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CWO REZ Social Impact Management Plan

Central-West Orana Renewable Energy Zone Transmission

Social Impact Management Plan

December 2025

The Energy Corporation of NSW (EnergyCo)

Acknowledgement of Country

The Energy Corporation of New South Wales acknowledges that it stands on Aboriginal land. We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land and we show our respect for Elders past and present through thoughtful and collaborative approaches to our work, seeking to demonstrate our ongoing commitment to providing places in which Aboriginal people are included socially, culturally and economically.

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Authorisation

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Glossary

Acronym/phrase	Description
Access roads	Permanent access roads to switching stations and energy hubs
Access tracks	Temporary and permanent access tracks to transmission lines
ACEREZ	Network operator, a partnership of Acciona, COBRA and Endeavour Energy.
ACEREZ D&C JV	A design and construction unincorporated joint venture of ACCIONA and COBRA.
ACEREZ M&L	A maintenance and lifecycle trust of ACCIONA, COBRA and Endeavour Energy.
Amendment Report	A Project Amendment Report was prepared to address project changes resulting from submissions and design progress since the EIS. It was accepted on 11 March 2024.
Adaptive management	Refers to systems to respond to new or different circumstances to support continuous improvement.
Central-West Orana REZ (CWO REZ)	A geographic area of approximately 20,000 square kilometres centred by Dubbo and Dunedoo and extending west to Narromine and east beyond Mudgee and to Wellington in the south and Gilgandra in the north, that will combine renewable energy generation, storage and HV transmission infrastructure to deliver energy to electricity consumers.
Construction area	The area that would be directly impacted by the construction of project including (but not limited to) transmission towers and lines, brake and winch sites, access roads to switching stations and energy hubs (not including any public roads), energy hubs, switching stations, communications infrastructure, workforce accommodation camps, construction compounds and laydown and staging areas.
Construction compound	An area used as the base for construction activities, usually for the storage of plant, equipment and materials, and/or construction site offices and worker facilities. It can also comprise concrete batching plant, crushing, grinding and screening plant, testing laboratory and wastewater treatment plant.
Construction routes	Roads used by construction vehicles (light and heavy).
Cumulative impact	The combined impacts of the project on a matter with other relevant future projects.
Cumulative impact rating	Refers to the rating (low, medium, high or very high) given to cumulative impact in the SIM Plan.
Current Regional Plan	Central-West and Orana Regional Plan 2041 produced by Department of Planning and Environment, 2022.
Direct social locality	The direct social locality is the area where social impacts rated as 'High' are expected to occur. This includes landowners of properties within 1 km of the transmission line of the Project and the communities of Merotherie, Cassilis, Wollar and Elong Elong which will host construction sites and the two accommodation camps.
DPIE (now DPHI)	The former Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (NSW), now the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure.

Acronym/phrase	Description
EnergyCo	The Energy Corporation of New South Wales constituted by section 7 of the *Energy and Utilities Administration Act 1987* as the NSW Government-controlled statutory authority responsible for the delivery of NSW's REZs.
Energy hub/s	An energy hub is a substation where energy exported from renewable energy generators or storage is aggregated, transformed to 500 kV (where required) and exported to the transmission network. For the project, this includes Merotherie Energy Hub and Elong Elong Energy Hub.
Impact	Influence or effect exerted by a project or other activity on the natural, built and community environment.
Index of Relative Socio-economic Advantage and Disadvantage (IRSAD)	Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas. The range of indices developed by the ABS showing relative levels of socio-economic advantage and disadvantage. They summarise key economic and social information about people and households within a defined area and are derived from Census variables.
Local social locality	The area expected to experience the most social change due to the project.
Local workforce	Workers who are permanent residents within the CWO REZ and adjacent LGAs of Dubbo, Mid-Western, Upper Hunter and Warrumbungle Regional Councils.
Network operator	The organisation who will design, build, finance, operate and maintain the REZ transmission network, in this case, ACEREZ
Planning approval conditions or planning conditions	The conditions contained within the Consolidated Approval/ Infrastructure Approval for the Project
Pre-construction minor works	As detailed in the consolidated conditions of approval, pre-construction minor works means: 1. the following activities: • surveys; • building and road dilapidation surveys; • investigative drilling, contamination investigations, excavation or salvage; • establishing and operating temporary accommodation camps (as described in the EIS); • establishing and operating temporary site office (in locations meeting the criteria identified in the conditions of this approval); and • installation of environmental impact mitigation measures, fencing, enabling works; • property acquisition adjustment work including installation of property fencing; • archaeological testing under the Code of practice for archaeological • investigation of Aboriginal objects in NSW (DECCW, 2010) or archaeological monitoring; • maintenance of existing buildings and structures required to facilitate the carrying out of the CSSI; 2. construction of minor access roads and minor adjustments to services/utilities, etc, for the activities identified in (1) above; and

Acronym/phrase	Description
	3. minor clearing or translocation of native vegetation for the activities that does not impact biodiversity values that require offsetting
(the) Project	The Project consists of the construction and operation of new high voltage electricity transmission infrastructure and new energy hubs and switching stations to connect new energy generation and storage projects within the Central-West Orana Renewable Energy Zone to the existing electricity network.
Regional social locality	The area expected to experience indirect, or secondary benefits and/or impacts due to the project.
Renewable energy generators	A renewable energy provider to the CWO REZ.
Renewable energy generation and storage projects	The various renewable energy generation and storage projects within the CWO REZ that would be delivered by others, such as wind farms and solar farms.
Renewable Energy Zone (REZ)	A geographic area with high-quality variable renewable energy resources (such as wind and solar), suitable topography and land use designations for development, and demonstrated interest from project developers.
Residual impact rating	Refers to the rating (low, medium, high or very high) given to the impacts once the mitigation and management measures have been applied.
Revised impact rating	Refers to the rating (low, medium, high or very high) given to the impact in the SIM Plan.
SIA impact rating	Refers to the rating (low, medium, high or very high) given to the impact in the Social Impact Assessment technical report.
Social Impact Assessment (SIA)	Refers to the Social Impact Assessment technical report prepared to inform an EIS.
Submissions Report	The report was prepared in response to submissions received on the EIS (dated March 2024).
Suburbs and Localities (SAL)	Suburbs and Localities, formerly State Suburbs, are an ABS Mesh Block approximation of the officially recognised boundaries of suburbs (in cities and larger towns) and localities (outside cities and larger towns) as defined by the State and Territory governments of Australia. Suburbs and Localities are created to enable the release of ABS data on areas that approximate the official localities. This allows for the comparison of ABS data with other data collected using localities as the geographic reference. ABS approximations of administrative boundaries do not match official legal boundaries and should only be used for statistical purposes.
Substation	A facility used to increase or decrease voltages between incoming and outgoing lines (e.g. 330 kV to 500 kV).
Switching station	A facility used to connect two or more distinct transmission lines of the same designated voltage.
Social impact assessment principles	The NSW Social Impact Assessment Guideline (2023) provides a list of thirteen principles to be adopted in social impact assessment practice. These include: action oriented, adaptive, distributive equity, human-rights oriented, impartial, inclusive, integrated, life-cycle focus, material, precautionary, proportionate, rigorous and transparent.

Acronym/phrase	Description
Social locality	The term 'social locality' refers to the geographical area in which the most social impacts are likely to materialise, it includes a local and regional social locality. Refer to Appendix B.
Transmission line easement	Transmission lines will be built on corridors of land known as transmission easements. Easements are established via an agreement between EnergyCo and the subject landowner. This agreement allows EnergyCo to access and use a section of private land for the REZ transmission network. Landowners can generally continue using land that has an easement on it, however this will be subject to certain restrictions to ensure public safety and to maintain the reliable operation of the electricity network.
Workforce accommodation camps	Areas that would be constructed and operated during construction to house the construction workforce.

Abbreviations

Acronym	Definition
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACEREZ	Acciona, Cobra and Endeavour Energy partnership
ACMA	Australian Communications and Media Authority
ACMP	Accommodation Camp Management Plan
AIPP	Australian Industry Participation Plan
APZ	Asset Protection Zones
BESS	Battery Energy Storage System
CCS	Community Communication Strategy
CCSI	Critical State Significant Infrastructure
CDEP	Community Development Employment Project
CEBP	Community and Employment Benefit Program
CHMP	Cultural Heritage Management Plan
CMS	Complaint Management System
CRG	Community Reference Group
CSP	Community Strategic Plan
CWO	Central-West Orana
DA	Development Application
DPE	Department of Planning and Environment (former)
DPIE	Department of Planning, Infrastructure and Environment (former)
DPHI	Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (current)
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EMFs	Electromagnetic Fields
EnergyCo	Energy Corporation of NSW
EP&A Act	*(NSW) Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979*
EPBC	*(NSW) Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*
GPs	General Practitioners
ha	Hectare

Acronym	Definition
HMP	Heritage Management Plan
HV	High Voltage
IAPP	Industry and Aboriginal Participation Plan
IRSAD	Index of Relative Socio-economic Advantage and Disadvantage
km	Kilometres
km^2	Kilometres square
kV	Kilovolts
LALC	Local Aboriginal Land Council
LBES	Local Business and Employment Strategy
LEP	Local Environmental Plan
LGA	Local Government Area
LSPS	Local Strategic Planning Statements
NEM	National Energy Market
NPWS	NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service
NSW	New South Wales
NSWALC	NSW Aboriginal Land Council
RAP	Registered Aboriginal Party
REZ	Renewable Energy Zone
RFS	Rural Fire Service
ROM	Run of Mine
SAL	Suburbs and Localities
SBP	Strategic Benefit Payments
SEARs	Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements
SEIFA	Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas
SEPP	State Environmental Planning Policy
SIA	Social Impact Assessment
SIM Plan	Social Impact Management Plan
SME	Small Medium Enterprise
SSC	State suburb
SSI	State Significant Infrastructure
STR	Specific Technical Requirements
WHS	Work Health and Safety

Executive summary

About this document

The Central-West Orana REZ transmission project (the Project) obtained State planning approval in June 2024. This document provides a Social Impact Management Plan (SIM Plan) to monitor, evaluate and publicly report on how the Project's social impacts are being managed during construction of the Project.

This SIM Plan:

- Provides a framework for the monitoring and management of social impacts (positive, negative and cumulative).
- Explains how unanticipated impacts will be managed.
- Sets out how the community can provide feedback as part of the Project's adaptive management.

The impacts affecting the wider REZ will be addressed by Whole of Government Initiatives through the Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap Steering Committee (refer to Appendix G).

About the Project

The Project consists of the construction and operation of new high voltage electricity transmission infrastructure and new energy hubs and switching stations to connect new energy generation and storage projects within the Central-West Orana Renewable Energy Zone to the existing electricity network.

The Energy Corporation of NSW (EnergyCo) is the statutory authority that led the Project planning approval process and the development of this SIM Plan. ACEREZ is the Project network operator, and will lead the design and construction of the Project and its ongoing maintenance.

Methodology

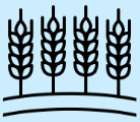
This SIM Plan is informed by the Project Social Impact Assessment, desktop research and community and stakeholder engagement. Key stakeholders consulted to inform the SIM Plan included Dubbo Regional, Mid-Western Regional, Warrumbungle Shire and Upper Hunter Shire councils, the Project Community Reference Group, the Central-West Orana Working Group and the Western Regional Leadership Executive Social Services Sub-Group (RLE sub-group).

A total of 144 people participated in SIM Plan consultation activities between November 2024 and April 2025, including drop-in sessions, workshops and one-on-one interviews. These included affected stakeholders, such as landowners who will be hosting Project infrastructure, landowners whose properties neighbour Project infrastructure, community members, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members, local businesses and services. An additional 127 people were engaged via an online survey between February and March 2025.

Consultation feedback

Consultation feedback provides an understanding of relevant issues for local communities, baseline conditions and describes the level of satisfaction with the proposed way in which the Project impacts would be managed.

Below is a summary of responses to the online community survey run between 10 February and 21 March 2025. To gather community views on the effectiveness of management measures over time, an annual independent community attitude survey will be delivered to monitor changes in attitudes during the Project construction.

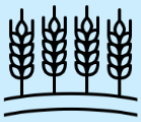
Impact area	Responses from the community		
Community	90% (n=89) reported that their relationship with their neighbours was good or very good	85% (n=84) reported their sense of safety to be good or very good	39% (n=37) reported that housing availability and affordability was poor or none
Way of life	51% (n=51) rated their experience with the volume of local traffic as good or very good	66% (n=65) rated the conditions of roads as poor or very poor	94% (n=93) rated their enjoyment of the environment as good or very good
Accessibility to services	40% (n=39) rated access to local services (retail goods) as good or very good	24% (n=24) rated access to childcare as poor or none	38% (n=37) rated access to internet services as poor or none
	43 % (n=42) rated access to phone services as poor or none	54% (n=53) rated emergency services as good or very good	
 Livelihoods	45 % (n=44) reported biosecurity for local landowners involved in agricultural production to be good or very good	53% (n=52) reported the availability of local workforce to be poor or none	
Impact Management	65% (n=49) reported being dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with how benefits are distributed across communities 6% (n=5) are satisfied or very satisfied	6% (n=5) are satisfied about the way in which traffic impacts will be managed, none were very satisfied 69% (n=61) reported to be dissatisfied or very dissatisfied	7% (n=6) are satisfied with the local skills and training programs that will be brought by the Project 57% (n= 50) are dissatisfied and very dissatisfied
	65% (n=57) are very dissatisfied or dissatisfied with the mental health support available for landowners and community members 19% (n=17) are neutral	5%(n=4) are satisfied with the way impacts on Aboriginal Culture will be managed, none were very satisfied, 38% (n=33) are neutral, 23% (n=20) don't know	58% (n=51) are very dissatisfied or dissatisfied with their ability to lodge queries, complaints and receive a response 72% (n=63) are very dissatisfied or dissatisfied with access to project information

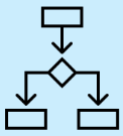
Note: Responses to selected questions are presented. Questions were optional, meaning that there are different number of responses to each question. (n=) means the number of responses. Participants were asked to respond using a five-point Likert scale.

Management measures

The SIM Plan is one of the plans and strategies that will support the management of construction impacts. The SIM Plan considers the management measures in other plans to manage social impacts and proposes new measures to strengthen mitigation of negative impacts and to enhance benefits. Measures introduced as a result of consultation feedback during SIM Plan development have been identified as (new).

Cumulative impacts within the REZ will be addressed by Whole of Government Initiatives through the Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap Steering Committee, supported by an Implementation Plan Working Group.

Impact area	Management measures
 Community	• Maximise the use of local sub-contractors for the construction of the accommodation camps (new). • Where reasonable and where it will not risk worker safety, ACEREZ and EnergyCo will aim to distribute accommodation bookings equitably throughout the local social locality and avoid localities during peak visitor periods where possible (new). • Using accommodation camps to accommodate the non-resident workforce and building the accommodation camps in stages to manage pressure on short-term accommodation and local housing. • Implementing the Community Communication Strategy and Complaints Management System to manage impacts to community cohesion. • Implementing the workforce standards of behaviours to minimise the impact of the non-resident workforce on sense of safety.
 Way of life	• Managing construction related impacts on sense of place through the property access plans • Providing notification of construction works through activities detailed in the Community Communication Strategy (CCS) and managing complaints through the Complaint Management System (CMS). • Managing impacts to road safety through the Traffic and Transport Management Plan (TTMP) and work health and safety measures. • Vehicle incidents to be reported through the complaints management system will be identified based on their registration number plate (new). • The local workforce will be encouraged to car-pool and use shuttle services (assessed on a case-by-case basis) to reduce impact on local traffic and roads (new). • The TTMP will be made publicly available for communities (new). • EnergyCo will establish a working group for traffic management within the REZ (new). • Maintaining communication with the Central-West Cycle Trail (CWCT) group to understand busy periods of cycle trail use (i.e. special events, holiday periods) and provide updates on traffic changes and movements to them for CWCT to update its own database of registered users (new).
 Livelihoods	• Enhancing local business opportunities to participate in economic activities and improving livelihoods through local employment opportunities by implementing the Industry and Aboriginal Participation Plan (IAPP), Local Business and Employment Strategy (LBES), Social Benefit Evaluation Criteria and training opportunities. • Managing the impact of reduced availability of employees on local businesses due to competing demand from the Project through training opportunities for local communities. • Managing the potential impact of increased biosecurity threats on livelihoods through the biosecurity measures for accessing properties and property access plans. • Reducing the demand on short-term accommodation and impacts on tourism related livelihoods through the Accommodation Camp Management Plan (ACMP).

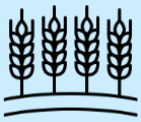
	• ACEREZ will utilise flexible working arrangements to support personnel in and returning to the workforce, as well as those transitioning into the industry (new). • ACEREZ will deliver targeted programs that encourage women to participate in traineeships or apprenticeships on the project and promote the inclusion and retention of women within the workforce (new). • Members of the workforce who live locally will be permitted to use vehicles to travel to and from site. Car-pooling will be encouraged to minimise traffic on local roads (new).
 Accessibility to services	• Reducing the demand on local health services through providing onsite and telehealth services at the accommodation camps and supporting mental health wellbeing through the ACMP and workforce wellbeing initiatives. • Managing the demand on emergency services through emergency planning, coordination and engagement • Project personnel are to be trained in emergency management and fire management, to respond to project emergencies (new).
 Mental Health and Wellbeing	• Managing interaction with landowners through the CCS and property access plans to reduce the impact on their mental health. • A mental health support telephone service already established by EnergyCo will be maintained to assist landowners whose properties are subject to acquisition for the transmission line. • EnergyCo will establish a Mental Health Support Program to provide additional mental health support for landowners and residents of properties impacted by the project (new). • Reducing the impact of construction related amenity impacts by implementing the Environmental Management Strategy and Noise and Vibration Management Plan. • For landowners hosting/adjacent to multiple projects, establish coordination/interface meetings with ACEREZ place managers and other nearby SSD projects with the aim to reduce cumulative construction impacts (e.g. noise and combining interactions with landowners to reduce construction fatigue) (new).
 Culture	• Implementing the Heritage Management Plan (HMP) and Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Training to reduce impacts on Aboriginal Heritage and enhancing knowledge about Aboriginal cultural values. • Consulting with the Central West Orana Working Group and RAPs where required to minimise cumulative impacts on Aboriginal cultural values. • The appointed Aboriginal Participation Manager will implement training, initiatives and support measures for the Aboriginal workforce to support cultural safety. • The First Nations Outcomes team at EnergyCo will support the promotion of employment, apprenticeship and traineeship opportunities (new).
 Surroundings	• Implementing biosecurity measures and property access plans to reduce negative impacts to agricultural land and food production. • Preserving and protecting trees where possible to minimise the impact to the environment. • ACEREZ will work with EnergyCo and community groups such as Landcare to explore local environmental initiatives (new).
 Decision - making systems	• Implementing the baseline and subsequent annual community attitudes survey to incorporate community feedback into social impact management. • Establishing the community information centres as a mechanism to receive feedback from the community. • EnergyCo to provide a summary of the SIM Plan quarterly report at the CRG, CWO Working Group and RLE Sub Group and to email to local community members registered in the survey and EnergyCo's newsletter database (new).

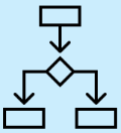
Monitoring and evaluation framework

The monitoring and reporting framework sets performance targets for the management measures and provides adaptive measures if those targets are not met. Adaptive measures will continue to be developed in consultation with relevant stakeholders, including the CWO Working Group and CRG.

The SIM Plan will be reviewed annually by EnergyCo to assess if management measures, indicators and monitoring frameworks are still applicable and effective in mitigating impacts.

An annual independent community attitudes survey will be implemented by EnergyCo to receive feedback on the management measures and their effectiveness, as well as new or unanticipated impacts. The outcomes from the annual independent survey will be incorporated into the annual review of the SIM Plan. A summary of the SIM Plan monitoring indicators is provided below.

Impact area	Indicators		
Community	Number of people who describe their relationship with their neighbours and members of the community as "good" and "very good"	Proportion of workforce who participate in volunteer programs	Number of short-term accommodation providers engaged
	Number of verified or avoidable complaints regarding non-resident workforce behaviour	Number of people who report their level of satisfaction as "satisfied" or "very satisfied" about the distribution of impacts and benefits	
Way of life	Number of verified and/or avoidable landowner complaints relating to amenity impacts (air quality, visual and noise)	Proportion of people who describe their sense of safety and experience with local traffic as "good" and "very good"	Number of project-related road and traffic incidents recorded
 Livelihoods	Number of small-medium businesses employed by the project from the local social locality	Proportion of contract value to be subcontracted to Aboriginal-owned businesses	Number and proportion of the total project workforce who are 'Learning workers'
	Proportion of apprentices and trainees	Demonstrated workforce diversity and proportion of underrepresented groups	Number of residents in the social locality (nine LGAs) who have participated in training programs developed as part of the project's IAPP, TSMP and LBES
	Number of incidents related to biosecurity or livestock escalated to EnergyCo through CMS escalation process	Number of local businesses and service providers who report or complain of loss of employees to the project and are unable to recruit staff	Number of verified complaints relating to impacts to the tourism industry as a result of the project

Accessibility to services	Number of project non-resident workforce who have accessed local health services – outside of what is provided on camp site	Number of people who describe their access to telecommunications as “good” or “very good”	
Mental Health and Wellbeing	Number of landowners who report to be very satisfied or satisfied with the mental health support available for landowners and community members	Proportion of complaints relating to dust, noise and vibration responded according to CCS and to the satisfaction of the complainant	
Culture	Proportion of unexpected finds addressed in line with Unexpected Heritage Finds and Human Remains Procedure	Proportion of key personnel who complete Aboriginal cultural awareness training	Evidence of interpretative installations and devices designed and implemented in consultation with the RAPs
Surroundings	Demonstrated tree coverage and preservation activities are completed in accordance with the Biodiversity Management Plan	The Biodiversity Offset Package is delivered as per Condition of Approval B22	Proportion of responses from community attitudes survey indicating their enjoyment of the environment is ‘good’ or ‘very good’
 Decision - making systems	Level of satisfaction of community and stakeholders about the management of social impacts	Level of satisfaction of community and stakeholders about access to project information	Level of satisfaction of community and stakeholders about ability to lodge queries, complaints and receive a response

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

The Central-West Orana REZ transmission project (the Project) obtained State planning approval in June 2024 and Commonwealth planning approval in August 2024.

Planning approval followed detailed technical planning and extensive community consultation across several phases. The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was exhibited from late September until early November 2023. The EIS included the Social Impact Assessment (SIA), which identified potential social impacts and gave them an impact rating. The EIS included measures to avoid, minimise and mitigate potential environmental and social impacts. The Submissions Report was developed to respond to community and stakeholder submissions received during the EIS exhibition period. The Amendment Report described changes to the Project and how resulting impacts would be addressed. These reports were completed to receive development planning approval.

Planning Approval Condition B55 and the Amendment Report management measure SI8 sets out the requirement for the preparation of a Social Impact Management Plan (SIM Plan). The SIM Plan builds on the impact identification completed during the EIS process, describes the measures expected to enhance positive impacts and manage and mitigate negative impacts (including cumulative impacts) and develops a program to monitor, evaluate and publicly report on management measures.

1.1.1 Planning approval condition

State planning approval conditions set out the requirements for construction to commence, including development of this SIM Plan as required by Condition B55. Table 1 identifies the relevant planning approval conditions and where these have been addressed in this SIM Plan.

Appendix E details how the SIM Plan has addressed the EIS and the Amendment Report management measure SI8.

Table 1: Compliance with planning approval conditions in this SIM Plan

Condition No.	Condition	Document Section/Location
A7	Evidence of consultation Where conditions of this approval require consultation with an identified party, the Proponent must: (a) consult with the relevant party prior to submitting the subject document to the Planning Secretary for approval; and	Section 1.3.5, Section 1.4 and Appendix C
	(b) provide details of the consultation undertaken including: (i) the outcome of that consultation, matters resolved and unresolved; and	Appendix C

Condition No.	Condition	Document Section/Location
	(ii) details of any disagreement remaining between the party consulted and the Proponent and how the Proponent has addressed the matters not resolved.	Appendix C
B55	The SIM Plan must: (a) be prepared by suitably qualified and experienced persons/s;	Appendix A
	(b) be prepared having regard to the EIS commitments for the preparation of the Social Impact Management Plan;	Appendix E
	(c) be developed in consultation with Dubbo Regional, Mid-Western Regional, Warrumbungle Shire and Upper Hunter Shire councils, and relevant affected stakeholders;	Section 1.3.3 Section 1.3.5
	(d) include a summary of the social baseline and assessment of social impacts and risks, including the social impact ratings;	Chapter 2
	(e) refer to and be consistent with the strategy in condition A22 (Community Communication Strategy);	Section 1.5 Chapter 2
	(f) describe the measures that would be implemented to enhance positive social impacts from the development;	Section 2.4
	(g) describe the measures that would be implemented to manage and mitigate negative (and cumulative) social impacts, including:	Chapter 2 and Appendix G
	(i) impacts to near neighbours and the broader community;	Section 2.3
	(ii) impacts to community cohesion, safety, health and wellbeing;	Section 2.2 Section 2.3 Section 2.6
	(iii) access to social infrastructure and services;	Section 2.5
	(iv) impacts to housing availability and affordability;	Section 2.2
	(v) impacts to tourism;	Section 2.4
	(vi) labour draw and impacts to local businesses and services;	Section 2.4
	(vii) consideration of cumulative social impacts associated with other State significant development projects in the area	Chapter 2 and Appendix G
	(h) include a program to monitor, evaluate and publicly report on the effectiveness of these measures and any social impacts of the development, including:	Chapter 2 Chapter 3
	(i) identifying performance indicators, incorporating trigger action response plan;	Chapter 2
	(ii) a yearly independent survey of the attitudes of the community about the development;	Appendix F Chapter 3 Chapter 4

Condition No.	Condition	Document Section/Location
	(iii) procedures for analysing and comparing the results of monitoring and surveys against the baseline, the predicted social impacts and results of previous monitoring and surveys;	Section 3.1
	(iv) recording community consultation and complaints as they relate to social issues;	Chapter 2
	(v) adaptive management measures implemented or proposed;	Chapter 2 Chapter 3
	(vi) preparing a quarterly monitoring report, to be publicly available on the project website;	Chapter 3
	(i) include details of who would be responsible for monitoring, reviewing and implementing the plan. Following the Planning Secretary's approval, the Proponent must implement the Social Impact Management Plan for the duration of construction.	Chapter 4

1.2 Project description

The Project consists of the construction and operation of new high voltage electricity transmission infrastructure and new energy hubs and switching stations to connect new energy generation and storage projects within the Central-West Orana Renewable Energy Zone to the existing electricity network.

The Project is located within the Warrumbungle Shire, Mid-Western Regional, Dubbo Regional and Upper Hunter Shire local government areas (LGAs) and extends north to south from Cassilis to Wollar and east to west from Cassilis to Goolma (see Figure 1:).

The Project is being delivered by ACEREZ, a consortium of three companies who will act as network operator. ACEREZ will lead the design and construction of the Project and its ongoing maintenance throughout its lifecycle.

Construction of the Project will commence in early to mid-2025 and is estimated to take about 52 months. To support the construction of the Project a number of construction compounds are required including staging and laydown facilities, concrete batching plants, and two workforce accommodation camps. The two workforce accommodation camps include:

- The Merotherie Camp, located in the Mid-Western Regional Council LGA, which will have a maximum capacity of 1,200 beds during the construction period with pre-construction minor works and construction to build the camps taking place between Q1 and Q3 2025 (indicative dates only).
- Turill Camp, located at Neeleys Lane, in Turill, in the Hunter Shire Regional Council LGA, will have a peak capacity of 600 people, with construction expected to take place between August 2025 and June 2026.

Both facilities are expected to be operational until December 2029. The utilities (water, wastewater, electricity, communications) to serve each accommodation camp will be independent from Council infrastructure.

An overview of construction stages and the associated impact to localities is outlined below. Please note that this is indicative only and may be subject to change.

- February 2025 - Pre-construction minor works commenced at Merotherie.

- Q2 2025 - Commencement of road upgrades at the Merotherie Road and Golden Highway intersection and Merotherie Road until approximately 300 metres south of Birriwa Bus route. Commencement of civil works at Barigan Creek and Merotherie Energy Hubs.
- Q3 2025 - Construction of transmission infrastructure begins and commencement of access tracks on landowners' properties at Merotherie to Barigan Creek and Merotherie to north Cassilis. Completion of 300 beds at the Merotherie Camp. Road upgrades at Spring Ridge Road near Dapper Road in Dunedoo.
- Q1 2026 - Transmission tower construction begins project wide.
- Q2 2026 - Construction of access tracks on landowners' properties at Merotherie to Valley of the winds. Stringing between towers begins project wide. Delivery of synchronous condensers.
- Q4 2-25 - Continue construction of access tracks on landowners' properties.
- 2028 onwards - Staged energisation project wide.

The most up to date project information, including monthly updates can be found at: http://www.acerez.com.au/resources.

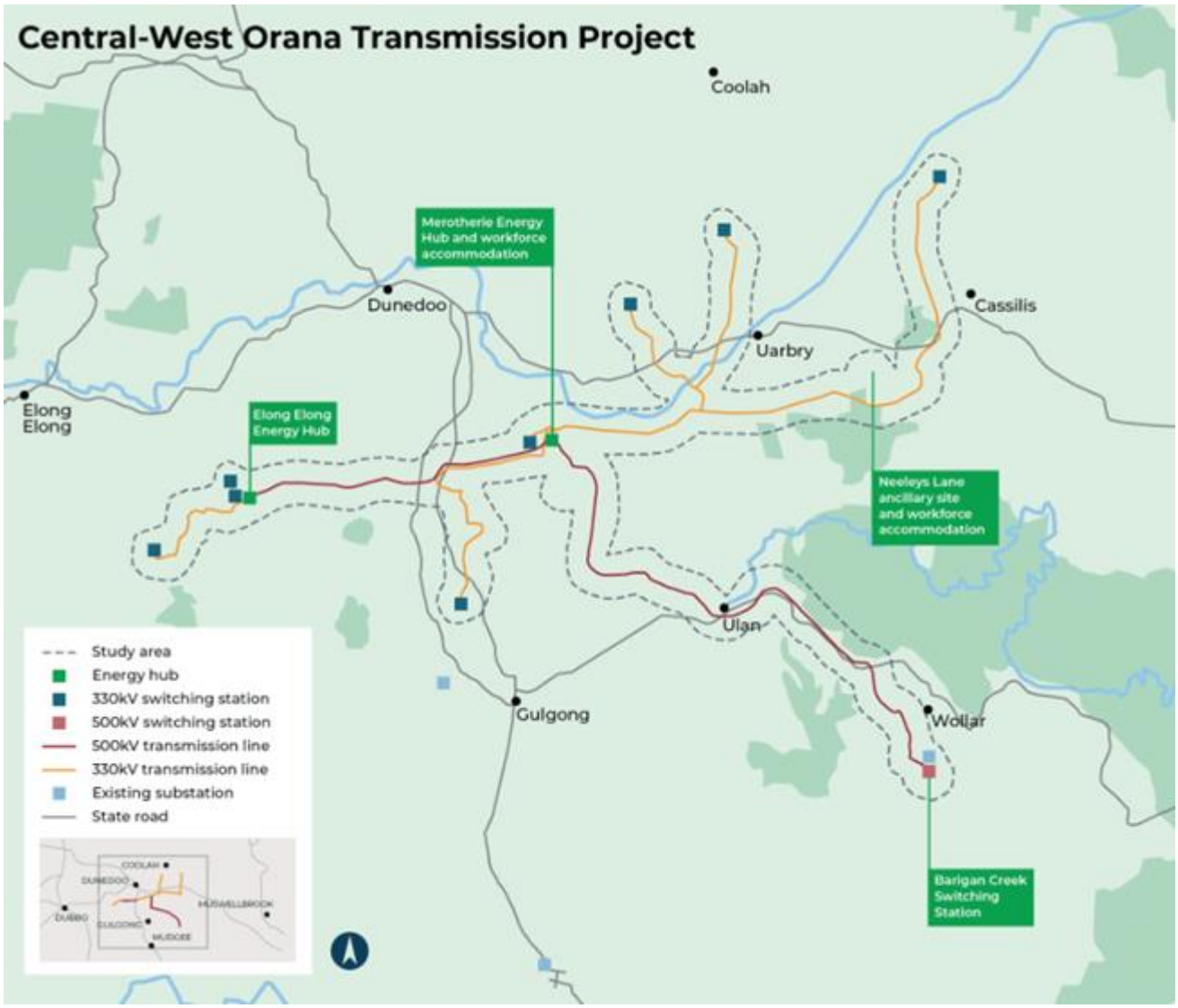


Figure 1: Central-West Orana Renewable Energy Zone

The Energy Corporation of NSW (EnergyCo) is a statutory authority that leads the design, delivery and coordination of NSW Renewable Energy Zones (REZs) and priority transmission infrastructure in a way that benefits consumers, investors and regional communities.

The Central-West Orana REZ (CWO REZ) is expected to attract $20 billion of private investment and require 5,000 construction workers at its peak.

Acknowledging the potential negative impacts resulting from a cumulative influx of workforces from this and other projects to the region, EnergyCo has established:

- Whole of Government Initiatives through the Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap Steering Committee, supported by an Implementation Plan Working Group (refer to Appendix G); and
- a Social Services Sub-Group of the Premier's Department Western Regional Leadership Executive (RLE) to address social services matters at a regional level and progress priority social services issues in the REZ.

In addition, EnergyCo has designed a Community and Employment Benefit Program (CEBP). The CEBP aims to support communities and realise lasting and tangible benefits.

EnergyCo has made $128 million available for community and employment benefits and projects to support the Central-West Orana REZ over four years. Of this, $70 million in grants were launched in 2024 through four streams, see Figure 2. The most up to date information about the CEBP can be accessed on the EnergyCo website: https://www.energyco.nsw.gov.au/cebp.

Figure 2: EnergyCo grants

During consultation for the CEPB, members of the Central-West Orana community made it clear that support was needed to ensure community groups can submit the most competitive grant application possible. EnergyCo acted on this feedback and, together with the NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, provided five grant writing workshops across the Central-West Orana REZ to assist Local Community Fund applicants. One of these sessions was recorded and is available on the EnergyCo website for those who were unable to attend the in-person workshops. EnergyCo is also providing dedicated, tailored support for First Nations Fund applicants.

1.3 About this Social Impact Management Plan

1.3.1 Purpose

This Social Impact Management Plan (SIM Plan) sets out the monitoring and adaptive management framework of the Project social impacts during the construction phase.

This SIM Plan objectives are to:

- Identify any changes to the existing social environment since the SIA was completed.
- Refine and validate mitigation, monitoring and management measures for identified social impacts (including cumulative) related to the Project construction.
- Explain how unanticipated impacts will be addressed.
- Set out how the community can provide feedback as part of adaptive management.

1.3.2 State Planning approval

As part of the EIS development for the Project, a Social Impact Assessment Report (SIA) (Technical paper 7– Social Impact Assessment) was prepared to assess and address social impacts. The SIA was undertaken in accordance with the NSW SIA Guideline (DPIE, 2023) and involved baseline research, scoping of potential impacts and consultation with stakeholders and communities. A total of 44 community members and stakeholders were interviewed, these included local Councils (Dubbo Regional, Mid-Western Regional, Warrumbungle Shire and Upper Hunter Shire), landowners both hosting and neighbouring Project infrastructure, community representatives and local services. An online survey targeted at landowners within 1 kilometre of Project's transmission corridor also informed the SIA, a total of 104 responses from landowners and some community members.

The SIA reported the predicted extent and nature of likely social impacts against baseline conditions, including considering the people and communities that would be impacted. This was done for both the construction and operation phases of the Project. Each impact was given an impact rating to prioritise how they would be addressed. Impact ratings are further described in Section 1.3.4.

The SIA recommended the development of a SIM Plan to manage and monitor the Project's social impacts during construction.

A Submissions Report (dated March 2024) was prepared in response to submissions received on the EIS. The Submissions Report includes clarifications as well as further detail relating to social impact management.

A Project Amendment Report (AR) was subsequently prepared to address project changes resulting from submissions and design progress. The AR was accepted on 11 March 2024. The AR provides an updated assessment of social cumulative impacts and updated social impact management measures, which also included the preparation of a SIM Plan in management measure SI8.

Figure 3 shows where social impact management sits in the SIA and EIS process.

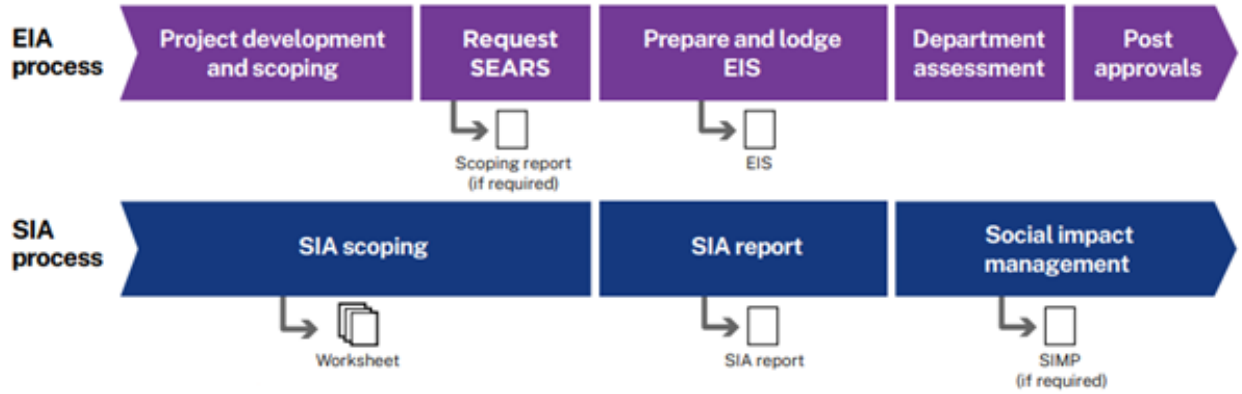


Figure 3: Aligned EIA/EIS and SIA process. Source NSW SIA Guideline (DPIE, 2023).

