

Building the project

New England Renewable Energy Zone network infrastructure project

Environmental impact statement | Fact sheet | October 2026

The New England Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) network infrastructure project is a key part of NSW's clean energy future, connecting renewable energy projects to the electricity grid and delivering reliable power to homes and businesses across the state.

Overview

The New England Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) network infrastructure project will include new transmission lines, energy hubs, access tracks, road upgrades and supporting infrastructure to connect renewable energy projects to the electricity network.

Timing

Subject to planning approval, construction of the network infrastructure project is expected to start in 2028 and take around 6 years to complete. Work will be staged, meaning activities will not occur along the entire corridor for the full six-year period.

Different sections of the corridor will be active at different times, and many locations will only experience construction for a few months at a time. For example, each transmission tower is built in stages and may only take weeks or months to build before work crews move on to other locations, returning at a later date for line stringing and site restoration.



500 kV transmission lines under construction

This approach means impacts along the transmission line corridor are usually temporary and localised rather than continuous across the entire alignment. Energy hubs will take longer to build.



Example of transmission towers being built



Construction worker



Example of transmission tower from below

Construction snapshot



Around 6 years of construction



Around 1,400 workers at peak construction



Around 533 kilometres of new 330 and 500 kilovolt (kV) transmission lines



250 metre-wide construction easements



Five energy hubs to connect renewable energy generation and storage projects to the network



Bayswater substation extension near Muswellbrook



Nemingha maintenance facility near Tamworth



Road upgrades and access tracks to support construction and operation of the project



Communications infrastructure to operate the network



Workforce accommodation camps and construction support sites



How the project would be built

Construction activities would vary depending on location, terrain and the type of infrastructure being built. Not all activities would occur in every area and the timing of work would differ across the project.

Activity

What's involved?



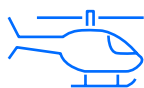
Pre-construction minor works and enabling work

- temporary fencing and site access
- establishing environmental controls and heritage excavation
- vegetation clearing
- construction of workforce accommodation camps
- upgrading existing and constructing new access tracks and roads
- establishing site office facilities and laydown areas



Transmission tower construction

- earthworks for tower pad benches (a flat, level area)
- construction of tower foundations
- delivery of tower components
- assembly of tower sections
- tower erection by cranes or other lifting equipment (e.g. helicopters in select locations where access is constrained)



Conductor stringing

- construction of temporary stringing sites
- either pulling the conductor along the ground by tractor/loader or using helicopters or drones to string pilot lines
- installing and tensioning conductors (cables or wires)



Energy hub construction

- earthworks for energy hub benches (a flat, level area)
- installation of drainage, pavements and foundations
- installation of electrical equipment



Testing and commissioning

- system testing, including transmission lines and energy hubs
- commissioning work
- energisation of the project



Restoration and rehabilitation

- rehabilitating work areas not required for operation
- stabilising disturbed areas and reinstating land in consultation with landholders

View our 'how we build towers' animation at energyco.nsw.gov.au/nerez

Managing construction impacts

We understand construction activities can affect nearby landholders, communities and the environment. The environmental impact statement (EIS) identifies measures to avoid, minimise and manage these impacts during construction and operation of the project.



Traffic and transport

Temporary and permanent traffic controls and road improvements will help support the safe movement of workers, equipment and materials while minimising impacts on local roads and communities.



Environmental

A range of management measures will be implemented to protect biodiversity, water resources, cultural heritage and agricultural land.



Biosecurity

Biosecurity protocols and hygiene measures will help prevent the spread of weeds, pests and diseases during construction and operation.



Noise and vibration

Measures such as noise and vibration monitoring, equipment selection, community notifications and restricted hours for noisy work will be used to minimise impacts.



Air quality

Air quality impacts will be managed through monitoring, dust suppression and vehicle and equipment controls.



Example of temporary workforce camp at Merotherie (1200 beds)



Switching station workers



Community and landholder engagement

EnergyCo and the network operator will engage with landholders and the community to provide information about upcoming activities, respond to feedback and minimise impacts.



Workforce accommodation and construction support sites

Workforce accommodation camps and construction support sites will help support the safe and efficient delivery of the project while reducing pressure on local housing and accommodation during peak construction periods.



Rehabilitation and reinstatement

Temporary work areas no longer required will be rehabilitated where practicable.

