



# Hunter Central Coast Regional Reference Group

# Acknowledgement of Country



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Energy Corporation of New South Wales acknowledges that it stands on Aboriginal land. We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land and show our respect for Elders past and present through thoughtful and collaborative approaches to our work, seeking to demonstrate our ongoing commitment to providing places in which Aboriginal people are included socially, culturally and economically.

# Agenda



Item	Lead	Time
Welcome	Chair	1 minute
Acknowledgment of Country	Rodney Groves HTP First Nations Lead	2 minutes
Hunter Transmission Project EIS update • Temporary workers accommodation • Traffic and Transport • Biodiversity	Peter Redwin Carolyn McCallig	40 minutes
Council Commissioning Payments	Darren Clarke	5 minutes
Hunter Conservation Investment Strategy (DCCEEW)	Kelly Carberry	15 minutes
HCC REZ Network Upgrades (Ausgrid) – Review of Environmental Factors – Exhibition themes and responses	Amanda Stephinson Jason Wall	15 minutes

# Agenda



Item	Lead	Time
Port to REZ and Newcastle Logistics Precinct updates	Liz Sacco Lemuel Yeung	10 minutes
Regional Outcome Initiatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Procurement Capability Uplift Program</li><li>• Jobs guide</li><li>• First Nations Workforce Readiness</li><li>• Hunter Businesses Prospectus–Net Zero Economy Authority</li></ul>	Darren Clarke	20 minutes
General Business		
<u>Meeting schedule for 2025:</u> 3 November – Cessnock City Council	Chair	2 minutes
Note: Meetings to be held first Monday of the month from 10am – 12noon		

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# Hunter Transmission Project EIS update

Peter Redwin – HTP Executive Project Director

Carolyn McCallig – HTP Planning and Environment Lead

# Hunter Transmission Project updates



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## Project update and next steps

### EIS Update:

- Construction Support Sites
- Traffic and Transport
- Biodiversity

### Engagement:

- Pre-EIS
- During EIS

# HTP project update - Next steps



September 1 (tbd)

September x 4 wks

October/ November

December

Environmental Impact Assessment lodgement

EIS public exhibition (4x weeks)

Prepare & lodge Submissions Report

- Analyses the issues raised
- Describes what's been done to address issues raised
- Updates merits of the project and incorporates the findings of any further assessment or community engagement

Planning Department publishes assessment report and ask the consent authority to determine the project

## Key planning milestones



# Accommodation and Construction Support Sites



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Temporary worker accommodation and construction compounds are a requirement of the Planning Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs).

To support the HTP delivery, 5 temporary construction support sites, 3 with accommodation facilities, proposed to house the mobile construction workforce.

- Hebden Road, Muswellbrook (up to 300 workers)
- Pikes Gully Road, Howick facilities
- Wollombi Road, Millfield
- Gouldsville Road, Gouldsville (up to 180 workers)
- Freemans Drive, Cooranbong (up to 300 workers)

These sites

- Do not negatively impact on local housing assess or affordability
- Avoid long-term land use
- Places workers close to construction areas and reduces travel time
- Self-contained and temporary

# Construction Support Sites



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Construction support sites will be used as the base for construction activities, and may include:

- demountable accommodation and offices
- workforce amenities (e.g. kitchens and recreation areas)
- processing facilities (concrete batching, aggregate crushing, grinding and screening)
- helicopter landing pad and support facilities (emergency and support stringing activities)
- utilities such as electricity and water
- parking areas and bus stops
- equipment, materials and gas storage
- generators
- laydown, hardstand and workshops.

# Traffic and transport – EIS Assessment



- The Project Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) defines the requirements to be addressed by the EIS
- This includes the requirement for traffic and transport impacts to be considered, including:
  - Assessment of the Project impact on capacity, condition, safety and efficiency for the road and rail network
  - Detail mitigation measures to manage Project impacts (e.g. road upgrades, proposed traffic control measures)
  - Include consultation with relevant road/rail authorities (e.g. TfNSW, Councils, ARTC)
  - Include a cumulative assessment of traffic from nearby developments

# Traffic and transport – Basis of assessment



- Each construction support site generates construction traffic
- We assess worst case scenario based on peak volumes across road network associated with each construction support site
- Construction will be progressive and staged therefore maximum numbers represents most conservative approach to assessment

<b>Construction support sites</b>	<b>Indicative maximum daily movements (peak construction)</b>	
	<b>Light vehicles</b>	<b>Heavy vehicles</b>
<b>Hebden Road</b>	434	406
<b>Pikes Gully Road</b>	378	335
<b>Gouldsville Road</b>	434	406
<b>Wollombi Road</b>	378	335
<b>Freemans Drive</b>	562	480

# Traffic and transport – Overview



## The traffic and transport assessment for the project considered:

- Using existing roads and tracks to reduce impacts
- Building new tracks only where needed, in consultation with landowners
- Upgrading roads and intersections (e.g. widening or resurfacing) along key routes
- Approvals to cross roads and rail lines with transmission wires (TfNSW, Councils, ARTC).
- Understand cumulative impacts by coordinated with major projects like New England REZ, Central West Orana REZ, Singleton Bypass, and Golden Highway upgrades.



The EIS will identify routes for worker travel, equipment transport, material/resource delivery, and oversize/overmass vehicles.



Information about traffic numbers and vehicle movements has been compiled to support assessment.