1.3.3 Methodology

The SIM Plan methodology is aligned with the Social Impact Management Toolbox for State Significant Projects and the NSW SIA Guideline (DPIE, 2023).

The following steps were undertaken to develop the SIM Plan:

- Review of the Project SIA, Submissions Report and Amendment Report.
- Development and implementation of a SIM Plan community and stakeholder consultation plan.
- Desktop research of baseline data and studies.
- Review and integration of ACEREZ and EnergyCo management plans, strategies and policies.
- Incorporating feedback to refine the management measures and monitoring frameworks.

In accordance with Condition B55 (b), the SIM Plan is developed with regard to the EIS SIA commitments for the SIM Plan (see Appendix E).

The Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) was consulted through the development of the SIM Plan.

This SIM Plan was prepared by a team of suitably qualified persons (see Appendix A). The SIM Plan lead author is a Certified Environmental Practitioner - Social Impact Specialist (CEnvP) under the Environmental Institute of Australia and New Zealand.

1.3.4 Review of impact ratings and identification of unanticipated impacts

The Project's SIA identified potential impacts resulting from the Project and determined the significance of those impacts, based on their likelihood of occurring and the magnitude or consequence, as per the NSW SIA Guideline (DPIE, 2023). These are referred to in this SIM Plan as the SIA impact rating, and are low, medium, high or very high, prior to management measures being applied

The SIM Plan determined a revised impact rating based on the process described in Section 1.3.3 and identified additional unanticipated impacts. Cumulative impact ratings were also determined considering the likelihood and magnitude of the cumulative impacts of relevant future projects in the social locality. The cumulative assessment considered DPHI's draft Central West Orana REZ - Population, Workforce and Housing and Accommodation Cumulative Impacts Assessment (Urbis, 2025) (draft report). Noting that population and workforce estimates, and timing of the projects considered in the DPHI report are subject to change, the report provides a suitable assessment for the purpose of considering cumulative impacts in this SIM Plan.

The residual impact rating was determined for each impact. The residual impact rating refers to the level of impact expected once the management and mitigation measures have been applied.

1.3.5 Community and stakeholder consultation

The community and stakeholder consultation plan for the SIM Plan identified tailored consultation methods for each relevant stakeholder group. Consultation was delivered in three phases to provide meaningful opportunities for participation (see Table 2). The first phase was delivered in November 2024 to obtain feedback from the

Community Reference Group (CRG), Dubbo, Mid-Western, Upper Hunter and Warrumbungle Regional Councils and Central West Orana Working Group on the SIM Plan consultation approach.

The second phase was conducted between January and March 2025. It focused on face-to-face and online engagement with relevant affected stakeholders to understand changes to baseline conditions, key areas of concerns and to gather recommendations for addressing social impacts and establishing the monitoring framework.

The third phase involved targeted consultation and feedback on the draft SIM Plan document. This phase was delivered between the end of March and beginning of April 2025. During this phase Dubbo, Mid-Western, Upper Hunter and Warrumbungle Regional Councils and the CRG were provided with an opportunity to review and comment on the draft SIM Plan. They were provided with direct responses to their comments, including how they were addressed by the SIM Plan, or if they resulted in a change to the SIM Plan. The comments and responses are presented in Appendix C)

The relevant affected stakeholder groups were informed by the outcomes of the SIA, and include:

- Landowners hosting infrastructure and adjacent neighbours (especially those neighbouring Energy hubs and accommodation camps) who may experience High rated impacts to changes to community cohesion, mental health and wellbeing, sense of place and to the way they work and move around the local area.
- The residents of Merotherie, Cassilis, Wollar and Elong Elong who may experience High impacts to sense of safety due to an influx of a non-resident workforce and increased traffic.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, including but not limited to the Wiradjuri, Kamilaroi and Wailwan groups who may experience High impacts to cultural values and High benefits from employment and procurement opportunities.
- Local health and other services providers who may see additional demand on already at-capacity centres at Dubbo, Wellington, Mudgee, Gulgong, Dunedoo, Merriwa, Scone and Coolah due to the influx of workers.
- Local businesses across the local social locality would experience Medium benefits due to increased procurement opportunities as well as diminished availability of local employees for businesses due to increased competition with the project.
- Residents of the local social locality are anticipated to experience Medium impacts to sense of safety, decision making and Medium benefits due to increased employment opportunities.

Table 2: SIM Plan community and stakeholder consultation summary

Phase	Aim	Stakeholder Group	Consultation method
1	Introduce the SIM Plan process and obtain feedback on consultation approach	Councils (Dubbo, Mid-Western, Upper Hunter and Warrumbungle Regional Councils) Community Reference Group (CRG) Local development groups CWO Working Group Department Planning Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI)	Targeted online and face to face briefings
2	Seek feedback on social impacts and mitigation measures and identify any new or additional issues and management measures	Councils and landowners neighbouring the Energy Hubs and accommodation camps	Online and face to face targeted interviews
		Landowners hosting infrastructure	Invite-only workshops at Cassilis and Dunedoo
		Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders	Focus groups at Wellington, Mudgee and Dubbo
		Neighbouring landowners Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders Councils Landowners hosting infrastructure Interagency groups and local services Local businesses (Chamber of commerce)	Community feedback sessions at Cassilis, Gulgong, Mudgee and Dunedoo
		Community Reference Group (CRG), CWO Working Group, RLE Sub-group	Working group meetings
		Rural Adversity Mental Health Program - Western NSW Local Health District	Online interview
		All stakeholders	Online survey
3	Consolidate feedback on final draft of the Plan prior to submission	Councils, CRG and relevant affected stakeholders DPHI	Targeted stakeholder review of draft SIM Plan

A total of 144 people were engaged through the development of the SIM Plan. Table 3 summarises consultation per stakeholder group. Community registered drop-in sessions provided an opportunity to community members to provide feedback about changes to baseline, social impacts, mitigation and monitoring indicator for each social impact category (see Figure 4). It is acknowledged that residents from neighbouring townships attended the community feedback sessions held at Cassilis, Gulgong, Mudgee and Dunedoo and therefore these findings reflect a wider area.

Table 3: SIM Plan consultation per stakeholder group

Stakeholder group	In person interviews	Workshops / drop-in sessions	Online meetings/ interviews	Email	Total consultation activities	Total number of participants
Councils (Dubbo, Mid-Western, Upper Hunter and Warrumbungle Regional Councils)			5	15	20	10
Community Reference Group	2			5	7	10
Central-West Orana Working Group			1		1	9
Landowners hosting infrastructure	7		1		8	11
Neighbouring landowners directly adjacent to accommodation camps, energy hubs and ancillary facilities			1	4	5	2
Community members and organisations	1	4	2		7	81
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations		3			3	11
Public services (i.e. emergency services, health services)			3		3	10
Total	**10**	**7**	**8**	**24**	**54**	**144**

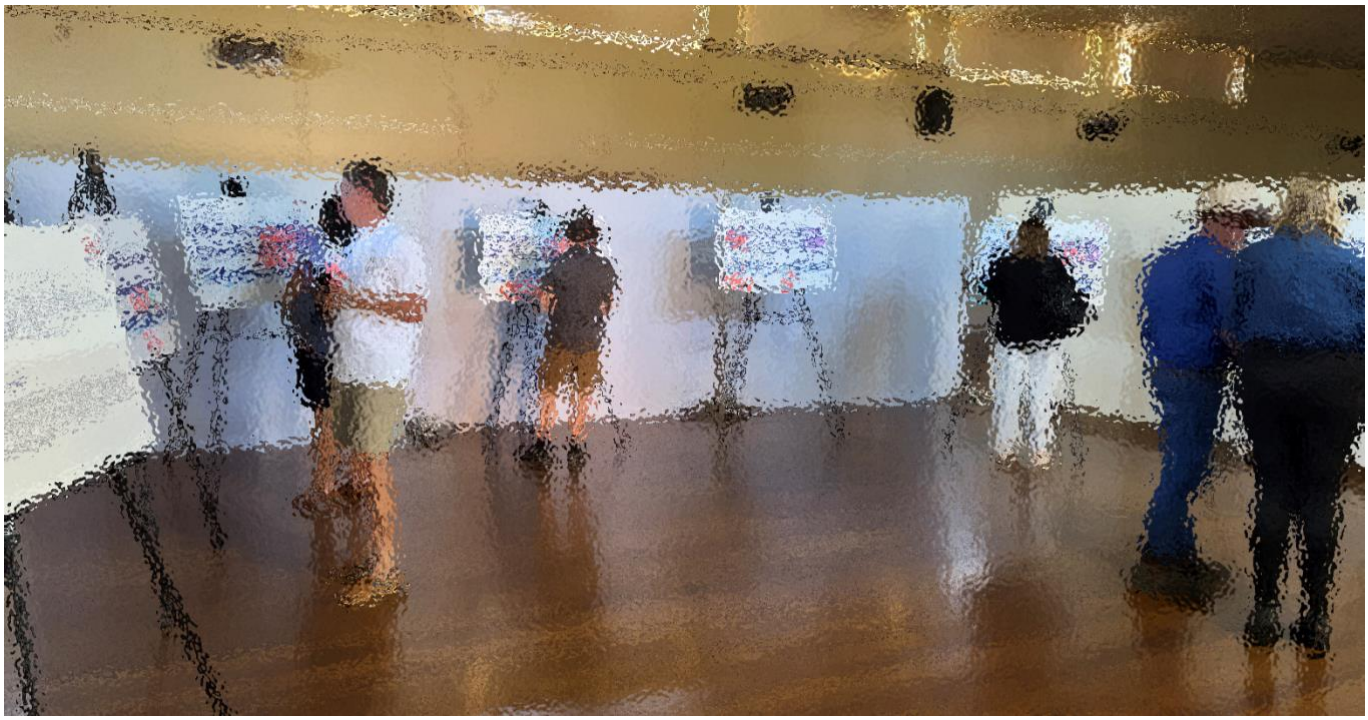


Figure 4: Community Registered Drop-in session

In addition, 127 people completed an online survey. Participants of the online survey were from

- Binnaway,
- Birriwa
- Bungaba
- Cassilis
- Comobella
- Coolah
- Dubbo
- Dunedoo
- Gollan
- Elong Elong
- Gulgong
- Hargraves
- Leadville
- Mendooran
- Merotherie
- Mudgee
- Somerset
- Tallawang
- The Den
- Uarbry
- Wellington

Figure 5 shows participants in the survey by stakeholder group.

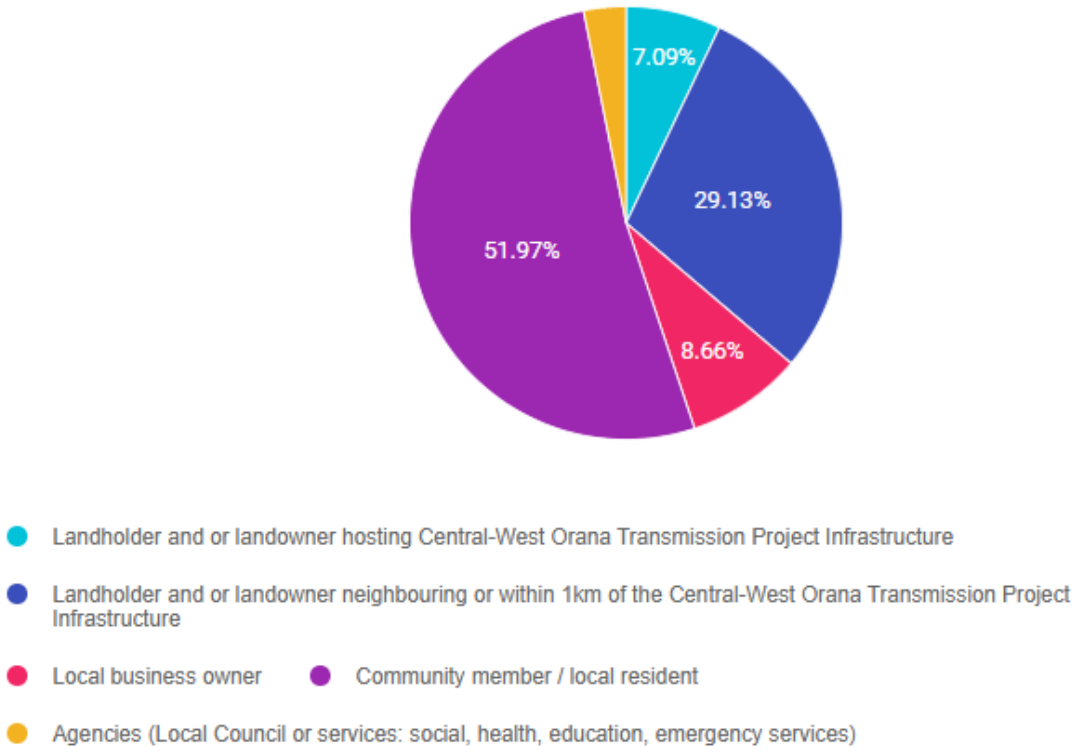


Figure 5: Online survey participants

1.4 Consultation feedback

This section provides a summary of the feedback received from the various stakeholder groups during the consultation process. Table 4 provides a summary of the key issues raised during consultation and an indication of where this feedback is addressed in this SIM Plan. Further detail on all consultation feedback and the response is outlined in Appendix C. For further details on the issues raised and their social impact categories, refer to Figure 9.

Key feedback included concerns about:

- sense of safety due to an influx of non-residential workforce
- road safety, increased traffic and impacts to road conditions resulting from the Project and other future projects within the REZ
- increased pressure for local services, especially health services, emergency services and waste management
- coordination in the management of impacts of the Project and REZ future projects
- loss of visual amenity (construction and transmission lines), noise pollution, and overall degradation of the local environment and quality of life
- receiving up to date and detailed information about the project impacts and management plans.

Figure 6 shows a word cloud of survey responses about what could improve overall satisfaction with the Project. This included:

- enhancing the distribution of benefits and impacts, including town-specific grants for those who will be more impacted
- ensuring proper management of accommodation camps, providing adequate resources to support the influx of workers, and engage with the community to address their concerns about the camps
- employment opportunities for young people, apprenticeships and traineeships for local schools, training and upskilling
- providing support to local services, health and emergency services
- increased communication by providing direct notification via community noticeboard, local newspaper, radio and LED signage.

Figure 6: Online survey word cloud about what could improve overall satisfaction with the Project

Table 4: Summary of consultation feedback and where it is addressed in this SIM Plan

Impact area	Feedback summary	Where addressed in this SIM Plan
Community	• Ensure equitable sharing of project benefits across all community groups and measuring overall satisfaction with the Project (Councils). • Recommendation to assess changes in population trends due to Project and multiple projects and develop strategies to maintain community cohesion amidst demographic changes (Councils). • Mitigate the impact of housing affordability and availability due to workforce demands and concerns about impacts to tourism as construction workers occupy tourist accommodations (Councils). • Build housing and local economies with workers accommodation being a legacy for communities/services (Councils and RLE). • Concern over influx of non-resident population reducing security and safety, (landowners) and having poor worker behaviour, and wet or dry accommodation camps (RLE). • Concern for missed opportunity of equitable sharing of project benefits (Councils) across most impacted communities (Dunedoo community members).	Section 2.2 Community

Impact area	Feedback summary	Where addressed in this SIM Plan
Way of life	• Concern over direct and cumulative changes to road safety and traffic disruptions resulting from increased traffic movements and over-size and over-mass vehicles (CRG and Councils), in particular for Merotherie Road and its upgrade for the accommodation camp and Cassilis (CRG, RLE), impacting on community and local cycle trail (CWCT). • Concerns about contractors making use of shortcuts damaging non-designated roads and cumulative impacts on maintenance, increasing repair costs for Council and ratepayers (Councils). • Recommendation to implement driver awareness campaigns and wildlife incident mitigation, as well as communication and coordination regarding real-time information on roadworks and detours (Councils). • Recommendation to make vehicles easily identifiable, reduce use of the road in wet weather, record overall incidents and consider alternative roads (community members at Gulgong, Cassilis, Dunedoo)	Section 2.3 Way of life

Impact area	Feedback summary	Where addressed in this SIM Plan
Livelihoods	• Define and communicate local procurement and workforce targets, and report on participation rates. Incentivise prime contractors to subcontract with local businesses and prioritise local suppliers (Council). • Provide training opportunities for locally employed workers and locals, especially Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders people and to develop local industries to complement the renewable energy sector (CRG, Council). • Recommendation to co-design Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander program and employment targets and to hire a locally based Aboriginal person to support consultation (Aboriginal focus group) • Measures to prevent labour loss from local employers (CRG, Council). • Implement gender equity policies and childcare provision (CRG). • Align project outcomes with broader regional economic development strategies to prevent disruption to farming operations and for long-term benefits (Council). • Recommendation to provide opportunities for local workforce to drive to work and offer transport for locally employed people (CRG). • Monitor economic and employment outcomes, including local job creation and business involvement in procurement, long term job creation and economic stimulation post-construction (Council). • Track youth consultation in training and employment programs (Council). • Develop a mechanism to monitor and share the proportion of economic benefits retained within the region (Council). • Concerns that tourism suffers from construction noise and amenity impacts, deterring visitors and affecting businesses (Council and community). Landowners specifically raised the following concerns: • Landowner loss of income due to time away from farming business to negotiate land acquisition and property access, biosecurity threats due to construction work on their property. • Landowner loss of income due to increased insurance costs (Gulgong).	Section 2.4 Livelihoods

Impact area	Feedback summary	Where addressed in this SIM Plan
Accessibility	• Recommends proponents are requested to ensure their own clinical staff are available at workforce accommodation camps, as local services cannot support this population (RLE). Recommendation to monitor waiting times and availability of medical services, as well as impacts on marginalised groups, such as the elderly or low-income residents (Councils). • Legacy work in health services should focus on building capacity with additional doctors and virtual providers (RLE) and provide funding to local healthcare providers to expand capacity (Council). • Conduct a pre-construction study to understand current service capacity and usage. Monitor increased service demand and identify capacity gaps by developing KPIs to measure changes in service and satisfaction (Council). • Concerns about police requirements for the increased workforce, support for the single police officer in Dunedoo, expected road traffic increase, and local pub licensing (RLE). • Ensuring work zones, OSOM vehicle routes do not impede emergency services, with contingency plans to prioritise access for ambulances, RFS, and police (Councils). • Assess the stability of internet and communication services near project areas (Council, CRG). • Support vulnerable groups to ensure community facilities are accessible and well-equipped (Councils). • Need for accommodation for current health and education workforce and to attract additional and future workforce (Council, RLE). • Concern over with increased fire risk due to transmission lines in fire-prone areas and vulnerabilities for properties due to insufficient fire management plans (Council). • The Council's workload has increased due to multiple REZ projects, affecting community services (Council). • Monitor waiting times emergency presentations (Gulgong community members, Councils) and availability of medical services, as well as impacts on marginalised groups, such as the elderly or low-income residents (Councils). • Recommendation to build capacity of local doctors and virtual providers by funding the nurse or doctor visiting the camp to spend one day a month in community (RLE, Council, community members).	Section 2.5 Accessibility

Impact area	Feedback summary	Where addressed in this SIM Plan
Health and wellbeing	• Landowners reported uncertainty, stress, imbalance of power and financial stress in the Project land acquisition process (landowners) • Monitor community mental health and wellbeing and implement programs, focusing on stress and mental health concerns, especially for landowners hosting infrastructure and those near construction sites (Council). • Communities are experiencing increased anxiety about change and the future (Council). • Mental health is a major ongoing concern, especially for police, as they are usually the first responders (RLE). • Support Council-run mental first aid program (Mudgee community member) • Psychological support offered from start of land acquisition process (Gulgong community member)	Section 2.6 Health and Wellbeing
Culture	• Impacts on Aboriginal People extend beyond heritage and culture, encompassing employment, housing, health (including mental health wellbeing), and social aspects such as social breakdowns and other social issues (CWO Working Group/RLE). • Recommendation to provide cultural awareness training and immersion for senior leadership and conduct audit of cultural protocols and wellbeing (Aboriginal focus group). • Opportunities to engage Aboriginal groups for initiatives such as smoking ceremonies (Cassilis community member) • Employ local liaison and Aboriginal youth liaison roles in towns (Aboriginal focus group). • Partnering with local job providers and high school to target young and unemployed Aboriginal people (Aboriginal focus group). • Allowing Aboriginal businesses not registered in Supply Nation to participate based on Statutory Declarations (Aboriginal focus group).	Section 2.7 Culture
Surroundings	• Concerns about disruptions to wildlife and migration corridors, as well as loss of biodiversity affecting natural pest control and pollination for farmers (Council). • The lack of local biodiversity offset undermines ecological preservation efforts. (Council) • Increased efforts are needed to preserve amenity, biodiversity values, the region's rural character to prevent losing its appeal to residents and visitors (Council). • Recommendation to fund a seed bank with local Landcare and community members to allow landowners to restore native vegetation on their properties • Monitor offsets on local properties (Cassilis) • Replacing like for like trees where they are removed (Cassilis community member) • Monitoring water usage (Dunedoo community session)	Section 2.8 Surroundings

Impact area	Feedback summary	Where addressed in this SIM Plan
Decision-making systems	• Ensure transparent processes for addressing grievances and complaints (Councils). • Cumulative impact of multiple projects and contact points across organisations (landowners) • Emphasise community presence and robust consultation to understand and communicate effectively with the community and interagency services (Council, CRG) and provide clarity on management plan coordination and the opportunity to provide feedback on management plans (CRG). • Implement regular transparent public reporting on project outcomes (Council) by reporting qualitative and quantitative data across all key areas (Council/RLE) including community perception (Council). • Establish a regional coordination body to align multiple project timelines, workforce needs, and resource allocation as well as community committees with renewable sub-committees (Council). • Make available a Plain English summary of SIM Plan. • Coordination for landowners hosting multiple projects to have a single point of contact who is a decision maker, enhance property access plans by doing walkthroughs with landowners and including escalation point. • Direct notification via community noticeboard, local newspaper, radio and LED signage. • Clarity for taxation implications of benefits scheme.	Section 2.9 Decision-making systems

1.5 Management plan hierarchy

A range of processes, procedures and actions will be implemented to ensure that construction activities are undertaken in accordance with the impacts identified in the EIS, Amendment Report and Submissions Report.

The management of environmental impacts during the main construction works will be documented in ACEREZ's Environmental Management Strategy (EMS) and sub plans (see Figure 7).

The EMS is supported by issue, activity and site-specific sub-plans and strategies based on the medium and high impacts identified in the EIS and Amendment Report.

The SIM Plan is one of the plans and strategies required for construction (see Figure 8). The plans are interrelated and overlap to manage impacts. The SIM Plan consolidates the management measures in other plans to manage social impacts and proposes new measures to strengthen mitigation of negative impacts and to enhance benefits.

The SIM Plan articulates how the relevant plans such as the Community Communication Strategy (CCS) address impacts on the community, by detailing communications processes such as construction notifications and complaints management. CCS reporting against indicators will be used as one of many inputs to measure the effectiveness of the management measures presented in this SIM Plan.

Figure 7: Construction environmental management plan and subplans

Figure 8: Other construction management plans

Note: The above management plans have been prepared as per the State planning approval conditions. These will be published once approved by the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure. Where relevant, requirements from these management plans have been summarised in the SIM Plan.

2 Social Impact Management Plan

2.1 Overview

The Social Impact Management Plan (SIM Plan) is structured following the eight social impact categories established in the NSW SIA Guideline (DPIE, 2023) (see Figure 9).

Figure 9: Social impact categories

For each impact category the SIM Plan provides:

- A summary of baseline data and changes since the SIA, including SIM Plan consultation findings.
- A review of the project's potential direct, indirect and cumulative impacts including impacted stakeholders, and impact ratings identified in the SIA and Amendment Report.
- Identification of relevant measures to manage the construction impacts including:
  - measures recognised through construction management plans, strategies and policies established by EnergyCo and ACEREZ,
  - new management measures introduced in this SIM Plan to be led by EnergyCo,
- The social impact management framework detailing indicators, monitoring, timing and reporting requirements.

The approach to developing the management, monitoring and reporting frameworks recognises the volume of management plans developed as part of the construction approval. It consolidates this information for ease and transparency for the impacted communities in understanding how social impacts will be managed.

The management measures, monitoring and reporting commitments outlined in this SIM plan will be implemented from the commencement of construction until construction completion, unless otherwise stated for a particular management, monitoring or reporting measure.

The indicators keep the Project accountable by measuring outcomes through actions. Baseline information serves as a starting point from which to measure potential change. The indicators and reporting requirements have been aligned to other management plans and processes where possible to ensure that the SIM Plan is integrated with the Project's processes. For example, indicators that align with regular public reporting from the Complaints Management System have been carried through to ACEREZ's Community Communication Strategy.

Consultation findings have been integrated through each one of these sections. The SIM Plan also details:

- how adaptive management will take place (see Chapter 3)
- the process for the broader monitoring, review and update of the SIM Plan (see Chapter 3).
- the roles and responsibilities for the implementation of SIM Plan (see Chapter 4).

2.2 Community

This section identifies the management framework for impacts to community composition, cohesion, character, and people's sense of place.

2.2.1 Social baseline

Since the SIA, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) has released updated population estimates at the LGA level. The estimated resident population on 30 June 2023 for the regional social locality was 155,122 people, an increase of around 1.7% on the population recorded in the 2021 Census of 152,122 people. The regional social locality is the area expected to experience indirect, or secondary benefits and/or impacts due to the project and includes nine LGAs comprising Dubbo Regional, Narromine, Mid-Western Regional, Upper Hunter, Warrumbungle, Gilgandra Shire, Liverpool Plains, Muswellbrook Shire and Cabonne.

The majority of this population increase was experienced in the Dubbo Regional LGA. No LGAs had an estimated population decline (ABS, 2024).

Population projections prepared for NSW estimated that the population of the regional social locality is expected to grow by around 8.1% by 2034, or 12,325 additional people from 2021 (NSW Government , 2024).

The construction of energy generation projects would also contribute to population growth. A recent study led by DPHI estimated a peak of 6,475 non-local construction workers would be required in 2026, these workers are estimated to bring approximately 303 family members in a scenario where all projects in the planning system in the last two years would proceed (Urbis, 2025) (draft report). It is acknowledged that this data will be further refined and updated as more information becomes available, and this inform future versions of the SIM Plan.

Dubbo Regional Council, Gilgandra, Warrumbungle Shire and Mid-Western Regional Council will receive the largest share of non-local construction workers and potentially their families, receiving 2,455, 2,277, 2,063 and 1,492 in additional population respectively (see Figure 10). Together, the four councils account for approximately 95.0% of the major project-driven additional population at its peak (Urbis, 2025) (draft report).

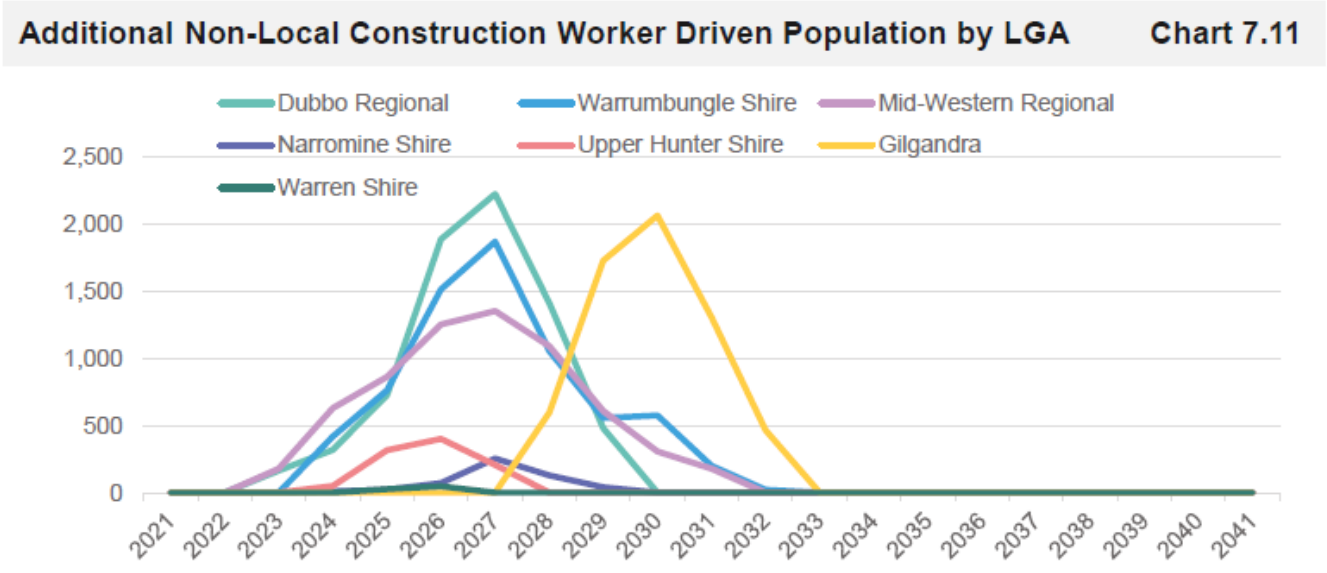


Figure 10: Non-local construction worker driven population by LGA (Urbis, 2025)(draft report)

Housing and accommodation supply constraints continue to remain an issue across the LGAs, which make up the regional social locality. There are only 22 proposed residential projects clustered within the LGAs of Dubbo and Mid-Western Regional, these will equate to 586 dwellings (Urbis, 2025) (draft report). There are also 171 proposed new lots, of which 159 lots are located in the Dubbo Regional LGA and 12 in Mid-Western Regional. All lots have gained development approval and are expected to be completed by 2027. CRG stakeholders reported that there are 50 housing lots being developed at Gulgong.

Aboriginal stakeholders highlighted the challenges for Aboriginal communities in securing adequate housing and reported instances of overcrowding in Dubbo and Wellington. Stakeholders reported that the challenge in accessing housing makes Aboriginal communities more vulnerable to homelessness, unemployment and poor health and cultural outcomes. This is consistent with the findings of the online survey (see Figure 11 and Figure 12).

The median weekly rents for the local government areas within the REZ boundaries are detailed in Table 5. Stakeholder raised concerns for rental affordability across the REZ.

Table 5: Median weekly rents, December 2024 (Source: Department of Communities and Justice, 2025).

2024 Weekly Rent December Quarter	Dubbo Regional Council	Mid-Western Regional Council	Upper Hunter Shire Council	Warrumbungle Shire Council
Median	$475	$560	$475	$350

Regarding short-term accommodation, there is a total of 109 establishments, offering a total of 2,792 rooms. 80.1% of these establishments are concentrated in The Dubbo Regional and Mid-Western regional LGAs. Most of

the existing supply are motels (78 establishments), followed by hotels (22 establishments) and aparthotels (9 establishments) (Urbis, 2025) (draft report).

There are currently 109 establishments in the proposed short-term accommodation pipeline, totalling 2,792 rooms. These establishments are concentrated in The Dubbo and Mid-Western LGAs. There are 15 proposed establishments in the accommodation pipeline, which would contribute to additional 949 rooms. By 2025 only 26 serviced apartment rooms will be readily available, with 479 rooms expected to be delivered by 2026.

Several projects that form part of the CWO REZ will have accommodation camps, including this Project. These include Valley of the Winds, Uungula, Spicers Creek, Orana, Liverpool Range and Burrendong wind farms, Narragamba, Birriwa (sharing with Narragamba), the Pines, Mayfair and Tallawang solar farms, Phoenix pumped hydro and Inland Rail projects. ACEREZ will build construction workers accommodation for up to 1,800 workers at sites at Merotherie and Neeleys Lane, Turrill to accommodate the workforce during construction of the Project.

During construction of these accommodation camps, a small number of workers may use existing short-term accommodation options. The initial number of workers required for establishing the temporary workforce accommodation at Merotherie will be approximately 50 people, the majority of which will be local (including local subcontractors). The workforce would be increased to approximately 100 by July 2025. From July 2025 onwards, the temporary workforce accommodation at Merotherie will have the capacity to accommodate up to 300 workers.

The temporary workforce accommodation at Merotherie is expected to be fully operational by Q4 2025, with a capacity to accommodate up to 1,200 workers. Subject to the number of local subcontractors, workforce is anticipated to exceed these numbers.

The Neeleys Lane temporary workforce accommodation, located in Turill within the Hunter Shire Regional Council LGA, is a smaller facility with a capacity to accommodate up to 600 workers. At this point in time, construction of the Neeleys Lane workforce accommodation is proposed to commence in Q1 2026 and is expected to be completed by Q3 2026.

Mudgee has seen a 66% increase in self-contained accommodation over the three years to February 2025, driven by demand during the Covid-19 pandemic and temporary workers for renewable energy projects. However, both Mudgee Region Tourism and Mid-Western Regional Council report rising vacancies and a shift from short-term to long-term rentals. In late 2024, 35 accommodation providers closed while only three new ones opened. Mudgee's accommodation costs an average of $90 more per night than other towns in the region, which, while supported by high demand from temporary workers, may deter leisure visitors if prices remain high compared to other NSW wine regions (Mudgee Regional Tourism, 2025).

Since the announcement of the CWO REZ, business visitation growth has stabilised to approximately two percent per quarter. While it is difficult to isolate REZ-specific visitor growth from broader post-COVID visitor recovery this return to positive visitor growth may suggest that the announcement of the REZ has had a positive effect on business visitation.

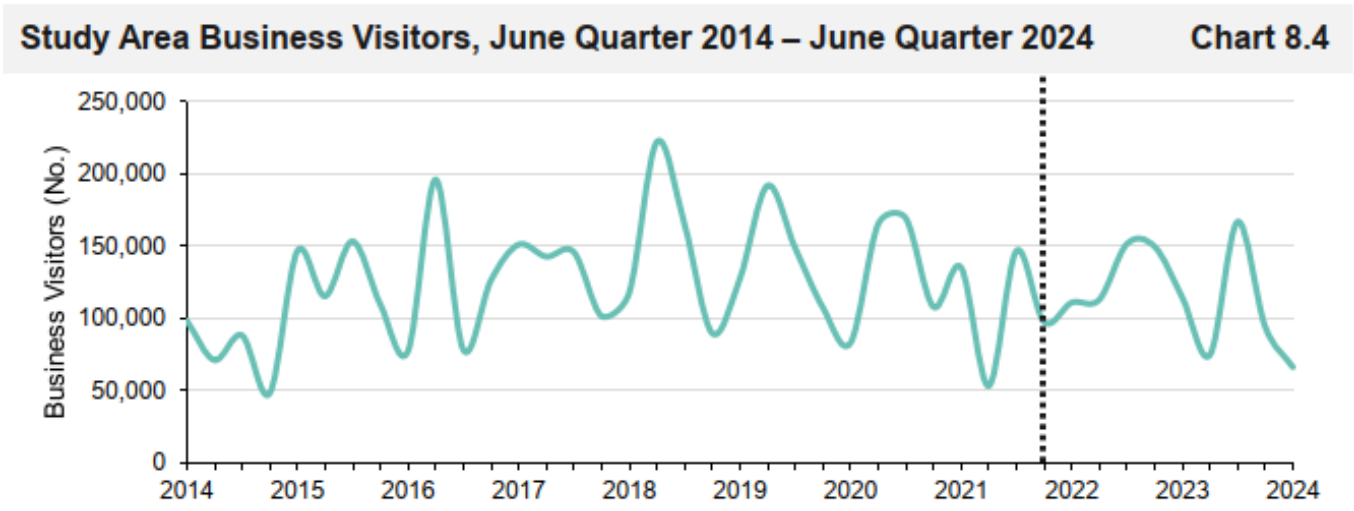


Figure 11: Business visitors, June Quarter 2014 - June Quarter 2024 (Urbis, 2025) (draft report).

Communities across the REZ reported that they had observed a change in community composition, particularly Dunedoo and Cassilis, with an increase in REZ project workers in recent years. This was generally perceived as a negative change to community character and composition as non-resident populations were not socially integrated with local communities. In Gulgong, a community member noted that they had observed an increase in misinformation in the community including crime and poor behaviour attributed to solar farm workers. However, online survey respondents (85%) reported good or very good sense of safety, and 90% reported good and very good relationships with neighbours.

Community members who participated in consultation sessions in Gulgong, Cassilis, Dunedoo and Mudgee reported that community cohesion had decreased due to the inequitable distribution of benefits across communities and Councils. For example, larger towns had benefited from payments while rural communities felt left out. It was also reported that the Gulgong farming community had already experienced diminished community cohesion, including less communal work and resources in recent years.

Sense of safety was also raised as a key issue for local communities. Table 6 provides publicly available crime data from the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research found for the four local government areas. Detailed reported offences for each LGA can be found in Appendix D

Table 6: Summary of reported major offences for LGAs, 2020 to 2024, year ending December (Source: BOCSAR, 2025).

Year ending December	Dubbo	Mid-Western	Upper Hunter	Warrumbungle
2020	3,989	947	418	384
2021	4,209	857	445	373
2022	4,664	822	418	475
2023	5,072	887	408	544
2024	4,654	937	477	599

Note: Major offences include Murder, Domestic violence related assault, Non-domestic violence related assault, Sexual assault, Sexual touching, sexual act and other sexual offences, Robbery, Break and enter dwelling, Break and enter non-dwelling, Motor vehicle theft, Steal from motor vehicle, Steal from retail store, Other stealing offences and Malicious damage to property.

Impact area	Responses from the community			
Community	90% (n=89) reported that their relationship with their neighbours was good or very good	85% (n=84) reported their sense of safety to be good or very good	39% (n=37) reported that housing availability and affordability was poor or none	65% (n=49) reported being dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with how benefits are distributed across communities 6% (n=5) are satisfied or very satisfied

Figure 12: Online survey findings about community

2.2.2 Community impacts during construction

The influx of a non-resident construction workforce may have an impact on sense of safety, community cohesion and short-term accommodation and housing availability and affordability. Stakeholders reported that they are concerned about the pressure across the region.

It is anticipated that prior to the operation of the workforce accommodation camps, a small number of construction workers would utilise existing local short-term accommodation during pre-construction minor works (between February and July 2025). In addition, a limited number of construction workers and grey and white-collar staff, such as project managers and technical specialists, may reside off-site from time to time.

During pre-construction minor works there is an overlap with 18 relevant future projects, which equates to about 5,140 employees. Some of these will be accommodated in workforce accommodation camps. The Amendment Report identified major cumulative impacts on the availability and affordability of short-term accommodation within the local social locality, with a minimal contribution of the Project to this impact.

