

# Workforce accommodation

## Central-West Orana REZ transmission project

September 2023

EnergyCo is delivering the Central-West Orana Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) to provide a clean, affordable and reliable power supply for energy consumers across NSW. The Central-West Orana REZ transmission project will involve the construction of new transmission lines, energy hubs, switching stations and related infrastructure. The new REZ network infrastructure will enable renewable energy from solar, wind and storage projects to be distributed to energy consumers across the State via the existing NSW transmission network.

### Temporary workforce accommodation

The Network Operator will build temporary workforce accommodation to support construction of the Central-West Orana REZ transmission project. Most of the construction workforce would be accommodated at a temporary facility within the Merotherie energy hub site, with a secondary accommodation facility proposed at Neeleys Lane, Cassilis.

### Workforce accommodation snapshot



**2** temporary workforce accommodation facilities



up to **1,800** workers at peak



**1,200** workers at Merotherie Road, Merotherie



**600** workers at Neeleys Lane, Cassilis

### What will temporary workforce facilities include?

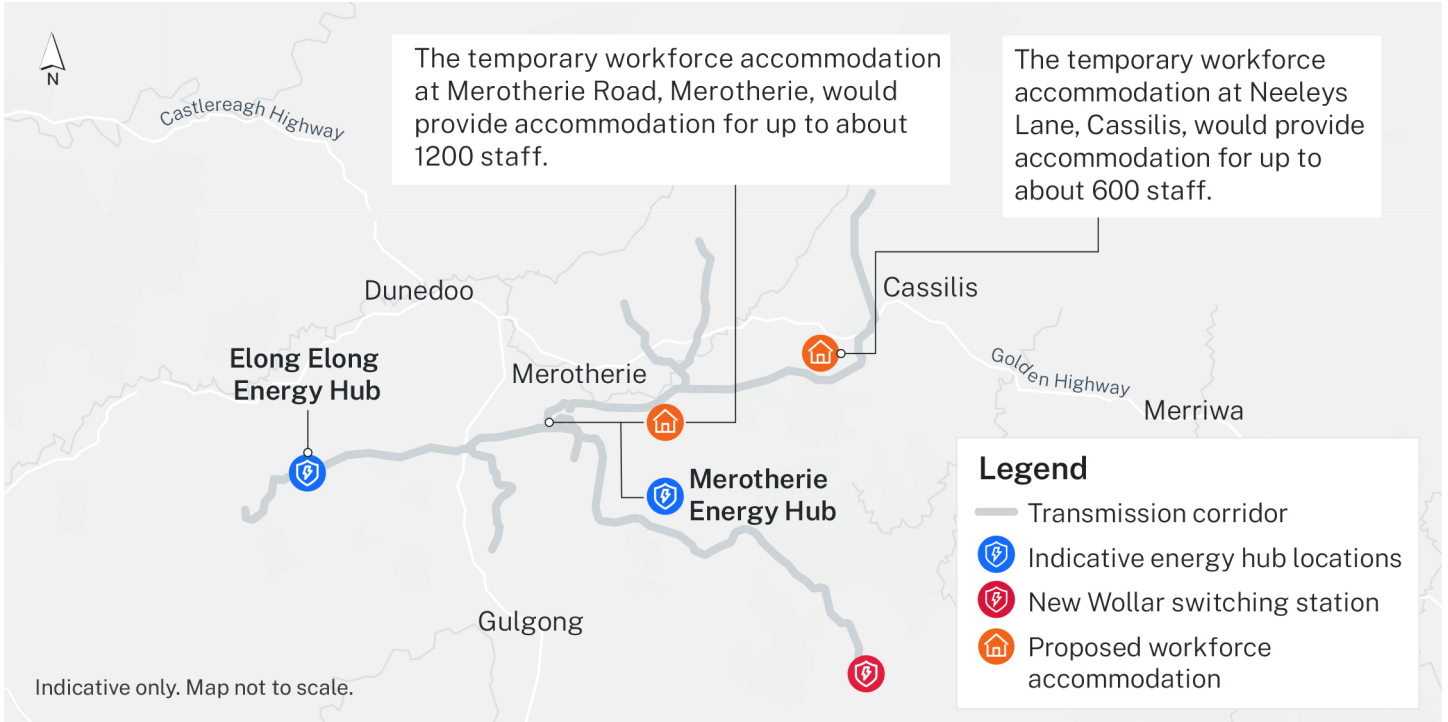
Each facility would include:

- demountable accommodation and offices
- workforce amenities such as kitchens and recreation areas
- utilities such as electricity and water
- parking areas and bus stops
- equipment, materials and gas storage
- generators
- wastewater treatment plant
- laydown, hardstand and workshops.

A range of activities will be carried out to support the operation of the temporary workforce accommodation facilities during construction. This would include general maintenance activities, deliveries, waste removal and vehicle movements.

Where practical, workers would be transported between the construction areas and the workforce accommodation via shuttle buses to help minimise potential traffic impacts of the project on local roads. This would mainly occur at the start and end of the working day. Temporary workforce accommodation will operate 24/7 throughout construction.

## Proposed temporary workforce accommodation facilities for the REZ transmission project



### Why use temporary facilities instead of local accommodation?

In early 2023 EnergyCo invited community feedback via an online survey on a number of key topics in the REZ, including how workers should be accommodated. Of the 290 responses received, nearly half of participants indicated that a mix of temporary facilities and existing local accommodation should be used. EnergyCo has used this feedback to inform the approach to workforce accommodation.

