

EnergyCo

# New England Renewable Energy Zone Transmission Project

Project update

December 2023



# In this update



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## Have your say

We will continue to engage with landowners and communities during the development of the EIS. Once the EIS is finalised, it will be placed on public exhibition and people are encouraged to make formal submissions.

The New England Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) is a critical energy project for NSW, to provide clean and reliable electricity to consumers for generations to come.

## Where are we now?

We have commenced field investigations to help refine the New England transmission project preliminary study corridor and inform the environmental studies needed to assess the project.

Field studies currently underway include flora and fauna surveys and aerial mapping surveys.

Since June 2023 we have been carrying out consultation on the preliminary study corridor.

So far we've completed over 330 individual and group landowner meetings and 14 community information sessions attended by more than 400 community members. This engagement has generated a range of feedback on opportunities to refine the corridor.

## What's next?

We are listening and have been working through landowner feedback. We will announce significant changes in the new year which aim to minimise and avoid impacts on landowners and local residents.

EnergyCo will then prepare a Scoping Report to be lodged with the Department of Planning and Environment.

The Scoping Report will provide an overview of the project and potential impacts that will require further consideration under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.

EnergyCo will then prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to assess the overall merits of the project and identify options to avoid, minimise and mitigate potential impacts. The EIS will be submitted to the Department of Planning and Environment for assessment.



## Field investigations

Specialist teams have begun field investigations to better understand and identify constraints and opportunities.

Thank you to all landowners who have provided access to carry out this important field work.

These studies are an important first step in helping us refine the preliminary study corridor and identify site specific issues. They will also help to inform the development of the EIS for the project.

Surveys are expected to continue throughout 2024 and we will work closely with landholders regarding these important survey efforts. For more information, please refer to our Field Investigations fact sheet.

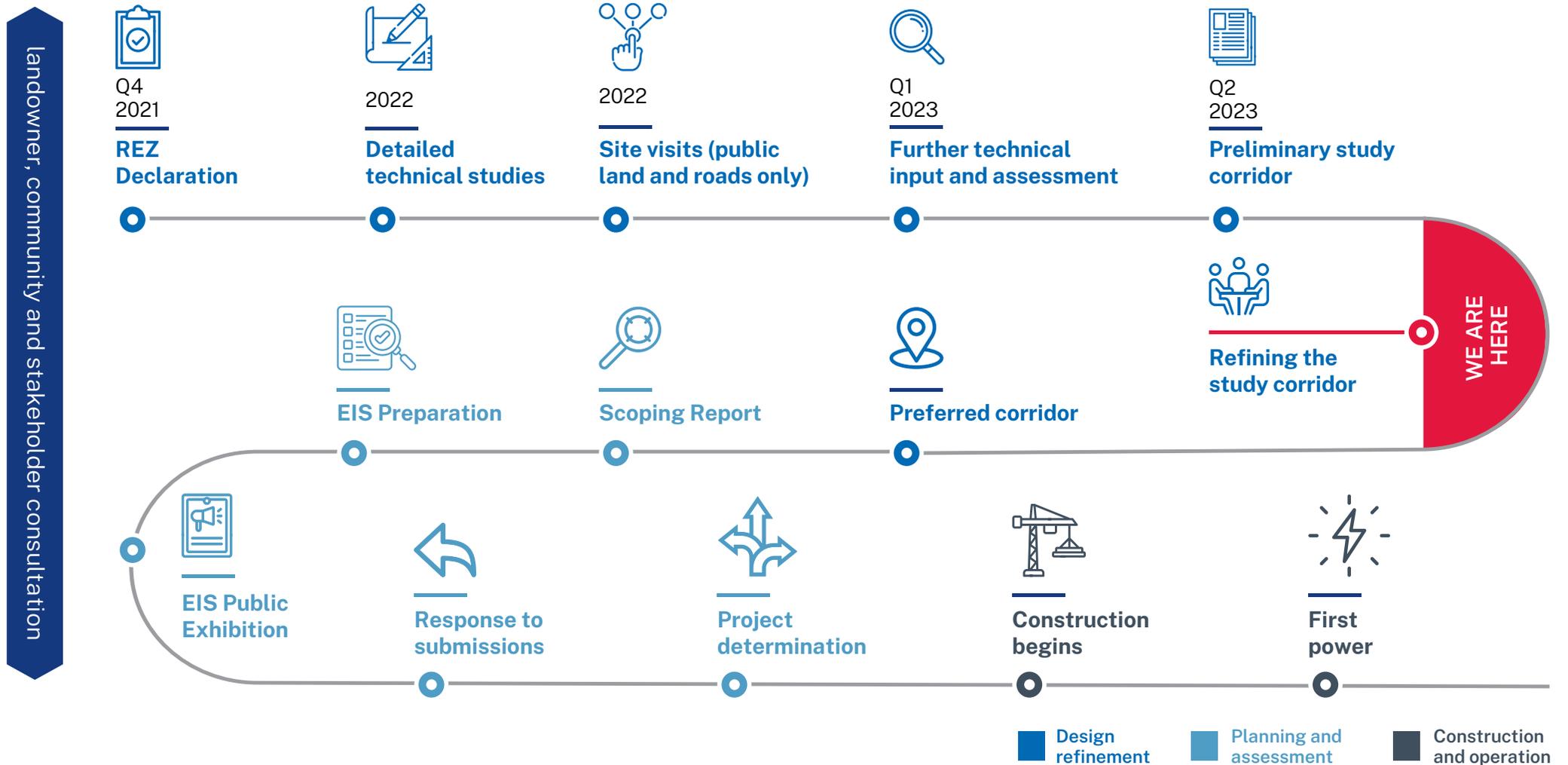
[Field Investigations fact sheet](#)