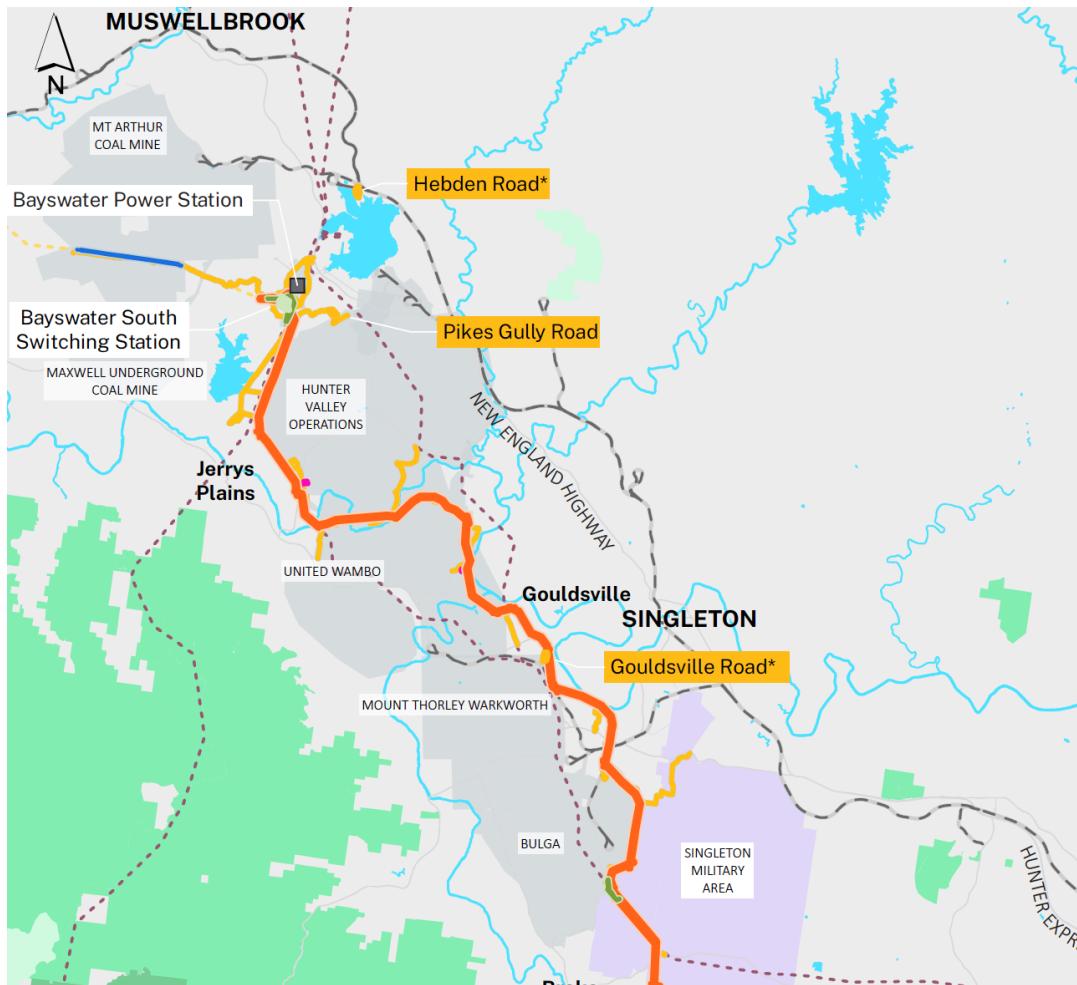


Peak traffic periods during construction will likely be 6-7am and 5-6pm, aligning with planned workers' shifts.



Some roads and intersections will be upgraded and works will be undertaken progressively over the project duration

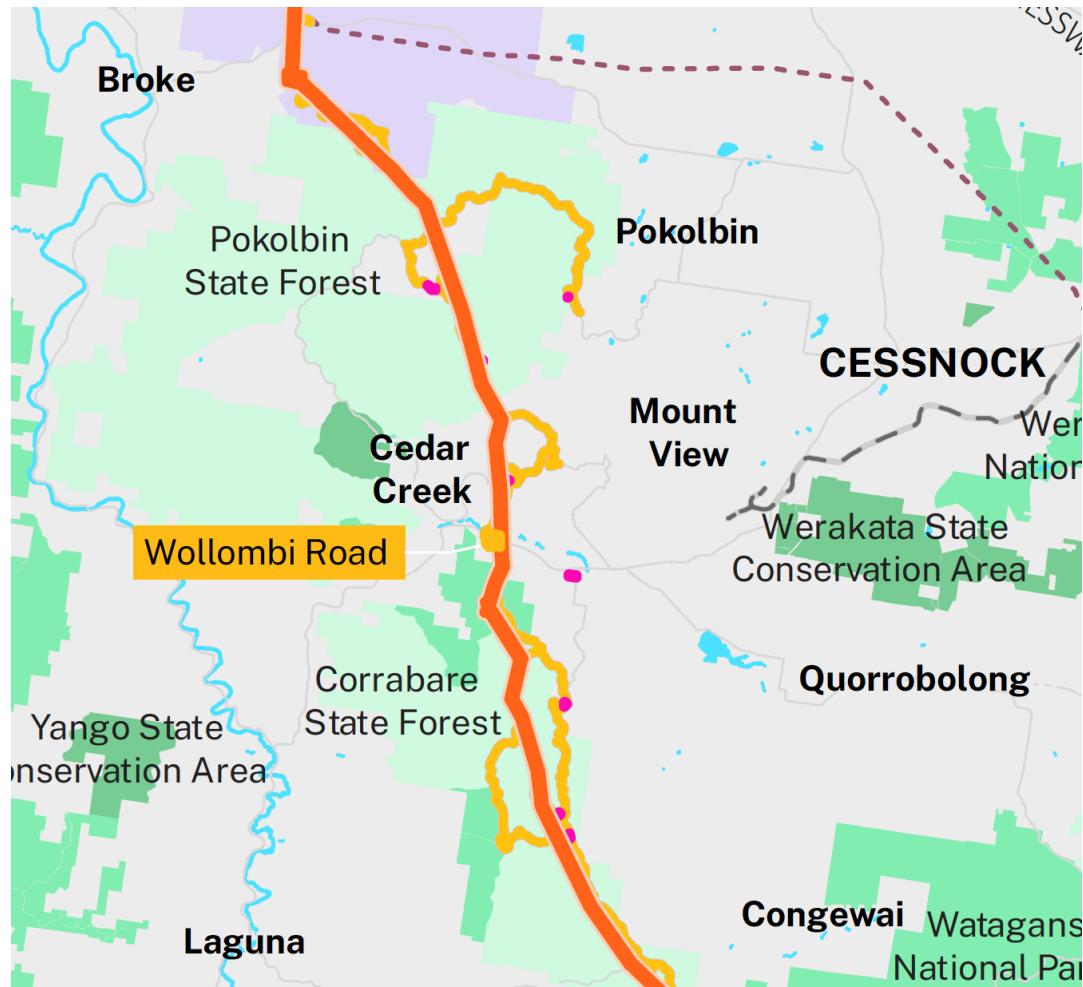
# Traffic and transport – North Muswellbrook and Singleton



## Key traffic and transport elements:

- Construction support sites at Hebden Road, Pikes Gully Road and Gouldsville Road will be the source of most construction traffic
- Construction vehicle access is required to the transmission line at several locations, the existing transmission infrastructure and Bayswater South switching station
- Main construction routes via state highways (New England Highway and Golden Highway), which may feed to regional and local roads for access
- Construction traffic will include both light and heavy vehicles, and roads will be used progressively over the project duration