Temporary workforce accommodation facilities are commonly used on construction and mining projects. By providing dedicated temporary accommodation for workers, we can help reduce demand on existing local accommodation and housing particularly when housing pressures are already being felt by communities in the Central-West Orana REZ.

Temporary workforce accommodation can provide economic benefits for local communities, such as opportunities for local businesses and suppliers while the facilities are being built and operated. In early 2024, EnergyCo will engage with the community about opportunities to get involved.

### Use of local accommodation on a short-term basis

While the temporary workforce accommodation is being established, a small number of construction workers may need to use existing local hotel, motel and rental accommodation. The Network Operator would make every effort to minimise the use of existing local accommodation during this early phase.



## Coordinating REZ workforce and accommodation

As Infrastructure Planner, EnergyCo is coordinating the delivery of transmission and generation projects in the REZ including planning key initiatives like housing and accommodation.

As well as coordinating the temporary workforce accommodation requirements for the REZ transmission project, EnergyCo is investigating housing and accommodation in the REZ more broadly in partnership with local councils, industry and other NSW Government agencies.

While renewable energy generators are responsible for addressing their own workforce accommodation requirements, EnergyCo is also working with developers to coordinate the delivery of workforce accommodation for wind and solar projects in the REZ.

EnergyCo is currently working with councils, developers, government agencies and industry to identify suitable locations for workforce accommodation to minimise impacts on the community. We are also working to establish suitable funding arrangements with industry to minimise the need for additional funding from the NSW Government.

EnergyCo is actively engaging with REZ stakeholders and facilitating information sharing and planning so that housing and accommodation outcomes are delivered in a coordinated manner.

## Investigations into housing and workforce accommodation

In early 2023, EnergyCo carried out a study into the existing housing context in the Central-West Orana region to help inform how workforce accommodation will be managed in the REZ. The study found that workforce numbers in the REZ are expected to peak in late 2025. This includes the workforce requirements for the REZ transmission project as well as major solar, wind and storage projects with planned connections to the REZ network.

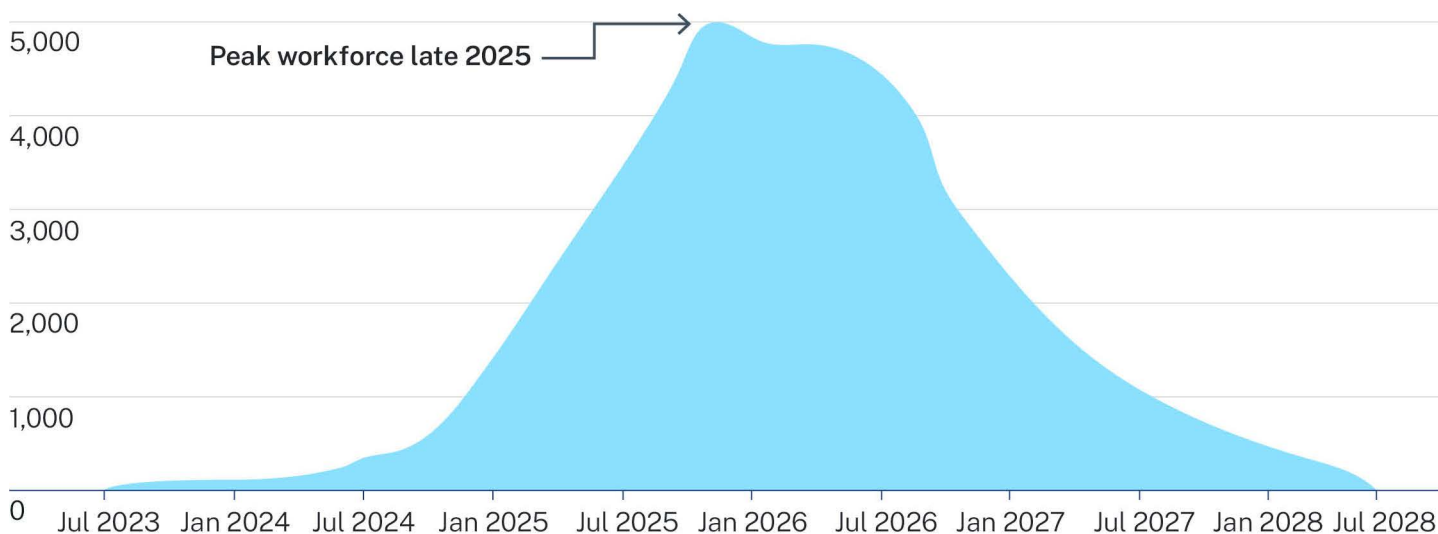
## Opportunities for legacy housing

EnergyCo is investigating a number of legacy housing initiatives in the REZ, such as accommodation for key workers and opportunities to provide affordable community housing once construction in the REZ is complete.

To help coordinate housing outcomes and other key issues in the REZ, the Central-West Orana REZ steering committee was developed in mid-2023 with local councils, EnergyCo, Department of Regional NSW and Department of Planning and Environment.

EnergyCo will keep the community informed as these initiatives progress in the coming months. We will provide an update on detailed plans for implementation in late 2023.

### Expected construction workforce numbers for the REZ transmission project and generators with proposed connections to the REZ network



For more information on temporary workforce accommodation proposed for the Central-West Orana REZ transmission project, please view Chapter 3 of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) via EnergyCo's website at [energyco.nsw.gov.au/cwo](http://energyco.nsw.gov.au/cwo).

## 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](https://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](mailto:cwo@energyco.nsw.gov.au)

📞 1800 032 101

🌐 [energyco.nsw.gov.au](https://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](https://energyco.nsw.gov.au).

