

Guide to the Environmental Impact Statement

Central-West Orana REZ transmission project

September 2023

What is the Environmental Impact Statement?

The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is a document required for State significant infrastructure projects under the NSW planning system, specifically the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act).

EnergyCo has prepared an EIS for the Central-West Orana REZ transmission project. The EIS provides a description of the project, how it will be constructed, and a technical assessment of the project, including potential economic, environmental and social impacts. It also outlines a range of mitigation measures which would be implemented to avoid, minimise and/or mitigate potential impacts to the surrounding environment and local communities during construction and operation of the project.

The EIS aims to inform communities and key stakeholders about the project and help them make an informed submission as part of the planning process.

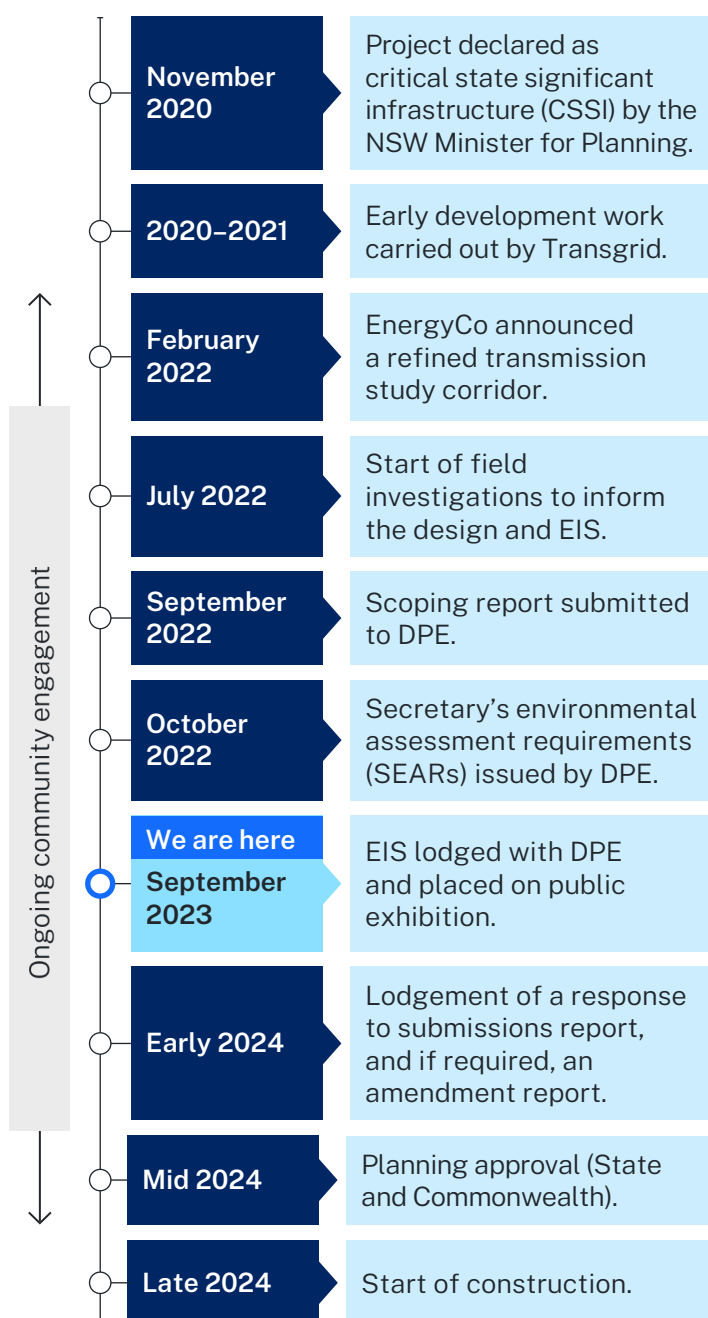
The EIS has been lodged with the NSW Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) and will be placed on public exhibition for 28 days. During this time, communities and stakeholders can view the EIS on the [NSW Planning Portal](#) and make a submission to DPE. You can find further details on how to make a submission in this fact sheet.

In this guide

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Project timeline



Statutory context

The Central-West Orana REZ transmission project was declared a critical state significant infrastructure (CSSI) project by the NSW Minister for Planning in November 2020 as it is considered 'essential for the State for economic, environmental or social reasons'.

Under the EP&A Act, CSSI applications are subject to approval by the NSW Minister for Planning following a comprehensive assessment process. This includes extensive community involvement and the preparation of an EIS.

The project is also a controlled action under the Australian Government's *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) and requires approval from the Australian Minister for the Environment.

EnergyCo is the proponent of the Central-West Orana REZ transmission project and is responsible for preparing and submitting the EIS to DPE. Development of the EIS began in early 2022 and included detailed investigation work, field assessments and consultation with communities and stakeholders.