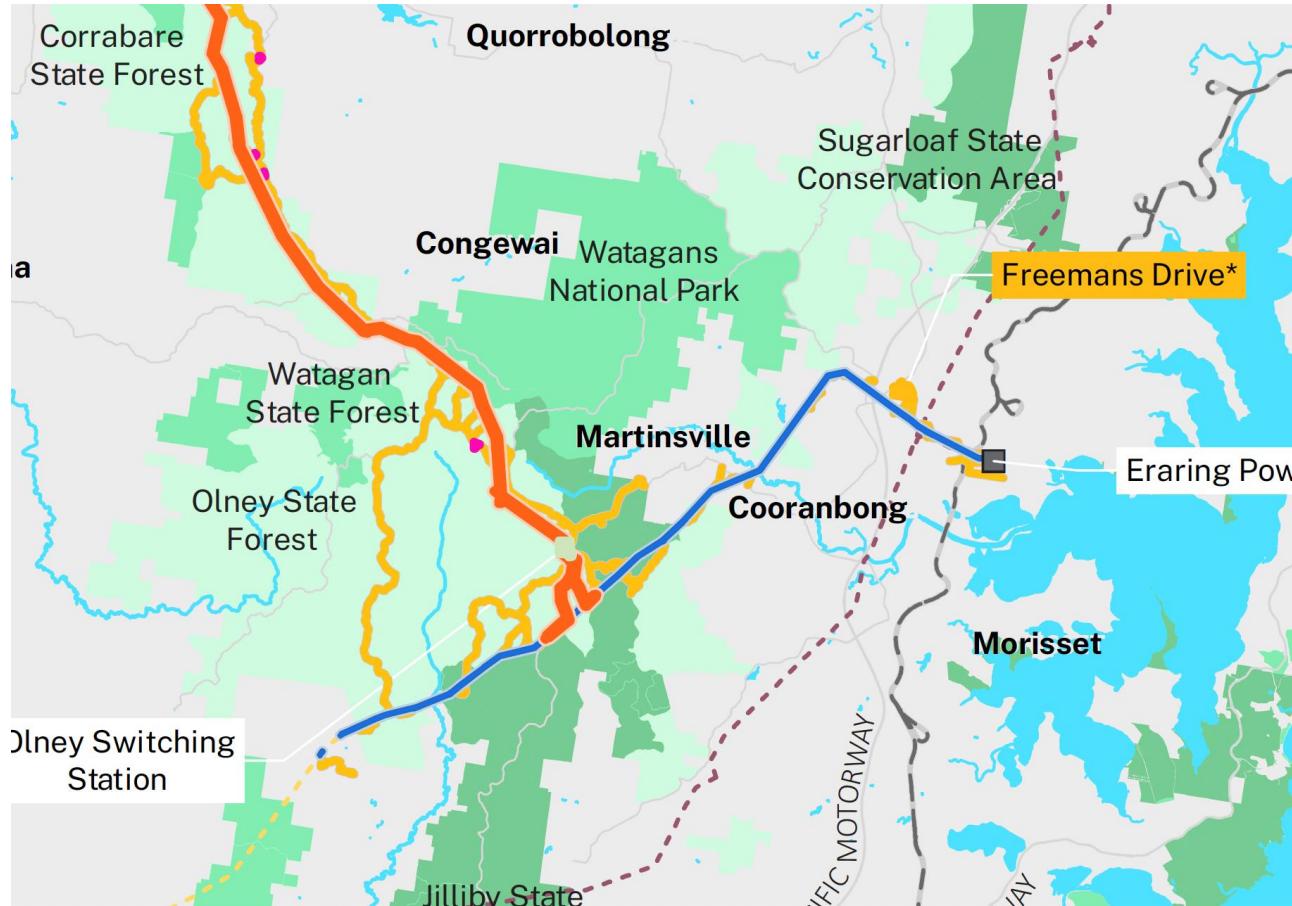
# Traffic and transport – Central - Cessnock Overview



## Key traffic and transport elements:

- Construction support site at Wollombi Road will be the source of most construction traffic
- Construction vehicle access is required to the transmission line at several locations
- Main construction routes via Broke Road and Wollombi Road which feed to local and forestry roads for access

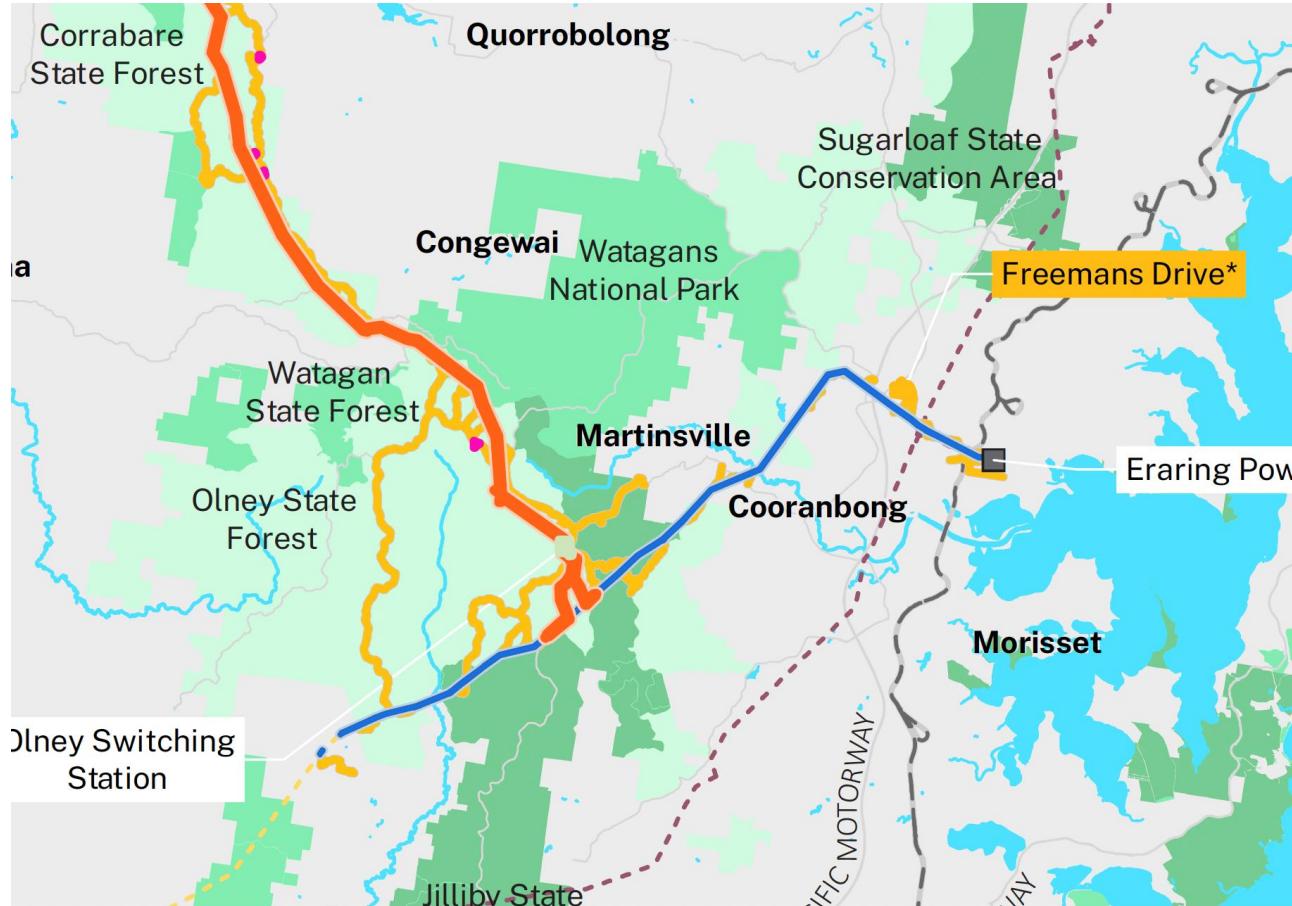
# Traffic and transport – Lake Macquarie Overview



## Key traffic and transport elements:

- Construction support site at Freemans Drive will be the source of most construction traffic
- Construction vehicle access is required to:
  - transmission line at several points
  - Olney switching station and Eraring substation.
- Main construction routes are via Freemans Drive and the M1, which feed to local and forestry roads for access

# Traffic and transport – South-Central Coast Overview



## Key traffic and transport elements:

- Construction support site at Freemans Drive will be the source of most construction traffic
- Construction vehicle access is required to the transmission line at several locations as well as Olney switching station.
- Main construction routes are via Freemans Drive and the M1, which feed to local and forestry roads for access

