

Central-West Orana Renewable Energy Zone Transmission Project Update

March 2024

EnergyCo is delivering the Central-West Orana Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) transmission project to provide a clean, affordable and reliable power supply for energy consumers across NSW.

Proposed transmission network infrastructure

The Central-West Orana REZ will be enabled by new transmission network infrastructure, including transmission lines and towers, energy hubs and switching stations. These transfer power generated by solar and wind farms to the NSW Transmission Network and to consumers. EnergyCo is the Infrastructure Planner for this new transmission network, which is currently going through the NSW Government's planning and approval process. This factsheet provides an update on Central-West Orana REZ transmission project progress through the planning process.



Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) response

The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Central-West Orana REZ transmission project was on public exhibition for 6 weeks, between Thursday 28 September and Wednesday 8 November 2023. During this time EnergyCo invited government agencies, stakeholders and the community to review the documentation and provide feedback via a formal submission for consideration in the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure's (DPHI) assessment of the project.

A total of 398 submissions from the community were received. Advice was also received from 23 local, State and Australian Government departments and agencies. The EIS provided a detailed description of the project and how it will be constructed, as well as a technical assessment of the project, including potential economic, environmental and social impacts. It also outlined ways in which we will avoid, minimise or mitigate potential impacts to the surrounding environment and local communities during construction and operation of the project.

The community was provided an opportunity to discuss the EIS through eight in-person community information sessions, 12 in-person pop up displays, stakeholder briefings and neighbouring landowner meetings. Information was also made available through EnergyCo's website, electronic direct mail outs, newsletters and a media release.

Summary of submissions and amendments to the project

EnergyCo has reviewed the submissions received during the public exhibition of the EIS and written a Response to Submissions (RtS) report that summarises the feedback and EnergyCo's responses. The RtS report is published on the [NSW Planning Portal](#).

Submissions are grouped by theme in the RtS report with responses provided to themes rather than specific individual responses. A unique identification (ID) number was provided to people when they submitted a response. This ID number will help them find the responses to each of the themes they raised in their submission.

Feedback from the community, as well as Government and stakeholder engagement, and ongoing development of the design and construction methodology of the project informed a number of key changes to the project, which have been described and assessed in an [Amendment report](#). This is also published on the NSW Planning Portal for information. This is a normal part of the planning process.



74%

The majority of issues raised in the submissions received by the community were associated with environmental, social and economic impacts

The top five key issues raised by the community were:



46%

Strategic context



43%

Cumulative impacts



42%

Social



39%

Landscape character and visual amenity



38%

Agriculture

For more details see **Chapter 4: Response to community submissions** in the RtS report.

Key changes include:

- Adjustment of the 500 kV and 330 kV transmission line alignment.
- Relocation of five 330 kV switching stations and an additional 330 kV switching station.
- Inclusion of an area used for the temporary storage and assembly of construction equipment at the construction compound at the Neeley's Lane workforce accommodation camp.
- Refinement of access roads at the energy hubs and New Wollar Switching Station.
- Refinement of access tracks and additional access tracks along and to the transmission lines.
- Changes to design of local road and intersection upgrades, including bridge and drainage works. This includes at Merotherie Road (between Golden Highway and Merotherie Energy Hub), Spring Ridge Road and Dapper Road (in the vicinity of the Spring Ridge Road and Dapper Road intersection). Further investigation of upgrades at the Golden Highway/ Ulan Road and Ulan Road/ Neeleys Lane intersections will be undertaken as part of detailed construction planning to confirm if any upgrades are required at these locations.
- Addition of a crushing, grinding and screening plant at switching station M1, at the end of the Cassilis connection to maximise the reuse of site won material from the earthworks.

Other proposed changes since the EIS display include:

- New Wollar Switching Station name change to Barigan Creek Switching Station to better distinguish it from Transgrid's nearby existing Wollar Sub Station.
- Review the name of the Merotherie Hub to reflect community expectations.

For more information on the proposed amendments to the Central-West Orana REZ transmission project, please view **Chapter 3: Description of amendments** of the Amendment report and to view the potential impacts associated with these changes, please view **Chapter 6: Assessment of impacts**.



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Next steps for planning approval of the transmission project

DPHI will review the EIS, RtS report and the Amendment report. After this they will prepare a draft Assessment report, which may include conditions of approval.

A final assessment report will then be provided to the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces who will determine the project. The Minister's determination, including any conditions of approval, will be published on the NSW Government's [state significant projects](#) website.

The project will also be assessed by the Australian Department of Climate Change, Energy, the

Environment and Water (DCCEEW) under the Australian Government's *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

The project is aiming for State and Australian Government approval in mid-2024.

EnergyCo will continue working with the community, impacted landowners, government agencies and other stakeholders to keep people informed of the progress of the project.

Project timeline



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:

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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.

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**.