Read more

Visit EnergyCo's engagement portal at energyco.nsw.gov.au/nerez to learn more about the project and how it will be built:

- EIS Section 3: Project description
- EIS Section 14: Traffic and transport
- EIS Section 16: Noise and vibration
- EIS Section 20: Air quality
- Technical report 4: Social impact assessment

Frequently asked questions

When will construction work be carried out?

Standard construction hours are 7am to 6pm, Monday to Friday, 8am to 1pm on Saturdays and no work on Sundays or public holidays.

Some work will occur outside these hours. Any out-of-hours activities would follow a dedicated protocol to manage impacts on nearby communities. To support these extended periods, the main construction compounds would also operate during these times.

Workforce accommodation would operate 24/7 during construction.

What might the community notice during construction?

Depending on the location and stage of construction, communities may notice:

- surveying and investigation activities
- construction vehicles travelling to and from work areas
- workforce accommodation camps and laydown areas being established
- vegetation clearing and earthworks
- transmission tower construction and line stringing activities
- road upgrades and access tracks
- fencing, traffic controls and other safety measures
- helicopter or drone activity where required
- deliveries of equipment and materials
- installation of electrical equipment.

The timing and scale of activities will vary across the project area as construction progresses.

How long would work occur on each property?

While construction of the project is expected to take around 6 years, work will be staged and move progressively across the project area. This means construction activities will not occur in the same location for the entire construction period.



- Some properties may only experience short-term activities such as surveying or line stringing.
- Properties with transmission towers or access tracks may experience construction activities for weeks or months.
- There may be periods with little or no activity between different construction activities.

This means the majority of landholders would not experience continuous construction activity on their property for the full construction period.

What are access tracks?

Temporary access tracks will be required to safely transport equipment, materials, construction workers and vehicles to transmission tower sites and temporary hardstand areas.

We will work closely with landholders to identify existing farm tracks or access routes that can be used or upgraded for construction. Where no suitable access exists, a new temporary track may need to be constructed in consultation with the landholder. If ground conditions are already stable and capable of supporting heavy loads, only minimal preparation is usually required.

Temporary access tracks would be reinstated to their original condition once construction is complete, unless the landholder prefers the track to remain in place.

Some access tracks may be required permanently for ongoing long-term maintenance of transmission infrastructure. We will discuss this with the landholder before construction starts.

Engagement portal

EnergyCo has prepared an EIS for the New England REZ network infrastructure project which describes how the project would be built.

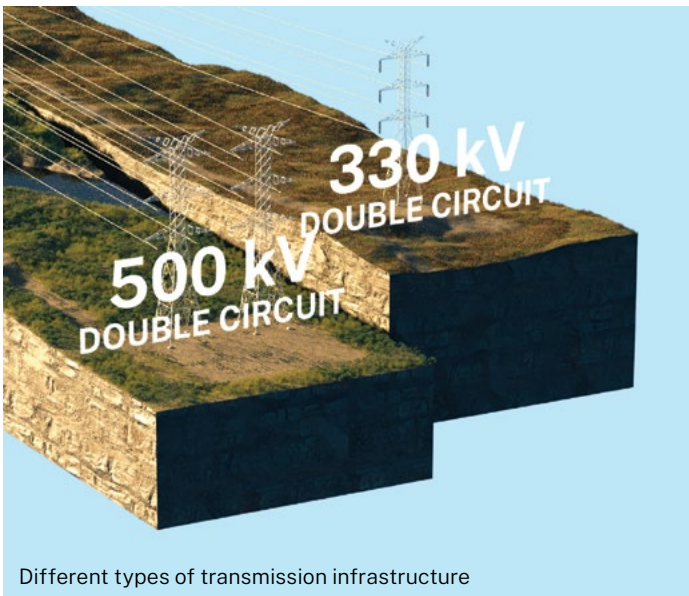
You can find out more about different project features and the construction program in the EIS by scanning the QR code or visiting EnergyCo's engagement portal at energyco.nsw.gov.au/nerez.



Scan the QR code to visit the engagement portal.



Example of infrastructure construction in progress



Different types of transmission infrastructure



Artist's impression of a finished 500 kV tower

Learn more and have your say on the EIS

The environmental impact statement (EIS) is on public exhibition in October and November 2026. You can have your say on the EIS by making a submission to the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure on the NSW Planning Portal.

To view the EIS and make your submission, visit planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects and search application number 'SSI-74175972'.



Scan the QR code to visit the NSW Planning Portal.



Contact us

EnergyCo wants to hear what you think about our plans. If you have questions or want to give feedback, please get in touch with our team.



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