# Biodiversity



## **Clearing of around 761 ha of native vegetation (546 ha of full clearing, 215 ha of partial)**

- 40% in a disturbed condition (96.81 ha derived grasslands and 186 ha thinned/poor/plantation woodlands)
- 207 ha is BC Act listed (7) TECs (124 ha of full clearing, 83 ha partial)
- 158 ha is EPBC Act (3) TECs (91 ha of full clearing, 67 ha partial)

## **Direct impacts to 38 threatened flora species (9 confirmed present, 29 assumed)**

- 36 species listed under the BC Act, of these 22 are also listed under the EPBC Act
- 2 species listed under the EPBC Act only

## **Direct impacts to 28 threatened fauna species (26 confirmed present, 2 assumed)**

- All species listed under the BC Act and 15 species also listed under the EPBC Act

**Serious and irreversible impacts entities:** 2 TECs (16.6 ha), 8 threatened flora (3 confirmed present, 5 assumed) and 7 threatened fauna species (5 confirmed present, 2 assumed)

Indirect impacts (line strike and EMF): 4 threatened bird species

Prescribed impacts (habitat connectivity): 4 threatened mammal species

# Biodiversity

**Targeted mitigation measures, including (but not limited to):**

- Mapped locations to target avoidance and minimisation of TECs, threatened species habitats and connectivity during detailed design
- **Sensitive biodiversity areas** requiring specific clearing controls targeting:
  - Recorded threatened flora species
  - Breeding habitat for threatened species (Amphibians, Microbats, Gang-gang Cockatoo and Sooty Owl)
  - Riparian zones (5m buffer from top of bank)
- **Myrtle Rust Management Plan** to minimise impacts on Scrub Turpentine
- **Nine locations identified for habitat connectivity structures** (targeting 4 BC Act species - Squirrel Glider, Yellow-bellied Glider and Greater Glider)



**Offset liability (234,753 total credits), comprising:**

- 17,087 ecosystem credits associated with direct impacts
- 29,671 flora species credits associated with direct impacts
- 180,325 fauna species credits associated with direct impacts
- 7670 additional species credits associated with indirect and prescribed impacts.

**EnergyCo intends to enter into a Strategic Offset Delivery Agreement in accordance with Clause 6.2 and Schedule 1 of the Biodiversity Conservation Regulation 2017.**

# Engagement Pre EIS (July – August)



## Targeted Notifications

- Letter to sensitive receivers impacted by traffic and haulage routes
- Letters to landowners and key stakeholders outlining exhibition timing and next steps. Includes follow-up emails and phone calls 2 days before exhibition.

## Community Engagement

- In-person engagement sessions in Morisset, Muswellbrook, Broke, Cessnock, Cooranbong, and Singleton.

## Media and Public Awareness

- Radio, print, and digital advertising campaign (from mid-August) to raise early awareness of the upcoming EIS public exhibition.
- eNewsletter to explain exhibition timing and how to provide feedback.

## Stakeholder Briefings

- MP briefings with communications pack. Includes emails and phone calls 2 days before exhibition.
- Council staff briefings. Includes emails and phone calls 2 days before exhibition.

# Engagement during EIS (August- September)



## **Targeted notifications**

- Letter to all sensitive receivers impacted by traffic and transport.
- Invitation to landowners, key community groups to attend drop-in sessions

## **Community engagement**

- In-person engagement sessions in Morisset, Cessnock, Maitland, Muswellbrook, Wyong, Singleton
- Surveys and webinars

## **Media and public awareness**

- Radio, print, and digital advertising campaign (end August -September) to build awareness of the EIS public exhibition and promote pop ups and information sessions.
- Video explaining the HTP project, what the EIS is and how to make a submission
- eNewsletter that public exhibition has commenced.
- Posters on noticeboards in shopping centres, libraries, council centres, community halls and other community noticeboards

## **Stakeholder briefings**

- Information packs for key stakeholders including LACL's, Councils, MPs and community groups

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# Council Commissioning Payments

Darren Clarke – Director Regional Coordination

# Hunter Conservation Investment Strategy (DCCEEW)

Kelly Carbery – Manager Strategic Projects, DCCEEW



# Regional conservation investment

## Hunter Central Coast REZ

July 2025

Planning, Offsets, Threatened Species and Ecosystems



# Hunter Central Coast REZ



Over 7000 square kilometres



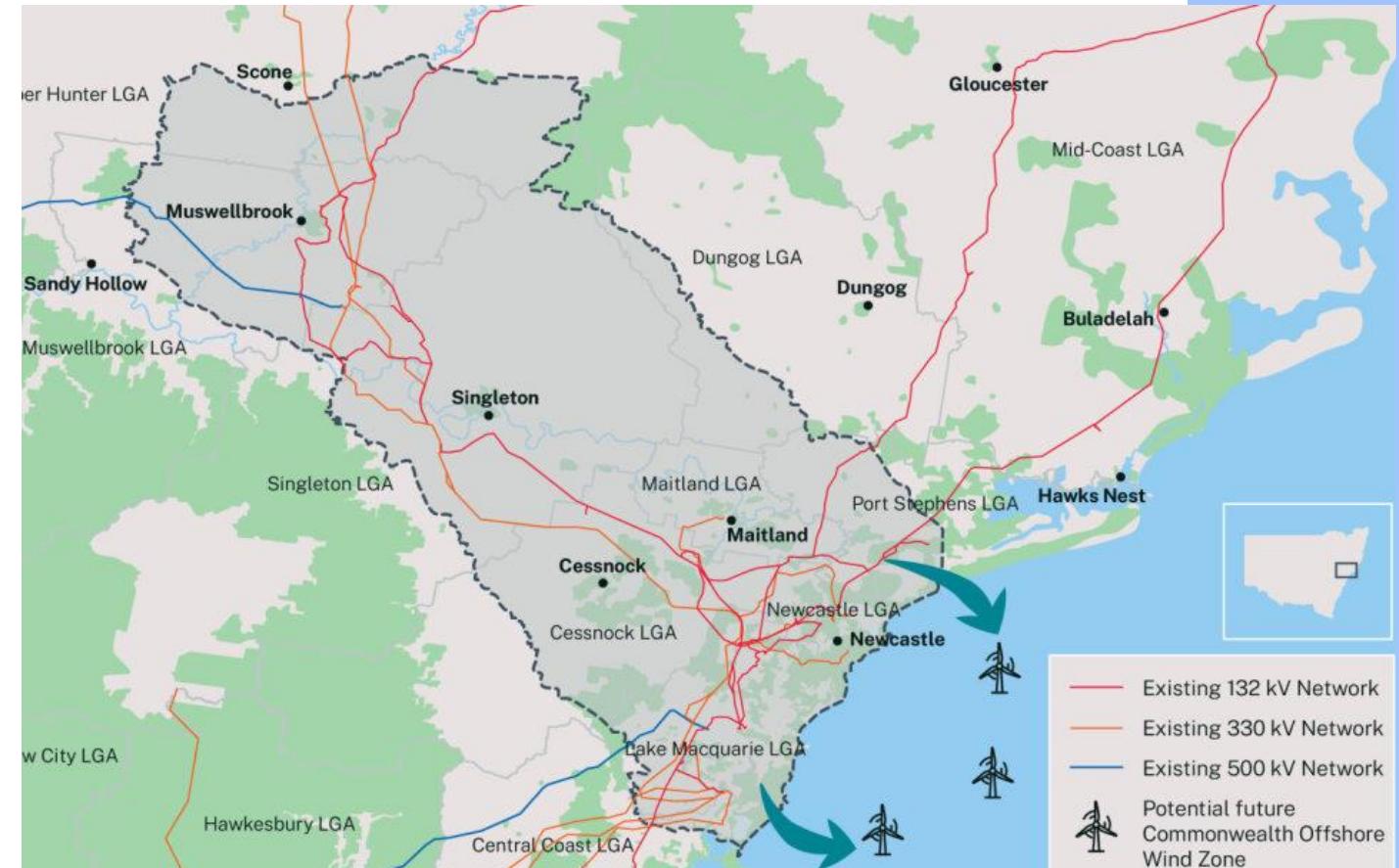
1 GW of renewable energy generation capacity and about 140 km of new transmission