We have prepared the EIS in accordance with the requirements of the EP&A Act, the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021* (EP&A Regulation) and the *NSW Department of Planning and Environment's (DPE) State Significant Infrastructure Guidelines* (DPIE, 2021a).

The EIS addresses the SEARs which were issued for the project in late 2022. It also addresses the supplementary SEARs that were issued in early 2023 to include the relevant Commonwealth requirements in accordance with the NSW Assessment Bilateral Agreement.



North of Wollar substation.

Chapter overview

The EIS is a large document and addresses a range of different topics. Each chapter is summarised below.



Chapter 1: Introduction

Provides an overview of the project and the contents of the EIS.



Chapter 2: Strategic context

Describes the need for the project, including the relevant Australian and NSW Government policies that support the project. It also describes the project objectives, the alternative options considered and a summary of the project development process.



Chapter 3: Project description

Outlines the key components of the project. It includes details of the built features of the project, construction activities required to build the project and maps of the construction areas, as well as the operational and maintenance aspects of the project.

Further details can be found in **Appendix B: Project description mapping**.



Chapter 4: Statutory context

Explains the environmental impact assessment, planning approval process and the planning instruments that are applicable to the project.

Further details can be found in **Appendix C: Statutory compliance**.



Chapter 5: Community and stakeholder engagement

Outlines the engagement activities that have been carried out with communities and stakeholders and summarises feedback received to date. It also outlines future engagement to be carried out for the project.

Further details can be found in **Appendix D: Engagement summary**.



Chapter 6: Approach to impact assessment

Describes how potential impacts have been assessed as part of the EIS.



Chapter 7: Land use and property

Outlines the potential land use and property impacts and proposed mitigation measures. It describes existing land use in the project area and includes detailed maps of land use and zoning.



Chapter 8: Agriculture

Outlines the potential agriculture impacts of the project and proposed mitigation measures, including a detailed description of existing agricultural land uses in the region.



Chapter 9: Landscape character and visual amenity

Assesses the potential landscape character and visual amenity impacts during construction and operation of the project. It provides a detailed description of the methodologies used to assess potential impacts and includes photomontages (artist's impressions) of the proposed transmission infrastructure, and proposed mitigation measures.



Chapter 10: Biodiversity

Identifies potential biodiversity impacts of the project and proposed mitigation measures. It describes existing vegetation and animal species (flora and fauna) within the project area, including threatened species.

Further detail can be found in **Technical Paper 4: Biodiversity Development Assessment Report**.



Chapter 11: Aboriginal heritage

Describes the existing environment as it relates to Aboriginal cultural heritage and assesses potential impacts and mitigation measures. It outlines the methodology used for assessing Aboriginal heritage impacts, engagement that has been carried out with the Aboriginal community and identifies Aboriginal sites and places within the project area.

Further detail can be found in **Technical paper 5: Aboriginal cultural heritage assessment report**.



Chapter 12: Non-Aboriginal heritage

Describes the existing environment as it relates to non-Aboriginal heritage and assesses potential impacts and mitigation measures. It outlines the history of the project area and known heritage sites.

Further detail can be found in **Technical paper 6: Non-Aboriginal heritage**.



Chapter 13: Social

Outlines the potential social impacts during construction and operation of the project and proposed mitigation measures. It describes targeted engagement carried out with landowners, community groups and stakeholders to inform the social impact assessment.

Further detail can be found in **Technical paper 7: Social**.



Chapter 14: Economic

Outlines the potential impacts to the regional and NSW economy and identifies measures to minimise negative economic impacts as a result of the project.

Further detail can be found in **Technical paper 8: Economic**.



Chapter 15: Noise and vibration

Assesses potential noise and vibration impacts during construction and operation as well as proposed mitigation measures. It identifies potential noise sensitive receivers and includes noise contour maps of the project area.

Further detail can be found in **Technical paper 9: Noise and vibration**.



Chapter 16: Hazard and risk

Outlines potential hazards and risks of the project during construction and operation, as well as proposed mitigation measures. Key topics addressed include bushfires, mine subsidence, utilities, aviation safety, electric and magnetic fields and dangerous goods and hazardous materials.

Further detail can be found in:

- **Technical paper 1: Aviation**
- **Technical paper 10: Bushfire**
- **Technical paper 11: Preliminary hazard analysis**
- **Technical paper 12: Electro magnetic field assessment**.



Chapter 17: Traffic and transport

Provides an assessment of potential traffic and transport impacts during construction and operation, as well as proposed mitigation measures. It discusses temporary and permanent traffic changes, heavy vehicle movements, traffic volumes and road capacity, property access, road maintenance and other topics.

Further detail can be found in **Technical paper 13: Traffic and transport**.



Chapter 18: Waste management

Outlines expected waste generation during construction and operation and how this will be managed.



