

Central-West Orana Renewable Energy Zone

June 2022 Project Update

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 REZ will initially unlock three gigawatts of new generation capacity from solar and wind within the next decade, which is enough to power 1.4 million homes.

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The REZ will deliver:



A cheaper, cleaner and more reliable energy supply for NSW.

3GW

At least **3 gigawatts** of new transmission capacity.



\$10 billion of new investment to the region.



More than **3,900 jobs** in construction.



Dedicated funding for community benefits.

What we've heard from you

We've been engaging with local communities and key stakeholders since early 2022 to help inform how we will plan, build and operate the Central-West Orana REZ. We understand that community input will be critical to the successful delivery of the REZ and we are committed to ongoing, effective engagement throughout the planning process.

We appreciate there are a number of areas of concern to the community in relation to the REZ transmission network and the REZ as a whole. These include, but are not limited to:

- impacts to agricultural land from the transmission route
- cumulative impacts to communities within the REZ
- how construction impacts will be managed
- how EnergyCo is consulting with the communities about the REZ, including feedback on how we can improve our practices in the future.

To help address these issues, we are developing a number of strategies and initiatives to ensure the REZ delivers on its social licence objectives and provides positive outcomes for local communities.

This includes:

- investigating how we can implement strategies to coordinate cumulative impacts across the REZ, while meeting the needs of our local communities and key stakeholders
- engaging locally based staff to ensure we have a presence in the local community
- liaising with developers of renewable generation projects on strategies to manage cumulative impacts within the REZ
- planning how we will involve the community and key stakeholders in the delivery of community benefit initiatives which will be funded through generator access fees to the REZ transmission network.

We want to continue an open dialogue with the community as the project progresses, and you can contact our team at any time if you have feedback or questions.

We are preparing a set of studies to coordinate the impacts of the REZ across a number of areas we've heard are priorities to the community:

Workforce accommodation

We are reviewing how we can provide construction workforce accommodation and services while meeting the needs of local communities and businesses.

Training

We are investigating opportunities to boost the skills of the local workforce and build capabilities in the renewable energy sector.

Roads and traffic management

We are looking at how we can coordinate traffic management and local road improvements within the REZ.

Telecommunication improvements

We are looking at ways to improve mobile connectivity for local communities as we deliver the REZ.

Waste management

We are investigating how we can best support local councils to manage waste during construction.

Revised study corridor feedback

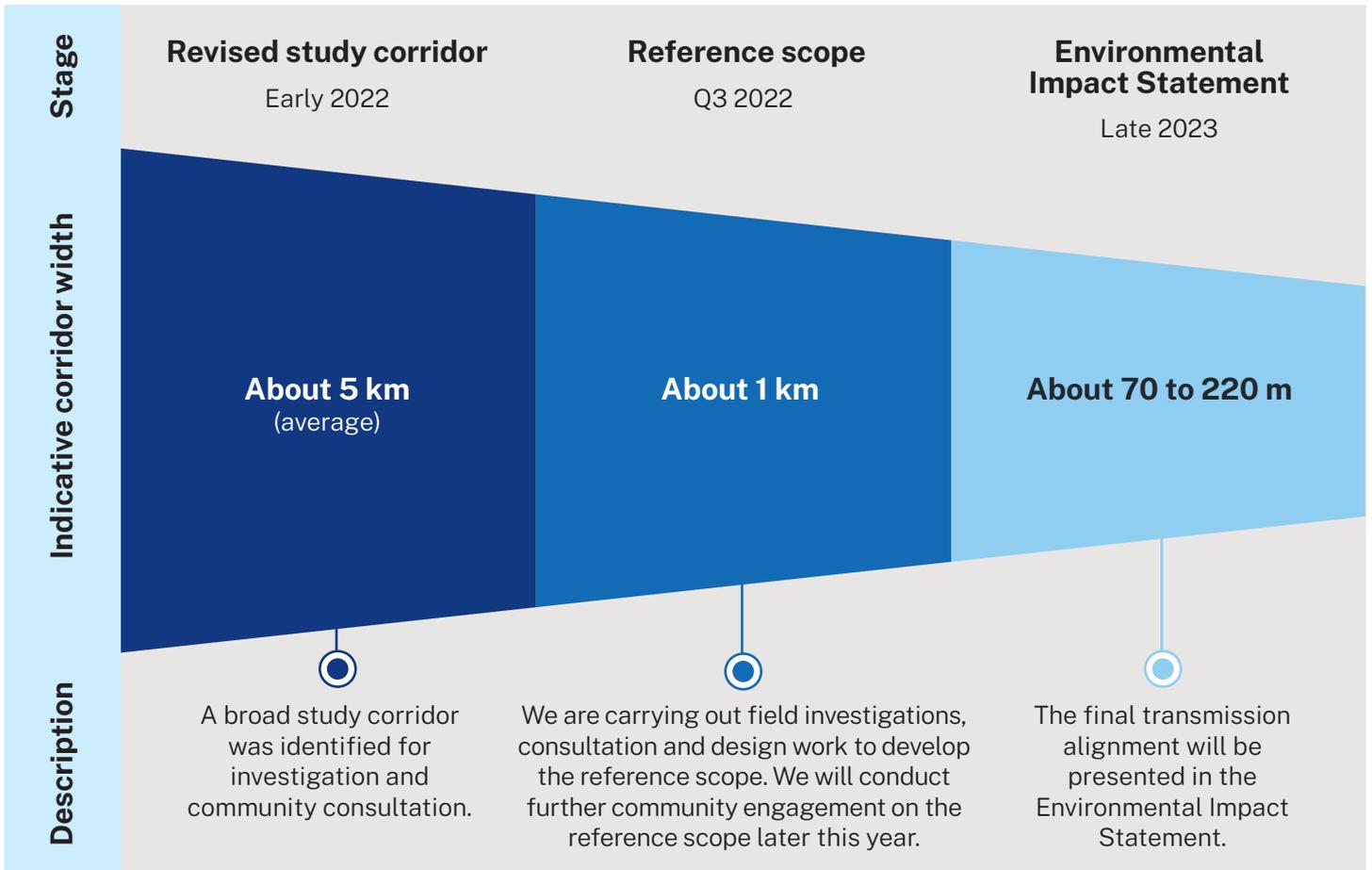
In February and March 2022, we invited community feedback on a revised study corridor for the REZ transmission network. Thank you to everyone who took time to review the revised study corridor and provide feedback.