During the consultation for the SIM plan and during previous engagement, Dubbo Regional Council emphasised their strong focus on ensuring that accommodation for projects in their LGA is provided through housing developments on residential land or on other suitable sites within or near existing settlements and villages. Notwithstanding, Dubbo Regional Council acknowledged the specific role of the accommodation camps for the Project.

The SIA identified the impact to sense of safety and perceived sense of safety for the residents closest to the accommodation camp in Merotherie and Turrill, and across the local social locality. SIM Plan consultation found that this is still a concern for these people, and potential impact.

The SIA identified unequitable distribution of impacts and benefits as an impact during operational phase of the Project and gave it a High level impact rating for landowners adjacent to infrastructure. However, during SIM Plan consultation community members expressed concern that the impact will materialise during the construction phase of the project, and in some cases already occurring. The SIM Plan consultation identified a new affected group, the communities of Wollar, Merotherie, Cassilis and Dunedoo, giving the impact a Medium rating.

The Amendment Report also identified adverse cumulative changes to community cohesion due to community members leaving the region. Table 7 details the potential direct, indirect and cumulative social impacts to community during construction of the Project, and the revised impact rating.

Table 7: Direct, indirect and cumulative impacts on community

Ref.	Social impact	Affected groups	SIA impact rating (prior to management)	Revised impact rating	Cumulative impact rating
C-01	Detrimental effects to community cohesion	Landowners hosting infrastructure	High	High	High
		Landowners adjacent to infrastructure	High	High	High
		Residents within the local social locality	Medium	Medium	High
C-02	Reduced short-term accommodation and housing availability and affordability for locals and visitors	Residents and visitors within the local social locality	No impact	Low	High
		Regional social locality	No impact	No impact	High
C-03	Impacts to sense of safety due to an influx of non-resident workforce	Merotherie and Turrill	High	High	High
		Local social locality	Medium	Medium	High
C-04	Unequitable distribution of impacts and benefits	Landowners neighbouring infrastructure	High	High	High
		Wollar, Merotherie, Cassilis and Dunedoo	Not assessed	Medium	High

2.2.3 Measures to manage impacts on community and enhance benefits

The measures to manage impacts to community cohesion, sense of safety and housing and accommodation are comprised of both the construction management plans (see Table 8) and new measures developed specifically for this SIM Plan.

The following measures have been developed to manage impacts to community cohesion, sense of safety and housing and accommodation, and are consistent with recommendations provided by community and key stakeholders during SIM Plan consultation:

- Using accommodation camps to accommodate the non-resident workforce and building the accommodation camps in stages to manage pressure on short-term accommodation and local housing supply and affordability.
- Implementing the Community Communication Strategy and Complaints Management System to manage impacts to community cohesion.
- Implementing the workforce standards of behaviours to minimise the impact of the non-resident workforce on sense of safety.
- Cumulative impacts affecting the wider REZ will be addressed by Whole of Government Initiatives through the Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap Steering Committee, supported by an Implementation Plan Working Group (Refer to Appendix G).

- To enhance benefits ACEREZ has allocated funding for community benefit initiatives to leave a legacy that extends beyond the completion of the REZ transmission infrastructure and ensures benefits of the renewable energy transition are directed to regional communities. Implementation of this community benefit program will be from Q4 2025 for 3 years until 2028ACEREZ will provide funding through its Community Grants Program, comprising two funding categories:
  Small community grants ranging from $3,000 to $50,000; and
  Significant community grants ranging from $50,000 to $1 million.
- Grant applications will be eligible where initiatives are located within, or deliver direct benefits to, the local government areas or Local Aboriginal Land Councils hosting the project infrastructure.
- The eligible local government areas are:
  • Upper Hunter Shire Council
  • Mid-Western Regional Council
  • Dubbo Regional Council
  • Warrumbungle Shire Council
- The eligible Local Aboriginal Land Councils are:
  • Mudgee Local Aboriginal Land Council
  • Walhallow Local Aboriginal Land Council
  • Gilgandra Local Aboriginal Land Council
  • Dubbo Local Aboriginal Land Council

More information on the ACEREZ Community Grants Program is available (link here to the ACEREZ brochure - Community Grants Program Brochure.pdf)

The following additional measures have been introduced to respond to consultation feedback during the development of the SIM Plan:

- Maximise the use of local sub-contractors for the construction of the accommodation camps.
- Where reasonable and where it will not risk worker safety, ACEREZ and EnergyCo will aim to distribute accommodation bookings equitably throughout the local social locality and avoid localities during peak visitor periods where possible.

Table 8: Management measures and strategies for impacts on community

Impact (s)	Management measures and strategies
Short-term accommodation **Housing affordability** **Sense of safety**	The Accommodation Camp Management Plan (ACMP) was developed in consultation with Transport for NSW, Mid-Western Regional Council, and Upper Hunter Shire Council and feedback was incorporated into the plan to address concerns and ensure compliance with local requirements. Measures to manage pressure on short term accommodation and local housing supply and affordability during construction of the accommodation camp include using a staged approach starting with approximately 50 workers in the first two stages (to mid-2025) and sourcing the initial workforce from within the REZ. The ACMP may be updated throughout the project to reflect any changes in project requirements, stakeholder feedback, or regulatory conditions as needed. Any substantial changes to the layout or design of the camps will require additional consultation.
Community cohesion	ACEREZ is exploring opportunities to provide employees with a range of volunteer opportunities in the community, for example: • removing graffiti • painting shared community spaces • upgrading school gardens and common areas • assisting elderly residents with daily needs (e.g. changing lightbulbs or house maintenance). ACEREZ is also exploring options to provide opportunities for volunteers to participate in the Rural Fire Service and State Emergency Services, contributing to the protection and wellbeing of the Central-West Orana region.
	ACEREZ has allocated funding for community benefit initiatives to leave a legacy that extends beyond the completion of the REZ transmission infrastructure and ensures benefits of the renewable energy transition are directed to regional communities. These community benefit initiatives are in addition to the CEPB. ACEREZ will consult with the community in 2025 to develop community benefit initiatives. The community benefit initiatives will also consider the Social Impact Assessment as well as the outcomes of the consultation undertaken for the SIM Plan. This ACEREZ community benefit program will be implemented from Q4 of 2025 for 3 years until 2028. The SIM Plan will be updated to contain more details about these initiatives prior to implementation of the program.

Impact (s)	Management measures and strategies
Community cohesion	ACEREZ's Community Communication Strategy (CCS) is designed to: - adhere to the community engagement requirements in the Conditions of Approval - Provide community and stakeholders with timely and transparent communication via a range of channels - specify communication and consultation activities to facilitate discussion and gather feedback from stakeholders, residents and the broader community - ensure that community members have access to relevant project information - identify the processes and procedures through which the community can discuss or provide feedback to ACEREZ The CCS outlines the role of the local Public Liaison Officers (also known as dedicated Community Place Managers) based in the Community Information Centre as a single point of contact from the CSE team, so affected landowners and the wider community in the REZ have continuity throughout the construction period. The Community Place Managers will be available for public enquiries via multiple channels including face-to-face, phone, dedicated project email and postal address. Community members will be able to enquire about the project through 1800 298 379 and the project email cwo.community@acerez-acjv.com.au. In addition, the Community Communication Strategy outlines ongoing engagement activities specific to the project, to be undertaken during construction.
	EnergyCo has designed a Community and Employment Benefit Program (CEBP). The CEBP aims to support communities and realise lasting and tangible benefits. EnergyCo has made $128 million available for community and employment benefits and projects to support the Central-West Orana REZ over four years. Of this, $70 million in grants were launched in 2024 through four streams, see Figure 2. The most up to date information about the CEBP can be accessed on the EnergyCo website: https://www.energyco.nsw.gov.au/cebp.

2.2.4 Management, monitoring and reporting framework

The management, monitoring and reporting framework to manage impacts on community is provided in Table 9. This table also provides the residual impact expected once the management and mitigation measures have been applied. The symbol (-) denotes the impact remains as a negative impact and the symbol (+) denotes the impact is a benefit. The drafting of monitoring indicators has been informed by community and key stakeholder consultation.

The following indicators were recommended by community and key stakeholders: workforce participation in volunteer programs, complaints about workforce behaviour, incidents of crime and median weekly rent. These indicators will monitor the impact of the non-resident workforce on community cohesion, sense of safety and housing affordability. Monitoring indicators for people's relationship with their neighbours will provide insight into the Project's impact on community cohesion, while monitoring satisfaction with the distribution of impacts and benefits will provide insight into the effectiveness of the SIM Plan and community benefit initiatives. Monitoring engagement with short-term accommodation providers will provide insight into efforts to mitigate negative impacts of using short term accommodation during construction of the accommodation camps.

Table 9: Impact management, monitoring and reporting framework for impacts on community

Ref.	Impact	Desired outcomes	Management Measure	Responsible for implementation	Indicators	Target (where relevant)	Data collection method and source	Monitoring frequency	Adaptive measure if not met	Residual Impact
C-01	Detrimental effects to community cohesion	Community cohesion is not further impacted and/or is enhanced	Community Attitudes Survey	EnergyCo	Number of people who describes their relationship with their neighbours and members of the community as "good" and "very good" Other indicators that will be monitored include number of people who respond 'yes' to the following statements. • 'I feel like I belong in my neighbourhood' • 'My neighbourhood has a strong sense of community'	<5% decrease from baseline	Community attitudes survey using the Likert scale (1-5)	Annual	Adaptive measure to be developed through SIM Plan annual review process.	Low - medium - (-)
			Workforce is encouraged to volunteer with local community organisations	ACEREZ	Proportion of workforce who participate in volunteer programs		HR Records	Annual		Medium (+)
C-02	Reduced short-term accommodation and housing availability and affordability for locals and visitors (Direct and Cumulative)	Short-term accommodation and housing availability and affordability remains at pre-project levels	Construction and operation of the accommodation camp. Distribution of equitable accommodation bookings across the local social locality, rather than fully booking with a limited number of providers	ACEREZ and EnergyCo	Number of short-term accommodation providers engaged		Travel expenditure data	Quarterly during construction	Review Accommodation Camp Management Plan and procurement policy	Low (-)
					Median weekly rent remains stable through Project construction in Dubbo, Mid-Western, Upper Hunter and Warrumbungle Regional Councils (new indicator)		NSW Department of Communities and Justice - Quarterly Rent tables			
C-03	Impacts to sense of safety due to an influx of non-resident workforce	The non-resident workforce has a minimal impact on sense of safety and a	Implement workforce standards of behaviours and drug and alcohol education and testing as per ACMP	ACEREZ	Number of verified or avoidable complaints regarding non-resident Project workforce behaviour	< 2% complaints received relating to anti-social behaviour	Complaint Management System (CMS)	Monthly	ACEREZ will review its protocols and training to ensure a reduction	Low (-)

Ref.	Impact	Desired outcomes	Management Measure	Responsible for implementation	Indicators	Target (where relevant)	Data collection method and source	Monitoring frequency	Adaptive measure if not met	Residual Impact
		culturally safe worker environment is created			Number of crime incidents	by non-resident Project workers	Crime statistics by LGA - NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research	Annual	in incidents in future quarters	
C-04	Unequal distribution of impact and benefits	The project leaves a positive legacy in most affected communities	ACEREZ has allocated funding for community benefit initiatives from Q4 2025 until 2028	ACEREZ	Number of community investment funds that have been directly injected into community organisations	>50% target of annual community funds be distributed directly to community organisations	ACEREZ social investment funding records	Annual	Adaptive measure to be developed through SIM Plan annual review process.	Low (-)

2.3 Way of life

This section outlines the management framework for impacts to people's way of life, this is how people live, how they get around, how they work, how they play, and how they interact each day.

2.3.1 Social baseline and consultation findings

Land use has generally not changed since the EIS and agricultural and residential land uses remain the primary land uses within the local social locality. Land use will change as renewable energy projects progress. The Amendment Report identified over 33 relevant future projects in the social locality, these included solar farms (17), wind farms (7), battery storage (4) and others such as mining and rail infrastructure (6).

Community events and festivals form an important part of the way of life of the local community. These include agricultural shows, arts festivals, sporting events, and markets, and are predominantly held in and around Mudgee and Gulgong. February and June are the busiest months of the year for local events (for full list of events see Table 53 in Appendix D).

CRG stakeholders reported concern for road capacity and conditions, safety and cumulative traffic impacts during construction of the project. Community members consulted for this SIM Plan reported that there had been an increase in traffic, particularly heavy vehicle traffic in the past year. However, 51% of survey respondents rated their experience with the current volume of local traffic as good or very good.

Of particular concern was an increase in non-resident workforce not familiar with the local roads and road rules causing safety concerns. This is also coupled with concerns over the road conditions, which were rated as poor and very poor by 66% of survey respondents.

Impact area	Responses from the community		
Way of life	51% (n=51) rated their experience with the volume of local traffic as good or very good	66% (n=65) rated the conditions of roads as poor or very poor	6% (n=5) are satisfied about the way in which traffic impacts will be managed, none were very satisfied 69% (n=61) reported to be dissatisfied or very dissatisfied

Figure 13: Online survey findings for way of life

2.3.2 Way of life impacts during construction

People living and working near construction sites and traffic routes are expected to experience changes to air quality, noise and vibration disturbance (known as amenity impacts), traffic and changes to the local landscape. The SIA determined that those living closest to the Project may experience impacts more strongly, resulting in a High unmitigated (meaning the impact is rated as high prior to any management measure being implemented) impact rating for landowners hosting infrastructure and Medium for neighbouring landowners.

During SIM Plan engagement, four landowners hosting project infrastructure reported that they found the property access plan paperwork to be unclear and had been left with unanswered questions. There was a lack of clarity on property access plan details, for example, how tree removals would be managed, or how to escalate

issues if the agreements are not being followed. Landowners recommended to enhance the process by walkthroughs with landowners in the property and include information about escalation point for property access plans. Landowners also recommended coordination between ACEREZ, EnergyCo and other developers needing to visit the property, and to establish a single point of contact.

Out of the 34 relevant future projects within the social locality, 22 would result in cumulative amenity impacts during construction. The Amendment Report identified medium and high risk to cumulative noise and potential for cumulative air quality impacts within 5 kilometres of the Project during construction.

Changes to the way people move and work due to perceived road delays and reduced sense of safety was determined as a Medium unmitigated impact in the SIA for Merotherie, Cassilis, Wollar and Elong Elong. As a result of SIM Plan consultation findings, this rating has been revised and increased to High unmitigated impact. As an example, Mid-Western Regional Council reported that drivers are already changing their driving habits and routes due to increased traffic on roads and sense of safety. Mid-Western Regional Council anticipates there would be an increase in residents using alternate routes that less safe, such as Bylong Valley Way, Golan Road and Goolma Road.

The Amendment Report provided a cumulative quantitative sensitivity assessment of road network performance. The assessment determined that that Ulan Road and Cope Road would experience unstable flow, restricting drivers' capacity to select their desired speed during the AM peak. For The Golden Highway (near Spring Ridge Road, west of Dunedoo), Castlereagh Highway (between Golden Highway and Tucklan Road and north of Laheys Creek Road) and Merotherie Road (south of Golden Highway) free flow and freedom to continue to select desired speeds is anticipated. The cumulative impact rating for changes to the way of people move and work is High.

Table 10 details the potential direct, indirect and cumulative social impacts to way of life during construction of the Project, and the revised impact rating.

Table 10: Direct, indirect and cumulative impacts on way of life

Ref.	Social impact	Affected groups	SIA impact rating (prior to management)	Revised impact rating	Cumulative impact rating
W-01	Reduced sense of place due to construction-related amenity impacts	Landowners hosting infrastructure	High	High	High
		Landowners neighbouring transmission infrastructure	Medium	Medium	High
		Residents within the local social locality	Low	Low	Medium
W-02	Changes to the way people move and work due to perceived road delays and reduced sense of safety	Merotherie, Cassilis, Wollar and Elong Elong (surrounding construction compounds and accommodation camps)	Medium	High	High
		Other suburbs within the Local social locality (including those near construction routes)	Low	Medium	High

2.3.3 Measures to manage impacts on way of life and enhance benefits

The following measures have been developed to manage impacts to sense of place due to construction-related amenity impacts and sense of safety. They are consistent with recommendations provided by community and key stakeholders during SIM Plan engagement:

- Managing construction related impacts on sense of place through the property access plans
- Providing notification of construction works through the CCS and managing complaints through the CMS.
- Managing impacts to road safety through the Traffic and Transport Management Plan (TTMP) and work health and safety measures.
- Vehicle incidents reported through the complaints management system will be identified based on their registration number plate.

The following additional measures have been introduced to respond to consultation feedback during the development of the SIM Plan:

- The TTMP will be made publicly available for communities.
- EnergyCo will establish a working group for traffic management within the REZ.
- Maintaining communication with the Central-West Cycle Trail (CWCT) group to understand busy periods of cycle trail use (i.e. special events, holiday periods) and provide updates on traffic changes and movements to them for CWCT to update its own database of registered users (new).
- The local workforce will be encouraged to car-pool and use shuttle services (assessed on a case-by-case basis) to reduce impact on local traffic and roads (new).

For further details see Table 11.

Table 11: Management measures and strategies for impacts on way of life

Impact(s)	Management measures and strategies
Sense of place	ACEREZ will manage impacts to sense of place for landowners by: • Completing pre-condition surveys and reinstatement works. • Written notifications for construction works on private property will be prepared and distributed to the landowner at least 14 calendar days before access is required on their property. • A pre-construction meeting will also be organised with the landowner at least two weeks prior to work commencing to reinforce the specific access requirements jointly agreed property access plan. • In the case of changes to the planned construction activities, the landowner will be notified of the change a minimum of 14 days prior to the change. • Each landholder is dedicated a Place Manager (also known as a property advisor) from the initial meeting through to negotiating the Property Access Plan. That person is the landholder's single point of contact to ensure continuity of the relationship.

Impact(s)	Management measures and strategies
	ACEREZ will complete a monthly progress report to the EnergyCo Property and Land Access team including overview of property and stakeholder consultation activities and complaints management.
Sense of place and sense of safety	EnergyCo has developed its general principles for EnergyCo, ACEREZ and other contractor access to properties to manage impacts to landowners, these include: • Construction related activities, including access, shall be confined to that part of the property and subject to the Construction Easement wherever possible; • Access to the Construction Easement is to be achieved through the use of existing gates [location to be marked on map] where reasonably practical with those gates to be kept closed whenever not in use; • The Contractor is to install and maintain gates for construction and ongoing maintenance activities in a location to be agreed with the Landowner in the event existing gates are deemed unsuitable by the Contractor. • The Contractor is to install and maintain any access tracks created by the Contractor for • construction and ongoing maintenance from a public road or adjoining property should an alternative access outside of the transmission easement be required. • If requested by the Landowner, the Contractor is to present vehicles and machinery for inspection by the Landowner on the first entry for each construction period.

Sense of place and sense of safety	The Community Communication Strategy (CCS) outlines how ACEREZ will manage communication and consultation during delivery of the project. It identifies stakeholders, consultation approach, the project commitment to best practice engagement, tools, notification timing, and the complaint management system (CMS).
	Measures to manage effects on sense of place and sense of safety include:
	• Written notifications for general construction works, such as road and utilities upgrades, and works that have been approved to occur outside the standard construction hours, will be prepared and distributed at least seven calendar days before work commences to allow sufficient time for residents and stakeholders to prepare and for ACEREZ to address any concerns they may have.
	• Written notification will include:
	  • works scope
	  • construction location
	  • map
	  • likely impacts (i.e. noise, vibration, access to properties, disruption to utility services and traffic changes)
	  • timing
	  • duration
	  • type of equipment and machinery used and
	  • associated mitigation measures for likely impacts.

Impact(s)	Management measures and strategies

	• The notification area for project updates and impacts, such as noise, vibration, dust and traffic access, will vary depending on the extent of the impacts and will be guided by the site-specific Construction Noise and Vibration Impact Survey (CNVIS).
	• Establishing Public Liaison Officers/ Community Place Managers at the Community Information Centre. A community information van will be available later this year to visit other towns in the vicinity of the project.
	• Integrating workers' behaviour expectations into daily construction pre-start meetings and toolbox talks, including examples of being a good neighbour and community compliments, as part of sharing success.
	• All ACEREZ workers going onto agricultural land will undergo inductions for property access including acceptable driving and behaviour when driving in paddocks with livestock, avoidance of damage to grazing areas, crops and reducing dust and noise.
	• Implementation of 24-hour toll free enquiry number (1800 298 379), project email (cwo.community@acerez-acjv.com.au), community information centre and PO Box to receive enquiries and complaints, with public complaints record to be published monthly on the ACEREZ website (see Figure 14).
	• Implementation of CMS with timeframes for response and process for escalation to EnergyCo.
	  ○ Phone enquiry resolution response plan within 7 days
	  ○ Written enquiries resolution response within 10 days

Sense of safety	ACEREZ's Traffic and Transport Management Plan will manage impacts to traffic as a measure to manage impacts to safety from increased traffic. A Transport Strategy will be developed in four main stages and in consultation with Transport for NSW and relevant Councils. The four stages are: • Merotherie Transport Strategy: road upgrades associated with the construction of the Merotherie Energy hub, Merotherie construction compound and Merotherie accommodation camp. • Elong Elong and Wollar Switching Station Transport Strategy: upgrades required for commencement of site establishment at the two key energy hubs for the project. • Project-wide Transport Strategy: to address all remaining road upgrades on the transport routes that are linked to the Project and not addressed as part of the Merotherie or Elong Elong and Wollar Switching Station Transport Strategies. • Stringing Transport Strategy: The Strategy for stringing will form the final element of the transport strategy and will include sufficient detail to outline methodology and any required concept designs for stringing cables across the state and local road network. Other transport strategies may be developed if required. ACEREZ will complete an independent dilapidation survey to establish existing condition of local roads and repair any damage to local roads on the transport routes that are linked to development related road traffic, and preparation of a report on the road repairs completed (planning approval condition B34).
Sense of safety	Measures to manage impacts to safety includes travel planning to reduce unnecessary travel and manage worker fatigue. All ACEREZ workers and subcontractors will be trained in community awareness during their induction. The community awareness component of the induction includes:

Impact(s)	Management measures and strategies
	• the Project's commitments to the community, • being considerate to the community including when driving on local roads, • displaying respectful behaviour at community venues, • issues and incident management, escalation and reporting procedures • procedures for referring enquiries from the community, • issues and incident management.

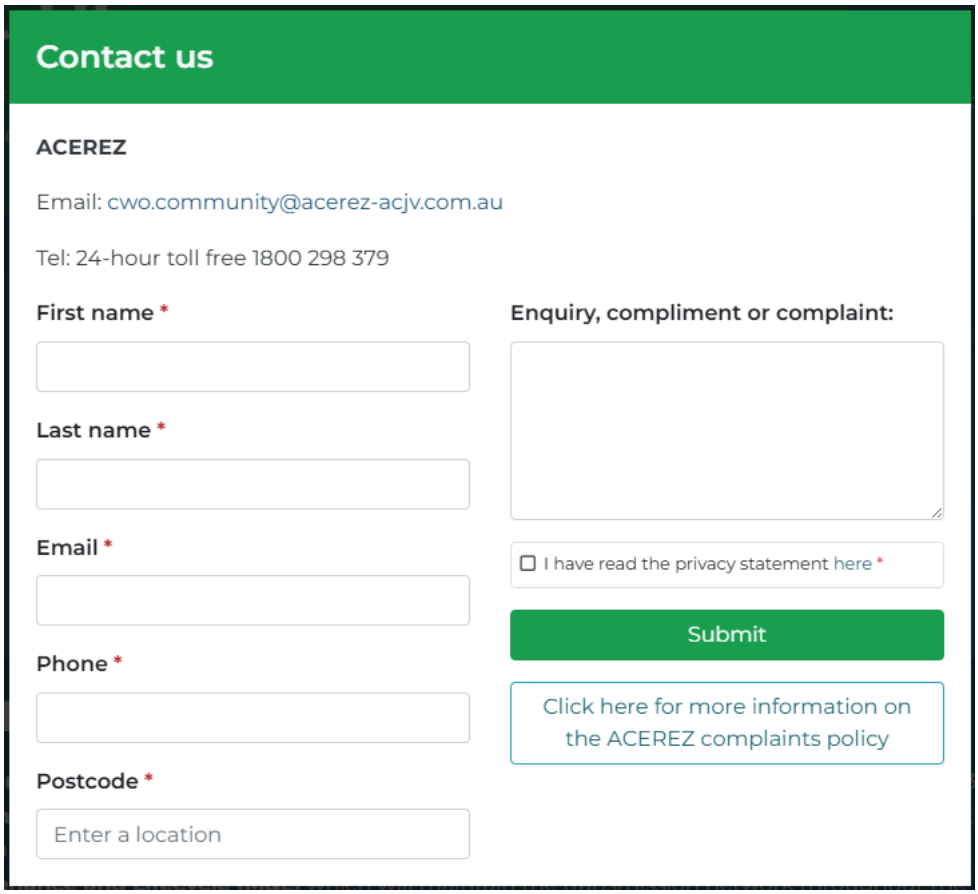


Figure 14: Contact form for ACEREZ ACJV

2.3.4 Management, monitoring and reporting framework

Table 12 provides the residual impact expected once the management and mitigation measures have been applied. The symbol (-) denotes the impact remains as a negative impact and the symbol (+) denotes the impact is a benefit. The following indicators were recommended by community and key stakeholders: complaints relating to amenity impacts, communities' perceived sense of safety (with local traffic) and road and traffic incidents. Monitoring these indicators will provide insight into the effectiveness of the construction works practices and construction notification processes, Traffic and Transport Management Plan (TTMP) and complaints management system. Monitoring community satisfaction with management of traffic incidents will provide insight into community perception of the CCS and TTMP.

Table 12: Impact management, monitoring and reporting framework for impacts on way of life.

Ref.	Impact	Desired outcomes	Management Measure	Responsible for implementation	Indicators	Target (where relevant)	Data collection method and source	Monitoring frequency	Adaptive measure if not met	Residual Impact
W-01	Reduced sense of place due to construction-related amenity impacts	Construction amenity impacts are minimal and do not impact sense or place for landowners hosting and neighbouring the Project	Complaints Management System	ACEREZ EnergyCo	Number of verified and/or avoidable landowner complaints relating to amenity impacts (air quality, visual and noise)		CMS	Monthly	Where there are repeated complaints of the same nature, review the relevant property access plan, seek feedback from the Place Manager, landowners and neighbouring landowners on process and make changes to ensure landowner needs are met	Low (-) / medium (-)
W-02	Changes to the way people move and work due to perceived road delays and reduced sense of safety	The local road network and safety of road users is not impacted by the project	Community Communication Strategy	EnergyCo	Proportion of people who describe their sense of safety and experience with local traffic as "poor" and "none/very poor" Proportion of people who declare to be "unsatisfied" or "very unsatisfied" with the way in which traffic impacts are managed	<5% decrease from baseline	Community attitudes survey using the Likert scale (1-5)	Annual	Investigation of each complaint regarding traffic to incorporate learning into traffic management plans, toolbox talks, startup meetings, construction notification etc	Low (-)
			Implement traffic management plans Implement work health and safety measures to manage fatigue and reduce unnecessary travel by planning travel	ACEREZ	Number of project related road and traffic incidents recorded		Health and safety incidents register	Quarterly	Investigation of each incident in line with traffic management plan. Incorporate learning from incident into traffic management plan	

2.4 Livelihoods

This section outlines the management framework for impacts related to livelihoods. Livelihood impacts refer to impacts to local and regional economies, and the people who rely on them.

2.4.1 Social baseline and consultation findings

The most recent employment figures continue to be the 2021 Census data that informed the SIA. In the local social locality, 46% of people aged 15 and over were employed, compared with 45% of the regional social locality, slightly higher when compared to NSW more broadly (44%). A total of 3% of the local social locality were unemployed at the time of the 2021 Census, compared with 5% for NSW. The Suburbs and Localities (SALs) with the highest levels of unemployment were Guntawang (12%), Goolma (6%) and Cope (5%). SALs are ABS boundary which align with suburb boundaries.

CRG stakeholders and community members in Dunedoo raised concerns about locals not being employed and about the loss of local-trained apprentices and farm workers to the project. Community members in Gulgong and Cassilis reported that in the previous year, they had difficulty accessing tradespeople, or had experienced long wait times.

The SIA identified that the top industries of employment in the local social locality were agriculture, forestry and fishing (8%) and mining (16%). Agriculture, forestry and fishing is an ABS industry employment category, which includes jobs such as growing and cultivation of crops, breeding, raising and farming of animals, forestry, logging and aquaculture (ABS, 2021). In the local social locality, this primarily means agricultural activities.

During consultation for this SIM Plan, farmers in Gulgong reported that they had to create additional stock routes to support their farms. Increased traffic was attributed as a cause of delays to travel between farms. Community members in Dunedoo reported that local businesses had not been made aware of Project procurement opportunities. Another key issue raised was the rising cost of insurance in relation to fire risk associated with renewable energy projects and transmission infrastructure.

Since the SIA, the ABS has released more recent data from the Index of Relative Socio-economic Advantage and Disadvantage (IRSAD). Between 2016 and 2021, at the regional social locality level, Dubbo, Narromine, Mid-Western, Warrumbungle and Gilgandra had an increase in score meaning they now experience less disadvantage. Upper Hunter, Liverpool Plains and Muswellbrook had a decrease in score, meaning they now experience more disadvantage, (shown in Table 13) (ABS, 2021). Cabonne remains the LGA with the lowest levels of disadvantage, and Liverpool Plains and Muswellbrook the highest levels of disadvantage.

The SALs with the lowest scores, meaning they experience higher levels of disadvantage, include Cumbo, Ulan, Wollar, Cope, Bungaba, Turill and Dunedoo which are within the direct social locality. Overall, the range of scores demonstrates that there are people who continue to experience higher levels of disadvantage compared with others across the regional and local social localities. This may mean they require additional support in accessing the economic benefits expected for the region through employment and procurement opportunities. Consultation with Aboriginal stakeholders identified that Aboriginal people within the REZ disproportionately experienced unemployment, especially young men.

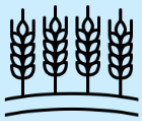
Impact Area	Responses from the community		
 Livelihoods	45 % (n=44) reported biosecurity for local landowners involved in agricultural production to be good or very good	53% (n=52) reported the availability of local workforce to be poor or none	7% (n=6) are satisfied with the local skills and training programs that will be brought by the Project 57% (n= 50) are dissatisfied and very dissatisfied

Figure 15: Online survey responses regarding livelihoods

Table 13: IRSAD scores for LGAs in regional social locality, change from 2016 to 2021

LGA	2016	2021	Score change since 20216 (+/-)
Cabonne	997	995	- 2
Dubbo Regional	953	958	+ 5
Mid-Western	942	949	+ 7
Upper Hunter	958	943	- 15
Narromine	927	934	+ 7
Warrumbungle	912	914	+ 2
Gilgandra	906	913	+ 7
Muswellbrook	912	908	- 4
Liverpool Plains	906	905	- 1

2.4.2 Livelihood impacts during construction

Potential Medium-level benefits to the local and regional social locality were identified in the SIA arising from both employment and procurement opportunities. This benefit may be enhanced by the opportunities arising from the 34 relevant future projects, which are likely to either source or hire a portion of their goods and services and workforce requirements from within the regional social locality, including from Aboriginal workers and businesses.

The SIA also identified that the Project is expected to generate competition for local employment in the regional social locality. In the communities where there is low unemployment and low availability of local workers, the competitive salaries and packages offered by Project employment can be expected to result in workers leaving their jobs. These issues would be exacerbated by the demand for workers at the 34 relevant future projects. This may diminish the availability of employees for local businesses and result in increased labour costs.

Landowners with productive agricultural land may be exposed to biosecurity threats and risk of livestock incidents as construction activities take place on their land or on neighbouring properties. Cumulative biosecurity risks are expected to be low once standard mitigation measures are implemented by the CWO REZ transmission project and future projects in close proximity. These projects include three windfarms (Orana, Valley of the Winds and

Liverpool Range), six solar farms (Dapper, Sandy Creek, Cobbera, Tallawang, Birriwa and Narrangamba) and one Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) (Bellambi Heights).

The Amendment Report assessed impacts to tourism in response to the Submissions Report. It determined that availability at caravan parks, pubs and camping sites will not be affected by the relevant future projects as they are deemed not suitable to host long term workforce. However, SIM Plan consultation reported that during the construction of solar farms caravan parks and pub accommodation had been used by non-residential workforces.

Given that only a small number of construction workers are utilising existing local short-term accommodation during pre-construction minor works of the accommodation camp (between February and July 2025), there will be a Low impact on short term accommodation available for tourism.

Considering that a limited number of construction workers and grey and white-collar staff may reside off-site from time to time, a High unmitigated cumulative impact is anticipated within the local and regional social locality. Table 14 details the potential social impacts to livelihoods during Project construction.

Table 14: Direct, indirect and cumulative impacts on livelihoods

Ref.	Social impact	Affected groups	SIA impact rating (prior to management)	Revised impact rating	Cumulative impact rating
L-01	Local business opportunities and economic stimulus due to project procurement opportunities and increased demand for goods and services	Businesses within the local social locality	Medium (+)	Medium (+)	Medium (+)
		Aboriginal businesses within the regional social locality	High (+)	High (+)	High (+)
		Businesses within the regional social locality	Medium (+)	Medium (+)	Medium (+)
L-02	Improved livelihoods due to increased local employment opportunities	Active workforce within the local social locality	Low (+)	Low (+)	Medium (+)
		Aboriginal workers within the regional social locality	High (+)	High (+)	High (+)
		Active workforce within the regional social locality	Medium (+)	Medium (+)	Medium (+)
L-03	Diminished availability of employees for existing business due to increased competition with the project	Suburbs with no unemployed residents – Elong Elong, Gollan, Spicers Creek	Medium	Medium	Medium
		Local social locality	Medium	Medium	Medium
		Regional social locality	Low	Low	Medium
L-04	Impacts on livelihoods due to increased biosecurity threats and project interaction with livestock.	Landowners hosting project infrastructure	High	High	High
		Landowners neighbouring project infrastructure	High	High	High
		Residents of Local social locality	Low	Low	Low
L-05	Tourism impacts due to reduced accommodation availability	Regional social locality	Not assessed	Low	High

2.4.3 Measures to manage impacts on livelihoods and enhance benefits

The following management measures have been developed by ACEREZ to maximise local employment and business opportunities, as well as to mitigate livelihoods impacts are consistent with recommendations provided by community and key stakeholders during engagement:

- Enhancing local business opportunities to participate in economic activities and improving livelihoods through local employment opportunities by implementing the Industry and Aboriginal Participation Plan (IAPP), Local Business and Employment Strategy (LBES), Social Benefit Evaluation Criteria and training opportunities.
- Managing the impact diminished availability of employees on local businesses due to competing demand from the Project through training opportunities for local communities.
- Managing the potential impact of increased biosecurity threats on livelihoods through biosecurity measures and property access plans.
- Reducing the demand on short-term accommodation and impacts on tourism related livelihoods through the ACMP.
- Ensuring property access plans and associated information is accessible via an online Landowner Information Platform portal including details of escalation points and provide ongoing support to landowners to ensure access requirements and individual concerns in the PAP are followed during construction.

The following additional measures have been introduced to respond to consultation feedback during the development of the SIM Plan:

- ACEREZ will utilise flexible working arrangements to support personnel in and returning to the workforce (including women), as well as those transitioning into the industry (new).
- ACEREZ will deliver targeted programs that encourage women to participate in traineeships or apprenticeships on the project and promote the inclusion and retention of women within the workforce (new).
- Members of the workforce who live locally will be permitted to use vehicles to travel to and from site. Car-pooling will be encouraged to minimise the impact of traffic on local roads (new).
- Communication about the roll-out of these measures will be delivered via the Community Information Centre, the community information van which will visit other towns in the vicinity of the Project. In addition, community members will be able to enquire about the project through 1800 298 379, project email cwo.community@acerez-acjv.com.au.

Table 15 provides a summary of these management measures.

Table 15: Management measures and strategies for impacts on livelihoods

Impact(s)	Management measures and strategies
Local business opportunities and economic stimulus **Improved livelihoods**	The IAPP outlines ACEREZ's approach to engaging with local industry, service providers, and Aboriginal communities during the delivery phase of the project. It sets compliance requirements and targets. The IAPP was developed in consultation with local Councils and Aboriginal stakeholders including LALC's. The IAPP was further informed by local industry and Aboriginal businesses through the delivery of industry forums. Mid-Western, Warrumbungle, Dubbo and Upper Hunter Shure Councils were also involved in the consultation process for the Local Business and Employment Strategy. The IAPP will be reviewed six monthly and updated as required to reflect emerging opportunities, stakeholder feedback, and project developments. ACEREZ will prepare a monthly 'IAPP performance report' and six monthly 'Australian Industry Participation Plan' (AIPP) report. In addition to these compliance reports ACEREZ will prepare a quarterly Skills and Employment report to be published on the Project Website.

Local business opportunities and economic stimulus	Measures to promote local procurement opportunities include:
	
	• Local Business and Employment Strategy (LBES) includes procurement strategies, industry engagement, capability building, and collaboration with other regional projects to support local employment, supply chain engagement, workforce diversity, and skills development.
	• The 'Keeping It Local Strategy', which will build meaningful relationships with industry stakeholders and suppliers, including SMEs and Aboriginal-owned businesses.
	• Assessing suppliers using the 'Social Benefit Evaluation Criteria' to provide a structured approach to evaluating tenders and ensuring that procurement decisions contribute to the social and economic well-being.
	• Delivering programs for local business and industry including:
	  ○ Industry forums and procurement briefings
	  ○ Industry Development Program for Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs)
	  ○ ACEREZ procurement toolkit for SMEs
	
	Measures for Aboriginal employment and procurement participation include:
	
	• Development of the co-designed 'Aboriginal Consultation and Communication Framework' in partnership with the CWO Working Group to guide key deliverables to ensure they align with the varying community employment and industry priorities.
	• Industry forums and procurement briefings
	• Capability statement and tender writing workshops
	• Aboriginal pre-employment programs
	• Aboriginal mentor program
	• Engaging Wiradjuri, Kamilaroi and Wailwan and their respected clan groups and knowledge holders to deliver cultural awareness training and immersion on Traditional lands.
	• Collaborating with Central West Orana First Nations Working Group, LALC's, Three Rivers Regional Assembly, Supply Nation, the NSW Indigenous Chamber of Commerce and relevant business networks.
	