Golden Highway and Muronbung Road, Ballimore.



Chapter 19: Other issues

19.1 Hydrology, flooding and water quality

Assesses the potential hydrology, flooding and water quality impacts during construction and operation, and identifies proposed mitigation measures.

19.2 Soils and contamination

Describes the existing environment as it relates to soils and contamination, assesses potential impacts during construction and operation and outlines proposed mitigation measures.

19.3 Groundwater

Assesses the potential groundwater impacts during construction and operation, and identifies proposed mitigation measures. It discusses potential impacts to groundwater quality, recharge and flow paths, and identifies potential sensitive receivers including groundwater dependent ecosystems and registered groundwater bores.

19.4 Air quality

Outlines existing air quality conditions in the project area and potential impacts from construction and operation, as well as proposed mitigation measures. It includes information about how dust and other air quality impacts will be managed during construction, such as from earthworks, vehicle movements and other activities.

19.5 Climate change and greenhouse gas

Outlines potential impacts from climate change and greenhouse gases during construction and operation, and proposed mitigation measures. It discusses the potential impact to project infrastructure from extreme weather conditions, such as increased rainfall, heat, droughts, storms and bushfire. It also includes the predicted greenhouse gas emissions from the project.

Further detail can be found in:

- **Technical paper 14: Hydrology and water quality**
- **Technical paper 15: Flooding**
- **Technical paper 16: Contamination**
- **Technical paper 17: Groundwater**
- **Technical paper 18: Air quality**



Chapter 20: Cumulative impacts

Assesses the potential cumulative impacts from the construction and operation of the project, when considered together with other relevant planned future projects in the Central-West Orana region.

Further details can be found in **Appendix E: Cumulative impact assessment**.



Chapter 21: Environmental management

Outlines the approach to managing environmental impacts during construction and operation. It includes details of how environmental performance will be measured and evaluated and outlines relevant management plans and strategies. It also provides a summary of the proposed mitigation measures outlined in previous chapters.



Chapter 22: Environmental risk analysis

Outlines potential risks associated with environmental, social and economic impacts from the project. It includes a table showing the expected risk rating of each potential impact and proposed management and mitigation measures.



Chapter 23: Justification and conclusion

Presents EnergyCo's justification for the project and a conclusion to the EIS. The justification incorporates the strategic need for the project, how the project objectives are achieved and an evaluation of the overall findings of the EIS.



Chapter 24: References

Lists the sources used in developing the EIS.

Where to view the EIS



Online on the NSW Planning Portal

Visit planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects and search SSI-48323210.



Through EnergyCo's website

Follow the link on our project web page at energyco.nsw.gov.au/cwo.



In person at a community information session

View details of upcoming sessions on our website at energyco.nsw.gov.au/cwo. You can also contact our team on 1800 032 101 or by emailing cwo@energyco.nsw.gov.au.

How to make an online submission

EnergyCo welcomes your submission on the Central-West Orana REZ transmission project EIS during the exhibition period. We've provided instructions below to help you make a submission.

1



Visit the NSW Planning Portal at planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects.

2



Create a user account by clicking the 'My Account' icon in the top right of the homepage or under the 'Services' tab and then click 'Create an Account'.

3



When you are logged in, find the Central-West Orana REZ Transmission Project, and click the 'Make a Submission' icon. Application number: **SSI-48323210**.

4



Access the [user guide](#) for more information on how to make a submission.

How to make a written submission

DPE encourages online submissions, however we understand that under certain circumstances it may not be possible to have your say online. In this case, you may send a written submission to DPE.

Please visit the Central-West Orana REZ transmission project webpage on the [NSW Planning Portal](#) to view the Exhibition Notice which includes detailed instructions on how to make a written submission. Your submission must reach DPE before the close of the exhibition period.

For more information including DPE's submissions policy please visit planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/have-your-say.

If you have further questions about making a written submission, please contact DPE's nominated Planner for the Central-West Orana REZ transmission project on **02 8217 2022**.



EnergyCo's Place Managers near Lake Burrendong.

Tools and resources

There are a range of supporting resources and tools available to help you better understand the EIS and learn more about key topics.



NSW Planning Portal

The EIS is available to view on the NSW Planning Portal at planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/projects/central-west-orana-rez-transmission. This is also where you can make an online submission to have your say on the EIS.



Digital EIS

We have prepared a digital version of the EIS which includes an overview of each chapter and supporting maps and images. You can access the digital EIS online via our website at energyco.nsw.gov.au/cwo.



Fact sheets

We have published a variety of fact sheets on key EIS topics including workforce accommodation, noise and vibration, building the REZ transmission network and more. You can view the fact sheets on our website at energyco.nsw.gov.au/cwo.