Over 200,000 biodiversity credits needed—significant investment in conservation in the region



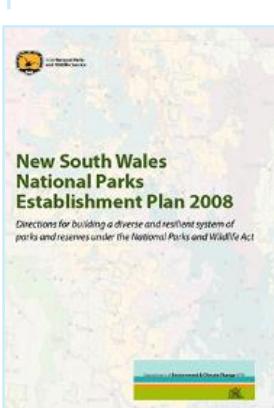
A significant opportunity for large-scale integrated conservation in the region



# Other conservation programs



## NSW National Parks Establishment Plan 2008



Saving Our Species  
Key threatening  
processes strategy

## Biodiversity Conservation Investment Strategy 2018



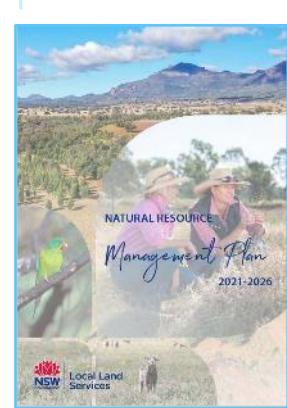
Saving Our Species  
Landscape species  
strategy

## Investing in Private Land Conservation (BCT)



NSW Koala  
Strategy  
(DCCEEW)

## LLS Natural Resource Management Plan



# Conservation assets of the HCC REZ



## Significant conservation assets include:



Watagans and Werakata National Parks and several State Forests



Hunter River and significant tributaries



28 threatened ecological communities (TECs)



Around 1300 hectares Travelling Stock Reserves



203 threatened species



Large intact areas of native vegetation

## TECs and species are under threat from:



Mining-related impacts



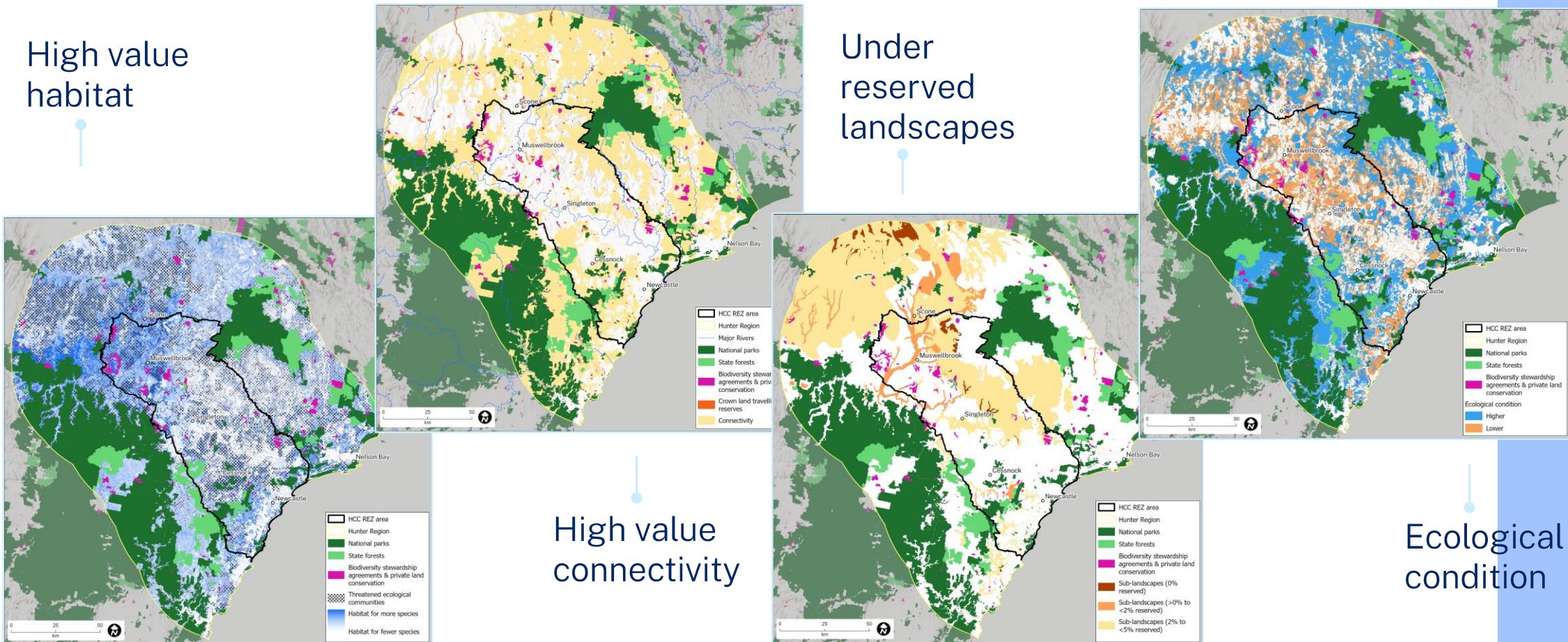
Feral animals & weeds



Climate change

# Conservation Investment Strategies

Use environmental data sets to identify high value areas and priority species for conservation investment