	Measures for local employment and retention include:

Impact(s)	Management measures and strategies
	• Partnerships with Regional Industry Education Partnerships (RIEP) Program and NSW Infrastructure Traineeship Program, attending local job fairs and career days (delivery Q1 2026). • ACEREZ pre-employment and mentoring programs will provide training and support to access jobs and where possible progress to traineeships or apprenticeships (commenced Q1 2025). • NSW Corrections employment program. • Training for existing workforce to develop transferrable skills (indicative delivery Q3 2025) • Maximising local business consultation to support local employment.
Diminished availability of local workforce	ACEREZ will support training local workers through programs including: • Partnership with local providers, Training Service NSW and training organisations to support upskilling and development of local workers (indicative delivery Q3 2025) • Local partnerships as described in the IAPP.
Improved livelihoods	The NSW Government has established a SBP Scheme for new major transmission projects (EnergyCo, 2023b). Under the SBP Scheme, private landowners hosting new high voltage transmission projects will be paid a set rate of $200,000 per kilometre of transmission hosted, paid out in annual instalments over 20 years. The rate of the payments is calculated in the same way, regardless of location in NSW to ensure all landowners are treated equitably under the scheme. The SBP Scheme is done in recognition of the critical supporting role these landowners will have in hosting the energy infrastructure that will power the State and to ensure they share directly in the benefits of this significant economic investment. If the transmission project requires two sets of towers (and subsequently two lines or parallel lines), the landowner will receive a SBP for each set of towers/lines for the project (that is, two payments). These payments are separate, and in addition to any compensation that is paid to landowners for transmission easements on their land in accordance with the *Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991*. If the land is sold or transferred to a private entity within the 20-year period, payments would be made to the new owner.
Impacts on livelihoods due to biosecurity threats	ACEREZ will implement biosecurity measures for the Project and access to landowner's properties.
	ACEREZ will manage impacts to livelihoods by developing property access plans with each landowner. Where existing agricultural operations will be impacted, property owners can access independent legal advice when developing property access plans relating to agricultural land.
Impacts on tourism	Measures to manage pressure on short term tourist accommodation include building the accommodation camp to house the non-resident workforce. The accommodation camp will be built in stages, starting with approximately 50 workers in the first two stages (to mid-2025), sourcing initial workforce from within the REZ to limit the need for short term accommodation used by tourists.

2.4.4 Management, monitoring and reporting framework

The management, monitoring and reporting framework to manage impacts on livelihoods is provided in Table 16. This table also provides the residual impact expected once the management and mitigation measures have been applied. The symbol (-) denotes the impact remains as a negative impact and the symbol (+) denotes the impact is a benefit. The drafting of monitoring indicators has been informed by community and key stakeholder consultation. While employment and local procurement targets, monitoring and indicators for impacts to livelihoods are largely from the Project's IAPP, some of these respond to recommendations proposed by the community and key stakeholders, including monitoring the number of small-medium businesses employed, workforce diversity and the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples employed on the Project. Monitoring of the indicators will provide insight into the effectiveness of the IAPP and LBES to enhance employment and training opportunities for communities and businesses in the REZ.

Other indicators proposed by the community and key stakeholders include monitoring: the number of local businesses who have lost employees to the Project or are unable to recruit staff, the number of biosecurity or livestock incidents, satisfaction with biosecurity and livestock management, and impacts to tourism. Monitoring these indicators will provide insight into the effectiveness of the biosecurity measures, property access plans, local upskilling and training programs, and use of the accommodation camp to reduce impacts on short-term tourist accommodation.

Table 16: Impact management, monitoring and reporting framework for impacts on livelihoods

Ref.	Impact	Desired outcomes	Management Measure	Responsible for implementation	Indicators	Target (where relevant)	Data collection method /source	Monitoring frequency	Adaptive measure if not met	Residual Impact
L-01	Local business opportunities and economic stimulus due to project procurement opportunities and increased demand for goods and services	Local businesses, including First Nations businesses, workers and industries receive economic opportunities and stimulus	Industry and Aboriginal Participation Plan Keeping it Local Strategy Social Benefit Evaluation Criteria Local Business and Employment Strategy	ACEREZ	Number of small-medium businesses employed by the project from the local social locality		Australian Industry Participation Plan Report	Six-monthly	The IAPP will be reviewed six monthly - if targets are not met, seek feedback from regional social locality local industry, Aboriginal businesses and Councils	High (+)
					Proportion of contract value to be subcontracted to Aboriginal-owned businesses	2% of the Eligible Project Value of Delivery project spend through Aboriginal owned businesses and Aboriginal employees		Six-monthly		
L-02	Improved livelihoods due to increased local employment opportunities	Local residents in the labour force, including First Nations residents, experience employment opportunities and economic benefits associated with the project	Industry and Aboriginal Participation Plan Keeping it Local Strategy Social Benefit Evaluation Criteria Training opportunities for local community Local Business and Employment Strategy	ACEREZ	Number of small-medium businesses employed by the project from the local social locality		IAPP performance report	Monthly	The IAPP will be reviewed six monthly - if targets are not met, seek feedback and review strategy and processes	High (+)
					Number and proportion of the total project workforce who are Learning workers	43% of workforce to be Learning Workers				
					Proportion of apprentices and trainees	25% of trades workforce to be apprentices				
					Workforce diversity and proportion of underrepresented groups	15% of workforce to be underrepresented groups. 2% of the Trades workforce to be women 8% of the workforce to be young people (25 and under) % of women in non-traditional roles, senior leadership and management roles.				

Ref.	Impact	Desired outcomes	Management Measure	Responsible for implementation	Indicators	Target (where relevant)	Data collection method /source	Monitoring frequency	Adaptive measure if not met	Residual Impact
					Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people participation rate	2% (FTE) of the workforce to be Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people				
L-03	Diminished availability of employees for existing business due to increased competition with the project	No decrease in workforce availability for local businesses	Industry and Aboriginal Participation Plan Local Business and Employment Strategy Training Skills Management Plan (TSMP)	ACEREZ	Number of residents in the social locality (nine LGAs) who have participated in training programs developed as part of the project's IAPP, TSMP and LBES		IAPP performance report	Quarterly	The IAPP will be reviewed six monthly - if targets are not met, seek feedback and review strategy and processes	Low (-)
				ACEREZ	Number of local business and service providers who report or complain of loss of employees to the project and ability (time) to fill positions compared to pre-project conditions increases.		CMS	Monthly		
L-04	Impacts on livelihoods due to increased biosecurity threats and project interaction with livestock.	Biosecurity is maintained and there are no associated impacts on livelihoods	Biosecurity measures for access to landowner properties Property access plans	ACEREZ	Number of incidents related to biosecurity or livestock escalated to EnergyCo through CMS escalation process		CMS	Monthly	Review biosecurity measures and make updates where necessary Undertake a review to ensure property access plans are being adhered to	Low (-)
				EnergyCo	Proportion of survey respondents who rate the biosecurity for local landowners involved in agricultural production as "very good" and "good"	>5% increase from previous year	Community attitudes survey using Likert scale (1-5)	Annual		
L-05	Tourism impacts due to reduced accommodation availability	Tourism industry is not negatively impacted due to reduced accommodation availability	Accommodation Camp Management Plan	EnergyCo	Number of verified complaints relating to impacts to the tourism industry as a result of the project	< 5 complaints received since previous year	CMS	Annual	Review Accommodation Camp Management Plan and procurement policy	Low (-)

2.5 Accessibility

This section outlines the management framework for impacts related to accessibility. Accessibility impacts refer to changes to how people access and use infrastructure, services and facilities, whether provided by a public, private, or not-for-profit organisation.

2.5.1 Social baseline and consultation findings

The local social locality has limited health, medical and emergency services, with residents generally travelling to servicing communities in the regional social locality to access these services. Community feedback gathered for this SIM Plan revealed community perception that health services within the local social locality were severely under resourced and at capacity.

Access to local health care was a concern raised by Councils, the RLE sub-group, community members and Aboriginal focus groups. They reported strain on health care as the local health district faces significant workforce challenges, with GPs struggling to serve the current population. Dunedoo has only 0.5 FTE GPs, Dubbo is underserved, and the Mid-Western Regional Council has the lowest service rate in NSW. At the time of writing, there is no doctor in Gulgong or Dunedoo and communities must travel to access health services in Orange or Dubbo. Community members in Cassilis cited long wait times at hospitals.

The lack of available childcare was also reported by stakeholders as a key issue for parents seeking employment in Cassilis and Coolah. Stakeholders in Cassilis noted that there had been an increase in younger families and children in recent years, however they attend school and daycare outside of Cassilis because there are no services available locally.

Since the SIA, mobile phone coverage remains fragmented across the social locality. Communities that do not have mobile connectivity include Wollar, Uarbry, Tichular, Cumbo, Turrill and Moolarben (EnergyCo, 2023). During consultation one member of the CRG also raised that at Gulgong phone coverage has been updated to 5G, and 3G coverage has been deactivated, creating black spots and reducing telecommunications accessibility. Stakeholders also reported that there is often no internet between 10am and 10pm.

Stakeholder feedback indicated that actual mobile coverage is less than what providers report, impacting worker safety as radios are not always a suitable alternative. Community members in Cassilis noted that they experienced higher cost of goods and services compared with other areas due to mining proponents. During consultation for this SIM Plan, community members in Gulgong reported unplanned power outages affecting homes and businesses in the previous year. The local social locality has limited mobile reception and internet connectivity. Houses can connect to the National Broadband Network (NBN). During SIA consultation, the community of Turrill reported that they did not have internet access due to the 2017 Sir Ivan fire that damaged infrastructure, instead relying on satellite connections which are more expensive. The poor access to internet and telecommunications was raised by a community member in Turrill again during consultation for this SIM Plan.

This is consistent with the online survey results, where 38% rated access to internet services as poor or none, and 43% of respondents rated their access to phone services as poor or none (see Figure 16).

Impact area	Responses from the community		
Accessibility to services	40% (n=39) rated access to local services (retail goods) as good or very good	24% (n=24) rated access to childcare as poor or none	38% (n=37) rated access to internet services as poor or none
	43% (n=42) rated access to phone services as poor or none	54% (n=53) rated emergency services as good or very good	

Figure 16: Online survey findings about accessibility to services

2.5.2 Accessibility impacts during construction

The Project accommodation camps will provide on-site services to reduce demand generated by non-residential project workforce on local health, retail and other services. Food, social and recreational space and services will also be provided at the accommodation camps, reducing the need to visit local retail and other services.

The SIA identified that Dubbo, Mudgee, Merriwa, Scone, Coolah and Gulgong, may experience Medium-level impacts to accessibility due to additional demand from Project construction personnel who would not be residing within the workforce accommodation camps.

The Project will have a workforce capacity of approximately 1,800 beds across two accommodation camps from around mid-2025 to around December 2029. Cumulatively, there is a total of 22 relevant future projects with overlapping construction schedules. The pressure on health, food and social services would be exacerbated by the non-resident construction workers for those projects, as well as the potential relocation of families during the project's construction period.

As such, while there are social and economic benefits of this incoming population, it is likely that there would be cumulative impacts to the capacity of health, food and social services to respond to an increased demand for services in the local and regional social locality, especially for Warrumbungle Shire, Dubbo Regional Council, Gilgandra LGA and Mid-Western Regional Councils.

The SIA identified potential disruptions to essential services during construction for a short duration and thus would possibly be experienced as a minimal change resulting in a Low unmitigated impact.

Table 17 details the potential direct, indirect and cumulative social impacts to accessibility during construction of the Project, and the revised impact rating.

Table 17: Direct, indirect and cumulative impacts on accessibility

Ref.	Social impact	Affected groups	SIA impact rating (prior to management)	Revised impact rating	Cumulative impact rating
A-01	Impacted ability of health, food (supermarkets, bakeries, delis) and social services to	Dubbo, Mudgee, Merriwa, Scone, Coolah, Gulgong	Medium	Medium	High
		Local social locality	Low	Low	High

Ref.	Social impact	Affected groups	SIA impact rating (prior to management)	Revised impact rating	Cumulative impact rating
	meet increased demand caused by project workforce	Regional social locality (especially for Warrumbungle Shire, Dubbo Regional Council, Gilgandra LGA and Mid-Western Regional Council)	Low	Low	High
A-02	Potential disruptions to essential services (i.e. communications, gas and energy, waste management, water supply) during construction	Local social locality	Low	Medium	Medium

2.5.3 Measures to manage impacts on accessibility and enhance benefits

This section outlines the management measures developed to manage impacts on accessibility. These measures are consistent with the recommendations provided by community and key stakeholders during SIM Plan consultation and include:

- Reducing the demand on local health services through providing onsite and telehealth services at the accommodation camps and supporting mental health wellbeing through the ACMP and workforce wellbeing initiatives.
- Managing the demand on emergency services through emergency planning, coordination and engagement.
- REZ cumulative impacts relating to social services will be monitored and managed by The Central-West Orana REZ Regional Leadership Executive (RLE) Social Services Sub-Group, co-chaired by EnergyCo and the NSW Premiers Department. The RLE social services sub-group will work towards an action plan to address growing social service demand due to increase REZ non-residential workforce. The Social Services Sub-Group will inform the CWO Regional Steering Committee and escalate matters for government attention as needed.

The following additional measures have been introduced to respond to consultation feedback during the development of the SIM Plan:

- Project personnel are to be trained in emergency management and fire management, to respond to project emergencies.

Table 18 provides additional details of these management measures.

Table 18: Management measures and strategies for impacts on accessibility

Impact(s)	Management measures and strategies
Impacted capacity of services	The Emergency Management Plan (EMP) provides a systematic approach for responding to emergencies, supporting emergency services, and minimising the impact of emergencies on property, life, and the environment. The EMP applies to all project sites and personnel working on the project, including subcontractors and site visitors. It sets out the roles and responsibilities of specific personnel in the event of an emergency and site evacuation and coordination with state emergency services, first responders, relevant state government departments and potentially impacted Councils. Measures to reduce demand on local emergency services include: • Engaging in preparedness activities and incident planning with state emergency services, local emergency committees and first responders • Bushfire protection measures and Asset Protection Zones (APZ) buffers. • Bushfire prevention training and site inductions, toolbox talks and prestart meetings. • Implementing adjustments to works and works permitting in line with the Australian Fire Danger Ratings (AFDR).
	ACEREZ will implement initiatives to support workforce wellbeing and to reduce demand on local health services including: • Implementing of Employee Assistance Program (EAP) free phone counselling program to support mental health wellbeing. • Health initiatives (i.e. onsite flu vaccinations and skin checks) • Awareness initiatives such as toolbox talks • Annual mental health and wellbeing survey
	The Western Regional Leadership Executive (RLE) is a multi-agency network that aims to address a range of cross-agency priorities at a regional level. A RLE Social Services Sub-Group was established in November 2024, to focus on addressing priority social services matters in the Central-West Orana REZ. The RLE Sub-Group includes members from Premier's Department, EnergyCo, Department of Communities and Justice, Western NSW Local Health District, NSW Police, Aboriginal Affairs and Education. Terms of reference for the sub-group were endorsed in February 2025 and strategic priorities will be developed in March 2025. Key themes likely to be considered in the Sub-Group strategic priorities include: • Health services to meet current and future population needs, including services for temporary workers • Monitoring for any increased services demands for childcare and early childhood • Local emergency management and response for bushfire and flood • Police resourcing

Impact(s)	Management measures and strategies
Impacted capacity of services **Disruptions to essential services**	The measures to manage impacts to local health, social and retail services are detailed in the ACMP and include: • ACEREZ will establish an on-site first aid facility with qualified nursing and paramedic personnel., supported by 24/7 Telehealth for checkups and e-prescriptions. • Recreational activities and social events to support connection and mental health wellbeing. • Food services including kitchens and dining areas with nutritious meals. • Recreational facilities including games area, gym, onsite wet mess (licensed bar), indoor and outdoor recreation. Measures to manage pressure on essential services include: • Establishing camp specific potable water (purchasing water, storing onsite and developing a potable water treatment plan) and wastewater supply and treatment. • Delivering on-site communication infrastructure to support the Project's communications requirements. This will be facilitated by a combination of dedicated radio channels on the Public Safety Network, UHF radio, satellite and mobile services. • Internet connection for the temporary workforce accommodation will be supported by a dedicated microwave link. • EnergyCo is exploring opportunities for improvements in nearby townships in consultation with infrastructure owners.

2.5.4 Management, monitoring and reporting framework

The management, monitoring and reporting framework to manage impacts on accessibility is provided in Table 19. This table also provides the residual impact expected once the management and mitigation measures have been applied. The symbol (-) denotes the impact remains as a negative impact and the symbol (+) denotes the impact is a benefit.

The community and key stakeholders proposed monitoring Project use of local health services, estimated population increase and access to internet and phone (telecommunications). Monitoring Project use of local health services and access to telecommunications will reveal if the health and telecommunications services provided by the accommodation camp are sufficient to support the non-resident workforce, or if the influx of the non-resident workforce is creating additional strain on local health services and the telecommunications network. Monitoring the estimated population growth will also provide insight into whether the Project is bringing additional people to the REZ, who in turn will use local health, food and social services.

Table 19: Impact management, monitoring and reporting framework for impacts on accessibility

Ref.	Impact	Desired outcomes	Management Measure	Responsible for implementation	Indicators	Target (where relevant)	Data collection method and source	Monitoring frequency	Adaptive measure if not met	Residual Impact
A-01	Impacted ability of health, food (supermarkets, bakeries, delis) and social services to meet increased demand caused by project workforce	Access to social, health and retail services are not impacted (or are enhanced)	Accommodation Camp Management Plan, workforce wellbeing initiatives	ACEREZ	Number of Project non-resident workforce who have accessed local health services – outside of what is provided on camp site		Health and safety register	Quarterly	Review level of health services provided at accommodation camp and adjust as required.	Low (-)
					Population estimates at the LGA level (additional indicator)		ABS – Estimated Resident Population	Annually		
A-02	Potential disruptions to essential services (i.e. communications, gas and energy, waste management, water supply) during construction	Essential services are not disrupted during construction as a result of Project construction	On-site communications infrastructure to support the project's communication requirements	ACEREZ	Number of people who describe their access to telecommunications as "poor" or "none"	<1% decrease annually	Community attitudes survey using Likert scale (1-5)	Annually	Where there are repeated complaints of the same nature or from the same landowner, review construction plan, seek feedback from landowners and neighbouring landowners on notification process and make changes to ensure community needs are met	Low (-)

2.6 Health and wellbeing

This section provides the monitoring framework for Health and wellbeing impacts. It includes impacts to the physical and mental health, especially for people vulnerable to social exclusion or substantial change, psychological stress resulting from financial or other pressures, access to open space and effects on public health. Impacts and management measures relating to access to health services are addressed in Section 2.5 Accessibility.

2.6.1 Social baseline and consultation findings

The data on long term health conditions reported in the SIA remains the most recent available. Mental health and asthma were the most common long-term conditions reported across Dubbo and Mid-Western Regional LGAs.

Community members who participated in consultation for this SIM Plan reported that the land acquisition process had caused distress and stress among landowners who expect to host transmission infrastructure. For some, this included compulsory acquisition and the need to engage legal support.

As previously mentioned in section 2.5.1, local Councils and the RLE sub-group reported strain on health care as local health district faces significant workforce challenges, with GPs struggling to serve the current population. Dunedoo has only 0.5 FTE GPs, Dubbo is underserved, and the Mid-Western Regional Council has the lowest service rate in the state.

The CWO Working Group explained that impacts on Aboriginal people extend beyond heritage and culture, encompassing employment, housing, health (including mental health). While employment to Aboriginal people is positive, people can experience stress and anxiety from being far away from home and their community, discrimination at the place of work, increased access to alcohol and domestic violence.

Impact area	Responses from the community	
Health and wellbeing	58% (n=57) rated access to medical services as poor or none, 21% (n=21) rated as good or very good, and 21% (n=21) as neutral	65% (n=57) are very dissatisfied or dissatisfied with the mental health support available for landowners and community members 19% (n=17) are neutral 19% (n=17) are neutral

Figure 17: Online survey findings about health and wellbeing

2.6.2 Health and wellbeing impacts during construction

The SIA determined that landowners who will host project infrastructure and experience amenity impacts may be expected to experience Medium level impacts to their mental health. Landowners neighbouring project infrastructure may be expected to have a High level of impact as they won't be able to negotiate arrangements or receive compensation.

During SIM Plan consultation, some landowners reported that they had not been made aware of the tax implications of the compensation received for land acquisition, causing additional stress.

At the time of writing this SIM Plan, the acquisition process is complete, as such, management of impacts related to the acquisition process are excluded. However, it is acknowledged that changes to health and wellbeing a result of construction works will be managed.

Cumulatively, there will be 10 relevant future projects that overlap on construction schedule and are in close proximity to the project. Landowners in proximity to these projects would experience cumulative noise and air quality impacts.

Table 20 details the potential direct, indirect and cumulative social impacts to health and wellbeing during construction of the Project, and the revised impact rating.

Table 20: Direct, indirect and cumulative impacts on health and wellbeing

Ref.	Social impact	Affected groups	SIA impact rating (prior to management)	Revised impact rating	Cumulative impact rating
H-01	Diminished mental health among landowners	Landowners hosting project infrastructure	Medium	Medium	High
		Landowners subject to compulsory acquisition	High	High	High
		Landowners neighbouring project infrastructure	High	High	High
H-02	Diminished health and wellbeing due to amenity impacts, such as construction dust, noise, and vibration	Landowners hosting project infrastructure	Medium	Medium	Medium
		Landowners neighbouring project infrastructure	Medium	Medium	Medium
		Local social locality	Low	Low	Low

2.6.3 Measures to manage impacts on health and wellbeing and enhanced benefits

This section outlines management measures and plans developed by ACEREZ and EnergyCo. These measures are consistent with recommendations provided by community and key stakeholders during SIM Plan engagement, and include:

- Managing interaction with landowners through the CCS and property access plans to reduce the impact on their mental health.
- A mental health support telephone service as already established by EnergyCo will be maintained to assist landowners whose properties are subject to acquisition for the transmission line.
- Reducing the impact of construction related amenity impacts by implementing the Environmental Management Strategy and Noise and Vibration Management Plan.

The following measures have been introduced to respond to previous consultation feedback and consultation during development of the SIM Plan:

- EnergyCo will establish a Mental Health Support Program to provide additional mental health support for landowners and residents of properties impacted by the project. Further information will be provided when available in Q2 of 2025.
- For landowners hosting/adjacent to multiple projects, establish coordination/interface meetings with ACEREZ place managers and other nearby SSD projects with the aim to reduce cumulative construction impacts (e.g. noise and combining interactions with landowners to reduce construction fatigue)

Table 21 provides a further detail on these management measures and plans.

Table 21: Management measures and strategies for impacts on health and wellbeing

Impact(s)	Management measures and strategies

Diminished health and wellbeing due to amenity impacts	The Community Communication Strategy (CCS) outlines measure to support mental wellbeing of the community, including:
	• Training all ACEREZ workers and subcontractors in community awareness during their induction. The community awareness component of the induction includes:
	  • the Project's commitments to the community,
	  • procedures for referring enquiries from the community,
	  • issues and incident management,
	  • key information on community identity, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture.
	• Training senior engineers, site engineers, superintendents and general foremen in community relations.
	• Integrating workers' behaviour expectations into daily construction pre-start meetings and toolbox talks, including examples of being a good neighbour and community compliments, as part of sharing success.
	• Notification (e.g. letter box drops, phone call, email, onsite meeting) of construction works and impacts 7 days prior to commencement including nature of works and noise, vibration and dust impacts, traffic impacts, utility disruptions, project milestones and project updates.
	• Conducting Construction Noise and Vibration Impact Survey (CNVIS) and noise and vibration modelling.

Diminished mental health among landowners	As part of EnergyCo's commitment to supporting regional communities hosting renewable energy and transmission lines, EnergyCo has partnered with Grand Pacific Health to deliver a Mental Health Support Program. This service will provide additional support to individuals owning or residing on a property directly impacted by projects, including the Central-West Orana REZ. This program will provide eligible residents access to comprehensive, personalised and longer-term services delivered under mental health care plans. The maximum expenditure per applicant is $5,000 or 10 sessions, whichever is reached first, with a maximum expenditure per property equal to two packages or $10,000.

2.6.4 Management, monitoring and reporting framework

The management, monitoring and reporting framework to manage impacts on health and wellbeing is provided in Table 22. This table also provides the residual impact expected once the management and mitigation measures have been applied. The symbol (-) denotes the impact remains as a negative impact and the symbol (+) denotes the impact is a benefit. T

he community and key stakeholders proposed monitoring landowner satisfaction with Project mental health support and the nature of complaint resolution under the CCS. Monitoring against these indicators will provide insight into the appropriateness of the mental health support and the resolution process for complaints under the CCS.

Table 22: Impact management, monitoring and reporting framework for impacts on health and wellbeing

Ref.	Impact	Desired outcomes	Management Measure	Responsible for implementation	Indicators	Target (where relevant)	Data collection method and source	Monitoring frequency	Adaptive measure if not met	Residual Impact
H-01	Diminished mental health amongst landowners	Landowner mental health is not impacted (or is enhanced)	Community Attitudes Survey	EnergyCo	Number of landowners who report to be very satisfied or satisfied with the mental health support available for landowners and community members	>1% increase annually	Community attitudes survey using Likert scale (1-5)	Annually	Circulate additional information about availability of services.	Low / medium (-)
H-02	Diminished health and wellbeing due to amenity impacts, such as construction dust, noise, and vibration	Health and wellbeing are not diminished by construction related impacts	Environmental Management Strategy Community Communication Strategy	ACEREZ	Proportion of complaints relating to dust, noise and vibration responded according to CCS and to the satisfaction of the complainant	All complaints will have a resolution plan within one week for phone enquiries and within 10 days for written enquiries	CMS	Monthly	Where there are repeated complaints of the same nature or from the same landowner, review construction plan, seek feedback from landowners and neighbouring landowners and make changes as necessary	Low / medium (-)

2.7 Culture

Culture refers to 'shared beliefs, customs, practices, obligations, values and stories, and connections to Country, land, waterways, places and buildings' both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal (DPHI, 2023).

2.7.1 Social baseline and consultation findings

The Project is located on Wiradjuri and Gomeroi/Kamilaroi Country (also known as Kamilaroi, Gomeroi and Gamilaraay). Places of Aboriginal cultural value include portions of travelling routes of Barney's Reef and Cockabutta Creek. The travelling routes intersect the construction area at five points near the Elong Elong Energy Hub, Switching Station M9 and Merotherie Energy Hub and two points between Merotherie Energy Hub and the New Wollar Switching Station.

The most recent population estimates for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander populations remains the 2021 Census used in the SIA. Within the local and regional social locality there is a comparatively high proportion of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples, at 17% within the local social locality and 12.1% within the regional social locality.

Regarding other issues evident in Aboriginal communities, all Aboriginal stakeholders reported that challenges securing housing and subsequent overcrowding had a significant impact on Aboriginal People's ability to engage with the employment opportunities presented by the Project and other renewable energy projects within the REZ. Some stakeholders also reported that people experienced fear of having their children removed from families due to overcrowding.

Stakeholders in Dubbo, Wellington and Mudgee reported that the colonial history and racism are still present and impacting these communities. Responses to the online survey indicated that only 5% (n=4) were satisfied with the way they expected impacts on Aboriginal Culture will be managed, while none were very satisfied, 38% (n=33) were neutral and 23% (n=20) reported that they "didn't know".

2.7.2 Culture impacts during construction

The SIA determined that the Project may impact Aboriginal cultural values due to changes to the landscape, access to sites of cultural significance and disruption of cultural and historical artefacts and places, resulting in a High unmitigated impact.

The Amendment Report (Section 5.6.2) identified 50 Aboriginal sites within the construction area, these included rock shelters, culturally modified trees, grinding grooves sites, artefact scatters and isolated artefacts. Out of the 50 Aboriginal sites, 11 will be avoided and the remainder will be subject to archival recording, excavation and/or surface collection. The Amendment Report determined that the Project would result in some cumulative impacts to Aboriginal Cultural heritage within the social locality, with direct impacts to between five and 15% for each of the identified site types documented, including rock shelters, grinding grooves, culturally modified trees and moderate or highly significant stone artefact deposits.

Regarding non-Aboriginal cultural heritage, impacts to Tallawang Creek Archaeological Site 02 and Lahey's Creek Cemetery will be avoided and restriction zones will be established around the suspected graves and buried architecture within specific areas of the Tallawang Church lots. No cumulative impacts for non-Aboriginal cultural

heritage were determined. No impacts to non-Aboriginal cultural values were determined through the SIA, and no concerns about non-Aboriginal cultural values were raised during SIM Plan engagement.

Table 23 details the potential direct, indirect and cumulative social impacts to culture during construction of the Project.

Table 23: Direct, indirect and cumulative impacts on culture

Ref.	Social impact	Affected groups	SIA impact rating (prior to management)	Revised impact rating	Cumulative impact rating
CH-01	Impacts on Aboriginal cultural values	Local Aboriginal communities, organisations and individuals within local and regional social locality	High	High	High

2.7.3 Measures to manage impacts on culture and enhance benefits

This section outlines the measures developed to manage the impacts on culture, and are consistent with recommendations provided by community and key stakeholders during engagement:

- Implementing the HMP and Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Training to reduce impacts on Aboriginal Heritage and enhancing knowledge about Aboriginal cultural values.
- Consulting with the Central West Orana Working Group and RAPs where required to minimise cumulative impacts on Aboriginal cultural values.
- The appointed Aboriginal Participation Manager will implement training, initiatives and support measures for the Aboriginal workforce to support cultural safety.

The following measures have been introduced to respond to consultation feedback during development of the SIM Plan:

The First Nations Outcomes team at EnergyCo will support the promotion of employment, apprenticeship and traineeship opportunities (new).Table 24 provides further detail on these management measures.

Table 24: Management measures and strategies for impacts on culture

Impact(s)	Management measures and strategies
Impacts on Aboriginal cultural values	The Central-West Orana Working Group has been set up to support local Aboriginal community consultation and negotiations during a project tendering stage and through the ongoing activities of the infrastructure project lifecycle. The purpose of the Central-West Orana Working Group is to coordinate and streamline consultation and consultation across renewable energy generation and network infrastructure projects in the Central-West Orana REZ with local Aboriginal community representatives. This is done in an efficient and respectful way, and to reduce consultation fatigue. To achieve this, proponents are encouraged to contact the First Nations Outcomes team at EnergyCo as early as possible to arrange consultation and consultation within project timeframes and the Central-West Orana Working Group availability.

Impact(s)	Management measures and strategies
	ACEREZ will provide Aboriginal cultural awareness training to its personnel in leadership positions, site supervisors and any staff who liaise with the public in carrying out their role (referred to as key personnel). Aboriginal cultural awareness training will be specific to the local region. Construction Site inductions will include content in relation to Aboriginal Cultural Awareness and identified cultural heritage site and controls.
	The Heritage Management Plan (HMP) has been developed in consultation with Aboriginal Stakeholders (defined as 'Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs) from the EIS' under the Project Approval) and the NPWS. The HMP has been reviewed by Heritage NSW. The following measures are established in the HMP: • Ongoing consultation with RAPS, where cultural heritage requires management – including unexpected finds, participation in archaeological fieldwork, and salvaged archaeological material and long-term management of Aboriginal objects recovered. • Avoidance of impacts by establishing heritage protection zones and restricted zones within specific areas to avoid harm to heritage sites. • Where direct impacts cannot be avoided, archival recording and or salvage of obtrusive site features will be conducted. • Procedure for unexpected heritage item find or discovery of human remains. • Complaints relating to Aboriginal heritage will be managed in accordance with the Community Communication Strategy, and the Complaints Management System. • A compliance report will be completed annually during construction in and displayed on the project website.
	ACEREZ will develop an Aboriginal heritage-interpretation strategy and plan will identify the interpretive values of the construction and provide direction for interpretive installations and devices. The strategy will provide out-reach opportunities at nearby townships such as Gulgong, Ulan and Mudgee.

2.7.4 Management, monitoring and reporting framework

The management, monitoring and reporting framework to manage impacts on culture is provided in Table 25. This table also provides the residual impact expected once the management and mitigation measures have been applied. The symbol (-) denotes the impact remains as a negative impact and the symbol (+) denotes the impact is a benefit. The community and key stakeholders proposed monitoring the accountability of measures to manage impacts on Aboriginal culture and communities. This is reflected in monitoring complaints under the CMS and community satisfaction with the management of Aboriginal cultural heritage. Monitoring how unexpected finds are managed, the number of interpretative installations and knowledge of key personnel will provide insight into the effectiveness of the Heritage Management Plan, Aboriginal heritage interpretation strategy and plan and the Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Training.

Table 25: Impact management, monitoring and reporting framework for impacts on culture

Ref.	Impact	Management Measure	Desired outcomes	Responsible for implementation	Indicators	Target (where relevant)	Data collection method and source	Monitoring and reporting frequency	Adaptive measure if not met	Residual Impact
CH-01	Impacts on Aboriginal cultural values	Heritage Management Plan Complaints Management System	Aboriginal culture is protected and preserved	ACEREZ	Proportion of unexpected finds addressed in line with Unexpected Heritage Finds and Human Remains Procedure	All unexpected finds that are addressed in line with Unexpected Heritage Finds and Human Remains Procedure	Aboriginal cultural heritage assessment report	Quarterly	Review Unexpected Heritage Finds and Human Remains Procedure and make updates as required Update site induction training or toolbox talks as necessary	Low (-)
					Complaints relating to Aboriginal Cultural Heritage		CMS – Monthly public report	Monthly		
			Aboriginal culture is protected and preserved	EnergyCo	Proportion of responses reporting ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with management of Aboriginal cultural heritage.	>10% increase from baseline	Community attitudes survey using Likert scale (1-5)	Annual		
		Aboriginal heritage-interpretation strategy and plan	Understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal culture is enhanced via interpretive installations and devices	ACEREZ	Interpretative installations and devices are designed and implemented in consultation with the RAPs		Aboriginal heritage interpretation strategy and plan	Annually	Review Aboriginal heritage interpretation strategy and plan, and make updates as required.	
		Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Training (specific to the local region)	Key personnel’s Aboriginal cultural awareness is enhanced	ACEREZ	Key personnel report including personnel in leadership positions, site supervisors public facing staff undertake Aboriginal cultural awareness training after	>80% of key personnel report increased knowledge All personnel in leadership positions, site supervisors and public facing staff undertake Aboriginal Cultural awareness training.	ACEREZ training records	Annually	Review Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Training and update if needed	

2.8 Surroundings

This section provides the management framework for impacts to surroundings. These refers to impacts to the built and natural environment that people inhabit, aesthetic value and amenity.

2.8.1 Social baseline and consultation findings

According to EIS Chapter 7: Land use and property, agricultural land makes up around 92% (3,663 hectares) of the construction area, of this, 79% is used for grazing and 21% used for cropping. The agricultural land that would be occupied by the construction area is equivalent to approximately 3% of the total agricultural area within a four-kilometre corridor from the construction area and 0.19% of the total agricultural land in the four LGAs.

Agricultural land use remains one of the primary land uses within the local social locality, however across the regional social locality, renewable energy projects are progressing, with a number of projects which will change the land use including solar and wind farms and battery storage. The Amendment Report identified over 33 relevant future projects in the social locality, these included solar farms (17), wind farms (7), battery storage (4) and others such as mining and rail infrastructure (6).

Community members from Gulgong, Cassilis and Dunedoo who participated in community sessions for this SIM Plan reported that there had been a visible change in landscape in the last year with the growth of solar farms detracting from the rural aesthetic amenity. In contrast, the online survey findings reported that 94% (n=93) rated their enjoyment of the environment (e.g. peace and quiet, the views) as good or very good.

2.8.2 Surroundings impacts during construction

The EIS Chapter 7 determined that around 1,316 hectares of land used for construction will not be permanently required for the operation of the project and would be returned to its former condition once construction activities have finished.

The continuation of existing land uses would then be able to occur in these areas, with land progressively rehabilitated to its previous condition in accordance with its pre-construction use, resulting in Low unmitigated impact to agricultural land and food production for future generations.

The SIA determined a Medium unmitigated impact to changes to the way people enjoy and connect with the environment, specifically for landowners hosting and neighbouring project infrastructure. Vegetation clearing at Merotherie Road was raised as a key concern for local communities, as well as landowners and Mid-Western Regional Council. Vegetation clearing at properties hosting infrastructure was also raised as a key concern. The Dunedoo Land Care recommended to fund a seed bank project for community members, landowners and land care to increase/restore native vegetation. Consequently, the significance of this impact has been revised and updated to a High unmitigated impact direct and cumulatively.

The following direct, indirect and cumulative impacts were identified for impacts on surroundings (Table 26).

Table 26: Direct, indirect and cumulative impacts on surroundings

Ref.	Social impact	Affected groups	SIA impact rating (prior to management)	Revised impact rating	Cumulative impact rating
S-01	Impact to agricultural land and food production for future generations	Local social locality	Low	Low	Medium
S-02	Changes to the way people enjoy and connect with the environment	Landowners hosting and neighbouring project infrastructure, specifically on Merotherie road.	Medium	High	High
		Local social locality	Low	Low	Medium

2.8.3 Measures to manage impacts on surroundings and enhance benefits

This section outlines the measures and plans to manage impacts on surroundings. These measures are consistent with recommendations provided by community and key stakeholders during engagement:

- Implementing biosecurity measures and property access plans to reduce negative impacts to agricultural land and food production.
- Preserving, protecting and planting trees to minimise the impact to the environment.

The following additional measure has been introduced to respond to consultation feedback during the development of the SIM Plan and enhance project benefits:

- ACEREZ will work with EnergyCo and community groups such as Landcare to explore local environmental initiatives (new).