During the consultation period, we spoke to more than 130 people at our community information sessions in Wellington, Dunedoo and Gulgong and received 35 written submissions. We are considering the comments received from the community as we further refine the transmission route.

We've published a Community Feedback Report on our website which outlines the feedback received and EnergyCo's responses. To view or download the report, please visit energyco.nsw.gov.au.

Route selection update

The key steps in the route selection process are outlined below.



Field investigations

In the coming months, we will begin carrying out field investigations to help inform the design and environmental assessment for the REZ transmission network. Field investigations help us better understand local land uses and allow us to confirm environmental conditions and engineering constraints. This is a key step in the project development process.

Field investigations may include:

- ecological surveys
- geotechnical and contamination investigations
- land surveys
- hydrological investigations
- heritage surveys
- noise monitoring
- utility investigations.

We will work closely with local landowners and communities to carry out these activities, as some of the work needs to be carried out on private property.

Investigation work is planned to start in July 2022 and will be carried out over several months. You may notice our workers in the field while these investigations are taking place.

Most investigation work is low impact and only takes a few days to complete. Activities such as geotechnical and utility investigations may cause some temporary impacts while machinery and equipment are being used, including noise.

We will work with landowners to seek permission prior to entering any private property for field investigations. For more information about this work, please view our fact sheet on our website at [energyco.nsw.gov.au](https://www.energyco.nsw.gov.au).

Network Operator tender process

EnergyCo is leading a competitive process to appoint a Network Operator to design, finance, build, operate and maintain the REZ transmission network. Three shortlisted tenderers were announced in May 2022 following an Expressions of Interest process.

EnergyCo is now seeking formal tender submissions from the shortlisted candidates, with the contract due to be awarded in 2023.

Scoping Report

We are currently preparing a Scoping Report for the REZ transmission network to be submitted to the Department of Planning and Environment.

The Scoping Report is the first step in the environmental planning process and supports EnergyCo's request for a Standard Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) to be issued by the department. The SEARs will outline the requirements that EnergyCo must address in the project's Environmental Impact Statement.

We will keep the community informed once the Scoping Report is finalised and available to view online.



Next steps

Ongoing community consultation

1 Revised study corridor consultation
Early 2022

2 Field investigations
From mid-2022

We are here

3 Issue of Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs)
Q4 2022

4 Selection of preferred Network Operator
Early 2023

5 Public exhibition of the Environmental Impact Statement – Late 2023

6 Planning approval
2024

7 Begin construction
By early 2025

Renewable generation projects

To ensure the REZ network infrastructure is built for purpose while minimising community and environmental impacts, it's important EnergyCo works closely with proposed solar and wind generation projects.

EnergyCo is collaborating with major generators to:

- develop strategies to manage cumulative impacts
- investigate and implement community benefit initiatives
- coordinate engagement activities within the REZ
- design an efficient transmission network.

For more information, visit our website at energyco.nsw.gov.au.

Register for updates

Want to keep up to date on our latest news and announcements? Please contact us at info@cworez.net.au or by calling **1800 032 101** to register your details.

Join our Community Reference Group

EnergyCo is now inviting members of the community to join our Community Reference Group for the Central-West Orana REZ.

The Community Reference Group will provide an open forum for community representatives, key stakeholders and EnergyCo to discuss issues relating to the planning and delivery of the REZ transmission network. It will also provide an opportunity for discussion about broader issues, such as community benefit initiatives and managing cumulative impacts during the construction and operation of the REZ.

We are looking for a mix of people who live locally or who have interests in the project, including community, environment, First Nations and industry groups.

The Community Reference Group will be facilitated by an Independent Chairperson engaged by EnergyCo. Applications are due by **Friday 22 July** and will be reviewed by the Independent Chairperson, Lisa Andrews.

Please visit our website at energyco.nsw.gov.au to download an application form. Alternatively, please contact our team for further details.



Contact us

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

- **Email:** info@cworez.net.au
- **Phone:** 1800 032 101 (9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday)
- **Website:** 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 032 101**.



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.