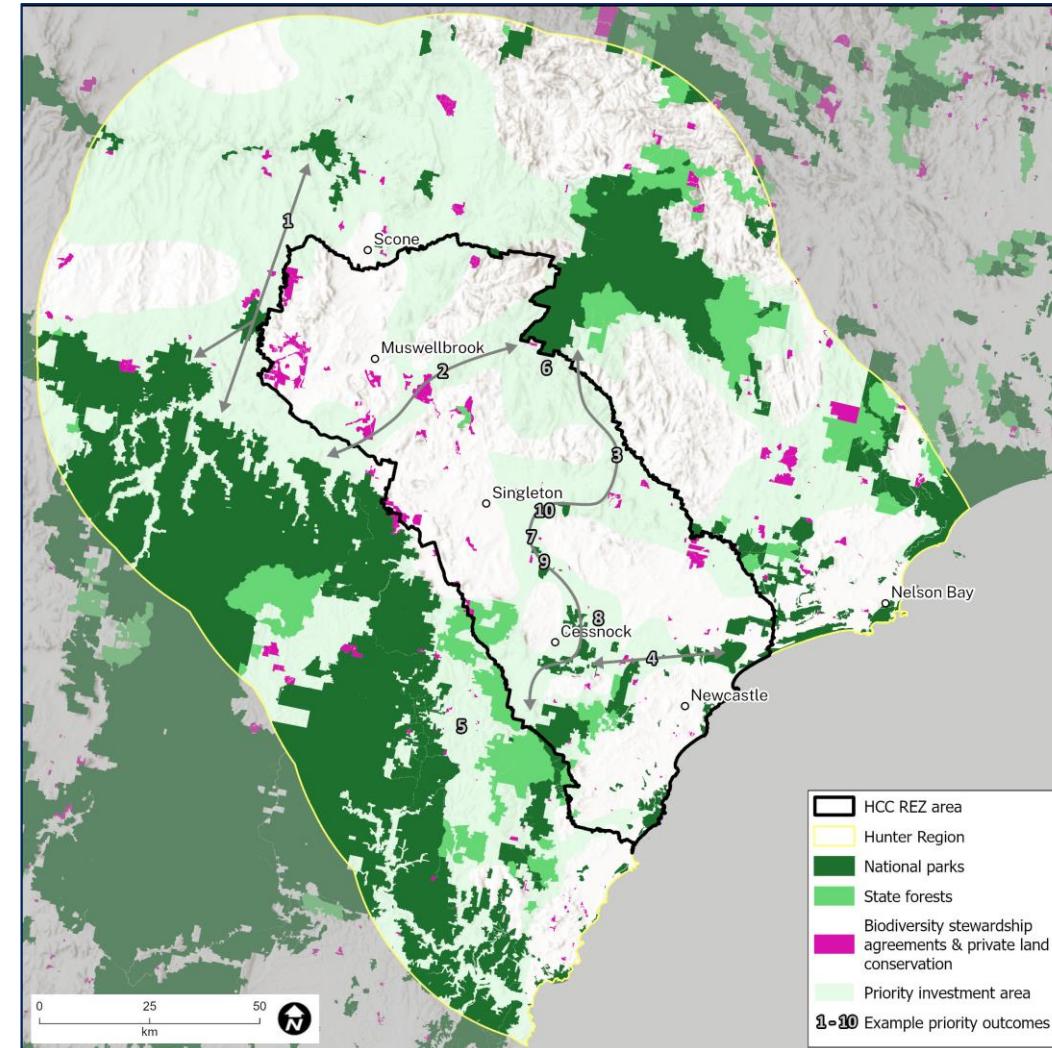


# Coordinating investment to optimise outcomes

- ✓ Connect vegetation & habitat
- ✓ Large-scale restoration effort
- ✓ Targeted species recovery projects
- ✓ Landscape scale threat management

## Implementation:

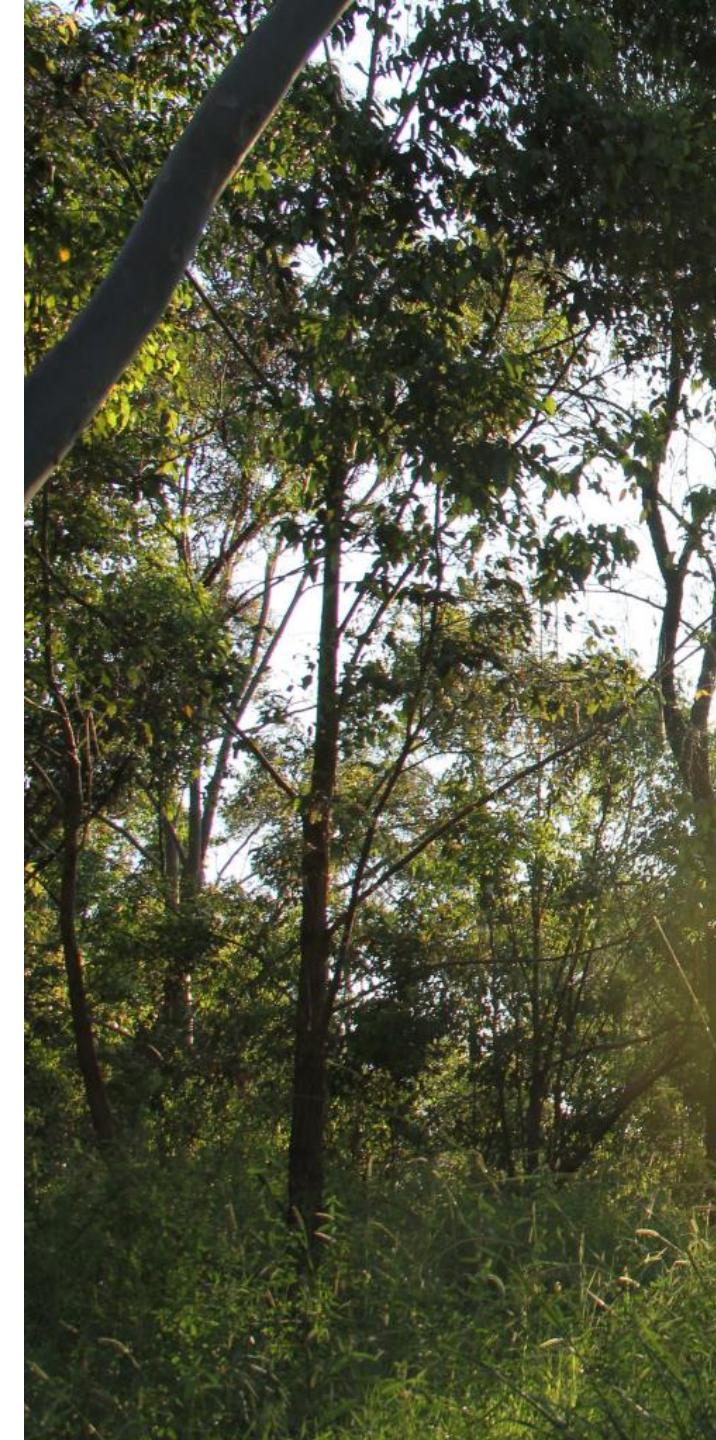
- Strategic offset delivery agreements
- Landholders interested in private land conservation
- Partnerships with community, landholders and Aboriginal people
- Existing conservation programs
- Future nature markets



# Opportunities

- Input on priorities in the strategy
- Opportunities for new revenue sources through biodiversity stewardship (including for LALCs)
- Employment and business opportunities for the region
- Build on existing conservation work in region
- Stewardship Support Program

The Stewardship Support Program is open for applications until 17<sup>th</sup> August 2025.



# Thank you & discussion



# HCC REZ Network Upgrades (Ausgrid)-Review of Environmental Factors exhibition themes and responses

Amanda Stephinson, Jason Wall - Ausgrid

# HCC REZ Network Upgrades – REF exhibition themes and responses



Draft Review of Environmental Factors (REF) exhibited from 29 April to 9 June 2025

Comprehensive engagement strategy included:

- Public drop-in sessions to discuss plans and receive input
- Multiple advertising platforms: radio, Facebook, local print media
- Information accessible online via Ausgrid website and community portal
- Focus on open, transparent, and proactive communication with communities and stakeholders

Ausgrid has released a Review of Environmental Factors for critical upgrades to the electricity network as part of the Hunter-Central Coast Renewable Energy Zone (HCC REZ). Find out what's planned and how we're minimising environmental impacts — and have your say.

