating retailer
Electric vehicle charging		
Support electric vehicle (EV) charging at the same site	Yes	Yes

How GridView can help you select locations

GridView can help you explore three common network factors when selecting possible community battery locations:

- available network capacity
- solar exports
- distance to a distribution substation.

These factors can help you decide early whether a location may be suitable before you move into a detailed planning and connection assessment.

1. Check available network capacity

Why it matters

A community battery needs enough local network capacity to:

- charge from the grid
- export electricity back to the grid.

If the local distribution substation is already operating close to capacity, network upgrades may be needed. This could involve installing a larger transformer or upgrading the low-voltage cables that supply customers.

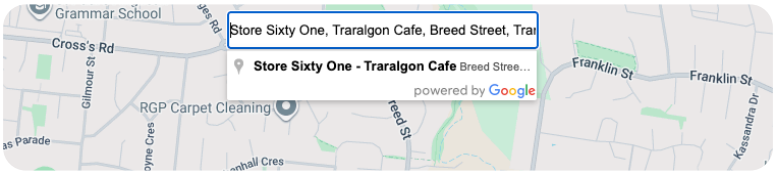
How GridView can help

Use GridView to find the closest distribution substation and compare its load profile with its nameplate rating. This can give you an early indication of whether there may be spare capacity.

How to check using GridView

1. Enter the proposed battery address in the search bar.

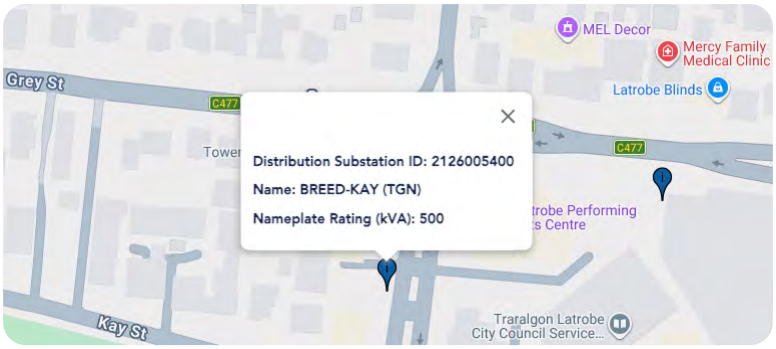
For example, type "Store Sixty One, Traralgon Cafe, Breed Street, Traralgon VIC, Australia" into the search bar and press ENTER



Select "Distribution substations" from the left-hand panel.

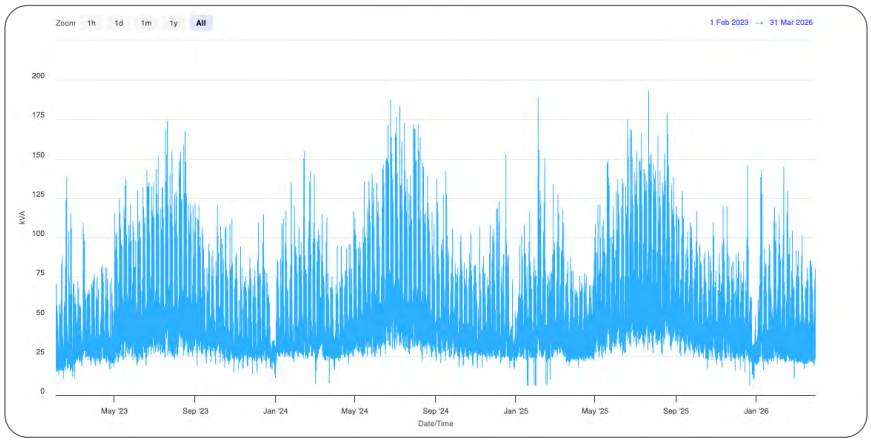
2. Find the closest distribution substation and check its nameplate rating.