# Where are we now?

Community feedback and the results of early field surveys are helping us to refine the preliminary study corridor.

We would like to thank everyone who has provided feedback to date for helping us identify individual property matters that require attention and consider potential improvements.

We are continuing to work on refinements to the project and release a preferred corridor in 2024.





# How the preliminary study corridor was chosen

As the Infrastructure Planner for the New England REZ, EnergyCo has been tasked with designing a suitable route for the development of critical transmission infrastructure needed to connect areas with strong renewable energy generation potential on the New England Tablelands with the existing electricity network in the Hunter Valley region.

The development of these routes needs to consider a range of factors, including (but not limited to), land use, environmental and heritage conservation areas, constructibility, timing, cost and network efficiency.

These factors can be grouped into five broad categories that provide for the balanced consideration of alternatives.



## People

Interactions with communities and landholdings, including consideration of amenity, lifestyles and livelihoods



## Strategic

The consistency of the project with the Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap



## Economic

The cost of the project and its impacts on NSW energy consumers



## Technical

The technical efficiency and reliability of the project in meeting electricity demand

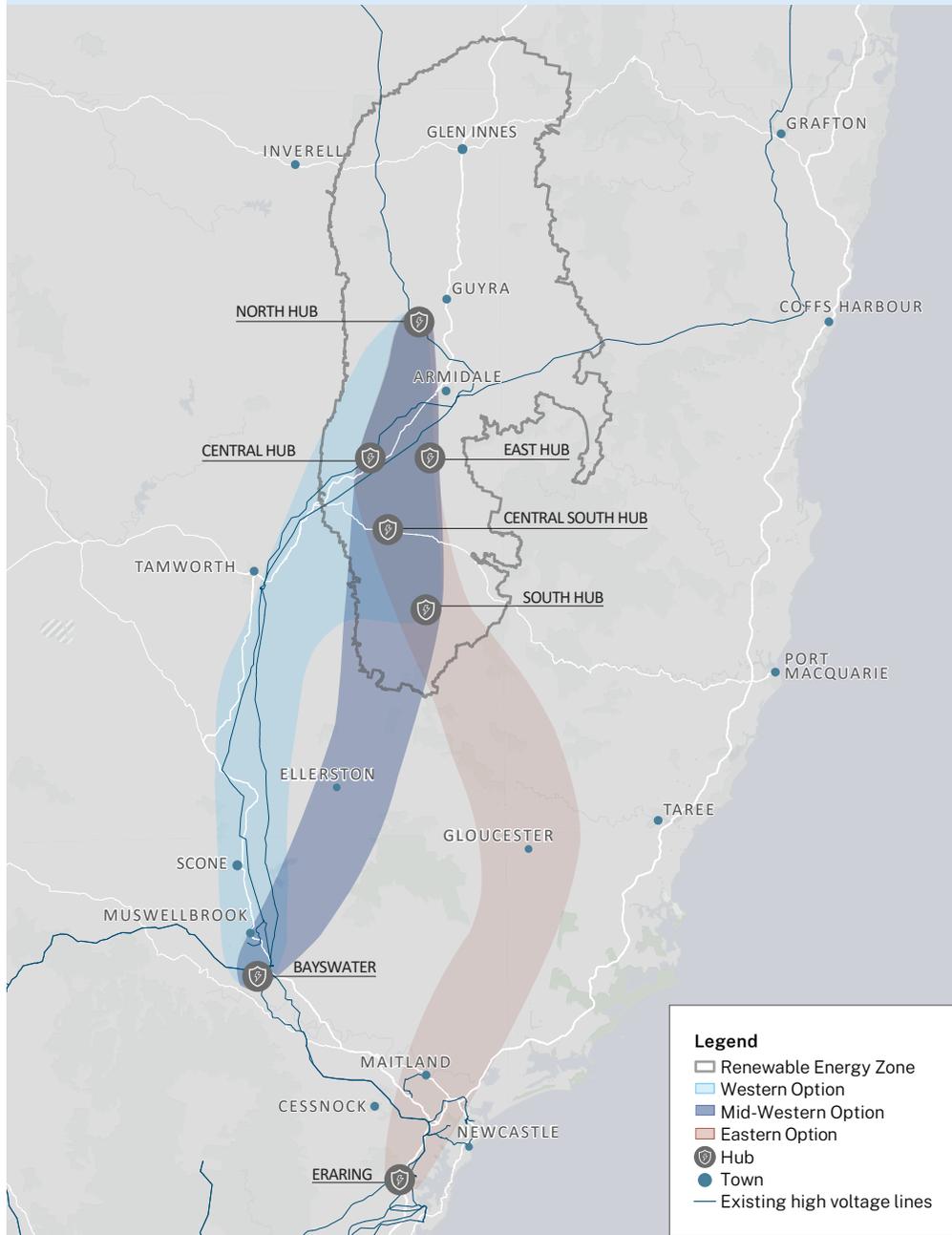


## Environment

Impacts to natural and cultural environments

New transmission infrastructure is also subject to the approval of the Australian Energy Regulator, and must demonstrate value for money for energy consumers. Consequently, route options with considerable extra length, construction complexity, protracted delivery times and overall elevated cost profiles are considered less desirable and were not progressed to corridor design.

# Landscape level corridor evaluation



Following detailed evaluation of potential landscape corridors, three corridor options were selected for further assessment to connect the New England REZ to the existing transmission network in the Hunter. These corridor options were subject to further assessment and modelling including detailed electricity system planning to ensure a secure grid and supply, strategic land use planning analysis, engineering and environmental desktop studies and physical inspection.