Online Webinar. Monday 19 May, 6:30 – 7:15pm [...See more](#)

AUSGRID.COM.AU/HCCREZ  
Register your interest [LEARN MORE](#)

Like Comment Share

**Hunter-Central Coast REZ network infrastructure upgrades**  
Review of Environmental Factors on exhibition

Ausgrid has been selected by the Energy Corporation of NSW (EnergyCo) as the preferred network operator to deliver the critical network infrastructure works required to support the Hunter-Central Coast Renewable Energy Zone.

As part of the planning and design process, Ausgrid has prepared a Review of Environmental Factors (REF) that considers potential environmental impacts of the proposed upgrades, and the measures to reduce these.

The REF will be available for public feedback from 29 April until 9 June 2025. Community members are invited to view the REF and submit their feedback.

1. View the REF online at [yourausgrid.com.au/HCCREZ](http://yourausgrid.com.au/HCCREZ)
2. You're invited to share feedback and have your say through the options below:

1800 955 635 Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm  
[hccrez@ausgrid.com.au](mailto:hccrez@ausgrid.com.au)  
Ausgrid HCC REZ, GPO Box 4009 Sydney NSW 2001

Meet the Project team and learn about the upgrades:

Singleton	Thursday 15 May 2025   4pm - 6pm Singleton Library
Muswellbrook	Wednesday 21 May 2025   4pm - 6pm Muswellbrook Library
Branxton	Thursday 22 May 2025   4pm - 6pm Branxton Community Hall
Singleton	Sunday 25 May 2025   10am - 2pm Valley Markets Singleton
Online webinars	Register via QR below Monday 19 May 2025   6:30pm - 7:15pm Tuesday 20 May 2025 12:30pm - 1:15pm

For more information and to register for the webinars, scan the QR code or visit [ausgrid.com.au/HCCREZ](http://ausgrid.com.au/HCCREZ)

# Submissions summary



A total of eight submissions were received on the exhibited REF for the HCC REZ network infrastructure upgrade project.

Submissions were received from:

1. Hunter Jobs Alliance
2. Local community member
3. Singleton Council
4. Xatech (business)
5. McCloy Group/Loxford Project Management Pty Ltd (business)
6. Muswellbrook Council
7. Transport for NSW
8. Huntlee

Key feedback themes:

- Support for HCC REZ as a low-impact clean energy solution
- Requests for high standards in community consultation and social license
- Importance of delivering long-term local benefits

# Next steps and ongoing engagement



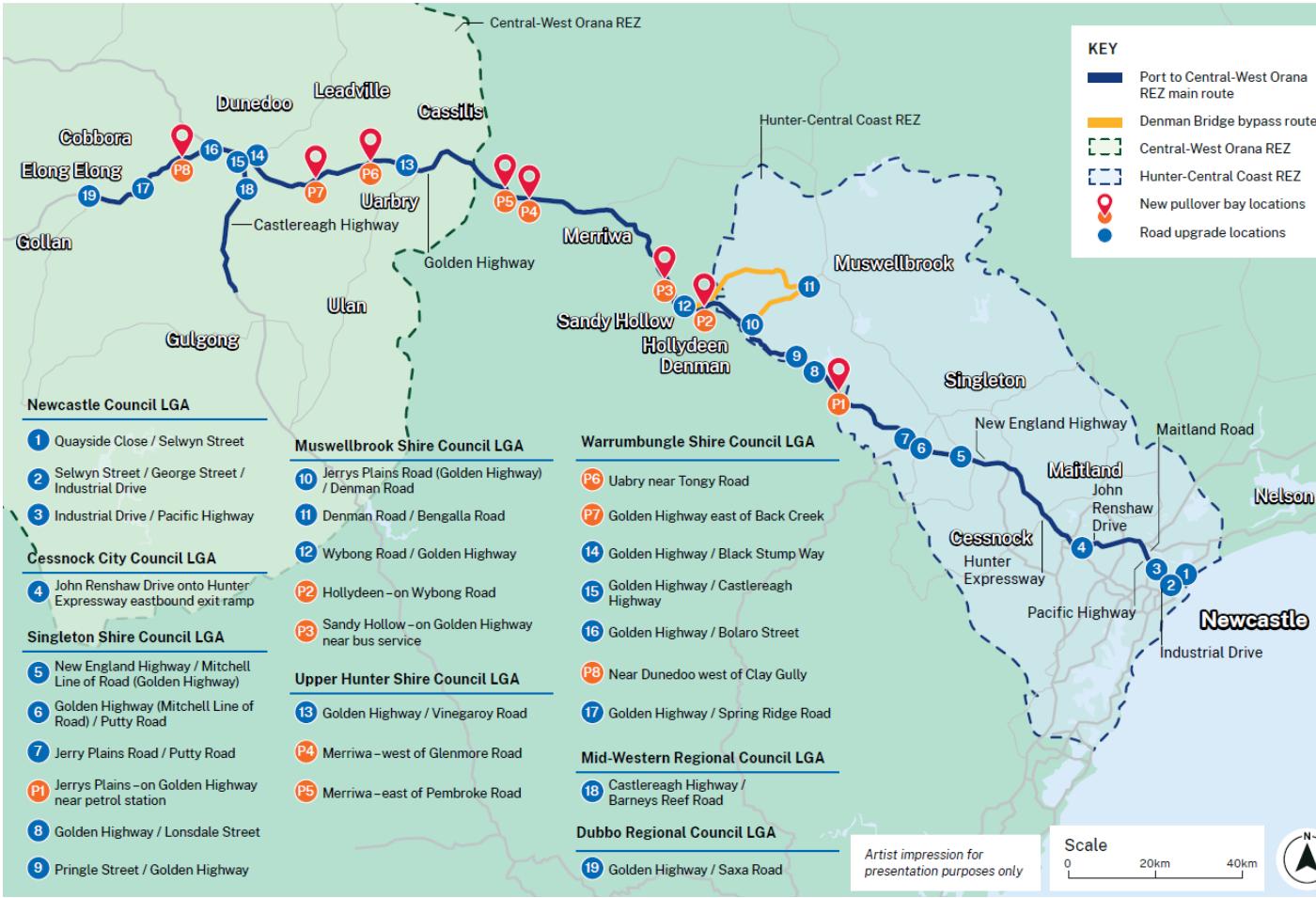
- Ausgrid's will incorporate the feedback in the final REF
- Ausgrid is committed to continuing collaboration with landowners, communities, local government, industry, and energy generators
- Ongoing updates and consultation as the project progresses
- Focus on managing cumulative impacts and maximising local benefits
- Community feedback will continue to shape project planning and delivery for positive environmental and social outcomes

# Port to REZ and Newcastle Logistics Precinct updates

Liz Sacco – Stakeholder Engagement Manager (P2R)  
Dimitri Perdikaris – Strategic Delivery Manager (P2R)  
Lemuel Yeung - Design Project Manager (NLP)