Distribution substation BREED-KAY has a nameplate rate of 500kVA



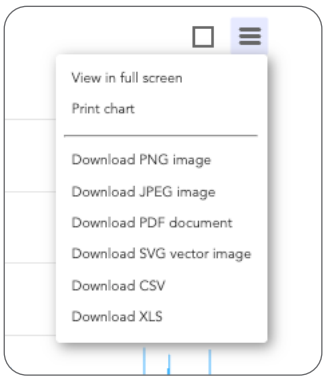
3. **View the distribution substation's load profile to see how much electricity is being taken from or exported to the grid.**

   Load profile for distribution substation BREED-KAY shows the maximum load (electricity taken from the grid) is just over 180kVA. With a nameplate rating of 500kVA, this may indicate spare capacity of around 200kVA. You will still need a detailed connection assessment.



4. **Download the load profile data for a detailed analysis.**

   Select your preferred file format to download the load profile data



2. Look for locations with high solar exports

Why this matters

If the battery is designed to charge from extra solar (i.e. excess solar on the grid), look for areas with high rooftop solar uptake and strong daytime exports to the grid. This can apply to both front-of-meter and behind-the-meter batteries, depending on the project design.

A behind-the-meter battery may charge from solar generated on the same site, boosted by grid imports when needed. A front-of-meter battery may charge from surplus solar exported by nearby homes and businesses.

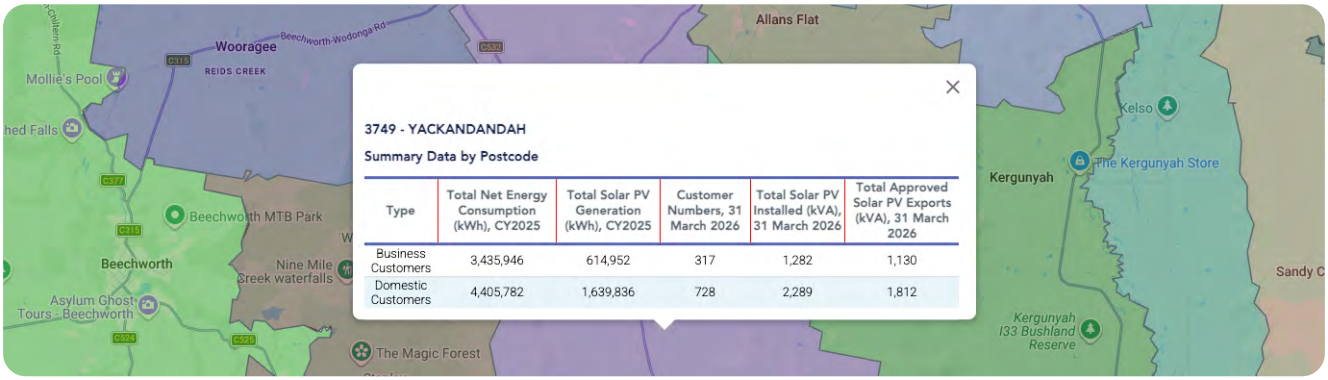
How GridView can help

GridView can help you explore local solar data by postcode and by distribution substation. This can show where rooftop solar is installed and how much export capacity has been approved.