Table 27 details relevant management plans and strategies, referring to previous Chapters as necessary

Table 27: Management measures and strategies for impacts on surroundings

Impact(s)	Management measures and strategies
Impact to agricultural land and food production	ACEREZ will implement biosecurity measures for the Project and access to landowner's properties, which set the overarching measures for protecting biosecurity and resulting impacts to agricultural land and food production for future generations.
	ACEREZ will manage impacts to agricultural land and food through: • Undertaking works within the agreed transmission easement boundaries. The boundaries are established as per land agreements. • Reporting all incidents of damage to property, livestock or crops immediately. The process applies to all ACEREZ workers and is as follows: • Incidents including damage are reported immediately by the involved persons to their direct Supervisor, who will advise the ACEREZ D&C Superintendent, Project Manager and Place Manger as soon as practicable.

Impact(s)	Management measures and strategies
	• The D&C Project Director / Stakeholder and Community Manager will be responsible to notify EnergyCo • Further information related to significant incidents will be provided to EnergyCo on request, within 48 hours. All incidents relating to property damage will be documented by the Property and Land team/and or the Place Manager in the ACEREZ D&C Incident Management System (Lucidity), and in the ACEREZ D&C CMS system. All ACEREZ workers going onto agricultural land will undergo inductions for property access including acceptable driving and behaviour when driving in paddocks with livestock, avoidance of damage to grazing areas, crops and reducing dust and noise.

2.8.4 Management, monitoring and reporting framework

The management, monitoring and reporting framework to manage impacts on surroundings is provided in Table 28. This table also provides the residual impact expected once the management and mitigation measures have been applied. The symbol (-) denotes the impact remains as a negative impact and the symbol (+) denotes the impact is a benefit. Community and key stakeholders proposed monitoring satisfaction with management of impacts to agricultural land to provide insight into the effectiveness of landowner's agricultural access agreements and biosecurity measures in managing impacts to agricultural land.

Monitoring communities' enjoyment of the environment was also proposed to understand the success of measures to preserve and protect the natural environment. Monitoring compliance with the Biodiversity Management Plan was also proposed by the community as an accountability measure for protection of the natural environment.

Table 28: Impact management, monitoring and reporting framework for impacts on surroundings

Ref.	Impact	Management Measure	Desired outcomes	Responsible for implementation	Indicators	Target	Data collection method and source	Monitoring and reporting frequency	Adaptive measure if not met	Residual Impact
S-01	Impact to agricultural land and food production for future generations	Biosecurity measures for access to properties, Incident reporting	The project minimises negative impacts to agricultural land and food production	ACEREZ	Proportion of responses indicating 'unsatisfied' or 'very unsatisfied' with management of impacts to agricultural land	<10% decrease in satisfaction from baseline	Community attitudes survey using Likert scale (1-5)	Annual	Review the biosecurity measures and implementation, make updates where necessary.	Low (-)
S-02	Changes to the way people enjoy and connect with the environment	Biodiversity Management Plan Biodiversity Offset Package	The project does not change the way people enjoy and connect with the environment	ACEREZ and EnergyCo	Tree coverage and preservation is completed in accordance with the Biodiversity Management Plan. The Biodiversity Offset Package is delivered as per Condition of Approval B22	100% compliance with the Biodiversity Management Plan	Biodiversity Management Plan Updates on the progress of Biodiversity Offset Package in Quarterly Report	Quarterly	Review the Biodiversity Management Plan and its implementation, make updates where necessary	Low (-)
					Proportion of responses indicating their enjoyment of the environment is 'poor' or 'none	>20% decrease in satisfaction from baseline	Community attitudes survey using Likert scale (1-5)	Annual		

2.9 Decision-making systems

This section details impact management framework for impacts related to people's ability to influence decision making systems in the CWO REZ and its associated projects.

2.9.1 Social baseline and consultation findings

Consultation with communities and stakeholders relating to the proposed new transmission network infrastructure in the Central-West Orana REZ has been ongoing since 2020. Since the SIA, key activities have included:

- Continuous consultation with the Community Reference Group (CRG) for the Central-West Orana REZ which aims to provide an open forum for discussion between EnergyCo, the community and key stakeholders about the REZ transmission project and broader REZ issues.
- EnergyCo held 12 in-person pop-up events in October 2023 to support the EIS public exhibition, as well as stakeholder briefings and neighbouring landowner meetings. More than 200 people were engaged with across the community information sessions and pop-up displays.
- A total of 398 submissions were received from the community and registered on the Planning Portal website during the EIS public exhibition between 28 September 2023 to 8 November 2023. A Submissions Report was subsequently published.
- EnergyCo held consultation on the Community and Employment Benefit Program between February and March 2024. A total of 147 people responded to the survey, 63 stakeholders participated in facilitated workshops and 98 attended community drop-in sessions.

Since being appointed the preferred Network Operator, ACEREZ has commenced community and stakeholder consultation activities including:

- Consultation with Councils and relevant stakeholders for the purpose of developing specific construction management plans.
- Consultation with Transport for New South Wales, Mid-Western Regional Council and Upper Hunter Shire Council to inform the Accommodation Camp Management Plan.
- Consultation with Aboriginal Stakeholders and NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service for development of the Heritage Management Plan.
- Consultation with local Councils for the Industry and Aboriginal Participation Plan and Local Business Consultation Strategy

During consultation for this SIM Plan, community members in Gulgong reported that they had experienced a lack of clear information about key project details such as location, timing, the non-resident workforce and employment opportunities, which has resulted in speculation and misinformation in the community.

Consultation fatigue was reported across stakeholder groups who reported that the growth of projects in the REZ in the previous year had meant they were dealing with multiple project proponents and different people as contacts for those projects. Landowners also reported that they had dealt multiple different people within EnergyCo and ACEREZ when engaging on the Project.

Landowners reported mixed experiences of the development of their property access plans to manage construction impacts on their properties. For some, this had been a source of stress as the process was not clear to them.

Warrumbungle Shire Council raised concerns regarding the lack of detail about cumulative impact management and consultation fatigue since the REZ was formed.

Impact area	Responses from the community		
Decision making systems and Project communications	58% (n=51) are very dissatisfied or dissatisfied with their ability to lodge queries, complaints and receive a response	72% (n=63) are very dissatisfied or dissatisfied with access to project information	70% (n=61) are very dissatisfied or dissatisfied the way in which the overall social impacts of the Project will be managed
	61% (n=47) would like to receive the SIM Plan quarterly report by email (66% registered for project updates via email)	23% (n=18) would like to see a SIM Plan quarterly report summary on the Energy Co website	25% (n=19) would like to receive the SIM Plan quarterly report at community information sessions.
	86% (n=61) would like to see information on social impacts and management (services and community life) 65% (n=46) would like to see information on benefit sharing	77% (n=55) would like to see information on environmental impacts and management (noise, traffic and transport, biosecurity).	33% (n=23) would like to see information on employment and 35% (n=25) would like to see information on business opportunities.

Figure 18 Online survey responses regarding decision making systems and communications

2.9.2 Impacts on decision-making systems during construction

The SIA determined that some landowners hosting infrastructure, and residents within the local social locality, may perceive and/or experience diminished capacity to influence or make decisions regarding changes that may affect their life, resulting in a Medium unmitigated impact. This impact may be experienced differently by landowners adjacent/ neighbouring the project who have expressed concerns about the project, resulting in a High unmitigated impact.

Cumulatively, each of the 33 future projects (of which 22 have overlapping construction schedules) would conduct different levels of engagement. It can be anticipated that residents within the local social locality would experience consultation fatigue and would have limited time to participate in the consultation sessions for each one of the projects.

Table 29 details the direct, indirect and cumulative impacts on decision making and the revised impact rating.

Table 29: Direct, indirect and cumulative impacts on decision-making systems

Ref.	Social impact	Affected groups	SIA impact rating (prior to management)	Revised impact rating	Cumulative impact rating
D-01	Diminished capacity to make decisions regarding changes that may affect people's own lives	Landowners neighbouring project infrastructure	High	High	High
		Landowners hosting project infrastructure and residents within the local social locality	Medium	High	High
		Regional social locality	Low	Medium	High

2.9.3 Measures to manage impacts on decision-making systems

This section outlines the measures to manage impacts on decision-making systems. These measures are consistent with recommendations provided by community and key stakeholders during engagement:

- Developing this SIM Plan to consolidate social impact management and reduce consultation fatigue.
- Implementing the baseline and then annual community attitudes survey to incorporate community feedback into social impact management.
- Establishing the community information centres as a mechanism to receive feedback from the community
- Cumulative impacts for the wider REZ will be addressed by Whole of Government Initiatives through the Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap Steering Committee, supported by an Implementation Plan Working Group (Refer to Appendix G).

The following measures have been introduced to respond to consultation feedback during the development of the SIM Plan:

- EnergyCo to provide a summary of quarterly reporting at the CRG, CWO Working Group and RLE Sub Group.
- EnergyCo to submit via email a summary of quarterly report to local community members registered via the survey and EnergyCo's newsletter.
- EnergyCo to host engagement sessions for ACEREZ and other active projects and proponents to attend with the aim to improve coordination with other proponents and reduce consultation fatigue.

Table 30 details relevant management plans and strategies, referring to previous Chapters as necessary.

Table 30: Management measures and strategies for impacts on decision making systems

Impact	Management measures and strategies
Diminished capacity to make decisions regarding changes that may affect people's own lives	ACEREZ will open a Community Information Centre (location to be determined) – to provide a point of contact for the community. The centre will be open three business days a week, from 9am to 5pm. Staff members are expected to include the members from the local community.

Impact	Management measures and strategies
Diminished capacity to make decisions regarding changes that may affect people's own lives	The measures contained within this plan include: • Undertaking community and stakeholder consultation to provide feedback on the development of this plan • How the community will participate in monitoring of impacts through the annual community attitudes survey • Preparing a quarterly monitoring report, to be publicly available on the project website.
	EnergyCo established the CRG in 2022 as an open forum for discussion and feedback between EnergyCo, community representatives and key stakeholders in the REZ. The CRG will continue as a key stakeholder group throughout construction, with the 2024 – 2026 group decided in July 2024.
	EnergyCo will conduct an annual independent online survey for the duration of construction to measure community attitudes to the Project (Community Attitudes Survey). The survey would be open for a period of 21 days. The survey would be live outside of the school holiday periods and run at a similar time each year. A survey was conducted as part of the development of this SIM Plan (see Appendix F) to collect baseline data on community characteristics and attitudes towards the project and impact management. To monitor changes, the survey questions will remain the same or similar to the original baseline survey. The methodology for distributing the survey should be reviewed to consider the direct and cumulative impact of consultation fatigue at the time of distribution. New or unanticipated impacts will be incorporated as necessary. Access to the survey will be distributed via: • Email to EnergyCo's CWO database • A link on the EnergyCo website and social media pages • Via QR code at the information centres (EnergyCo and ACEREZ) • QR code in community meetings • Printed URL and QR code on newsletters or project updates distributed by ACEREZ and EnergyCo. The survey will be open for a period of one month to allow the community sufficient time to participate. In the event of obtaining limited participation in the survey, additional distribution and recruitment methods will be put in place to achieve a larger sample. The survey will be independent to safeguard confidentiality on responses. Survey findings will be de-identified. The outcomes will be reported in the annual SIM Plan review.
Impacts related to consultation fatigue from multiple proponents	EnergyCo will identify a number of regional locations across the REZ to attend on a regular basis to host engagement sessions. EnergyCo will invite ACEREZ and other active projects and proponents to take part in these sessions. This would be in addition to our regular attendance at local community events and shows. These will commence on a regular basis from the start of construction.

2.9.4 Management, monitoring and reporting framework

The management, monitoring and reporting framework to manage impacts on decision-making systems is provided in Table 31. This table also provides the residual impact expected once the management and mitigation measures have been applied. The symbol (-) denotes the impact remains as a negative impact and the symbol (+) denotes the impact is a benefit. The community and key stakeholders proposed monitoring the level of satisfaction with the SIM Plan, access to information and the ability to lodge queries and complaints and receive a response. Monitoring these indicators will provide an understanding of the effectiveness and opportunities for improvement of the use of community information centres detailed in the CCS, the CMS and other Project governance mechanisms, such as the use of the Community Reference Group. These indicators also provide an opportunity to identify unexpected social impacts.

Table 31: Impact management, monitoring and reporting framework for impacts on decision-making systems

Ref.	Impact	Desired outcomes	Management Measure	Responsible for implementation	Indicators (where required)	Target	Data collection method and source	Monitoring frequency	Adaptive measure if not met	Residual Impact
D-01	Diminished capacity to make decisions regarding changes that may affect people's own lives	Community feedback is incorporated into relevant management plans	SIM Plan, Community Communication Strategy CRG, CWO Working Group, and RLE sub-group	EnergyCo	Level of satisfaction of community and stakeholders about the management of social impacts	>10% increase from baseline	Community attitudes survey using Likert scale (1-5)	Annually	Review process for documenting and managing unexpected impacts Identify key gaps and opportunities to improve process for SIM Plan impact management. Independent review.	Medium (-)
		Identified and unexpected social impacts (including cumulative impacts) are proactively managed			Level of satisfaction of community and stakeholders about access to project information	>10% increase from baseline	Community attitudes survey using Likert scale (1-5)	Annually		
		The SIM Plan is effective in managing impacts			Level of satisfaction of community and stakeholders about ability to lodge queries, complaints and receive a response	>10% increase from baseline	Community attitudes survey using Likert scale (1-5)	Annually		
		Identified and unexpected social impacts (including cumulative impacts) are proactively managed	Establishment of community information centres	EnergyCo and ACEREZ						

3 Adaptive management

The approach to social impact management will allow for adaptation over time in response to the changing contexts in which the Project is evolving, the needs of stakeholders and the community, and as impacts emerge from the project.

The monitoring and reporting framework (detailed in Chapter 2) sets performance targets for the management measures and provides adaptive measures if those targets are not met. In cases where no adaptive measures have been identified in this SIM Plan, they will be developed in consultation with relevant stakeholders, including the CWO Working Group and CRG.

Monitoring and reporting contribute to adaptive management by ensuring accountability and identifying unanticipated issues. Reports which will be produced on a regular basis include:

- ACEREZ's management plan monitoring reports to EnergyCo,
- ACEREZ's public complaint record published on their website,
- EnergyCo's quarterly monitoring report which will be published on the EnergyCo and ACEREZ websites (see Chapter 3).
- EnergyCo's annual SIM Plan update.

ACEREZ's management plans include ongoing consultation and opportunities for the community and stakeholders to provide feedback and complaints, as detailed in Chapter 2. These opportunities provide a feedback mechanism during implementation. EnergyCo will undertake consultation with key stakeholders throughout implementation and hold an annual independent third-party survey of community attitudes to the project.

3.1 Procedure for SIM Plan review

The SIM Plan will be reviewed annually by EnergyCo to assess if management measures, indicators and monitoring frameworks are still applicable and effective in mitigating impacts and achieving their residual risk ratings. This will be done in consultation with the CRG, Councils (Dubbo, Mid-Western, Upper Hunter and Warrumbungle Regional Councils) and CWO Working Group to seek feedback on the monitoring program and whether actions and targets require revision.

The community attitudes survey will allow the community to provide feedback on the management measures and their effectiveness, as well as new or unanticipated impacts. The survey would be undertaken annually for the duration of construction for a period of 21 days outside of the school holiday periods and run at a similar time each year. The outcomes from the community attitudes survey, quarterly reporting and consultation led by EnergyCo and supported by ACEREZ's management plans will be incorporated into the annual review of the SIM Plan. The community attitudes survey used in baseline data collection for this SIM Plan and which will be replicated as the annual community attitudes survey is included at Appendix F.

The results of the community attitudes survey and results of monitoring against indicators in this SIM Plan will be analysed and compared with the baseline data and the predicted social impacts to identify if the residual impact

rating is being achieved. Each year, this will include the results of monitoring and surveys from baseline and in the previous year(s).

The purpose of the SIM Plan review is to ensure the effectiveness of management measures and incorporate feedback from the community and stakeholders throughout construction and address unanticipated and evolving impacts as they arise, as shown in Figure 19.

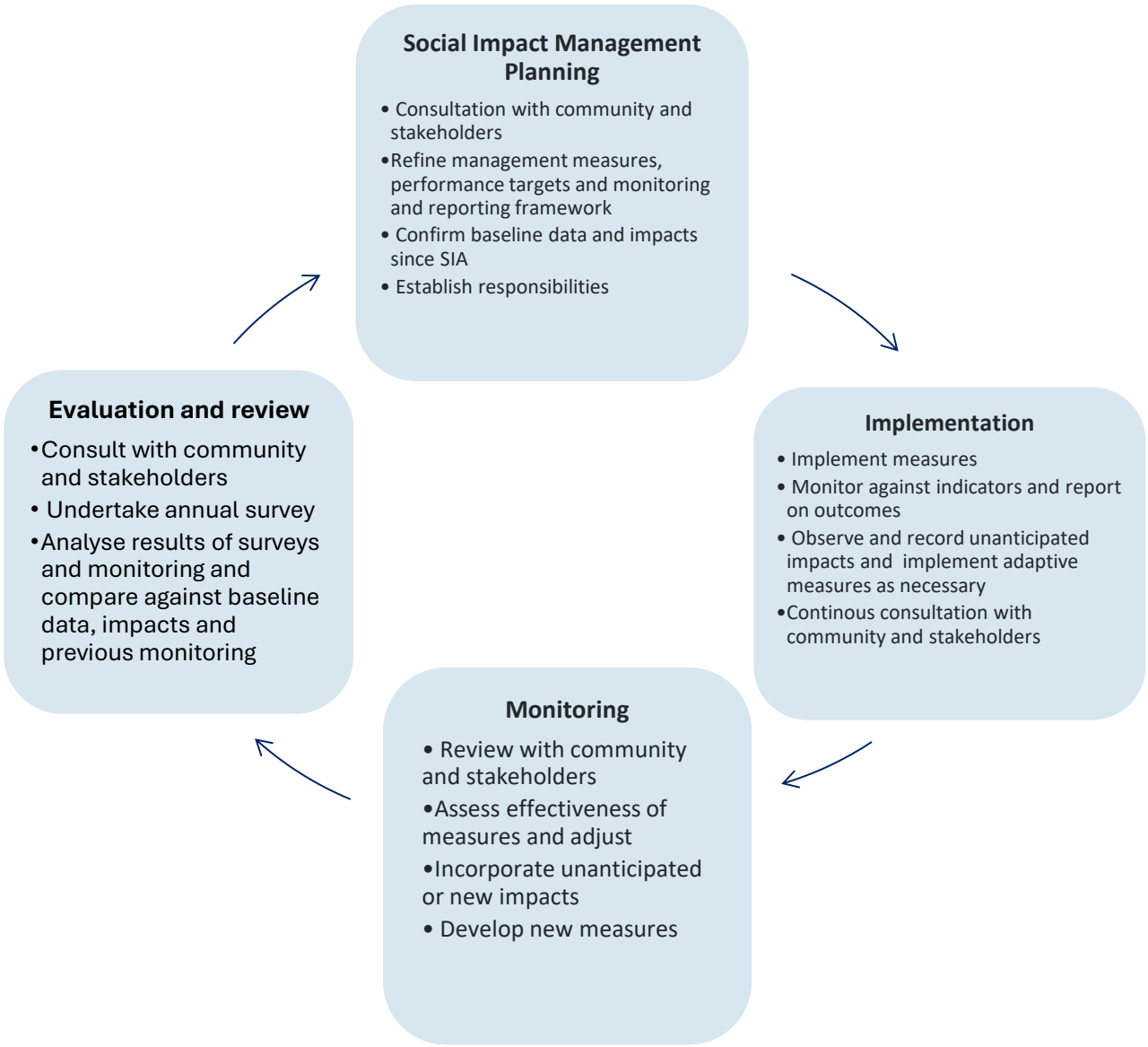


Figure 19: Summary of SIM Plan process

3.2 Non-compliance with the SIM Plan

This section describes the non-compliance notification process for the SIM Plan.

Non-compliance is defined in the planning approval conditions as “an occurrence, set of circumstances or development that is a breach of this approval”. For this SIM Plan, this means where an action is not implemented or there is a breach. The general steps for identifying and notification of a non-compliance are as follows:

Identify non-compliance:

- Monitor the Project for any instances of non-compliance with the planning approval conditions
- If non-compliance is identified, document the details immediately.

Notification of the Planning Secretary within seven days of becoming aware of the non-compliance. Prepare and submit a written notification via the Major Projects website portal including:

- clearly identifying the development project and include the application number,
- specifying the planning approval condition that has not been met,
- describe how the development is non-compliant,
- provide reasons for the non-compliance, if known,
- outline the actions taken or planned to address the non-compliance.

Post notification actions:

- implement the actions outlined in the notification to address the non-compliance and
- monitor the effectiveness of these actions and make adjustments as necessary.

ACEREZ and EnergyCo must maintain records of all non-compliance notifications and actions taken and ensure documentation is up-to-date and accessible for future reference.

4 Roles and responsibilities

The development, coordination and implementation of this SIM Plan will be delivered in collaboration with key stakeholders. The roles and responsibilities are outlined in Table 32. EnergyCo roles and responsibilities are outlined in Table 33.

Table 32: Roles and responsibilities

Organisation	Role in SIM Plan development and review	Responsibility in SIM Plan implementation and review
Planning Secretary	Set conditions of approval and SIM Plan requirements	Approve SIM Plan in accordance with the conditions of approval Condition B55 and SI8.
EnergyCo	Develop management measures, monitoring and reporting framework in consultation with relevant stakeholders	Lead monitoring and reporting of SIM Plan effectiveness including preparation of quarterly monitoring report to be published on the EnergyCo website. Implement adaptive measures where necessary. Implement a yearly independent survey of community attitudes about the Project. Conduct annual review and update to management measures and SIM Plan in consultation with stakeholders.
ACEREZ	Provide review and input into the development of the management measures, monitoring and reporting framework.	Implement and adopt management measures into operations and procedures where specified
Dubbo Regional, Mid-Western Regional, Warrumbungle Shire and Upper Hunter Shire Councils, CRG and CWO Working Group	Provide feedback on the proposed management measures, monitoring and reporting framework through consultation.	Provide feedback on implementation and effectiveness of management measures including notifying EnergyCo of when measures are not effective.
Other stakeholders	Provide feedback on the proposed management measures, monitoring and reporting framework through consultation.	Provide feedback on implementation and effectiveness of management measures including notifying EnergyCo of when measures are not effective.

Table 33: EnergyCo roles and responsibilities

Roles	Responsibilities
Manager planning CWO REZ	Lead monitoring and reporting of SIM Plan effectiveness including preparation of quarterly monitoring report to be published on the EnergyCo website Oversee the yearly independent survey of community attitudes about the Project. Conduct annual review and update to management measures and SIM Plan in consultation with stakeholders.

Roles	Responsibilities
CWO REZ transmission Community and Place Director	Oversee implementation of management measures by ACEREZ and EnergyCo Oversee implementation of adaptive measures where necessary.
CWO REZ Project Construction Delivery Director **Director Planning and Policy (Planning and Communities)**	Allocate sufficient resources for the implementation of the SIM Plan

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Appendix A SIM Plan authors

This report has been developed by an experienced team of social scientists.

Carla Martinez is the lead author for the SIM Plan. Carla holds a Master of Development Practice majoring in Planning for Social Development from the University of Queensland. Carla has over 10 years' experience in social impact assessment and management.

Carla is a Certified Environmental Practitioner – Social Impact Assessment Specialist by the Environmental Institute of Australia and New Zealand.

Carla led the development of the Social Impact Assessment for the project between 2022 and 2023.

Louise Beaton and **Kim-Cherie Davidson** are the co-authors the SIM Plan. Louise holds a degree in Regional and Town Planning from the University of Queensland and is an experienced stakeholder consultation practitioner. Louise has completed the Social Impact Assessment training from the University of Strathclyde (UK). Louise supported the baseline update, summarising of management measures and response to consultation feedback.

Kim-Cherie brings 15 years' experience in community consultation around regional NSW. Kim-Cherie has completed the Critical perspectives in Social Impact Assessment Certificate Course from The University of Queensland and the Social Impact Assessment Training from the International Association of Impact Assessment (IAIA). Kim-Cherie also supported the development of the SIA for the project in 2022 by conducting field engagement. Kim-Cherie led the delivery of consultation activities for the SIM Plan and supported the response to consultation feedback.

This report has been reviewed by **Felicity Richards**. Felicity holds a Graduate Certificate in Social Impact Assessment from Macquarie University and a Master of International Business from Monash University. She has over 10 years' experience in complex social impact assessment development and technical review in Australia.

Felicity was the technical reviewer of the SIA for the Project between 2022 and 2023.

Felicity and Carla are members of the Environmental Institute of Australia and New Zealand.

Appendix B SIA Summary

The Social impact assessment (SIA) was developed by WSP Australia between May 2022 and September 2023.

The SIA was informed by in-person, online and phone consultation. A total of 44 community members and stakeholders were interviewed, these included local Councils (Dubbo Regional, Mid-Western Regional, Warrumbungle Shire and Upper Hunter Shire), landowners both hosting and neighbouring Project infrastructure, community representatives and local services. An online survey targeted at landowners within 1 kilometre of Project's transmission corridor also informed the SIA, a total of 104 responses from landowners and some community members.

The SIA determined two main geographical areas where social impacts are expected to occur: a regional social locality and a local social locality.

The local social locality is the area expected to experience the most social change due to the Project and includes 42 ABS Suburbs and Localities within Dubbo Regional, Mid-Western Regional, Warrumbungle Shire and Upper Hunter Shire local government areas (LGAs) (see Table 34).

The regional social locality includes nine LGAs comprising Dubbo Regional, Narromine, Mid-Western Regional, Upper Hunter, Warrumbungle, Gilgandra Shire, Liverpool Plains, Muswellbrook Shire and Cabonne.

The review of the Project SIA, Submissions Report and Amendment Report informed the refinement of the Project social locality, the geographical area in which the most social impacts are likely to materialise. A direct social locality was determined for the Project identifying where impacts with a high rating are anticipated to occur and who would be most likely impacted (see Figure 20).

Table 34: Local social locality, LGAs and SALs

Southern Section		
Mid-Western Regional LGA		
• Barneys Reef • Beryl • Birriwa • Bungaba • Canadian Lease • Cooks Gap • Cooyal • Cope • Cumbandry • Cumbo • Eurunderee	• Galambine Goolma • Gulgong • Guntawang • Home Rule • Linburn • Mebul • Merotherie • Mogo • Moolarben • Mudgee • Munghorn	• St Fillans • Stubbo • Tallawang • Tichular • Turill • Two Mile Flat • Ulan • Wilpinjong • Wollar • Yarrawonga
Western Section	**Northern Section**	**Eastern Section**
Dubbo Regional LGA	**Warrumbungle Shire LGA**	**Upper Hunter Shire LGA**

Southern Section		
• Elong Elong • Gollan • Spicers Creek	• Cobbora • Coolah • Dunedoo • Leadville • Uarbry	• Cassilis

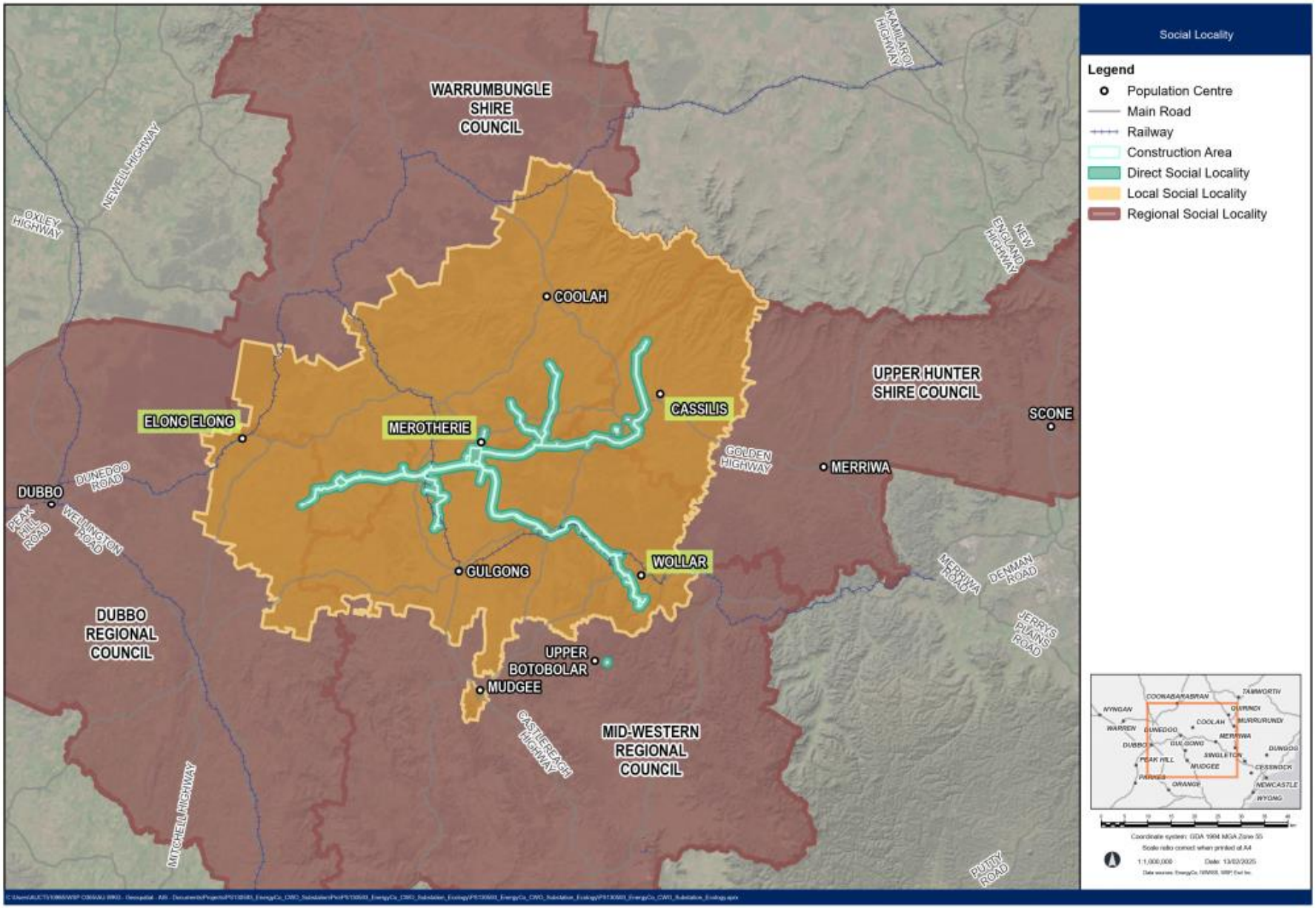

Figure 20: Social locality

Social impacts

The SIA identified benefits and negative impacts during construction. Expected benefits are:

- procurement opportunities for local businesses within local and regional social localities
- increased local employment opportunities within local and regional localities.
- The negative social impacts with a High unmitigated rating expected to occur during construction are:
- diminished community cohesion between landowners hosting infrastructure and adjacent neighbours
- impacts to sense of safety due to a non-resident workforce
- reduced sense of place for landowners hosting infrastructure and neighbours due to amenity impacts
- impacts on livelihoods due to increased biosecurity threats
- potential adverse mental health effects among landowners hosting infrastructure and neighbours
- potential impacts on Aboriginal culture within local social locality
- reduced capacity to make or influence decisions regarding changes that may affect people's lives.

All impacts identified in the SIA have been addressed in the SIM Plan regardless of their rating.

Management measures

Mitigation measures in the SIA include the development and implementation of:

- Landowner Consultation Strategy
- Workforce Management Plan
- Local Workforce Participation Strategy
- Industry Participation Plan
- Communication and Consultation Plan
- First Nations liaison group
- Complaints management system
- Social Impact Management Plan.

Note: The titles of the proposed management plans have been refined in Approval Conditions and by ACEREZ and may not reflect the names detailed in the SIA.

Appendix C Consultation feedback

The following tables, Table 35 to

Table 47 detail the feedback received during consultation and how the issue was resolved in the SIM Plan, including reference to the SIM Plan Section or Appendix. Where the issues have been partially resolved or have not been resolved by the SIM Plan, the next steps for the stakeholder(s) to seek resolution are detailed in the final column.

Table 35: Consultation feedback from Dubbo Regional Council

Impact area	Engagement Phase	Stakeholder Group	Issue raised	Where addressed in the SIM Plan	How was the issue resolved in the SIM Plan	If unresolved or only partially resolved in the SIM plan, what are the next steps to seek resolution
Community	Phase 2	Dubbo Regional Council	Housing supply boost from workers' accommodation left as a legacy in Wellington and Dubbo	Not applicable to the SIM Plan		This is unresolved in the SIM Plan. The Project does not propose to leave workers accommodation facilities as legacy housing. The Central-West Orana REZ Regional Leadership Executive Social Services Sub-Group, co-chaired by EnergyCo and the NSW Premier's Department will work towards an action plan to address pressure on rental accommodation. The Social Services Sub-Group will inform the CWO Regional Steering Committee and escalate matters for government attention as needed. EnergyCo is in the process of developing an Accommodation Strategy for the CWO REZ area. Dubbo Regional Council is a key stakeholder in the development of this strategy and this position will be considered in the development of this strategy.
Decision Making	Phase 2	Dubbo Regional Council	Community committees to be established for two years from March, with renewable sub-committees, could be a communication channel. Clarity on the project and associated works in our area. Phase 2 consultation suggested a community registered session in Wellington due to local active interest.	Section 1.3.5 Section 2.2.3	An Aboriginal Focus Group session was held in Wellington in Phase 2 consultation. EnergyCo has established a Community Reference Group (CRG) for the Central-West Orana REZ which aims to provide an open forum for discussion between EnergyCo, the community and key stakeholders about the REZ transmission project and broader REZ issues.	
Accessibility	Phase 2	Dubbo Regional Council	Increased workload for council due to REZ projects is affecting services to the community.	Section 2.9.3 Appendix G	EnergyCo and Councils have funding agreements (paid annually) to support them to resource appropriately to manage the additional workload caused by the REZ, to ensure this doesn't drain on the resources required for business as usual. EnergyCo will continue to engage with councils regarding these arrangements.	

Impact area	Engagement Phase	Stakeholder Group	Issue raised	Where addressed in the SIM Plan	How was the issue resolved in the SIM Plan	If unresolved or only partially resolved in the SIM plan, what are the next steps to seek resolution
Decision Making	Phase 2	Dubbo Regional Council	Visibility on impacts through qualitative and quantitative data on health (emergency and GPs), housing (vacancy rates and prices), visual amenity, road safety (volume and safety), mental health, local employment, vulnerable (Aboriginal people with disabilities and women), local procurement and tourism accommodation. Measure community's perception versus reality (data), to understand and manage gaps.	Section 2	The SIM Plan reports on project outcomes through a quarterly report. A number of indicators have been identified to quarterly report on management measures outputs and achieving desired outcomes. The annual community survey will report on the community's perception.	
Health and Wellbeing	Phase 2	Dubbo Regional Council	Increased community anxiety due to uncertainty about REZ developments and future changes.	Section 2.9.2 Section 2.9.3 Appendix G	Section 2.9.2 acknowledges the cumulative impact of the REZ on residents within the social locality. The ratings of decision making and cumulative impacts have been revised and updated to reflect a High unmitigated impact. As outlined in Section 2.9.3, cumulative impacts for the wider REZ will be addressed by Whole of Government Initiatives through the Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap Steering Committee, supported by an Implementation Plan Working Group (Refer to Appendix G).	
Livelihoods	Phase 2	Dubbo Regional Council	Training and employment opportunities for locals, especially Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders people. Legacy of training and upskilling facilities for long-term benefits. Businesses, especially certain sectors like construction, could lose employees to the project.	Section 2.4.3	Impact mitigation and benefits of the project related to livelihoods, including for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are addressed in Section 2.4.3 and include: • Enhancing local business opportunities to participate in economic activities and improving livelihoods through local employment opportunities by implementing the Industry and Aboriginal Participation Plan (IAPP), Local Business and Employment Strategy (LBES), Social Benefit Evaluation Criteria and training opportunities. • Managing the impact diminished availability of employees on local businesses due to competing demand from the Project through training opportunities for local communities.	
Way of life	Phase 2	Dubbo Regional Council	Safety concerns due to increased traffic and different vehicle types (over-size and over-mass). Suggested road safety courses/campaigns for the public	Section 2.3.3	Traffic and transport issues are considered in the following strategies and management plans: — Transport Strategies which will be developed in consultation with Transport for NSW and relevant Councils as per condition B31. The strategies will be developed in stages, including: — Merotherie Transport Strategy — Elong Elong and Wollar Switching Station Transport Strategy — Project-wide Transport Strategy — Stringing Transport Strategy — Other stages if required — a Traffic and transport management plan developed in consultation with NPWS, TfNSW, Dubbo Regional Council, Mid-Western Regional Council, Upper Hunter Shire Council, Warrumbungle Shire Council and the NSW Police to the satisfaction of the Planning Secretary (condition B35). In addition, the following conditions of approval will be implemented, which are consistent with measures suggested by community and key stakeholders: — use of designated heavy vehicles routes described in the EIS as per conditions B29 and B30 — road upgrades and relevant mitigation measures established in the Transport Strategies (condition B32) — independent dilapidation survey to establish existing condition of local roads and repair any damage to local roads on the transport routes that are linked to development related road traffic, and preparation of a report on the road repairs completed (condition B34)	

Table 36: Consultation feedback from Mid-Western Regional Council

Impact area	Engagement Phase	Stakeholder Group	Issue raised	Where addressed in the SIM Plan	How was the issue resolved in the SIM Plan	If unresolved or only partially resolved in the SIM plan, what are the next steps to seek resolution
Way of life	Phase 1	Mid-Western Regional Council	Monitor traffic volumes, road safety, and disruptions to essential services travel, while tracking travel times and public transport availability to health services during construction. Evaluate road closures and traffic impacts on the community's access to retail services [Content from email sent after phase 1 online meeting].	Section 2.3.3 Section 2.3.4	The SIM Plan will monitor: • Number of project related road and traffic incidents recorded; and • Proportion of people who describe their sense of safety and experience with local traffic as "poor" and "none/very poor" • Proportion of people who declare to be "unsatisfied" or "very unsatisfied" with the way in which traffic impacts are managed. Section 2.3.3 outlines measures to manage impacts on way of life. These measures included: • Managing impacts to road safety through the Traffic and Transport Management Plan (TTMP) and work health and safety (WHS) measures.	
Livelihoods	Phase 1	Mid-Western Regional Council	Collaborate with local businesses to ensure they can manage higher demand for goods and services. Track feedback and financial performance of local businesses to ensure they benefit sustainably [Content from email sent after phase 1 online meeting].	Section 2.4.3	Collaboration with local business will be driven by implementing the Industry and Aboriginal Participation Plan (IAPP), Local Business and Employment Strategy (LBES), Social Benefit Evaluation Criteria and training opportunities. The SIM Plan will track complaints relating to businesses through ACEREZ's CMS but will not track financial performance of local businesses.	
Accessibility	Phase 1	Mid-Western Regional Council	Assess the stability and reliability of internet and communication services near project areas [Content from email sent after phase 1 online meeting].	Section 2.5.3	Section 2.5.3 outlines the measures to manage pressure on essential services, in particular for telecommunications. These include: • Providing communications infrastructure onsite and exploring opportunities for improvements in nearby townships in consultation with infrastructure owners. On-site communication will be facilitated by a combination of dedicated radio channels on the Public Safety Network, UHF radio, satellite and mobile services. • Internet connection for the temporary workforce accommodation will be supported by a dedicated microwave link.	
Accessibility	Phase 1	Mid-Western Regional Council	Monitor impacts on groups at risk of marginalisation, such as elderly or low-income residents and offer support for vulnerable groups, ensuring that community facilities are accessible and well-equipped [Content from email sent after phase 1 online meeting].	Section 2.5.4	The SIM Plan will monitor the number of people who describe their access to telecommunications as good and very good. Disaggregated data about the age and gender of this groups can be gathered to obtain further detail if needed.	
Accessibility	Phase 1	Mid-Western Regional Council	Suggest to: - Conduct a pre-construction study to understand the current capacity, accessibility, and usage of social, health, and retail services. Concerned over strain on public services like healthcare, education, and childcare. - Increase investment in health services, social care facilities, and schools to meet the growing demands due to workforce expansion; - Develop Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to measure project-related changes. KPIs include metrics such as healthcare waiting times, childcare availability, retail stock levels, and community satisfaction with service access, with ongoing data	Section 2.5.3 Section 2.5.4	The SIM Plan partially addresses the issues raised by: Developing an updated SIA baseline informed by desktop research, DPHI studies and on consultation. The Project will avoid contributing to demand on local health services by providing onsite and telehealth services at the accommodation camps and supporting mental health wellbeing through the ACMP and workforce wellbeing initiatives. The following indicators will be monitored as part of the SIM Plan: • Number of project non-resident workforce who have accessed local health services – outside of what is provided on camp site • Number of people who describe their access to telecommunications as "good" or "very good"	This is partially resolved by the SIM Plan. The Central-West Orana REZ Regional Leadership Executive Social Services Sub-Group, co-chaired by EnergyCo and the NSW Premier's Department will work towards an action plan to address growing social service demand due to increase REZ non-residential workforce. The Social Services Sub-Group will inform the CWO Regional Steering Committee and escalate matters for government attention as needed.