The Western corridor option was selected as the preferred option for the development of a preliminary study corridor, as it represented the best overall solution when all factors were balanced and considered. In summary, this corridor provides:

-  Opportunities to minimise interactions with towns / settlements and use topography to minimise visual impacts
-  Greater ability to mitigate and manage bushfire risks
-  Greater opportunities to co-locate with existing transmission lines and generation infrastructure along sections of the route
-  Greater hub flexibility in terms of hub connection options
-  Minimises interactions with protected areas and conservation areas
-  Reduced interaction with biophysical strategic agricultural land (BSAL) and critical industry cluster lands
-  Greater opportunity to utilize 330 kV infrastructure and minimise the extent of 500kV infrastructure needed on the New England Plateau
-  Significantly improved constructability outcomes (i.e. less difficult terrain)
-  Lower costs and faster delivery timeframes - supporting delivery of energy affordability and reliability objectives
-  Improved accessibility due to existing road networks and reduced program risk (eg for inclement weather)
-  Maximises opportunities to use Crown and public land where practicable
-  Fewer predicted impacts on listed threatened species and communities

# Contact Us

For more information about the New England REZ transmission project, you can visit our website or contact the project team:



Call 1800 061 114  
(9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday)



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**



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Scan the QR code below to subscribe for updates

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](http://energyco.nsw.gov.au).

If you have received a letter from EnergyCo regarding your property being within the preliminary study corridor, and you have not yet met with a member of the team, please contact us for more information.

# About EnergyCo

The Energy Corporation of NSW (EnergyCo) is a statutory authority responsible for leading the delivery of Renewable Energy Zones (REZs) as part of the NSW Government's Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap. EnergyCo will work closely with communities, investors and industry to deliver the state's first five REZs.

For more information about EnergyCo, visit our website at [\*\*energyco.nsw.gov.au/about-energyco\*\*](http://energyco.nsw.gov.au/about-energyco)