Community information sessions

During the public exhibition, we will be hosting a series of information sessions so you can speak to the project team and ask questions about the EIS. View the details of our upcoming sessions at energyco.nsw.gov.au/cwo or by contacting our team on 1800 032 101 or cwo@energyco.nsw.gov.au.



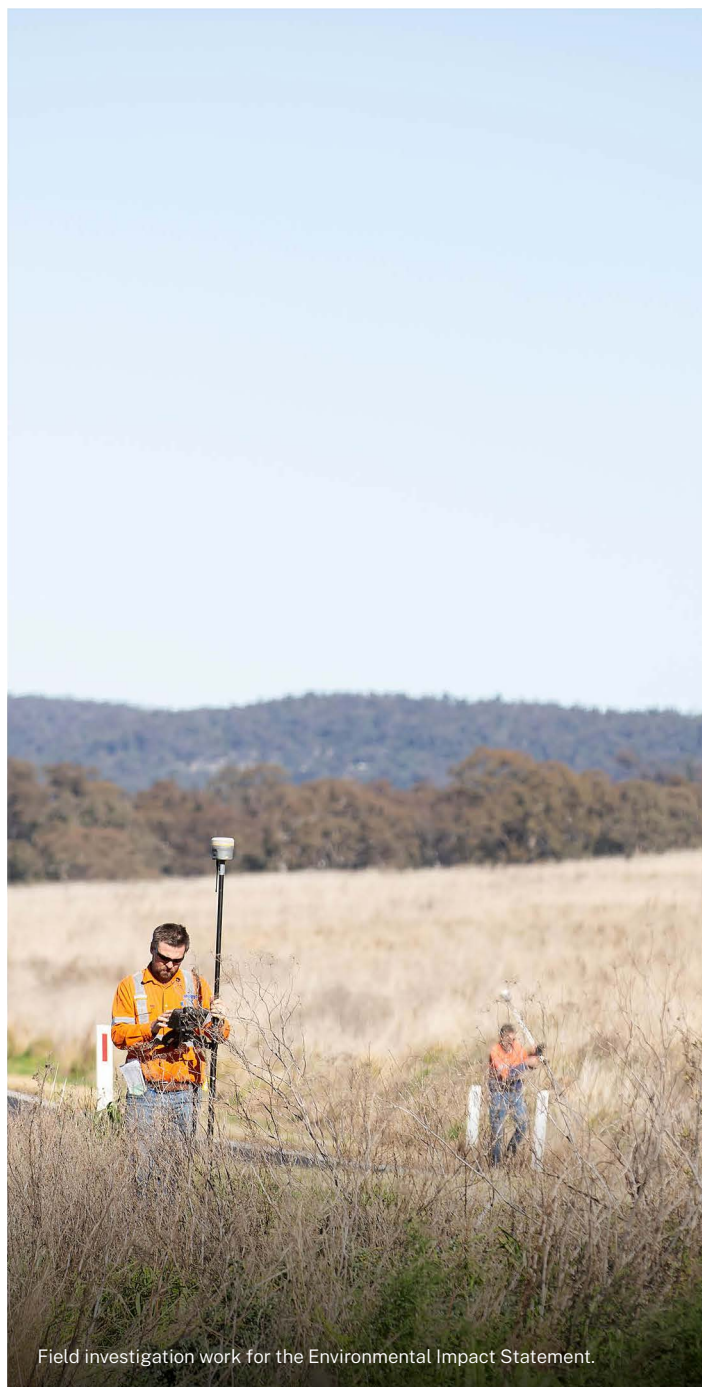
Interactive map

Our interactive map shows key features of the Central-West Orana REZ, including the transmission project study corridor and energy hub locations. The map is available to view online at caportal.com.au/energyco/rez.

What happens next?

Once the public exhibition period has closed, DPE will collate all submissions and provide them to EnergyCo for review and consideration. After reviewing the submissions, EnergyCo will prepare a submissions report that responds to the issues raised. The submissions report will be made publicly available on the NSW Planning Portal.

If the project is approved, it would be built and operated in accordance with the plans and mitigation measures described in the EIS and other conditions of approval.



Field investigation work for the Environmental Impact Statement.

About EnergyCo

The Energy Corporation of NSW (EnergyCo) is a statutory authority responsible for leading the delivery of Renewable Energy Zones (REZs) under the NSW Government's Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap. For more information, visit our website at energyco.nsw.gov.au/about-energyco.

Contact Us

For more information about the Central-West Orana REZ project, you can visit our website or contact the project team:

✉ cwo@energyco.nsw.gov.au

📞 1800 032 101

🌐 energyco.nsw.gov.au

🗣️ If you need help understanding this information, please contact the Translating and Interpreting Service on **131 450** and ask them to call us on **1800 061 114**.

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. You can find more information on our website by scanning the QR code or by visiting energyco.nsw.gov.au.



NSW Department of Planning and Environment / Neil Fenelon.