Impact area	Engagement Phase	Stakeholder Group	Issue raised	Where addressed in the SIM Plan	How was the issue resolved in the SIM Plan	If unresolved or only partially resolved in the SIM plan, what are the next steps to seek resolution
			collection to track these targets; - Regularly engage with community members and service providers to identify emerging concerns about access to services and conduct focus groups and public forums to gather feedback and adjust mitigation measures accordingly; -Appoint dedicated Community Liaison Officers to act as points of contact for concerns, and develop partnerships with local healthcare facilities, schools, and retailers to co-design solutions and facilitate regular communication between project teams and service providers; and - Support the creation of additional childcare facilities or programs to manage increased demand from workers and their families; and - Provide funding or resources to local healthcare providers to expand capacity (e.g., hire additional staff, extend operating hours) Monitor increased service demand by evaluating usage of community services (e.g., childcare, counselling, aged care) to identify capacity gaps; Monitor reduced service availability to ensure local services remain accessible and equitable for residents despite workforce demands and assess whether workforce health needs divert resources from local residents Monitor waiting times and availability of medical services, including mental health and emergency care			
Community	Phase 1	Mid-Western Regional Council	Creating tensions between landholders, farmers, and residents due to REZ developments. Deepen disputes over compensation and land use changes, eroding trust. Monitor social cohesion by evaluating trust and harmony within the community, particularly between landowners, workers, and stakeholders. Strategies to maintain community cohesion amidst demographic changes.	Section 2.2.3 Section 2.2.4	Section 2.2.2 acknowledges impacts to community cohesion. The SIM Plan will monitor the following indicator informed by an annual community survey: • Number of people who describes their relationship with their neighbours and members of the community as “good” and “very good”	
Community	Phase 1	Mid-Western Regional Council	Concern about exacerbate regional housing issues, leading to overcrowding or relocation and limited rental availability, affecting local families and farmworkers, as well as driving up housing costs due to the influx of temporary workers.	Section 2.2.3	Impacts to housing and short-term accommodation will be minimised by: • Using accommodation camps to accommodate the non-resident workforce and building the accommodation camps in stages to manage pressure on short-term accommodation and local housing supply and affordability. • Maximise the use of local sub-contractors for the construction of the	

Impact area	Engagement Phase	Stakeholder Group	Issue raised	Where addressed in the SIM Plan	How was the issue resolved in the SIM Plan	If unresolved or only partially resolved in the SIM plan, what are the next steps to seek resolution
			Measures to mitigate the impact of housing affordability and availability due to workforce demands during the project's lifecycle [Content from email sent after phase 1 online meeting].		accommodation camps. • Where reasonable and where it will not risk worker safety, ACEREZ and EnergyCo will aim to distribute accommodation bookings equitably throughout the local social locality and avoid localities during peak visitor periods where possible. The SIM Plan will monitor the Number of short-term accommodation providers engaged.	
Community	Phase 1	Mid-Western Regional Council	Minimise the impact of a non-resident workforce on the community's sense of safety by proponents adopting strategies focused on fostering integration, ensuring transparency, and maintaining clear standards of behaviour. Monitor sense of safety by assessing residents' perceptions of safety related to workforce influx, increased traffic, and environmental risks (e.g., bushfires). Suggested proponent strategies are Comprehensive Community Engagement, Workforce Code of Conduct, Controlled Accommodation, Security Measures, Social Integration and Community Contribution, Monitoring and Feedback Mechanism, transparent communication about workforce size and role and clear guidelines on road usage. [Content from email sent after phase 1 online meeting].	Section 2.2.3 Section 2.3.3 Section 2.8.3	Impacts on the sense of safety are addressed in this SIM Plan in the following measures: • Workforce standards of behaviours to minimise the impact of the non-resident workforce on sense of safety. • Workforce is encouraged to volunteer with local community organisations to foster connection. Traffic impacts managed through Traffic and Transport Management Strategy. Sense of safety managed through Community Communication Strategy, Complaint Management System, work health and safety measures, workforce standards of behaviours. Bushfire response managed through Emergency Management Plan for the accommodation camp. The SIM Plan will monitor the community's sense of safety on an annual basis informed by a community attitudes survey and develop adaptive measures as necessary.	
Community	Phase 1	Mid-Western Regional Council	Monitor housing affordability and availability through property and rental prices to identify potential affordability issues caused by workforce demand and assess the availability of temporary housing for workers and its impact on local residents [Content from email sent after phase 1 online meeting].	Section 2.2.2	Updated baseline data regarding weekly median rent in the four LGAs has now being included in the SIM Plan.	
Community	Phase 1	Mid-Western Regional Council	Track complaints and resolutions related to the project. Transparent processes for addressing grievances and complaints. Monitor satisfaction with community engagement and ensure transparency. Measure overall satisfaction with the project's integration into the region [Content from email sent after phase 1 online meeting].	Section 2.2.3	This issue is resolved by implementing the Community Communication Strategy and Complaints Management System to manage impacts to community cohesion. Implementing the baseline and then annual community attitudes survey to incorporate community feedback into social impact management. The annual community survey will measure the satisfaction with community engagement and provide an opportunity for review of the SIM Plan	
Community	Phase 1	Mid-Western Regional Council	Ensure equitable sharing of project benefits across all community groups across the region	Section 2.2.2	Section 2.2.2 acknowledges the inequal distribution of impacts and benefits as a social impact. To enhance benefits ACEREZ has allocated funding for community benefit initiatives to leave a legacy that extends beyond the completion of the REZ transmission infrastructure and ensures benefits of the renewable energy transition are directed to regional communities.	

Impact area	Engagement Phase	Stakeholder Group	Issue raised	Where addressed in the SIM Plan	How was the issue resolved in the SIM Plan	If unresolved or only partially resolved in the SIM plan, what are the next steps to seek resolution
					The funding allocation provided to each of the four councils eligible for the Legacy Infrastructure Fund (LIF) was informed from input from various stakeholders, including councils, state agencies and regional planning bodies. The Program is driven by the Electricity Infrastructure Act 2020 (EII Act) and the EII Regulation. One of the key aspects of the EII Act is to support communities hosting the REZ which covers a number of councils with various types of infrastructure, activities and projects.	
Community	Phase 1	Mid-Western Regional Council	Assess changes in population trends due to new opportunities or negative impacts [Content from email sent after phase 1 online meeting].	Section 2.2.2	Section 2.2.2 provides updated data and assessment of population change and trends.	
Decision Making	Phase 1	Mid-Western Regional Council	Establish a regional coordination body to align project timelines, workforce needs, and resource allocation across all projects in the area. Align project outcomes with broader regional economic development strategies to ensure long-term benefits. [Content from email sent after phase 1 online meeting].	Section 2.5.3	The Western Regional Leadership Executive (RLE) is a multi-agency network that aims to address a range of cross-agency priorities at a regional level. A RLE Social Services Sub-Group was established in November 2024, to focus on addressing priority social services matters in the Central-West Orana REZ. The RLE Sub-Group includes members from Premier's Department, EnergyCo, Department of Communities and Justice, Western NSW Local Health District, NSW Police, Aboriginal Affairs and Education. Terms of reference for the sub-group were endorsed in February 2025 and strategic priorities will be developed in March 2025. Key themes likely to be considered in the Sub-Group strategic priorities include: • Health services to meet current and future population needs, including services for temporary workers • Monitoring for any increased services demands for childcare and early childhood • Local emergency management and response for bushfire and flood • Police resourcing	
Decision Making	Phase 1	Mid-Western Regional Council	Implement regular public reporting on project outcomes, including local procurement, workforce diversity and Aboriginal participation. Use the monitoring data collected to continuously refine management strategies, adapting approaches based on feedback and measurable outcomes to ensure the community's needs are met effectively. Evaluate residents' capacity to influence decisions impacting their lives. Enhanced capacity for communities to influence decisions that impact their lives [Content from email sent after phase 1 online meeting].	Section 2.9.4	The quarterly report will report publicly on outcomes set by the monitoring framework in the SIM plan. Annual SIM Plan review provides an opportunity for mitigation, management and monitoring to be revised and updated as necessary.	
Decision Making	Phase 1	Mid-Western Regional Council	Acknowledge LGA's hosting of significant percentage of transmission lines with equitable representation of support initiatives and programs to benefit local businesses and communities	Not applicable to the SIM Plan		This is unresolved in the SIM Plan. The funding allocation provided to each of the four councils eligible for the LIF was informed from input from various stakeholders, including councils, state agencies and regional planning bodies. The Program is driven by the Electricity Infrastructure Act 2020 (EII Act) and the EII Regulation. One of the key aspects of the EII Act is to support communities hosting the REZ which covers a

Impact area	Engagement Phase	Stakeholder Group	Issue raised	Where addressed in the SIM Plan	How was the issue resolved in the SIM Plan	If unresolved or only partially resolved in the SIM plan, what are the next steps to seek resolution
						number of councils with various types of infrastructure, activities and projects.
Health and wellbeing	Phase 1	Mid-Western Regional Council	Monitoring of community mental health and wellbeing, in particular, levels of stress and mental health concerns among residents, especially landowners hosting infrastructure and those near construction sites [Content from email sent after phase 1 online meeting].	Section 2.6.3	The SIM Plan will monitor mental health and wellbeing via an annual Community Attitudes Survey focusing on number of landowners who report to be very satisfied or satisfied with the mental health support available for landowners and community members.	
Health and wellbeing	Phase 1	Mid-Western Regional Council	Programs to address potential mental health and safety concerns, particularly for residents near transmission lines [Content from email sent after phase 1 online meeting].	Section 2.6.3	EnergyCo proposes to address wellbeing concerns using existing measures such as the existing EnergyCo mental health hotline as well as establishing the Mental Health Support Program. The Mental Health Support Program to provide additional mental health support for landholders and residents of properties impacted by the project. Further information will be provided when available in Q2 of 2025.	
Livelihoods	Phase 1	Mid-Western Regional Council	Disruption to farming operations and access to field due to transmission lines. Loss of biodiversity affects farmers who rely on natural pest control and pollination [Content from email sent after phase 1 online meeting].	Section 2.4.3	Potential impact of increased biosecurity threats on livelihoods will be managed through the biosecurity measures for accessing properties and Property Access Plans.	
Livelihoods	Phase 1	Mid-Western Regional Council	Reduced tourism income due to construction workers occupying tourist accommodation. Tourism suffers from visual and noise impacts, deterring visitor and affecting businesses [Content from email sent after phase 1 online meeting].	Section 2.4.3	Reducing the demand on short-term accommodation and impacts on tourism related livelihoods through the Accommodation Camp Management Plan (ACMP). L-05 management measure will monitor "Number of verified complaints relating to impacts to the tourism industry as a result of the project"	
Livelihoods	Phase 1	Mid-Western Regional Council	Residents near REZ infrastructure face indirect costs without direct benefits. Financial gains are concentrated among a few landholders, leaving many with negative effects and little compensation [Content from email sent after phase 1 online meeting].	Section 1.2 Section 2.2.3	As described in Section 1.2, EnergyCo's Community and Employment Benefit Program (CEBP) is funded by access fees and its legislative remit is to provide benefits holistically within the boundary of a REZ where communities are hosting generation activity. The CEPB includes a Legacy Infrastructure Fund (LIF). The purpose of the LIF is to provide funding for infrastructure projects that will deliver long-term and legacy benefits for local communities within the Central-West Orana REZ. The program design of the CEPB was informed by a series of consultation events held in the region in early 2024, which built on previous consultation work. As described in Section 2.2.3, ACEREZ has allocated funding for community benefit initiatives to leave a legacy that extends beyond the completion of the REZ transmission infrastructure and ensures benefits of the renewable energy transition are directed to regional communities. ACEREZ will consult with the community in 2025 to develop community benefit initiatives and ensure the community has a say on where these funds will be allocated.	

Impact area	Engagement Phase	Stakeholder Group	Issue raised	Where addressed in the SIM Plan	How was the issue resolved in the SIM Plan	If unresolved or only partially resolved in the SIM plan, what are the next steps to seek resolution
Livelihoods	Phase 1	Mid-Western Regional Council	Support for education and training programs to ensure long-term employment opportunities post-construction. Programs tailored to upskilling residents for long term roles in renewable energy and other industries [Content from email sent after phase 1 online meeting].	Section 2.4.3	• Enhancing local business opportunities to participate in economic activities and improving livelihoods through local employment opportunities by implementing the Industry and Aboriginal Participation Plan (IAPP), Local Business and Employment Strategy (LBES), Social Benefit Evaluation Criteria and training opportunities. • Managing the impact of reduced availability of employees on local businesses due to competing demand from the Project through training opportunities for local communities.	
Livelihoods	Phase 1	Mid-Western Regional Council	Define and communicate local procurement and workforce targets, and report on participation rates within this LGA and CWO REZ. Communicate local employment and business opportunities via newsletters, press, social media updates and targeted outreach in this LGA and CWO REZ. Monitor economic and employment outcomes by tracking the percentage of jobs created locally during construction and operation phases and the extent that local businesses are involved in procurement. Track youth engagement in training and employment programs, including monitoring long-term job creation and economic stimulation post-construction. Develop a tracing mechanism to monitor and share proportion of economic benefits retained within the region. Invest in long-term infrastructure improvements and support training and upskilling initiatives to build local capacity for service delivery beyond the project lifecycle, leaving a positive legacy for the community	Section 2.4.4	The following indicators will be monitored in relation to local employment and procurement: • Number of small-medium businesses employed by the project from the local social locality • Proportion of contract value to be subcontracted to Aboriginal-owned businesses • Number of small-medium businesses employed by the project from the local social locality • Number and proportion of the total project workforce who are Learning workers Proportion of apprentices and trainees	
Livelihoods	Phase 1	Mid-Western Regional Council	Incentivise prime contractors to sub-contract with local businesses and prioritise local suppliers. Publish procurement outcomes, including the number and value of contracts awarded to local business in this LGA and CWO REZ. Increase smaller, decoupled procurement opportunities for local small and medium enterprises. Provide feedback to unsuccessful local tenders and offer resources to improve future submissions. Understand local employment and business capability and capacity gaps through workshops and partner with local training providers to develop	Section 2.4.3	Measures to promote local procurement opportunities include: • Local Business and Employment Strategy (LBES) includes procurement strategies, industry engagement, capability building, and collaboration with other regional projects to support local employment, supply chain engagement, workforce diversity, and skills development. • The 'Keeping It Local Strategy', which will build meaningful relationships with industry stakeholders and suppliers, including SMEs and Aboriginal-owned businesses. • Assessing suppliers using the 'Social Benefit Evaluation Criteria' to provide a structured approach to evaluating tenders and ensuring that procurement decisions contribute to the social and economic well-being.	

Impact area	Engagement Phase	Stakeholder Group	Issue raised	Where addressed in the SIM Plan	How was the issue resolved in the SIM Plan	If unresolved or only partially resolved in the SIM plan, what are the next steps to seek resolution
			tailored programs to address specific gaps. Offer mentoring and advisory services to local businesses to improve competitiveness and invest in post-project transition programs to help local businesses pivot to new opportunities after project completion [Content from email sent after phase 1 online meeting].			
Livelihoods	Phase 1	Mid-Western Regional Council	Develop a transparent grievance mechanism for local business to report concerns [Content from email sent after phase 1 online meeting].	Section 2.4.3	Implementing the Community Communication Strategy and Complaints Management System to manage impacts - L-03 will measure "Number of local business and service providers who report or complain of loss of employees to the project and are unable to recruit staff". Implementing Local Business and Employment Strategy (LBES) and engaging with local businesses	
Surroundings	Phase 1	Mid-Western Regional Council	Lack of local biodiversity offset undermines ecological preservation efforts. Increased efforts to preserve aesthetic and biodiversity values in the region. Fragmented local ecosystems disrupt wildlife and migration corridors [Content from email sent after phase 1 online meeting].	Section 2.8.3	Preserving, protecting and planting trees to minimise the impact to the environment. The Biodiversity Offset Package is delivered as per Condition of Approval B22. The following additional measure has been established to respond to consultation feedback during the development of the SIM Plan: •ACEREZ will work with EnergyCo and community groups such as Landcare to explore local environmental initiatives (new).	
Surroundings	Phase 1	Mid-Western Regional Council	Increased fire risk due to transmission lines in fire-prone areas. Insufficient fire management plans leave properties vulnerable to fire damage, raising community concerns [Content from email sent after phase 1 online meeting].	Section 2.5.3	The Emergency Management Plan (EMP) provides a systematic approach for responding to emergencies, supporting emergency services, and minimising the impact of emergencies on property, life, and the environment. Measures to reduce demand on local emergency services include bushfire protection measures and Asset Protection Zones (APZ) buffers, bushfire prevention training and site inductions, toolbox talks and prestart meetings.	
Way of life	Phase 1	Mid-Western Regional Council	Change the region's character, reducing its appeal to residents and visitors. Disrupt tranquillity with noise and light pollution from construction and operations. Diminish the rural character, affecting residents and visitors through visual impact [Content from email sent after phase 1 online meeting].	Section 2.3.3 Section 2.8.3	Section 2.3.3 outlines management measures and strategies for impacts on sense of place, including: • Managing construction related impacts on sense of place through the Property Access Plans • Providing notification of construction works through the CCS and managing complaints through the CMS. The Community Communication Strategy (CCS) outlines how ACEREZ will manage communication and consultation during delivery of the project. The notification area for project updates and impacts, such as noise, vibration, dust and traffic access, will vary depending on the extent of the impacts and will be guided by the site-specific Construction Noise and Vibration Impact Survey (CNVIS). Section 2.8.3 includes measures to manage impacts on surroundings include preserving, protecting and planting trees to minimise the impact to the environment. The Biodiversity Offset Package is delivered as per Condition of Approval B22	

Impact area	Engagement Phase	Stakeholder Group	Issue raised	Where addressed in the SIM Plan	How was the issue resolved in the SIM Plan	If unresolved or only partially resolved in the SIM plan, what are the next steps to seek resolution
Way of life	Phase 1	Mid-Western Regional Council	Prolonged roadworks cause traffic disruptions, detours, and longer travel times. OSOM vehicle movements add to congestion and delays, especially on narrow rural roads. Unapproved shortcuts by contractors and the community damage non-designated roads, increasing repair costs for Council and ratepayers. Maintain road user safety by driver awareness on regional roads educational campaigns and wildlife incident mitigation. Communication and coordination regarding real-time information on roadworks and detours and community engagement on construction schedules Ensure work zones and OSOM vehicle routes do not impede emergency services. Include contingency plans to prioritise access for ambulances, RFS and police. Ongoing concerns about the cumulative impact on maintenance of local and regional roads [Content from email sent after phase 1 online meeting].	Section 2.3.3	Section 2.3.3 outlines the measures to manage traffic related impacts. ACEREZ's Traffic and Transport Management Plan will manage impacts to traffic as a measure to manage impacts to safety from increased traffic. A Transport Strategy will be developed in stages and in consultation with Transport for NSW and relevant Councils. In addition, an independent dilapidation survey will be delivered to establish existing condition of local roads and repair any damage to local roads on the transport routes that are linked to the Project related road traffic, and preparation of a report on the road repairs completed. As a result of SIM Plan engagement, a working group for traffic management within the REZ will be stablished and traffic management plan will be made publicly available for communities	

Table 37: Consultation feedback from Upper Hunter Shire Council

Impact Area	Engagement Phase	Stakeholder Group	Issue raised	Where addressed in the SIM Plan	How was the issue resolved in the SIM Plan	If unresolved or only partially resolved in the SIM plan, what are the next steps to seek resolution
Accessibility	Phase 2	Upper Hunter Shire Council	Ongoing concerns about impacts to health services and getting teachers for Merriwa due to housing.	Section 2.5.3	This is partially resolved by the SIM Plan. Impacts to health services will be managed by: • Reducing the demand on local health services through providing onsite and telehealth services at the accommodation camps and supporting mental health wellbeing through the ACMP and workforce wellbeing initiatives. • Managing the demand on emergency services through emergency planning, coordination and engagement. The following additional measures have been established to respond to consultation feedback during the development of the SIM Plan: • Project personnel are to be trained in emergency management and fire management, to respond to project emergencies (new).	This is partially resolved by the SIM Plan. Constraints related to getting teachers to local communities has not been addressed in the SIM Plan. The Central-West Orana REZ Regional Leadership Executive Social Services Sub-Group, co-chaired by EnergyCo and the NSW Premier's Department will work towards an action plan to address pressure on rental accommodation and incentivise attraction of essential workers. The Social Services Sub-Group will inform the CWO Regional Steering Committee and escalate matters for government attention as needed.

Impact Area	Engagement Phase	Stakeholder Group	Issue raised	Where addressed in the SIM Plan	How was the issue resolved in the SIM Plan	If unresolved or only partially resolved in the SIM plan, what are the next steps to seek resolution
Community	Phase 2	Upper Hunter Shire Council	Housing and accommodation are still a concern, renewable developers have approvals to build own worker's camp, others exploring opportunities with developers. Housing and accommodation studies by DPHI are ongoing, focusing on cumulative impact.	Not applicable to the SIM Plan		This is unresolved in the SIM Plan. The Project does not propose to leave workers accommodation facilities as legacy housing. The Central-West Orana REZ Regional Leadership Executive Social Services Sub-Group, co-chaired by EnergyCo and the NSW Premier's Department will work towards an action plan to address pressure on rental accommodation. The Social Services Sub-Group will inform the CWO Regional Steering Committee and escalate matters for government attention as needed. EnergyCo is in the process of developing an Accommodation Strategy for the CWO REZ area. Upper Hunter Regional Council is a key stakeholder in the development of this strategy and this position will be considered in the development of this strategy.
Decision Making	Phase 2	Upper Hunter Shire Council	Surveying impacts, via the online annual survey is a good idea. Community presence and robust consultation to understand and communicate with the community effectively. ACEREZ management plans are not fully addressed yet.	Section 3	The SIM Plan reports on project outcomes through a quarterly report. • EnergyCo to provide a summary of quarterly reporting at the CRG, CWO Working Group and RLE Sub Group. • EnergyCo to submit via email a summary of quarterly report to local community members registered in survey and EnergyCo's newsletter. Management Plans are made publicly available as they are finalised. Section 3 describes the Adaptive Management processes.	
Way of life	Phase 2	Upper Hunter Shire Council	Concerns about traffic impacts in Cassilis are still being worked through.	Section 2.3.3	Traffic and transport issues are considered in the following strategies and management plans: — Transport Strategies which will be developed in consultation with Transport for NSW and relevant Councils as per condition B31. The strategies will be developed in stages, including: — Merotherie Transport Strategy — Elong Elong and Wollar Switching Station Transport Strategy — Project-wide Transport Strategy — Stringing Transport Strategy — Other stages if required — a Traffic and transport management plan developed in consultation with NPWS, TfNSW, Dubbo Regional Council, Mid-Western Regional Council, Upper Hunter Shire Council, Warrumbungle Shire Council and the NSW Police to the satisfaction of the Planning Secretary (condition B35).	

Table 38: Consultation feedback from Warrumbungle Shire Council

Impact Area	Engagement Phase	Stakeholder Group	Issue raised	Where addressed in the SIM Plan	How was the issue resolved in the SIM Plan	If unresolved or only partially resolved in the SIM plan, what are the next steps to seek resolution
Accessibility	Phase 2	Warrumbungle Shire Council	Urgently required are extra emergency service workers namely ambulance paramedics, firefighting resources, nurses, doctors and more beds in hospitals. Benefits from the project are hopefully, extra health and emergency services resources on the ground that are definitive and measurable.	Section 2.5.3	This is partially addressed by the SIM Plan. Demand on local health services will be managed through providing onsite and telehealth services at the accommodation camps and supporting mental health wellbeing through the ACMP and workforce wellbeing initiatives. EnergyCo will establish a Mental Health Support Program to provide additional mental health support for landholders and residents of properties impacted by the project.	This is partially resolved by the SIM Plan. This issue will be also monitored by The Central-West Orana REZ Regional Leadership Executive (RLE) Social Services Sub-Group, co-chaired by EnergyCo and the NSW Premier's Department. The RLE sub-group will work towards an action plan to address growing social service demand due to increase REZ non-residential workforce. The Social Services Sub-Group will inform the CWO Regional Steering Committee and escalate matters for government attention as needed.
Decision Making	Phase 2	Warrumbungle Shire Council	The key issue remains identifying and mitigating the cumulative impacts. Despite the passage of three years or so with relation to the CWO REZ this matter is still yet to be adequately addressed. Each Council is dealing closely with 10 or more generation projects, the developers of same, and the DPHI and EnergyCo and our communities. A key point is we are a small Shire and are seriously under-resourced to deal with the flood of assessment work arising from REZ-related projects	Section 2.9.1 Section 2.9.3 Appendix G	Section 2.9.1 acknowledges the cumulative impacts to key stakeholders in dealing with multiple generation projects. Section 2.9.3 outlines that cumulative impacts will be addressed by Whole of Government Initiatives through the Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap Steering Committee, supported by an Implementation Plan Working Group. Refer to Appendix G.	
Decision Making	Phase 2	Warrumbungle Shire Council	Quarterly monitoring report to be succinct and focused on providing hard numbers on the tangible specific actions that have been delivered on the ground. Please talk hard numbers re extra police, paramedics, nurses, doctors, etc including mental health services.	Section 2.5.3	The quarterly report will report publicly on outcomes set by the monitoring framework in the SIM plan. The SIM Plan will monitor the number of project non-resident workforce who have accessed local health services – outside of what is provided on camp site. The Central-West Orana REZ Regional Leadership Executive Social Services Sub-Group, co-chaired by EnergyCo and the NSW Premier's Department will inform the CWO Regional Steering Committee and escalate matters for government attention as needed and would monitor resourcing requirements.	
Decision Making	Phase 2	Warrumbungle Shire Council	Recommends ensuring that the developers comply with conditions of consent and that there are penalties when they don't.	Section 3.2	EnergyCo intends to comply with all Conditions of Approval for the CWO REZ transmission project. Incident and non-compliance notification process are outlined in Section 3.2.	
Way of life	Phase 2	Warrumbungle Shire Council	Managing the itinerant workforce and increased road safety risks requires increasing police resources. A big risk not mentioned anywhere is local community outrage at the delays and disruption to their travel times associated with a raft of roads being upgraded and emergency evacuation of workers camps during bushfires.	Section 2.3.3 Section 2.5.3	This is partially addressed by the SIM Plan. Section 2.3.3 outlines the measures to manage impacts on way of life. ACEREZ's Traffic and Transport Management Plan will manage impacts to traffic as a measure to manage impacts to safety from increased traffic. Section 2.5.3 outlines the management measures and strategies for impacts on accessibility, including bushfire. The Emergency Management Plan (EMP) provides a systematic approach for responding to emergencies, supporting emergency services, and minimising the impact of emergencies on property, life, and the environment. Measures to reduce demand on local emergency services include bushfire protection measures and Asset Protection Zones (APZ) buffers, bushfire prevention training and site inductions, toolbox talks and prestart meetings.	This is partially resolved by the SIM Plan. Unresolved feedback relating to pressure on local services (Police) will be considered by the Central-West Orana REZ Regional Leadership Executive Social Services Sub-Group, co-chaired by EnergyCo and the NSW Premier's Department. The Social Services Sub-Group will inform the CWO Regional Steering Committee and escalate matters for government attention as needed.

Impact Area	Engagement Phase	Stakeholder Group	Issue raised	Where addressed in the SIM Plan	How was the issue resolved in the SIM Plan	If unresolved or only partially resolved in the SIM plan, what are the next steps to seek resolution
Way of life	Phase 2	Warrumbungle Shire Council	We want to see ACEREZ and EnergyCo ensure that all local road upgrades are completed prior to the commencement of project construction. There is also potential impact of disruption from road upgrades themselves.	Section 2.3.3	A Transport Strategy will be developed in stages and in consultation with Transport for NSW and relevant Councils. In addition, an independent dilapidation survey will be delivered to establish existing condition of local roads and repair any damage to local roads on the transport routes that are linked to the Project related road traffic, and preparation of a report on the road repairs completed.	

Table 39: Consultation feedback from the CRG

Impact area	Engagement Phase	Stakeholder Group	Issue raised	Where addressed in the SIM Plan	How was the issue resolved in the SIM Plan	If unresolved or only partially resolved in the SIM plan, what are the next steps to seek resolution
Community	Phase 1	CRG	When conducting consultations in this region, will you consider the timelines and impacts of other projects. Consultation itself adds to cumulative impacts, with multiple projects potentially progressing simultaneously. Shared shopfronts could be a way to mitigate cumulative impacts. Mitigate by regular updates on timelines and construction activities.	Appendix C	Consultation for the SIM Plan considered the following input from key stakeholders: • National Sorry Day on 13 February • Other meetings • NSW Farmers Renewable Zone Meeting 18 February in Dubbo • CRG Meeting, suggested 19 February in Dubbo • CRG suggested weekends or evenings, times need to be flexible • CWO Working Group suggested evenings (6 or 6.30pm start) for Wellington, 12-2pm and evenings (6pm start) for Dubbo.	
Decision Making	Phase 1	CRG	CRG requested opportunity to review the Draft SIM Plan and have a review period of 21 days. Would the SIM Plan summarize/integrated other management plans?	Appendix C	The draft SIM Plan Rev E was provided to the CRG for review in March 2025 in addition to consultation undertaken during SIM plan development in December 2024 and February 2025. One CRG member provided feedback to the SIM Plan process as detailed in Appendix C.	
Health and wellbeing	Phase 1	CRG	Consider the development of the community wellbeing strategy mentioned in the Amended Report.	Section 2.6.3	The Wellbeing Strategy was mentioned in the Amendment Report as an example of the type of plans that may be developed as part of the management plan framework. EnergyCo proposes to address wellbeing concerns using existing measures such as the existing EnergyCo mental health hotline as well as establishing the Mental Health Support Program. The Mental Health Support Program to provide additional mental health support for landholders and residents of properties impacted by the project. Further information will be provided when available in Q2 of 2025.	
Livelihoods	Phase 1	CRG	Gender equity for employment, if there is a gender policy – what is being done about childcare, as there is no childcare available. Limited labour available could be mitigated if there was childcare facilities for educated females to be able to work.	Section 2.4.3	Section 2.4.3 outlines measures to manage impact on livelihoods. ACEREZ will utilise flexible working arrangements to support personnel in and returning to the workforce, as well as those transitioning into the industry, including women. ACEREZ will deliver targeted programs that encourage women to participate in traineeships or apprenticeships on the project and promote the inclusion and retention of women within the workforce.	

Impact area	Engagement Phase	Stakeholder Group	Issue raised	Where addressed in the SIM Plan	How was the issue resolved in the SIM Plan	If unresolved or only partially resolved in the SIM plan, what are the next steps to seek resolution
Livelihoods	Phase 1	CRG	Employment opportunities - Opportunities for residents to be Drive in-Drive out (DIDO). Local workers and trained apprentices going to project. Training availability for local hires to avoid displacing current employees. Monitor how local jobs are advertised and local percentage of employment.	Section 2.4.3	Section 2.4.3 outlines measures to enhance local employment opportunities, including providing opportunities for members of the workforce who live locally to travel to and from site by car. Car-pooling will be encouraged to minimise traffic on local roads (new). Measures for local employment and retention include: • Partnerships with Regional Industry Education Partnerships (RIEP) Program and NSW Infrastructure Traineeship Program, attending local job fairs and career days • ACEREZ pre-employment and mentoring programs will provide training and support to access jobs and where possible progress to traineeships or apprenticeships • NSW Corrections employment program, Training for existing workforce to develop transferrable skills • Maximising local business consultation to support local employment. • ACEREZ will support training local workers through programs including partnership with local providers, Training Service NSW and training organisations to support upskilling and development of local workers	
Way of Life	Phase 1	CRG	Current accommodation pressure could be exacerbated. Currently limited accommodation (short-term long term), how is this going to be mitigated? Concern about influx of workforce with families putting pressure on private rental accommodation and local services. Mitigate by the coordination of accommodation providers, rather than individual proponents competing for accommodation. Monitor availability and price of short-term accommodation. Agreement amongst developers. Similarly, for government agencies need for better coordination breaking silos.	Section 2.2.3	Section 2.2.3 outlines measures to manage impacts on community. The Accommodation Camp Management Plan (ACMP) was developed in consultation with Transport for NSW, Mid-Western Regional Council, and Upper Hunter Shire Council and incorporated into the plan to address concerns and ensure compliance with local requirements. Measures to manage pressure on short term accommodation and local housing supply and affordability during construction of the accommodation camp include using a staged approach starting with approximately 50 workers in the first two stages (to mid-2025) and sourcing the initial workforce from within the REZ. The ACMP may be updated throughout the project to reflect any changes in project requirements, stakeholder feedback, or regulatory conditions as needed. Any substantial changes to the layout or design of the camps will require additional consultation.	
Way of Life	Phase 1	CRG	Road capacity and safety regards to increased traffic, either by delivery of construction materials or roads not upgraded or upgraded and causes increased local traffic. In the past year, a lack of traffic plan for local community, no information available. Strong concern in the community about safety and time delays on the Golden Highway due to increased traffic, especially as it is the only route to access services, retail, work and education. Concern about transport routes nominated in EIS thorough village of Cassilis. Is this still preferred route? Monitor increase of travel time	Section 2.3.3	Section 2.3.3 outlines the measures to manage traffic related impacts. ACEREZ's Traffic and Transport Management Plan will manage impacts to traffic as a measure to manage impacts to safety from increased traffic. A Transport Strategy will be developed stages and in consultation with Transport for NSW and relevant Councils. In addition, an independent dilapidation survey will be delivered to establish existing condition of local roads and repair any damage to local roads on the transport routes that are linked to the Project related road traffic, and preparation of a report on the road repairs completed. As a result of SIM Plan engagement, a working group for traffic management within the REZ will be established by EnergyCo and traffic management plan will be made publicly available for communities	
Accessibility	Phase 2	CRG	Concerns about access/no access to mobile service with extra workers in the area. Recent Cassilis Rodeo, mobile phones were blocked due to usage on the day.	Section 2.5.3	Section 2.5.3 outlines the measures to manage impacts on accessibility including measures to manage pressures on essential services (telecommunications) through providing communications infrastructure onsite. On-site communication will be facilitated by a combination of dedicated radio channels on the Public Safety Network, UHF radio, satellite and mobile services. Internet connection for the temporary workforce accommodation will be supported by a dedicated microwave link.	