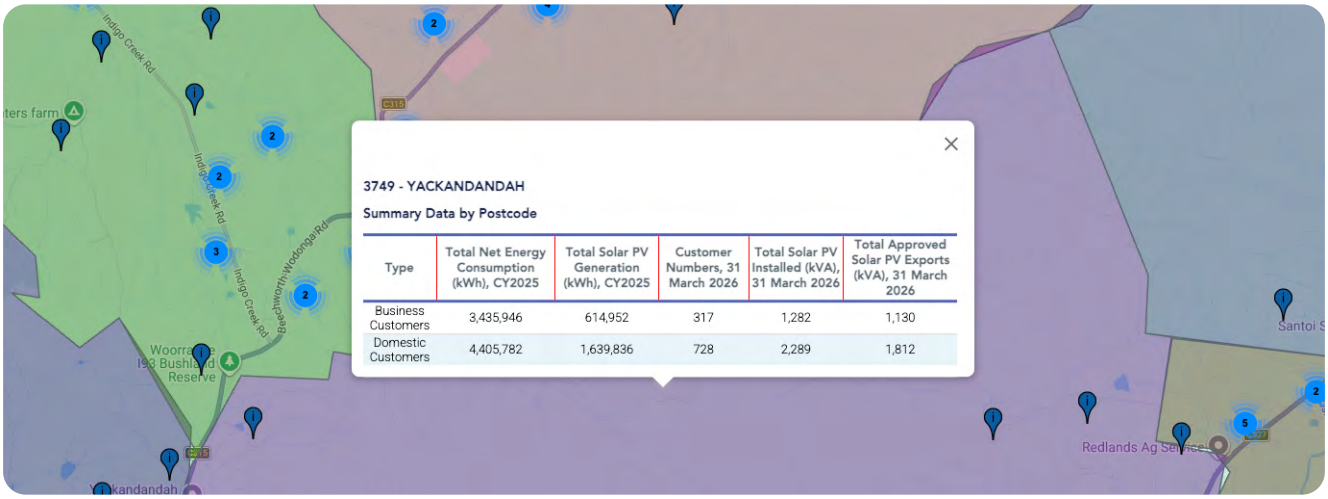
How to check using GridView

1. Search by postcode to find areas with high rooftop solar uptake.

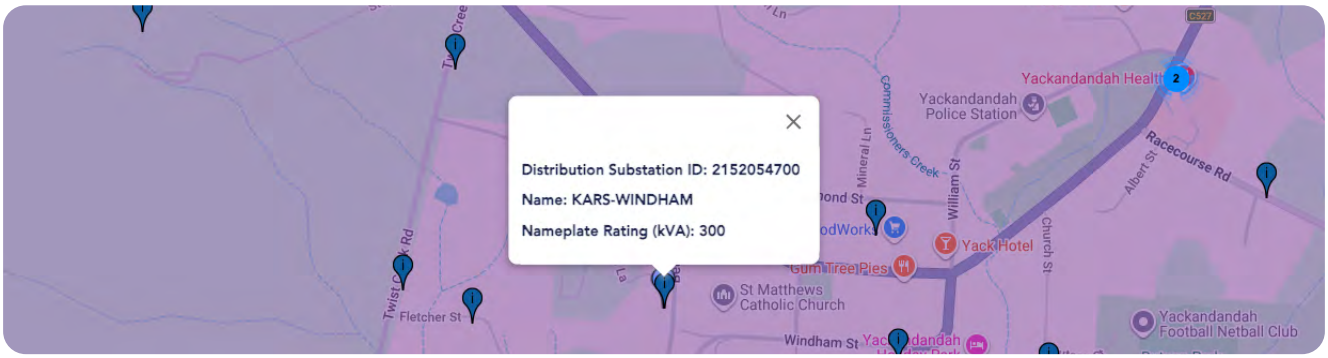
Tick the postcodes box under the Boundaries heading, and then type the postcode in the search bar using double quotation marks, for example “3749”. The postcode summary data will show information about solar installed in the area and approved exports.



2. Click on the distribution substations to see substations in the selected postcode area.



3. Review nearby substations and look for those with a larger nameplate rating, typically 200kVA or above.



Yarra Junction community battery (YARRA01), photo credit Indigo Power.

4. Check the report data for each relevant substation. Look at how many customers have solar, the solar PV inverter capacity and the approved export capacity.

The report data for this substation shows 117 kVA of solar PV inverter capacity (amount of rooftop solar connected) and 99 kVA of approved export capacity.