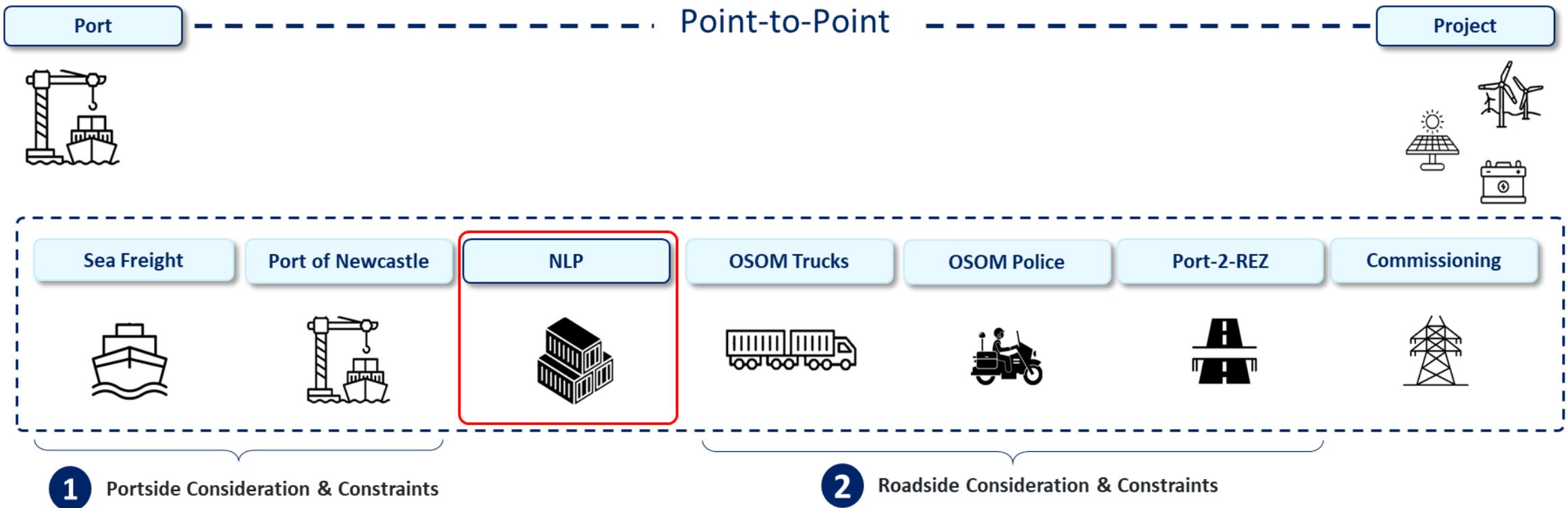
# Port to REZ

- Work started in or near HCC REZ at:
  - Lonsdale St/Pagan St, Jerrys Plains
  - Quayside Cl/Selwyn St, Mayfield North
  - Selwyn St/George St/Industrial Dve, Mayfield North
  - Wybong Rd/Golden Hwy, Sandy Hollow
- Work starting soon in or near HCC REZ here:
  - Denman Rd/Bengalla Rd, Muswellbrook
  - Jerrys Plains Rd/Golden Hwy, Denman
  - Industrial Drv/Pacific Hwy, Mayfield North
  - John Renshaw Dve/Hunter Exp, Buchanan
- 8 new pullover bays recently announced, 3 are in or near HCC REZ LGAs (Jerrys Plains, Sandy Hollow and Hollydeen)



Port to REZ – upgrades and new pullover bays

# Newcastle Logistics Precinct update



# Newcastle Logistics Precinct update



Port logistics



Delivery model development



Operations &  
Maintenance – Market  
feedback



Logistics Coordination



Roadside OSOM  
movements

# Regional Outcome Initiatives

Darren Clarke – Director Regional Coordination

- Procurement Capability Uplift Program (PCUP)
- Jobs guide
- First Nations Workforce Readiness
- Hunter Business Prospectus – Net Zero Economy Authority
- Newcastle Logistics Precinct Knowledge Exchange

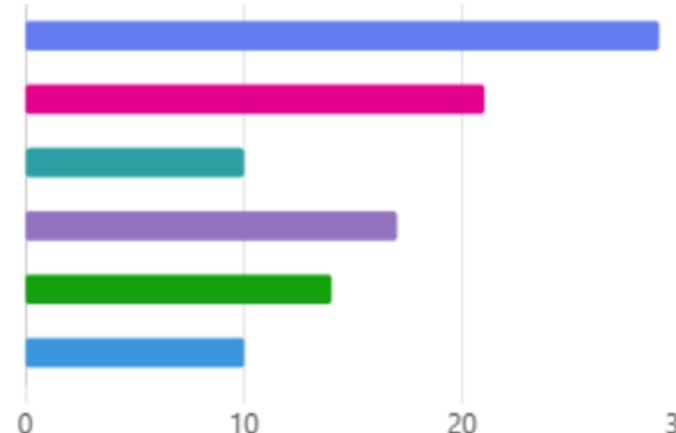
# Newcastle Logistics Precinct Knowledge Exchange – 23 July



Sold out event with over 100 attendees from approximately 55 registered businesses

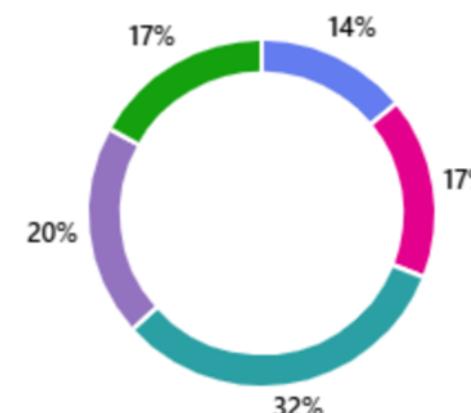
## 1. What would enable your business to participate in the Newcastle Logistics Precinct project or broader renewable energy logistics supply chain?

- |   |    |
|---|----|
| ● Clearer information about contract or tendering opportunities | 29 |
| ● Early engagement with Tier 1 or project delivery partners     | 21 |
| ● Support to scale up (equipment, staff, compliance)            | 10 |
| ● Partnerships or joint ventures with larger operators          | 17 |
| ● Infrastructure upgrades (e.g. road, access, depot)            | 14 |
| ● Other   | 10 |



## 2. How can the Hunter's strong manufacturing and engineering base be leveraged to support the renewable componentry transport and logistics supply chain?

- |   |    |
|---|----|
| ● Heavy Vehicle Servicing & Fleet Support         | 10 |
| ● Custom Trailer & Component Manufacturing        | 12 |
| ● Supply Chain Clusters and Co-location Potential | 23 |
| ● Circular economy backhaul opportunities         | 14 |
| ● Other   | 12 |



# Newcastle Logistics Precinct Knowledge Exchange



## Overall Sentiment:

Average enjoyment rating: **4.43 out of 5**, indicating strong satisfaction

## Feedback highlights and suggestions:

- High-quality speakers and content
  - Appreciation for the opportunity to connect and collaborate
  - More time for Q&A sessions
  - Stronger local supplier engagement
  - Desire for more industry insights tailored to attendees' sectors



## Feedback Themes Word Cloud



# General Business



- Next meeting scheduled for Monday 3 November at Cessnock City Council