Impact area	Engagement Phase	Stakeholder Group	Issue raised	Where addressed in the SIM Plan	How was the issue resolved in the SIM Plan	If unresolved or only partially resolved in the SIM plan, what are the next steps to seek resolution
Accessibility	Phase 2	CRG	Concerns about emergency services (Rural Fires Service, Police), as all are currently stretched to capacity. Concerns that current ambulance access of half an hour, will be increased with extra traffic and hold ups on highway.	Section 2.5.3 Section 2.3.3	Partially addressed by the SIM Plan. Section 2.5.3 outlines the measures to manage impacts on accessibility including managing the demand on emergency services through emergency planning, coordination and engagement and project personnel to be trained in emergency management and fire management, to respond to project emergencies. Section 2.3.3 outlines the measures to manage impacts on way of life including road safety through the Traffic and Transport Management Plan (TTMP) and work health and safety (WHS) measures. The TTMP will be made publicly available for communities and a working group for traffic management within the REZ will be established.	This is partially resolved by the SIM Plan. The Central-West Orana REZ Regional Leadership Executive Social Services Sub-Group, co-chaired by EnergyCo and the NSW Premier's Department will work towards an action plan to address growing social service demand due to increase REZ non-residential workforce. The Social Services Sub-Group will inform the CWO Regional Steering Committee and escalate matters for government attention as needed.
Accessibility	Phase 2	CRG	Provide opportunities for the community to access services and amenity at the workforce accommodation camp, such as gym, nurses and pool. Concern about the camps being close out creating inequity in access to services between community and the workers. An open-door policy to community to access services, especially health services, in camp will enhance acceptance.	Not applicable to the SIM Plan	Not resolved by the SIM Plan. EnergyCo has considered the suggestion to allow the community to access the workforce accommodation camp, however there are impediments to making this possible, including safety considerations.	This is partially resolved by the SIM Plan. The Central-West Orana REZ Regional Leadership Executive Social Services Sub-Group, co-chaired by EnergyCo and the NSW Premier's Department will work towards an action plan to address growing social service demand due to increase REZ non-residential workforce. The Social Services Sub-Group will inform the CWO Regional Steering Committee and escalate matters for government attention as needed.
Accessibility	Phase 2	CRG	Concerns about the cumulative pressure on local services and resources, including water, fuel and waste management. Concern that increased pressure would increase Council rates.	Section 2.5.3 Section 2.2.3 Appendix G	Section 2.5.3 outlines the measures to manage impacts on accessibility including pressure on essential services (communications, gas and energy, waste management, water supply) by establishing camp specific potable water (purchasing water, storing onsite and developing a potable water treatment plan) and wastewater supply and treatment. Section 2.2.3 outlines the measures to manage impacts on community including measures for cumulative impacts that will be addressed by Whole of Government Initiatives through the Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap Steering Committee, supported by an Implementation Plan Working Group (Refer to Appendix G).	
Livelihoods	Phase 2	CRG	Transmission line is a positive opportunity to transition away from coal mining in the Mudgee region. Some of this skilled workforce could be freed up for the REZ. Impact of shift work on communities means lack of involvement in the community. Are all contractors going to stay at the worker's camps? Monitor or report non-residential workforce participation in community organisations and clubs (e.g. local net ball team).	Section 2.4.3	Section 2.4.3 outlines the measures to enhance local employment opportunities including providing opportunities for residents within driving distance (e.g.45km) of project locations to Drive in-Drive out (DIDO).	
Community	Phase 2	CRG	Concern about the influx of workforce and unknown about demographic profiles and the social life at the accommodation camp.	Section 2.2.3	Section 2.2.3 outlines the measures to manage impacts on community including measures for sense of safety managed through the Community Communication Strategy, Complaint Management System, work health and safety measures and workforce standards of behaviours.	
Community	Phase 2	CRG	Concerns that different impacts on different communities are not being considered.	Section 1.3.5 Section 1.4 Section 2	Section 1.3.5 and 1.4 outlines the SIM Plan consultation, which aimed to consult with a range of stakeholders across the REZ, including Councils and the communities, including those most impacted. Section 2 identifies the impacts identifying the potential impacts of transmission infrastructure, compounds, traffic routes, workforce accommodation camp on relevant community and stakeholder group.	
Community	Phase 2	CRG	Mitigate by developing a micro grid for impacted communities to lower electricity costs in the long term.	Not applicable to the SIM Plan		This is unresolved in the SIM Plan. This suggestion has been considered out of scope for CWO REZ transmission project and EnergyCo's remit.

Impact area	Engagement Phase	Stakeholder Group	Issue raised	Where addressed in the SIM Plan	How was the issue resolved in the SIM Plan	If unresolved or only partially resolved in the SIM plan, what are the next steps to seek resolution
Way of life	Phase 2	CRG	Concern about lack of detailed information about the project and its specific impacts, in particular about the traffic management plans and number of predicted vehicles at specific roads, which would limit CRG capacity to inform the SIMP Plan.	Section 2.3.3	Section 2.3.3 outlines the Community Communication Strategy (CCS), which details how ACEREZ will manage communication and consultation during delivery of the project. It identifies stakeholders, consultation approach, the project commitment to best practice engagement, tools, notification timing, and the complaint management system (CMS). Multiple engagement methods are being roll-out to reach out to difference stakeholder groups and cater to their engagement needs. Section 2.3.3 outlines the measures to manage impacts on traffic. A Transport Strategies and a Traffic and Transport Management Plan will be developed and in consultation with Transport for NSW and relevant Councils. As a result of SIM Plan engagement, a working group for traffic management within the REZ will be established by EnergyCo and traffic management plan will be made publicly available for communities	
Decision Making	Phase 2	CRG	Concerns about CEBP application process a multiple point of contacts for each specific fund, as well as the process being onerous for community organisations to apply. Dissatisfaction about the larger proportion of fund to be managed by Councils and the community fund to be contestable and not directed to Merotherie community.	Not applicable to the SIM Plan		This is unresolved in the SIM Plan. The Community and Employment Benefit Program (CEBP) is funded by access fees and its legislative remit is to provide benefits holistically within the boundary of a REZ where communities are hosting generation activity. To be eligible for CEBP funding, the funded component of a project must be for a "community purpose" or "employment purpose" and be located within the geographic boundary of a REZ. The program design of the CEPB was informed by a series of consultation events held in the region in early 2024, which built on previous consultation work. EnergyCo and ACEREZ are continuing to engage with landholders and community organisations to address issues raised during the development of the Social Impact Management Plan.
Decision Making	Phase 2	CRG	Mitigate by ensuring the decommissioning of renewable infrastructure is done properly.	Not applicable to the SIM Plan		This is unresolved in the SIM Plan. The Community can make an enquiry directly to Proponents or DPHI regarding decommissioning. EnergyCo and ACEREZ will comply with relevant conditions of approval in relation to decommissioning.
Health and wellbeing	Phase 2	CRG	Impacted by cumulative impacts and overwhelming scale of development. In past year, increased stress levels caused by multiple State significant development projects in the Wollar community. Monitor the number of different planning and development processes in individual communities. Mitigate by staged project development with better integrated planning and communication.	Section 2.5.3 Section 2.9.3	Section 2.5.3 outlines management measures and strategies for impacts on accessibility. Section 2.9.3 outlines measures to manage impacts on decision-making systems noting cumulative impacts will be addressed by Whole of Government Initiatives through the Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap Steering Committee, supported by an Implementation Plan Working Group. REZ cumulative impacts will be managed by the Central-West Orana REZ Regional Leadership Executive Social Services Sub-Group, co-chaired by EnergyCo and the NSW Premier's Department and will work towards an action plan to address growing social service demand due to increase REZ non-residential workforce. The Social Services Sub-Group will inform the CWO Regional Steering Committee and escalate matters for government attention as needed.	

Impact area	Engagement Phase	Stakeholder Group	Issue raised	Where addressed in the SIM Plan	How was the issue resolved in the SIM Plan	If unresolved or only partially resolved in the SIM plan, what are the next steps to seek resolution
Livelihoods	Phase 2	CRG	Concerns about biosecurity threats for the district.	Section 2.4.3 Section 2.8.3	Section 2.4.3 outlines measures to manage impact to livelihoods. ACEREZ will manage impacts to livelihoods by developing Property Access Plans with each landowner. Depending on their needs, property owners can access independent legal advice when developing Property Access Plans for access to agricultural properties. Section 2.8.3 outlines measure to manage impacts on surroundings. ACEREZ will implement biosecurity measures for accessing properties which sets the overarching measures for protecting biosecurity and resulting impacts to agricultural land and food production for future generations. ACEREZ will manage impacts to agricultural land and food by reporting all incidents of damage to livestock, crops or otherwise immediately and escalate them through the incident notification and reporting process. Details of Significant Incidents will be provided to EnergyCo within 48 hours. The transmission easement boundaries are established as per land agreements. Changes to the transmission location, if needed, will take place within the existing boundaries.	
Surroundings	Phase 2	CRG	In the past year, the realisation that the visual amenity will change. Lots of photos being taken. Concerns about the visual impact of two 500kV transmission lines. Mitigate by towers being painted green to better blend into the landscape. Mitigate by more proactive environmental solutions for local communities rather than offsets. For examples parks and tree planting on farms.	Not applicable to the SIM Plan		This is unresolved in the SIM Plan. The SIM Plan focuses on impacts that will arise during the Project construction. The visual impacts of the Transmission infrastructure has been determined as an operational impact of the Project.
Way of life	Phase 2	CRG	In the past year, the condition of local infrastructure (roads and creek crossings) has deteriorated due to more extreme weather events. Mitigate by clear information about road maintenance responsibility, e.g., is it up to local councils? Monitor deterioration of road conditions and maintenance needs and reported communication of actions taken, in particular of Merotherie road.	Section 2.3.3	An independent dilapidation survey will be delivered to establish existing condition of local roads and repair any damage to local roads on the transport routes that are linked to the Project related road traffic, and preparation of a report on the road repairs completed.	
Way of life	Phase 2	CRG	Concern about cumulative impacts of State significant development projects' construction timetables and traffic movements. Concern about the lack of concrete information on cumulative impact of traffic. We are assuming it is negative. Mitigate by traffic management plan coordination between different projects.	Section 2.3.3	Section 2.3.3 outlines the measures to manage impacts on way of life. ACEREZ's Traffic and Transport Management Plan will manage impacts to traffic as a measure to manage impacts to safety from increased traffic. A Transport Strategy will be developed in stages and in consultation with Transport for NSW and relevant Councils. As a result of SIM Plan engagement, a working group for traffic management within the REZ will be established by EnergyCo and traffic management plan will be made publicly available for communities	
Decision Making	Phase 2	CRG - Warrabinga Wiradjuri #7 Native Title Claimants Aboriginal Corporation	Not adequately consulted, as engagement has been directed through the First Nations Group, and the Corporation's repeated requests for meaningful engagement have been ignored. They seek clarification on who is representing their interests and under what authority. Additionally, the cancellation of the SIM focus group for Mudgee and the replacement with a survey is seen as insufficient, particularly for Elders who may not have access to digital platforms. They emphasise that participation in ceremonies does not equate to proper consultation on broader impacts. The Corporation urges EnergyCo and ACEREZ to engage directly with them as key stakeholders and requests a formal meeting to discuss their concerns and ensure their community's voices are heard and represented in the Plan.	Appendix C	A focus group in Mudgee targeted at Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members was delivered. It is understood there was a misunderstanding about the delivery of the focus group given the low number of people who registered to attend. Energy Co has reached out to Warrabinga Wiradjuri #7 Native Title Claimants to obtain their feedback to incorporate into the SIM Plan.	

The following Table 40 provides feedback collected from interviews with landowners in Mid-Western Regional Council (MRC) and Warrumbungle Shire Council (WSC). The landowner feedback has been grouped based on their location and specific identifying information has been removed to respect privacy.

Table 40: Consultation feedback from landowners

Impact area	Engagement Phase	Stakeholder Group	Issue raised	Where addressed in the SIM Plan	How was the issue resolved in the SIM Plan	If unresolved or only partially resolved in the SIM plan, what are the next steps to seek resolution
Way of Life	Phase 2	Landowner (neighbouring)	The landowner is concerned about flooding and structural changes to Merotherie Road, which could damage paddocks and fences; security issues due to increased activity from the hub and camps; and water availability, with potential impairment of local water supplies. Additionally, they are worried about the decline in property value, lack of direct consultation, loss of trees and birdlife, and the sudden influx of people affecting the local community. Other concerns include the need for legal assistance, utilisation of unused buildings, fire risks, and having a dedicated Project contact.	Section 2.3.3	The issues raised have been considered in the SIM Plan. EnergyCo is liaising directly with this landowner and a place manager has been assigned to provide response to specific queries and requirements.	This is partially resolved by the SIM Plan. The Energy & Water Ombudsman NSW (EWON) has expanded its jurisdiction to take complaints from landholders and community members impacted by renewable energy infrastructure. The EWON can manage complaints and unresolved issues from landholders and community members related to transmission and new transmission infrastructure. Landholders and community members can escalate unresolved matters to EWON.
Community	Phase 2	Landowner interviews (MRC and WSC)	Loss of sense of safety on property due to non-resident workforce.	Section 2.2.3 Section 2.3.3	Section 2.2.3 outlines the measures to manage impacts on community including measures to implement the workforce standards of behaviours to minimise the impact of the non-resident workforce on sense of safety. ACEREZ is also exploring opportunities to provide employees with a range of volunteer opportunities in the community. Section 2.3.3 outlines the measures to manage impacts on way of life including measures for vehicle incidents to be reported through the complaints management system will be identified based on their registration number plate (new).	
Livelihoods	Phase 2	Landowner interviews (MRC and WSC)	Acquisition process didn't allow for neighbours to collaborate to accommodate needs of each property or find a middle ground. Property Access Plan not developed. Concerns during construction as Property Access Plan is completed though still a lot of unanswered questions. People don't understand we had no choice with transmission lines coming through our property. It is voluntary or compulsory acquisition. It is not like solar or wind, where you have a choice.	Section 2.3.3 Section 2.4.3 Section 2.4.4 Section 2.6.3 Section 2.8.3	Section 2.3.3 outlines measures to manage impacts on way of life including managing construction related impacts on sense of place through the Property Access Plans and the additional measure of enhancing the Property Access Plans process by walkthroughs with landowners and include information about escalation point for Property Access Plans. Section 2.4.3 outlines management measures and strategies for livelihoods by ACEREZ managing impacts to livelihoods by developing Property Access Plans with each landowner. Depending on their needs, property owners can access legal advice from when developing Property Access Plans. Additionally, hosting landowners will be able to access Property Access Plan information via an online portal, which includes details of escalation points. Section 2.4.4 outlines management monitoring and reporting framework for livelihoods and includes ensuring Property Access Plans are being adhered by monthly reviews via CMS. Section 2.6.3 outlines measures to manage impacts on health and wellbeing including managing interactions with landowners through the CCS, landowner Property Access Plans to reduce the impact on landowner mental health. Section 2.8.3 outlines measures to manage impacts on surroundings by implementing the biosecurity measures for accessing properties and Property	

Impact area	Engagement Phase	Stakeholder Group	Issue raised	Where addressed in the SIM Plan	How was the issue resolved in the SIM Plan	If unresolved or only partially resolved in the SIM plan, what are the next steps to seek resolution
					Access Plans to reduce negative impacts to agricultural land and food production.	
Community	Phase 2	Landowner interviews (MRC and WSC)	Process of acquisition there was no respect - communication not clear, not consulted about changes, property assets and information ignored resulting in tree clearing and removal of assets, pressured into voluntary acquisition by line's placement to be changed, then not honoured. Need to be able to talk to the people who make the decisions. There is a lack of transparency and capacity to make decisions. The key point of contact should be able to make decisions. Landowners have one point of contact across all the projects, or at least for Transmission project. Communication needs to clear, concise, consistent, honest, timely and open. Questions answered, follow up and outcomes. Lack of communication causes uncertainty and stress.	Section 2.3.3 Section 2.4.3 Section 2.4.4 Section 2.6.3 Section 2.8.3	This is partially addressed in the SIM Plan. Section 2.3.3 outlines measures to manage impacts on way of life including managing construction related impacts on sense of place through the Property Access Plans and the additional measure of enhancing the Property Access Plans process by walkthroughs with landowners and include information about escalation point for Property Access Plans. Section 2.4.3 outlines management measures and strategies for livelihoods by managing the potential impact of increased biosecurity threats on livelihoods through the biosecurity measures for accessing properties and Property Access Plans. ACEREZ managing impacts to livelihoods by developing Property Access Plans with each landowner. Depending on their needs, property owners can access independent legal advice from when developing Property Access Plans for access to agricultural properties. Section 2.4.4 outlines management monitoring and reporting framework for livelihoods and includes ACEREZ will implement a biosecurity measures for accessing properties which sets the overarching measures for protecting biosecurity to be reviewed monthly via CMS and ensuring Property Access Plans are being adhered by monthly review via CMS. Section 2.6.3 outlines measures to manage impacts on health and wellbeing including managing interactions with landowners through the CCS, landowner Property Access Plans to reduce the impact on landowner mental health. Section 2.8.3 outlines measures to manage impacts on surroundings by implementing the biosecurity measures for accessing properties and Property Access Plans to reduce negative impacts to agricultural land and food production. The following additional measures have been established to respond to consultation feedback during the development of the SIM Plan: • For landowners hosting/adjacent to multiple projects, establish coordination/interface meetings with ACEREZ place managers and other nearby SSD projects with the aim to reduce cumulative construction impacts (e.g. noise and combining interactions with landowners to reduce construction fatigue) In addition, EnergyCo has developed Guidelines for written follow up with landowners to ensure a consistent approach from EnergyCo to ACEREZ.	This is partially resolved by the SIM Plan. The Energy & Water Ombudsman NSW (EWON) has expanded its jurisdiction to take complaints from landholders and community members impacted by renewable energy infrastructure. The EWON can manage complaints and unresolved issues from landholders and community members related to transmission and new transmission infrastructure. Landholders and community members can escalate unresolved matters to EWON.
Health and wellbeing	Phase 2	Landowner interviews (MRC and WSC)	Concern for mental health, a need for more intervention due to ongoing uncertainty. Acquisition process has caused mental health issues. Still have construction and operation to go through.	Section 2.6.3	Section 2.6.3 outlines the measures to manage impacts on health and wellbeing on landowner's mental health by managing interaction with landowners through the CCS, the landowner Property Access Plans and mental health support telephone service, already established by EnergyCo. EnergyCo, EnergyCo has partnered with Grand Pacific Health to deliver a Mental Health Support Program to provide additional support to individuals owning or residing on a property directly impacted by projects. This program	

Impact area	Engagement Phase	Stakeholder Group	Issue raised	Where addressed in the SIM Plan	How was the issue resolved in the SIM Plan	If unresolved or only partially resolved in the SIM plan, what are the next steps to seek resolution
					will provide eligible residents access to comprehensive, personalised and longer-term services delivered under mental health care plans.	
Livelihoods	Phase 2	Landowner interviews (MRC and WSC)	During construction concerns about negative impacts to biosecurity. During construction negative impacts to lambing.	Section 2.4.3	Section 2.8.3 outlines measures to manage impacts on surroundings including reducing the negative impacts to agricultural land and food production and preserving, protecting and planting trees to minimise the impact to the environment. ACEREZ will implement biosecurity measures for accessing properties which sets the overarching measures for protecting biosecurity and resulting impacts to agricultural land and food production for future generations.	
Community	Phase 2	Landowner interviews (MRC)	Changes to community cohesion is cumulative due to transmission lines and the number of proposed projects across the REZ. Community cohesion is caused by many polarised opinions.	Section 2.2.3	Section 2.2.3 outlines the measures to manage impacts on community cohesion, including: • Implementing the Community Communication Strategy and Complaints Management System; and • Opportunities to provide employees with a range of volunteer opportunities in the community. The SIM Plan will monitor "Number of people who describes their relationship with their neighbours and members of the community as “good” and “very good”	
Livelihoods	Phase 2	Landowner interviews (MRC)	During construction negative impacts to cropping. Loss of potential income (horticulture and mining) due to alignment.	Section 2.4.3	Section 2.8.3 outlines measures to manage impacts on surroundings including reducing the negative impacts to agricultural land and food production and preserving, protecting and planting trees to minimise the impact to the environment. ACEREZ will implement biosecurity measures for accessing properties which sets the overarching measures for protecting biosecurity and resulting impacts to agricultural land and food production for future generations.	
Accessibility	Phase 2	Landowner interviews (MRC)	During construction concerned about firefighting and dust (wants dust suppression on roads, especially main roads). Concerns regarding construction as clearing 100s of trees on the property and don’t know what it looks like.	Section 2.5.3 Section 2.8.3	This is partially addressed in the SIM Plan. The demand on emergency services will be managed through emergency planning, coordination and engagement, project personnel to be trained in emergency management and fire management to respond to project emergencies and the Emergency Management Plan (EMP) (see Section 2.5.3). A Biodiversity Offset Package will be delivered as per Condition of Approval B22, and there will be an opportunity to Work with Landcare and community groups to scope and fund an environmental initiative for community and landowners to increase/restore native vegetation, for example via seed bank collection with local Landcare organisations.	This is partially resolved by the SIM Plan. The Environmental Management Strategy addressed impacts to air quality and relevant management measures.
Livelihoods	Phase 2	Landowner interviews (WSC)	Property Access Plan is being developed, will not sign it until we have seen the biosecurity measures for accessing properties and fire safety plan. What is the process, if the Property Access Plans are not followed? What are the actions and remedy? One landowner reported that Property Access Plan done -	Section 2.3.3 Section 2.4.3 Section 2.4.4 Section 2.8.3	This is partially addressed in the SIM Plan. Section 2.4.3 outlines management measures and strategies for livelihoods by managing the potential impact of increased biosecurity threats on livelihoods through the biosecurity measures for accessing properties and Property Access Plans. ACEREZ managing impacts to livelihoods by developing Property Access Plans with each landowner. Depending on their needs, property owners can access legal advice. Where	This is partially resolved by the SIM Plan. EnergyCo and ACEREZ are continuing to engage with landholders and community organisations to address issues raised during the development of the Social Impact Management Plan. Conditions of Approval A21 and 22 require development

Impact area	Engagement Phase	Stakeholder Group	Issue raised	Where addressed in the SIM Plan	How was the issue resolved in the SIM Plan	If unresolved or only partially resolved in the SIM plan, what are the next steps to seek resolution
			the process was fast, tick-a-box. Post Property Access Plans need to be a walkthrough of the affected area to see how the plan will work. Need to walk through everything with landowners.		existing agricultural operations will be impacted, property owners can access independent legal advice from an when developing Property Access Plans for access to agricultural properties. Additionally, hosting landowners will be able to access Property Access Plan information via an online portal, which includes details of escalation points. Section 2.4.4 outlines management monitoring and reporting framework for livelihoods and includes ACEREZ will implement a biosecurity measures for accessing properties which sets the overarching measures for protecting biosecurity to be reviewed monthly via CMS and ensuring Property Access Plans are being adhered by monthly review via CMS. Section 2.8.3 outlines measures to manage impacts on surroundings by implementing the biosecurity measures for accessing properties and Property Access Plans to reduce negative impacts to agricultural land and food production.	and implementation of a Community Communication Strategy. In addition, the Energy & Water Ombudsman NSW (EWON) has expanded its jurisdiction to take complaints from landholders and community members impacted by renewable energy infrastructure. The EWON can manage complaints and unresolved issues from landholders and community members related to transmission and new transmission infrastructure. Landholders and community members can escalate unresolved matters to EWON.
Way of life	Phase 2	Landowner interviews (WSC)	With communication, check the landowner's preferred method of communication (phone, text, email etc). Need to know the people to talk to develop good relationships. People entering our properties need to be identified by at least have a name tag with name and company. Vehicle signage would be good for easy identification. We need a register, of who and when.	Section 2.3.3 Section 2.6.3	The following additional measures have been established to respond to consultation feedback during the development of the SIM Plan: •All landowners will have a dedicated place manage. For landowners hosting/adjacent to multiple projects, establish coordination/interface meetings with ACEREZ place managers and other nearby SSD projects with the aim to reduce cumulative construction impacts (e.g. noise and combining interactions with landowners to reduce construction fatigue) •Hosting landowners will be able to access Property Access Plan information via an online portal, which includes details of escalation points.	
Community	Phase 2	Landowner interviews (WSC)	Impacted areas need to have representation and benefits, at least, as the same proportion as the impacts. After the Easement compensation received advised compensation will be taxable, implications for property, capital gains. This was not discussed at the start. Will the Benefit Payment Scheme also have tax implications?	Section 2.6.2	The SIM Plan acknowledges that this has been raised as an issue by the community. EnergyCo suggests landowners seek their own independent advice regarding tax implications.	This is partially resolved by the SIM Plan. EnergyCo will consider tax implications in the development of future schemes.
Community	Phase 2	Landowner interviews (WSC)	This SIM Plan is just for construction of the transmission project. We want to see the full picture, what is coming next, how many more projects? The SIM Plan provide a summary in Plain English - easy to understand and digest. Across the REZ, duplication of people and reports have been an issue and causing engagement fatigue, need a database for at least a starting point for all new projects. Coordinated, co-operative and collaborative approach between EnergyCo/ACEREZ and REZ developers. To mitigate fatigue, get on with the construction, get the job done and be efficient. EnergyCo/ACREZ to work closely with Council about the roads and monitoring them.	Section 2.6.3 Section 2.9.3	The following mitigation measures have been adopted to address this issue: • For landowners hosting/adjacent to multiple projects, establish coordination/interface meetings with ACEREZ place managers and other nearby SSD projects with the aim to reduce cumulative construction impacts (e.g. noise and combining interactions with landowners to reduce construction fatigue) • EnergyCo to submit via email a summary of quarterly report to local community members registered via the survey and EnergyCo's newsletter. Additionally, EnergyCo have committed to doing a plain English version of the SIM Plan.	

Impact area	Engagement Phase	Stakeholder Group	Issue raised	Where addressed in the SIM Plan	How was the issue resolved in the SIM Plan	If unresolved or only partially resolved in the SIM plan, what are the next steps to seek resolution
Livelihoods	Phase 2	Landowner interviews (WSC)	Loss of income as we will need to project manage construction and will take time away from main business of farming. Loss of income from lead up to construction with the EIS, burden on us, need to take time out of farming operations. Would be good to have some compensation. Need an answer about electric fences and what can be done. Farm workers are hard to get due to the competition with the mines, transmission project, could make it worse.	Section 2.4.3	This is partially addressed in the SIM Plan. The following measures are implemented in the SIM Plan: • For landowners hosting/adjacent to multiple projects, establish coordination/interface meetings with ACEREZ place managers and other nearby SSD projects with the aim to reduce cumulative construction impacts (e.g. noise and combining interactions with landowners to reduce construction fatigue). • Diminished availability of local workers will be managed through training opportunities for local communities.	This is partially resolved by the SIM Plan. EnergyCo and ACEREZ are continuing to engage with landholders and community organisations to address issues raised during the development of the Social Impact Management Plan. Conditions of Consent A21 and 22 require development and implementation of a Community Communication Strategy. In addition, The Energy & Water Ombudsman NSW (EWON) has expanded its jurisdiction to take complaints from landholders and community members impacted by renewable energy infrastructure. The EWON can manage complaints and unresolved issues from landholders and community members related to transmission and new transmission infrastructure. Landholders and community members can escalate unresolved matters to EWON.
Surroundings	Phase 2	Landowner interviews (WSC)	Due to construction losing trees. Trees need to be replaced on our property and fenced to protect them. Offset needs to be locally through Landcare and farmers and include fencing for trees to survive. Provide funding for tree replacement. Avoid tree removal as much as possible on properties. Losing trees on property. There should be more leeway to be offset in a different way. Tree removal will cause corrosion and salt issues.	Section 2.8.3	Section 2.8.3 outlines the measures and plans to manage impacts on surroundings. They include: • Preserving, protecting and planting trees to minimise the impact to the environment. • ACEREZ will work with EnergyCo and community groups such as Landcare to explore local environmental initiatives (measure adopted based on community feedback). Section 2.8.4 outlines the impact management, monitoring and reporting framework for impacts on surroundings. They include the measure of Biodiversity Management Plan and Biodiversity Offset Plan. EnergyCo and ACEREZ are continuing to engage with landholders and community organisations to address issues raised during the development of the Social Impact Management Plan.	
Way of life	Phase 2	Landowner interviews (WSC)	Increased traffic how is it going to be managed. For example, the Golden Highway has no overtaking lanes, Port to Rez transport, there are no details. Monitoring of roads, the number of vehicles and weather, to stop roads being destroyed and landowners unable to travel to towns for shopping and services or unable to send cattle to market. There should be maintenance of roads. Concerns about cumulative impacts due to other related developments e.g. quarry, renewable projects.	Section 2.3.3	Traffic and transport issues are considered in the following strategies and management plans: — Transport Strategies which will be developed in consultation with Transport for NSW and relevant Councils as per condition B31. The strategies will be developed in stages, including: — Merotherie Transport Strategy — Elong Elong and Wollar Switching Station Transport Strategy — Project-wide Transport Strategy — Stringing Transport Strategy — Other stages if required — a Traffic and transport management plan developed in consultation with NPWS, TfNSW, Dubbo Regional Council, Mid-Western Regional Council, Upper Hunter Shire Council, Warrumbungle Shire Council and the NSW Police to the satisfaction of the Planning Secretary (condition B35). In addition, the following conditions of approval will be implemented, which	

Impact area	Engagement Phase	Stakeholder Group	Issue raised	Where addressed in the SIM Plan	How was the issue resolved in the SIM Plan	If unresolved or only partially resolved in the SIM plan, what are the next steps to seek resolution
					are consistent with measures suggested by community and key stakeholders: — use of designated heavy vehicles routes described in the EIS as per conditions B29 and B30 — road upgrades and relevant mitigation measures established in the Transport Strategies (condition B32) — independent dilapidation survey to establish existing condition of local roads and repair any damage to local roads on the transport routes that are linked to development related road traffic, and preparation of a report on the road repairs completed (condition B34)	
Community	Phase 2	Landowner interviews (WSC)	Loss of cohesion is due to the "haves" and "have nots". Could be managed by Councils being able to prepare communities before the decisions are news. Also, viable and visible benefits for the whole community, for example, 10% off electricity bill for everyone in the LGA. Plus, support grants where serious project work will be done.	Section 2.2.3	Section 2.2.3 outlines measures to manage impacts on community including measures and strategies for community cohesion through ACEREZ community benefit initiatives. ACEREZ will consult with the community in 2025 to develop community benefit initiatives. The community benefit initiatives will also consider the Social Impact Assessment as well as the outcomes of the consultation undertaken for the SIM Plan. The Community and Employment Benefit Program (CEBP) is funded by access fees and its legislative remit is to provide benefits holistically within the boundary of a REZ where communities are hosting generation activity. To be eligible for CEBP funding, the funded component of a project must be for a “community purpose” or “employment purpose” and be located within the geographic boundary of a REZ. The program design of the CEPB was informed by a series of consultation events held in the region in early 2024, which built on previous consultation work.	

Table 41: Consultation feedback from the Central West Orana (CWO) Working Group

Impact Area	Engagement Phase	Stakeholder Group	Issue raised	Where addressed in the SIM Plan	How was the issue resolved in the SIM Plan	If unresolved or only partially resolved in the SIM plan, what are the next steps to seek resolution
Decision Making	Phase 1	CWO Working Group	Phase 2 consultation: In Phase 2, involve Local Aboriginal Land Councils (LALCs) and LALC zone officers in Dubbo and Mudgee.	Appendix C	The SIM plan considered targeted consultations with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members via focus groups in Wellington, Dubbo and Mudgee. Further details are provided in Appendix C.	
Health and wellbeing	Phase 1	CWO Working Group	Impacts on Aboriginal people: extend beyond heritage and culture, encompassing employment, housing, health (including mental health), and social aspects such as social breakdowns and other social issues.	Section 2.7.3	The impacts on Aboriginal people are addressed through the following measures in the plan: • Consulting with the Central West Orana Working Group and RAPs where required to minimise cumulative impacts on Aboriginal cultural values. • The First Nations Outcomes team at EnergyCo will support the promotion of employment, apprenticeship and traineeship opportunities • The appointment of an Aboriginal Participation Manager who will implement training, initiatives and support measures for the Aboriginal workforce to support cultural safety.	

Table 42: Consultation feedback from Aboriginal Focus Groups held in Dubbo, Mudgee and Wellington

Impact Area	Engagement Phase	Stakeholder Group	Issue raised	Where addressed in the SIM Plan	How was the issue resolved in the SIM Plan	If unresolved or only partially resolved in the SIM plan, what are the next steps to seek resolution
Community	Phase 2	Dubbo Aboriginal Focus Group	Impacts on accommodation demand: conflict between workers and locals over accommodation. The focus group questioned how the project would house extra people with new people coming into town causing rents and property prices to increase, driving out local people.	Section 2.2.3	Measures to manage pressure on short term accommodation and local housing supply and affordability during construction of the accommodation camp include using a staged approach starting with approximately 50 workers in the first two stages (to mid-2025) and sourcing the initial workforce from within the REZ. The ACMP may be updated throughout the project to reflect any changes in project requirements, stakeholder feedback, or regulatory conditions as needed. Any substantial changes to the layout or design of the camps will require additional consultation.	
Accessibility	Phase 2	Dubbo Aboriginal Focus Group	Impact on health care system with camp facility was raised. Impact on hospital capacity with influx of new workforce and camp, with the focus group expecting impact on Dubbo hospital to be large	Section 2.5.3	This is partially addressed in the SIM Plan. Section 2.5.3 outlines the management measures and strategies for impacts on health services This includes reducing the demand on local health services through providing onsite and telehealth services at the accommodation camps and supporting mental health wellbeing through the ACMP and workforce wellbeing initiatives. Initiatives include implementing of Employee Assistance Program (EAP) free phone counselling program to support mental health wellbeing, health initiatives (i.e. onsite flu vaccinations and skin checks), awareness initiatives such as toolbox talks, annual mental health and wellbeing survey. ACEREZ will establish an on-site first aid facility with qualified nursing and paramedic personnel. The SIM Plan will monitor the number of project non-resident workforce who have accessed local health services – outside of what is provided on camp site.	This is partially resolved by the SIM Plan. The REZ cumulative impacts on local services will be managed by the Central-West Orana REZ Regional Leadership Executive Social Services Sub-Group, co-chaired by EnergyCo and the NSW Premier's Department and will work towards an action plan to address growing social service demand due to increase REZ non-residential workforce. The Social Services Sub-Group will inform the CWO Regional Steering Committee and escalate matters for government attention as needed.
Way of life	Phase 2	Dubbo Aboriginal Focus Group	Impact on roads around camp facility was raised.	Section 2.3.3	Traffic and transport issues are considered in the following strategies and management plans: — Transport Strategies which will be developed in consultation with Transport for NSW and relevant Councils as per condition B31. The strategies will be developed in stages, including: — Merotherie Transport Strategy — Elong Elong and Wollar Switching Station Transport Strategy — Project-wide Transport Strategy — Stringing Transport Strategy — Other stages if required	

Impact Area	Engagement Phase	Stakeholder Group	Issue raised	Where addressed in the SIM Plan	How was the issue resolved in the SIM Plan	If unresolved or only partially resolved in the SIM plan, what are the next steps to seek resolution
Livelihoods	Phase 2	Dubbo Aboriginal Focus Group	The focus group was concerned about project impact on local Aboriginal employment. the focus group wanted to know what the employment strategy for the project is and does it match local Aboriginal capacity. It was suggested to invest in local aboriginal employees and business which would be an asset, enhancing project and sustainability. It was noted that there are a lot of Aboriginal businesses around, very eager to do the work, but don't know who to help. the project need to have local employment recruitment, utilising Dubbo-based employment agencies and local mob agencies. It was suggested there is disconnect between regions and the project provides the opportunity to recruit within this region, and it needs to recruit local people. Training opportunities with developers: It was suggested that the project provides the opportunity for local Aboriginal training and support, opportunity to approach young people for traineeships. The Aboriginal community are willing to start the training process early, 2 years for apprentice, start traineeship and finish the job. Give the Aboriginal people the opportunity - the project is missing the first step to engage now. People need to get the skills.	Section 2.4.3	Section 2.4.3 outlines the measures to maximise opportunities for Aboriginal employment and procurement participation. The Industry and Aboriginal Participation Plan (IAPP) outlines ACEREZ's approach to engaging with local industry, service providers, and Aboriginal communities during the delivery phase of the project. It sets compliance requirements and targets. The IAPP was developed in consultation with local Councils and Aboriginal stakeholders including LALC's. The IAPP was further informed by local industry and Aboriginal businesses through the delivery of industry forums. The IAPP will be reviewed six monthly and updated as required to reflect emerging opportunities, stakeholder feedback, and project developments. ACEREZ will prepare a monthly 'IAPP performance report' and six monthly 'Australian Industry Participation Plan' (AIPP) report. In addition to these compliance reports ACEREZ will prepare a quarterly Skills and Employment report to be published on the Project Website. Measures include development of the co-designed 'Aboriginal Consultation and Communication Framework' in partnership with the CWO Working Group to guide key deliverables to ensure they align with the varying community employment and industry priorities, industry forums and procurement briefings, capability statement and tender writing workshops, Aboriginal pre-employment programs (commenced Q1 2025), Aboriginal mentor program, Engaging Wiradjuri, Kamilaroi and Wailwan and their respected clan groups and knowledge holders to deliver cultural awareness training and immersion on Traditional lands, Collaborating with Central West Orana First Nations Working Group, LALC's, Three Rivers Regional Assembly, Supply Nation, the NSW Indigenous Chamber of Commerce and relevant business networks.	
Decision Making	Phase 2	Dubbo Aboriginal Focus Group	Project transparency and communication was raised. How does the company hear the voice of people? Need to talk to the unemployed. Transparency around Aboriginal employment targets, were they achieved or not is important. There needs to be communication - Organisations like EnergyCo offering to people. Come out to the LALCs and see if young people are appropriate to support project.	Section 2.7.3 Section 2.4.4	The First Nations Outcomes team at EnergyCo has been established to promote engagement with Aboriginal people, as well as participation on employment and traineeship opportunities. The SIM Plan stablished as monitoring target achieving 2% (FTE) of the workforce to be Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people	
Livelihoods	Phase 2	Mudgee Aboriginal Focus Group	Opportunity to work with young Aboriginal community. You need to have local people, a good liaison. Someone who takes on the responsibility of working with young people.	Section 2.7.3	The First Nations Outcomes team at EnergyCo will support the promotion of employment, apprenticeship and traineeship opportunities.	
Culture	Phase 2	Mudgee Aboriginal Focus Group	It was suggested that Agricultural land should not be used for solar panels.	Not applicable to the SIM Plan		This is unresolved in the SIM Plan. The delivery of solar panels on Agricultural land is not part of the Project. Solar projects declared State Significant Infrastructure would undertake an environmental impact assessment process subject to approval from the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure.
Decision Making	Phase 2	Wellington Aboriginal Focus Group	Cumulative impacts of engagement. The focus group highlighted the amount of REZ projects, a lot of repetitive conversation without actions or outcomes with little consultation.	Section 2.9.3	Section 2.9.3 outlines the management measures and strategies for impacts on decision making systems. This includes establishing the community information centres as a mechanism to receive feedback from the community and provide a consistent point of contact for the community.	