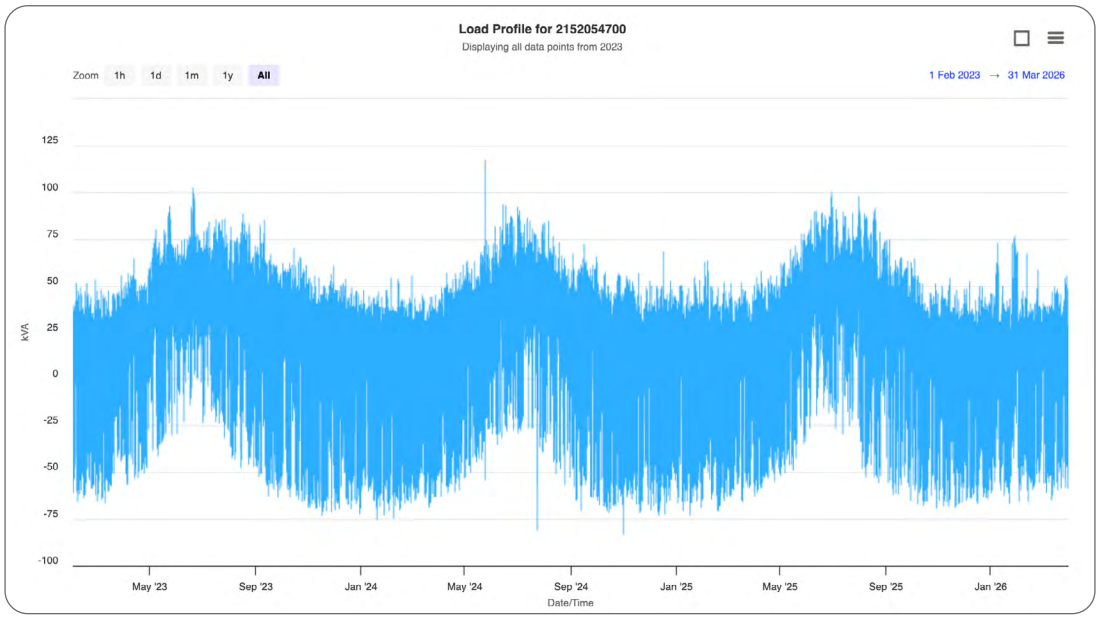
Report Data for 2152054700

Distribution Substation Data

Name	Type	Nameplate Rating (kVA)	Total Customers	Domestic Customers	Business Customers	Customers with Solar	Total Solar PV Inverter Capacity (kVA)	Total Solar PV Inverter Capacity (kW) – Domestic Customers	Total Approved Solar PV Exports (kW) - Domestic Customers	Total Solar PV Inverter Capacity (kW) – Business Customers	Total Approved Solar PV Exports (kW) – Business Customers
KARS-WINDHAM	Single Pole	300	42	41	1	25	117	117	99	0	0

5. Review the load profile to see how much solar energy is being exported to the grid during the day.

This load profile shows the amount of solar being exported to the grid from March 2023 to December 2025. Areas of the chart below zero show energy being exported back to the grid – typically from rooftop solar.



3. Look for locations with high solar exports

Why this matters

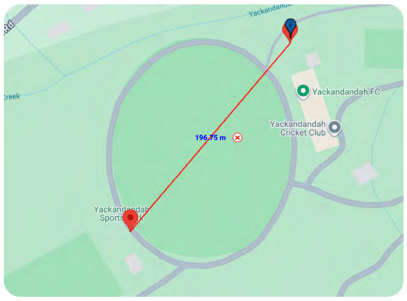
Sites closer to a distribution substation or existing network infrastructure may be simpler and cheaper to connect. Shorter distances can reduce the need for digging trenches, installing cables and restoration costs for front-of-meter batteries.

Longer distances can increase voltage drop (when the voltage gradually decreases as electricity travels along power lines), which may mean larger cables are needed to keep power flowing safely and efficiently. Longer distances can also add complexity to connection approvals. This can affect both front-of-meter and behind-the-meter batteries.

How GridView can help

Use GridView's measuring tool to measure the distance between the distribution substation and your preferred battery location.

How to check using GridView



1. **Find the preferred battery location on the map.**
2. **Find the closest distribution substation.**
3. **Right click on the map to start the measurement tool.**
4. **Measure the distance between the distribution substation and the preferred battery location.**

   Right click on the map to start the measurement tool.
   The distance between two points is shown above by the red line.

What to consider

Use the measured distance as a guide only. The final connection design may depend on site access, cable route, network configuration and technical assessment.

Before you move to the next stage

Before you choose a possible location, use GridView to review:

- closest distribution substation
- substation nameplate rating
- load profile data
- solar PV inverter capacity
- approved export capacity
- daytime export patterns
- distance from the battery site to the distribution substation.

This information can help you shortlist locations for a suitable site.

More information

Launch GridView at **ausnet.com.au/gridview**

Learn more about community batteries at: **ausnet.com.au/community-batteries**

Learn more about our connection process at: **ausnet.com.au/connecting-a-community-battery**

If you have questions, email us at: **communityenergy@ausnetservices.com.au**