Impact Area	Engagement Phase	Stakeholder Group	Issue raised	Where addressed in the SIM Plan	How was the issue resolved in the SIM Plan	If unresolved or only partially resolved in the SIM plan, what are the next steps to seek resolution
Decision Making	Phase 2	Wellington Aboriginal Focus Group	Lack of transparency and accountability among REZ projects - it was suggested cumulative impacts of meeting little requirements for cultural awareness. Who makes them accountable for cultural requirements. Who is accountable for Aboriginal employment and cultural outcomes accountable? The focus group suggested these projects do not show a true reflection of cultural needs of the community. It was suggested cultural audits should be completed.	Section 2.7.3	The Central-West Orana Working Group has been set up to support local Aboriginal community consultation to coordinate and streamline consultation across renewable energy generation and network infrastructure projects in the Central-West Orana REZ with local Aboriginal community representatives ACEREZ will provide Aboriginal cultural awareness training specific to the local region. Construction Site inductions will include content in relation to Aboriginal Cultural Awareness and identified cultural heritage site and controls.	
Livelihoods	Phase 2	Wellington Aboriginal Focus Group	Opportunities for traineeships and Aboriginal employment. An example provided was Squadron Energy providing traineeships to fix wind turbines. Support local schools through School-based traineeships. It was suggested Aboriginal trade people can't get jobs. Labouring positions given to us while Dubbo gets the bulk of it. We gave local Aboriginal community a lot of training. No opportunities for positions. If we put them through training, there will be plenty of opportunities. ACEREZ have access to these people who have already train. It was suggested the percentage of Aboriginal employment should match the percentage of the community you are going into. Lack of Aboriginal employment in REZ projects was raised, noting the opportunities the project brings to hire Aboriginal community. Opportunity for partnership agreement and alignment in schools, Tafe - people are job ready. The project brings income to support Aboriginal community and close the gap - Aboriginal Employment Strategy - Employment transparency - it was suggested to employ someone to be local Aboriginal employment officer. There has been a lack of communication on what the project requires in terms of employment and skills	Section 2.4.3	Section 2.4.3 outlines the measures to maximise opportunities for Aboriginal employment and procurement participation. The Industry and Aboriginal Participation Plan (IAPP) outlines ACEREZ's approach to engaging with local industry, service providers, and Aboriginal communities during the delivery phase of the project. It sets compliance requirements and targets. The IAPP was developed in consultation with local Councils and Aboriginal stakeholders including LALC's. The IAPP was further informed by local industry and Aboriginal businesses through the delivery of industry forums. The IAPP will be reviewed six monthly and updated as required to reflect emerging opportunities, stakeholder feedback, and project developments. ACEREZ will prepare a monthly 'IAPP performance report' and six monthly 'Australian Industry Participation Plan' (AIPP) report. In addition to these compliance reports ACEREZ will prepare a quarterly Skills and Employment report to be published on the Project Website. Measures include development of the co-designed 'Aboriginal Consultation and Communication Framework' in partnership with the CWO Working Group to guide key deliverables to ensure they align with the varying community employment and industry priorities, industry forums and procurement briefings, capability statement and tender writing workshops, Aboriginal pre-employment programs (commenced Q1 2025), Aboriginal mentor program, Engaging Wiradjuri, Kamilaroi and Wailwan and their respected clan groups and knowledge holders to deliver cultural awareness training and immersion on Traditional lands, Collaborating with Central West Orana First Nations Working Group, LALC's, Three Rivers Regional Assembly, Supply Nation, the NSW Indigenous Chamber of Commerce and relevant business networks.	
Culture	Phase 2	Wellington Aboriginal Focus Group	Cultural acknowledgement and awareness was raised as an issue, it was suggested that the project demonstrates that the Aboriginal community matters, are seen and a pathway provided. An example of racial abuse on other project sites was provided. It was suggested there should be a standard of all companies to be culturally accredited	Section 2.7.3	ACEREZ will provide Aboriginal cultural awareness training specific to the local region. Construction Site inductions will include content in relation to Aboriginal Cultural Awareness and identified cultural heritage site and controls. The Central-West Orana Working Group has been set up to support local Aboriginal community consultation to coordinate and streamline consultation across renewable energy generation and network infrastructure projects in the Central-West Orana REZ with local Aboriginal community representatives	

Table 43: Consultation feedback from community sessions held in Cassilis, Mudgee, Dunedoo and Gulgong

Impact Area	Engagement Phase	Stakeholder Group	Issue raised	Where addressed in the SIM Plan	How was the issue resolved in the SIM Plan	If unresolved or only partially resolved in the SIM plan, what are the next steps to seek resolution
Accessibility	Phase 2	Cassilis community session	Impact to access to local services (tradespeople) - three community members noted that tradesmen are difficult to access, with them causing delays. Other concerns include access/cost of goods, fuel and food	Section 2.4.3 Section 2.5.3	The impact on diminished availability of employees on local businesses due to competing demand from the Project will be managed through training opportunities for local communities. The workforce accommodation camp will be self-sufficient to minimise impacts to the community to access to services. Section 2.5.3 describes the measures to manage impacts on accessibility to services and goods. Accommodation camp would have specific potable water (purchasing water, storing onsite and developing a potable water treatment plan) and wastewater supply and treatment.	
Accessibility	Phase 2	Cassilis community session	Four community members raised limited/no access to health care and emergency services, and day cares as a key concern. Two community members raised support for health programs in Cassilis. Other member supported local community-focused infrastructure.	Section 2.5.3 Section 2.6.3 Section 2.2.3	Demand on local health services will be managed through providing onsite and telehealth services at the accommodation camps and supporting mental health wellbeing through the ACMP and workforce wellbeing initiatives. EnergyCo will establish a Mental Health Support Program to provide additional mental health support for landholders and residents of properties impacted by the project. ACEREZ has allocated funding for community benefit initiatives to leave a legacy that extends beyond the completion of the REZ transmission infrastructure and ensures benefits of the renewable energy transition are directed to regional communities. ACEREZ will consult with the community in 2025 to develop community benefit initiatives. The community benefit initiatives will also consider the Social Impact Assessment as well as the outcomes of the consultation undertaken for the SIM plan. In addition, the Community and Employment Benefit Program (CEBP) includes grant streams targeted at local communities (Local Community Fund and Local Community Small Grants).	
Accessibility	Phase 2	Cassilis community session	A key project concern is increased demand on telecommunications. This was raised by a community member in relation to Turill. A project opportunity could be a partnership with a mobile phone operator for additional towers and the promotion of tele-health services.	Section 2.5.3 Section 2.5.4	Section 2.5.3 outlines the measures to manage pressure on essential services, in particular for telecommunications. These include: • Providing communications infrastructure onsite and exploring opportunities for improvements in nearby townships in consultation with infrastructure owners. On-site communication will be facilitated by a combination of dedicated radio channels on the Public Safety Network, UHF radio, satellite and mobile services. • Internet connection for the temporary workforce accommodation will be supported by a dedicated microwave link.	
Accessibility	Phase 2	Cassilis community session	Monitoring should include non-resident workers who use local health services.	Section 2.5.4	Section 2.5.4 has included the Monitoring of the Number of project non-resident workforce who have accessed local health services – outside of what is provided on camp site.	

Impact Area	Engagement Phase	Stakeholder Group	Issue raised	Where addressed in the SIM Plan	How was the issue resolved in the SIM Plan	If unresolved or only partially resolved in the SIM plan, what are the next steps to seek resolution
Community	Phase 2	Cassilis community session	Impact to community cohesion - Change in composition and community interactions as FIFO workers are not integrated (at pub, in town). Sense of safety due to non-resident workforce was raised by two community members. Missed opportunities for increasing community cohesion between urban and rural communities. Loss of community cohesion due to discrepancy between REZ payments. Mitigation measures included: incentives to restore properties, CCTV, identifiable work vehicles, policies and a complaints management system or tracking crime numbers.	Section 2.2.3 Section 2.2.4 Section 2.3.4	This is partially addressed in the SIM Plan. The following measures have been developed to manage impacts to community cohesion, sense of safety: • Implementing the Community Communication Strategy and Complaints Management System to manage impacts to community cohesion. • Implementing the workforce standards of behaviours to minimise the impact of the non-resident workforce on sense of safety. • Vehicle incidents reported through the complaints management system will be identified based on their registration number plate Monitoring indicators included in the SIM Plan (Sections 2.2.4 and 2.3.4) include: • Number of people who describes their relationship with their neighbours and members of the community as “good” and “very good” • Number of verified or avoidable complaints regarding non-resident workforce behaviour • Proportion of people who describe their sense of safety and experience with local traffic as “poor” and “none/very poor” • Proportion of people who declare to be “unsatisfied” or “very unsatisfied” with the way in which traffic impacts are managed.	This is partially resolved by the SIM Plan. This issue will be also monitored by The Central-West Orana REZ Regional Leadership Executive (RLE) Social Services Sub-Group, co-chaired by EnergyCo and the NSW Premier’s Department. The RLE sub-group will work towards an action plan to address growing social service demand due to increase REZ non-residential workforce. The Social Services Sub-Group will inform the CWO Regional Steering Committee and escalate matters for government attention as needed.
Culture	Phase 2	Cassilis community session	Positive impact from connecting with Aboriginal people for initiatives such as smoking ceremonies.	Section 2.7.3	This is addressed through implementing the Industry and Aboriginal Participation Plan (IAPP) and delivery of Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Training to enhance knowledge about Aboriginal cultural values. A smoking ceremony was undertaken with local aboriginal knowledge holders at the start of pre-construction minor works at the Merotherie site. ACEREZ will continue engagement with local Aboriginal people and groups throughout construction.	
Decision Making	Phase 2	Cassilis community session	Community members raised cumulative impact of consultation fatigue. Key issues included: accountability, ensuring all voices are heard, changes in the project timelines and delays, and power imbalance of community and REZ project proponents. Multiple community members reported feeling powerless or overloaded by information regarding the project.	Section 2.9.2 Section 2.9.3	This is partially addressed in the SIM Plan. Section 2.9.2 determined a high cumulative unmitigated impact to community decision making, and Section 2.9.3 identifies the following management measures to address this direct and cumulative impact: • Developing this SIM Plan to consolidate social impact management and reduce consultation fatigue. • Implementing the baseline and then annual community attitudes survey to incorporate community feedback into social impact management. • Establishing a community information centre as a mechanism to receive feedback from the community and a community information van • Cumulative impacts will be addressed by Whole of Government Initiatives through the Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap Steering Committee, supported by an Implementation Plan Working Group (Refer to Appendix G). • EnergyCo to provide a summary of quarterly reporting at the CRG, CWO Working Group and RLE Sub Group. • EnergyCo to submit via email a summary of quarterly report to local community members registered in survey and EnergyCo’s newsletter.	This is partially resolved by the SIM Plan. EnergyCo and ACEREZ are continuing to engage with landholders and community organisations to address issues raised during the development of the Social Impact Management Plan.

Impact Area	Engagement Phase	Stakeholder Group	Issue raised	Where addressed in the SIM Plan	How was the issue resolved in the SIM Plan	If unresolved or only partially resolved in the SIM plan, what are the next steps to seek resolution
Decision Making	Phase 2	Cassilis community session	Access to direct information rather than via Council was raised by a community member. They recommended utilising the community noticeboard, local newspaper and LED signage.	Section 2.3.3	In Section 2.3.3, the following management measures have been stablished to promote direct communication and information to community members: • Notification (e.g. letter box drops, phone call, email, onsite meeting) of construction works and impacts 7 days prior to commencement including nature of works and noise, vibration and dust impacts, traffic impacts, utility disruptions, project milestones and project updates. • Establishing Public Liaison Officers/ Community Place Managers at the Community Information Centre. A community information van will be available later this year to visit other towns in the vicinity of the project. • Implementation of 24-hour toll free enquiry number (1800 298 379), project email (cwo.community@acerez-acjv.com.au), community information centre and PO Box to receive enquiries and complaints, with public complaints record to be published monthly on the ACEREZ website • Implementation of CMS with timeframes for response and process for escalation to EnergyCo. o Phone enquiry resolution response plan within 7 days o Written enquiries resolution response within 10 days. ACEREZ and EnergyCo will also consider other forms of communication as suggested for different activities.	
Health and wellbeing	Phase 2	Cassilis community session	Four community members raised isolation as a key project concern. One person raised that young people might feel isolated, with another discussing that workers may feel isolated from community. A community member noted that there has been no roll out of mental health support in region.	Section 2.5.3 Section 2.6.3	This is partially addressed in the SIM Plan. Section 2.5.3 outlines the management measures developed to manage impacts on accessibility including reducing the demand on local health services through providing onsite and telehealth services at the accommodation camps and supporting mental health wellbeing through the ACMP and workforce wellbeing initiatives. Section 2.6.3 outlines the measures to manage impacts on health and wellbeing including measures for mental health. The measures include: • Managing interaction with landowners through the CCS and landowner Property Access Plans to reduce the impact on landowner mental health. • A mental health support telephone service as already established by EnergyCo will be maintained to assist landowners whose properties are subject to acquisition for the transmission line. Further information will be provided when available in Q2 of 2025. • EnergyCo will establish a Mental Health Support Program to provide additional mental health support for landholders and residents of properties impacted by the project.	This is partially resolved by the SIM Plan. EnergyCo and ACEREZ are continuing to engage with landholders and community organisations to address issues raised during the development of the Social Impact Management Plan. The Central-West Orana REZ Regional Leadership Executive (RLE) Social Services Sub-Group, co-chaired by EnergyCo and the NSW Premier's Department. The RLE sub-group will work towards an action plan to address growing social service demand due to increase REZ non-residential workforce. The Social Services Sub-Group will inform the CWO Regional Steering Committee and escalate matters for government attention as needed.

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Livelihoods	Phase 2	Cassilis community session	Concern over potential devaluation of properties due to the project and economic impact to locals, farmers and business owners having to work differently due to the project.	Section 2.4.2	Section 2.4.2 identified impacts on landholders' livelihoods due to increased biosecurity threats and project interaction with livestock. This impact will be managed through the biosecurity measures for accessing properties and Property Access Plans.	
Livelihoods	Phase 2	Cassilis community session	Limited opportunities for employment due to the regional area was raised as an impact. Employment opportunities include advertising employment on local Facebook pages and local radio stations. Two community members mentioned work experience programs and job opportunities for more than just trades.	Section 2.4.3	Section 2.4.3 outlines the management measures developed to enhance employment benefits. These measures include: • Enhancing local business opportunities to participate in economic activities and improving livelihoods through local employment opportunities by implementing the Industry and Aboriginal Participation Plan (IAPP), Local Business and Employment Strategy (LBES), Social Benefit Evaluation Criteria and training opportunities. • Provide opportunities for residents within driving distance (e.g. 45km) of project locations to Drive in-Drive out (DIDO). • Communication about the roll-out of these measures will be delivered via the Community Information Centre, the community information van which will visit other towns in the vicinity of the Project. In addition, community members will be able to enquire through 1800 298 379, project email cwo.community@acerez-acjv.com.au. ACEREZ will also consider advertising employment on local Facebook pages and local radio stations.	
Surroundings	Phase 2	Cassilis community session	Three community members noted concerns regarding the local biosecurity. Two community members raised the water infrastructure in the region and the impacts on the region. Both raised the impact on the health of the Turill River.	Section 2.4.3 Section 2.5.3	Section 2.4.3 outlines the management measures developed to manage impacts on livelihoods. These measures include managing the potential impact of increased biosecurity threats on livelihoods through the biosecurity measures for accessing properties and Property Access Plans. Section 2.5.3 outlines the management measures developed to manage impacts on accessibility. These measures include to manage pressure on essential services by establishing camp specific potable water (purchasing water, storing onsite and developing a potable water treatment plan) and wastewater supply and treatment.	
Surroundings	Phase 2	Cassilis community session	Community raised changes to the town, such as huge towers, which impact the town's aesthetic value. It was noted that the community feels overtaken by the industrial footprint in the region. Community noted that they have received assurance that the workforce camps will not be permanent. Two community members raised offsets, especially on local properties and public land.	Section 2.8.3 Section 2.8.4	Section 2.8.3 outlines the measures and plans to manage impacts on surroundings. They include: • Preserving, protecting and planting trees to minimise the impact to the environment. • ACEREZ will work with EnergyCo and community groups such as Landcare to explore local environmental initiatives (measure adopted based on community feedback). Section 2.8.4 outlines the impact management, monitoring and reporting framework for impacts on surroundings. They include the measure of Biodiversity Management Plan and Biodiversity Offset Plan. EnergyCo and ACEREZ are continuing to engage with landholders and community	

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					organisations to address issues raised during the development of the Social Impact Management Plan.	
Way of Life	Phase 2	Cassilis community session	Four people raised concerns about safety and amenity impacts on local roads including increased traffic and congestion, noise, road and road degradation. One community member from Turill also raised these impacts. Impacts included increased heavy vehicle traffic, pressure on roads, noise, degradation of roads and timing. The challenges that a small traffic bypass might bring to community was also raised. A project opportunity is included scheduled maintenance of the roads used and/or upgrade to include additional lanes. It was also raised that alternate routes to the work site should be considered.	Section 2.3.3	Section 2.3.3 outlines the measures to manage impacts on way of life, including traffic impacts and road safety. These measures include: • Managing impacts to road safety through the Traffic and Transport Management Plan (TTMP) and work health and safety (WHS) measures. • An independent dilapidation survey will be delivered to establish existing condition of local roads and repair any damage to local roads on the transport routes that are linked to the Project related road traffic, and preparation of a report on the road repairs completed. • The TTMP will be made publicly available for communities. • Establishing a working group for traffic management within the REZ.	
Accessibility	Phase 2	Dunedoo Community Session	There was an increase in concern on the impact of State Government services as a result of the project including all emergency services and disaster planning. Capacity of emergency services was raised by three people, including firefighting.	Section 2.5.3	This is partially addressed in the SIM Plan. Section 2.5.3 outlines management measures and strategies for impacts on accessibility including managing the demand on emergency services through emergency planning, coordination and engagement. The Emergency Management Plan (EMP) provides a systematic approach for responding to emergencies, supporting emergency services, and minimising the impact of emergencies on property, life, and the environment. The EMP applies to all project sites and personnel working on the project, including subcontractors and site visitors.	This is partially resolved by the SIM Plan. The Central-West Orana REZ Regional Leadership Executive Social Services Sub-Group, co-chaired by EnergyCo and the NSW Premier's Department will work towards an action plan to address growing social service demand due to increase REZ non-residential workforce. The Social Services Sub-Group will inform the CWO Regional Steering Committee and escalate matters for government attention as needed.
Community	Phase 2	Dunedoo Community Session	Impact of community cohesion - there's a clear divide between the project hosts and the remaining community. Neighbours feel they are pitted against each other and their families. Divided community where volunteer organisations are no longer working cohesively e.g. RFS, SES, Junior Rugby League. Less trust throughout the community in relation to the project	Section 2.2.2 Section 2.2.3	Section 2.2.2 acknowledges impacts to community cohesion. The SIM Plan will monitor the following indicator informed by an annual community survey: • Number of people who describes their relationship with their neighbours and members of the community as "good" and "very good"	
Community	Phase 2	Dunedoo Community Session	Community benefit fund spent in bigger towns and not on areas directly impacted. Money has been haphazardly allocated to organisations and not supporting local farming people. Suggested that the project pay a rates contribution to the Council to support with upgrades.	Section 2.2.3	ACEREZ has allocated funding for community benefit initiatives to leave a legacy that extends beyond the completion of the REZ transmission infrastructure and ensures benefits of the renewable energy transition are directed to regional communities. ACEREZ will consult with the community in 2025 to develop community benefit initiatives and ensure the community has a say on where these funds will be allocated. EnergyCo's Community and Employment Benefit Program (CEBP) is funded by access	

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					fees and its legislative remit is to provide benefits holistically within the boundary of a REZ where communities are hosting generation activity. The CEPB includes a Legacy Infrastructure Fund (LIF). The purpose of the LIF is to provide funding for infrastructure projects that will deliver long-term and legacy benefits for local communities within the Central-West Orana REZ. The program design of the CEPB was informed by a series of consultation events held in the region in early 2024, which built on previous consultation work.	
Community	Phase 2	Dunedoo Community Session	Influx of primarily single men in workforce will change composition. Potential concern for camp security. Security on local properties was noted as a growing concern as the community don't know this new workforce and are concerned about trespassing.	Section 2.2.3	Section 2.2.3 outlines measures to manage impacts on community including sense of safety managed through Community Communication Strategy, Complaint Management System, work health and safety measures, workforce standards of behaviours. ACEREZ is exploring opportunities to provide employees with a range of volunteer opportunities in the community, for example: • removing graffiti • painting shared community spaces • upgrading school gardens and common areas • assisting elderly residents with daily needs (e.g. changing lightbulbs or house maintenance). ACEREZ is also exploring options to provide opportunities for volunteers to participate in the Rural Fire Service and State Emergency Services, contributing to the protection and wellbeing of the Central-West Orana region.	
Community	Phase 2	Dunedoo Community Session	Impacts on housing accessibility and affordability were raised four community members.	Section 2.2.3	Section 2.2.3 outlines measures to manage impacts on community. This includes using accommodation camps to accommodate the non-resident workforce and building the accommodation camps in stages to manage pressure on short-term accommodation and local housing supply and affordability.	
Decision Making	Phase 2	Dunedoo Community Session	Impacts and concerns relating to decision making systems including access to information and transparency. Lack of community time and capacity to participate in Project consultation, Project website hard to find, Use of jargon. Not receiving a response after providing feedback to EnergyCo, Pressure to make long term decisions, windfarms not doing social impact management plans, project proponents not being transparent about transport management plan and water licences for accommodation camp. Power imbalance against State Significant Projects. Consultation was suggested to be reviewed with a lack of feedback from information sessions	Section 1.3.5 Section 1.4 Section 2.2.3 Section 2.9.3	This is partially addressed in the SIM Plan. Section 1.3.5 and 1.4 outline the SIM Plan consultation aimed to consult with a range of stakeholders across the REZ, including Councils and the community. Community members from Elong Elong participated in the online survey and EnergyCo hosted a SIM plan consultation session at nearby Dunedoo. Section 2.2.3 outlines measures to manage impacts on community. This includes implementing the Community Communication Strategy and Complaints Management System to manage impacts to community cohesion. Section 2.9.3 outlines the measures to manage impacts on decision-making systems including project communication and transparency. This includes establishing	This is partially resolved by the SIM Plan. EnergyCo and ACEREZ are continuing to engage with landholders and community organisations to address issues raised during the development of the Social Impact Management Plan. In addition, the Energy & Water Ombudsman NSW (EWON) has expanded its jurisdiction to take complaints from landholders and community members impacted by renewable energy infrastructure. EWON can manage complaints and unresolved issues from

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			noted as truly concerning. It was suggested that all towns/areas are included in future consultation e.g. Elong Elong		community information centres as a mechanism to receive feedback from the community and provide a consistent point of contact for the community.	landholders and community members related to transmission and new transmission infrastructure. Landholders and community members can escalate unresolved matters to EWON.
Decision Making	Phase 2	Dunedoo Community Session	Lack of consideration of cumulative impacts in the REZ was raised. Mitigation measures for cumulative impacts suggested there is a central place for complaints to be made (Ombudsman for REZ). The community noted the impacts raised are short term only and they expect to see the creation of “ghost towns” in the future.	Section 2.9.3	This is partially addressed in the SIM Plan. Section 2.9.3 outlines the management measures and strategies for impacts on decision making systems. This includes establishing the community information centres as a mechanism to receive feedback from the community and provide a consistent point of contact for the community. REZ wide cumulative impacts outside the scope of control for the CWO REZ transmission project will be addressed by Whole of Government Initiatives through the Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap Steering Committee, supported by an Implementation Plan Working Group.	This is partially resolved by the SIM Plan. The Energy & Water Ombudsman NSW (EWON) has expanded its jurisdiction to take complaints from landholders and community members impacted by renewable energy infrastructure. The EWON can manage complaints and unresolved issues from landholders and community members related to transmission and new transmission infrastructure. Landholders and community members can escalate unresolved matters to EWON.
Livelihoods	Phase 2	Dunedoo Community Session	The project would redirect potential workers away from local employers with families and local businesses leaving the area and branching off into larger areas such as sale yards and the service industry. Availability of employment was identified as a concern as employment opportunities were noted as very short term (construction phase only).	Section 2.4.3	Section 2.4.3 outlines measures to managing the impact diminished availability of employees on local businesses due to competing demand from the Project through training opportunities for local communities. Measures for local employment and retention include: • Partnerships with Regional Industry Education Partnerships (RIEP) Program and NSW Infrastructure Traineeship Program, attending local job fairs and career days (delivery Q1 2026), • ACEREZ pre-employment and mentoring programs will provide training and support to access jobs and where possible progress to traineeships or apprenticeships (commenced Q1 2025), NSW Corrections employment program, T raining for existing workforce to develop transferrable skills , Maximising local business consultation to support local employment. • ACEREZ will support training local workers through programs including partnership with local providers, Training Service NSW and training organisations to support upskilling and development of local workers.	
Livelihoods	Phase 2	Dunedoo Community Session	Negative impacts on property values was raised as a concern by the Dunedoo community, noting a 30% change in sale prospects.	Section 2.4.2 and 2.4.3	Section 2.4.2 identified impacts on landholders' livelihoods due to increased biosecurity threats and project interaction with livestock. This impact will be managed through the biosecurity measures for accessing properties and Property Access Plans.	

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Surroundings	Phase 2	Dunedoo Community Session	One community member noted tree removal impacting biodiversity, other impacts included increased fire risk due to transmission lines and loss of aerial and land-based firefighting (who is responsible?), the burning of diesel at camp, potential run off from solar farm (there is 2,000 acres on the river) and wastewater and waste pollution from camp and construction. the community questions where construction would source water? Mitigation measure suggested was replacing trees, including local trees within 1km of road.	Section 2.5.3 Section 2.8.3	Section 2.5.3 details the measure to manage impacts on accessibility to services, including the demand on emergency services, and the water and waste management for the camp, including: •Managing the demand on emergency services through emergency planning, coordination and engagement delivered as part of the Emergency Management Plan. •Project personnel are to be trained in emergency management and fire management, to respond to project emergencies. •Establishing camp specific potable water (purchasing water, storing onsite and developing a potable water treatment plan) and wastewater supply and treatment. Section 2.8.3 outlines measures to manage impacts on surroundings including reducing the negative impacts to agricultural land and food production and preserving, protecting and planting trees to minimise the impact to the environment. ACEREZ will implement biosecurity measures for accessing properties which sets the overarching measures for protecting biosecurity and resulting impacts to agricultural land and food production for future generations. The following additional measure has been established to respond to consultation feedback during the development of the SIM Plan and enhance project benefits: •ACEREZ will work with EnergyCo and community groups such as Landcare to explore local environmental initiatives (new).	
Surroundings	Phase 2	Dunedoo Community Session	Impacts on natural aesthetic and sense of place eroded through dramatic changes on landscape and including change from agricultural to industrial landscapes – both transmission and solar.	Section 2.8.3	This is partially addressed in the SIM Plan. Section 2.8.3 outlines measures to manage impacts on surroundings including reducing the negative impacts to agricultural land and food production and preserving, protecting and planting trees to minimise the impact to the environment. ACEREZ will implement biosecurity measures for accessing properties which sets the overarching measures for protecting biosecurity and resulting impacts to agricultural land and food production for future generations. The SIM Plan will monitor people's experience with the environment via an annual survey. Specifically, will monitor the proportion of responses indicating their enjoyment of the environment is 'good' or 'very good'	This is partially resolved by the SIM Plan. The SIM Plan focuses on impacts that will arise during the Project construction. The visual impacts of the Transmission infrastructure has been determined as an operational impact of the Project.
Way of life	Phase 2	Dunedoo Community Session	Impact on safety due to increased traffic was identified as a concern by at least five community members. This included increased highway traffic disrupting stock routes, increased road damage, increased wide load and road closures paired with the number of people travelling to work daily, lack of safety at bus stops and for young and elderly drivers and lack pedestrian crossings was noted as a safety issue. The Dunedoo community suggested the Council has not been told the level of traffic expected roads.	Section 2.3.3 and 2.3.4	Section 2.3.3 outlines the measures to manage impacts on traffic. A Transport Strategies and a Traffic and Transport Management Plan will be developed in consultation with Transport for NSW and relevant Councils. As a result of SIM Plan engagement a working group for traffic management within the REZ will be established by EnergyCo and traffic management plan will be made publicly available for communities. In addition, the SIM Plan will monitor: • Number of project related road and traffic incidents recorded; and • Proportion of people who describe their sense of safety and experience with local traffic as "poor" and "none/very poor" • Proportion of people who declare to be "unsatisfied" or "very unsatisfied" with the way in which traffic impacts are managed.	

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Way of life	Phase 2	Dunedoo Community Session	A community member expressed concerns over their house being covered in dust so thick they could not see their garden.	Section 2.3.3 Section 2.6.3	Section 2.3.3 outlines management measures and strategies for impacts on sense of place, including: • Managing construction related impacts on sense of place through the Property Access Plans • Providing notification of construction works through the CCS and managing complaints through the CMS. Section 2.6.3 outlines management measures and strategies for impacts to health and wellbeing including reducing the impact of construction related amenity impacts (including dust and air quality) by implementing the Environmental Management Strategy and Noise and Vibration Management Plan.	
Way of life	Phase 2	Dunedoo Community Session	One community member reported their feelings of worry noting "life spoilt" by the project.	Section 2.6.1 Section 2.6.3	Section 2.6.1 acknowledges that some community members have experience distress and stress as a result of the Project. As a response, a mental health support telephone service as already established by EnergyCo will be maintained to assist landowners whose properties are subject to acquisition for the transmission line. In addition, EnergyCo will establish a Mental Health Support Program to provide additional mental health support for landholders and residents of properties impacted by the project. Further information will be provided when available in Q2 of 2025. A Complaints Management System is also available to manage community queries and complaints.	
Accessibility	Phase 2	Gulgong community session	Impacts to access to local services and infrastructure including health services (shortage of doctors) was raised by three community members. Community members would like to see increase funding for local health services, footpath infrastructure and relief for electricity costs.	Section 2.5.3	This is partially addressed in the SIM Plan. Section 2.5.3 outlines the management measures and strategies for impacts on accessibility. This includes reducing the demand on local health services through providing onsite and telehealth services at the accommodation camps and supporting mental health wellbeing through the ACMP and workforce wellbeing initiatives. Initiatives include implementing of Employee Assistance Program (EAP) free phone counselling program to support mental health wellbeing, health initiatives (i.e. onsite flu vaccinations and skin checks), awareness initiatives such as toolbox talks, annual mental health and wellbeing survey.	This is partially resolved by the SIM Plan. REZ cumulative impacts will be managed by the Central-West Orana REZ Regional Leadership Executive Social Services Sub-Group, co-chaired by EnergyCo and the NSW Premier's Department and will work towards an action plan to address growing social service demand due to increase REZ non-residential workforce. The Social Services Sub-Group will inform the CWO Regional Steering Committee and escalate matters for government attention as needed.
Livelihoods	Phase 2	Gulgong community session	Impacts to local tradespeople was raised by one community member.	Section 2.5.3	The impact of diminished availability of employees on local businesses due to competing demand from the Project will be managed through training opportunities for local communities. These include: • Partnerships with Regional Industry Education Partnerships (RIEP) Program and NSW Infrastructure Traineeship Program, attending local job fairs and career days (delivery Q1 2026). • ACEREZ pre-employment and mentoring programs will provide training and support to access jobs and where possible progress to traineeships or apprenticeships (commenced Q1 2025).	

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					• NSW Corrections employment program. • Training for existing workforce to develop transferrable skills. • Maximising local business consultation to support local employment.	
Community	Phase 2	Gulgong community session	Impacts to community cohesion included: misinformation including instances of solar farm workers being blamed for poor behaviour and crimes, inequity in benefit distribution.	Section 2.2.3 Section 2.9.3	Section 2.2.3 outlines measures to manage impacts on community. This includes implementing the Community Communication Strategy and Complaints Management System to manage impacts to community cohesion. Section 2.9.3 outlines the measures to manage impacts on decision-making systems including project communication and transparency. This includes establishing community information centres as a mechanism to receive feedback from the community and provide a consistent point of contact for the community.	
Decision Making	Phase 2	Gulgong community session	Impacts to decision making systems included perceived lack of information, lack of transparency and powerlessness in the acquisition process and accountability of the Project including ACEREZ and EnergyCo. Some community flagged that they felt they no longer have a say in what happens on their own land.	Section 2.9.3	This is partially addressed in the SIM Plan. Section 2.9.3 outlines the measures to manage impacts on decision-making systems including project communication and transparency. This includes establishing community information centres as a mechanism to receive feedback from the community and provide a consistent point of contact for the community.	This is partially resolved by the SIM Plan. The Energy & Water Ombudsman NSW (EWON) has expanded its jurisdiction to take complaints from landholders and community members impacted by renewable energy infrastructure. The EWON can manage complaints and unresolved issues from landholders and community members related to transmission and new transmission infrastructure. Landholders and community members can escalate unresolved matters to EWON.
Health and Wellbeing	Phase 2	Gulgong community session	Impacts to health and wellbeing were raised by three community members who cited mental and financial stress.	Section 2.5.3 Section 2.6.3	Section 2.6.3 outlines the measures to manage impacts on health and wellbeing on landowner's mental health by managing interaction with landowners through the CCS, the landowner Property Access Plans and mental health support telephone service, already established by EnergyCo. EnergyCo, EnergyCo has partnered with Grand Pacific Health to deliver a Mental Health Support Program to provide additional support to individuals owning or residing on a property directly impacted by projects. This program will provide eligible residents access to comprehensive, personalised and longer-term services delivered under mental health care plans.	
Livelihoods	Phase 2	Gulgong community session	Positive impact to livelihood due to additional money spent at local businesses and jobs, however the opportunities are not clear. Suggested TAFE collaboration. Monitoring local business revenue was suggested by a community member.	Section 2.4.3	Section 2.4.3 outlines measures to enhance livelihoods. benefits The IAPP outlines ACEREZ's approach to engaging with local industry, service providers, and Aboriginal communities. The SIM Plan will monitor the number of local businesses engaged through procurement, however, will not monitor local business revenue.	

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Livelihoods	Phase 2	Gulgong community session	Negative impacts to biosecurity, agricultural production (lambing and cropping) was mentioned by two people. One person raised cost of fire prevention insurance.	Section 2.4.3 Section 2.8.3	This is partially addressed in the SIM Plan. Section 2.4.3 outlines measures to manage impact to livelihoods. ACEREZ will manage impacts to livelihoods by developing Property Access Plans with each landowner. Depending on their needs, property owners can access independent legal advice when developing Property Access Plans for access to agricultural properties. Section 2.8.3 outlines measure to manage impacts on surroundings. ACEREZ will implement biosecurity measures for accessing properties which sets the overarching measures for protecting biosecurity and resulting impacts to agricultural land and food production for future generations. ACEREZ will manage impacts to agricultural land and food by reporting all incidents of damage to livestock, crops or otherwise immediately and escalate them through the incident notification and reporting process.	This is partially resolved by the SIM Plan. Fire protection insurance is not addressed in the SIM Plan, as this is an issue relating to operation rather than construction. The Energy & Water Ombudsman NSW (EWON) has expanded its jurisdiction to take complaints from landholders and community members impacted by renewable energy infrastructure. The EWON can manage complaints and unresolved issues from landholders and community members related to transmission and new transmission infrastructure. Landholders and community members can escalate unresolved matters to EWON.
Way of Life	Phase 2	Gulgong community session	Impacts of traffic safety were raised by four community members including non-resident workers not understanding local traffic changes, increased traffic. A mitigation measure suggested was use of shared vehicles to minimise this impact, planning oversized movements and clearly identifying vehicles.	Section 2.3.3	Section 2.3.3 outlines the measures to manage impacts on way of life. These include: • ACEREZ's Traffic and Transport Management Plan will manage impacts to traffic as a measure to manage impacts to safety from increased traffic. • A Transport Strategy will be developed in four main stages and in consultation with Transport for NSW and relevant Councils. • An independent dilapidation survey will be delivered to establish existing condition of local roads and repair any damage to local roads on the transport routes that are linked to the Project related road traffic, and preparation of a report on the road repairs completed. As a result of SIM Plan engagement, the following measures have been added including EnergyCo establishing a working group for traffic management within the REZ and Make the traffic management plan publicly available for communities	
Accessibility	Phase 2	Mudgee Community Session	Less access to medical services was identified as a community concern as doctors have closed books.	Section 2.5.3	Section 2.5.3 outlines the management measures and strategies for impacts on accessibility. This includes reducing the demand on local health services through providing onsite and telehealth services at the accommodation camps and supporting mental health wellbeing through the ACMP and workforce wellbeing initiatives. Initiatives include implementing of Employee Assistance Program (EAP) free phone counselling program to support mental health wellbeing, health initiatives (i.e. onsite flu vaccinations and skin checks), awareness initiatives such as toolbox talks, annual mental health and wellbeing survey. In addition, the Project will have a fully equipped first aid station staffed by qualified medical professionals, ACEREZ will establish an on-site first aid facility with qualified nursing and paramedic personnel	

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Accessibility	Phase 2	Mudgee Community Session	Impact on food, fuel and other service provisions were identified as a concern, such as cleaning, and the unknown greater impact on local and regional roads. Balance of project workforce on surrounding services was suggested as a mitigation measure through effective stage developments.	Appendix G	Section 2.5.3 describes the measures to manage impacts on accessibility to services and goods. The accommodation camp will have food services including kitchens and dining areas with nutritious meals. Appendix G outlines the Whole of Government initiatives to respond to these cumulative impacts on roads, fuel and other services.	
Community	Phase 2	Mudgee Community Session	Impacts to community character and cohesion were raised by three attendees including misinformation and a “REZ vs non-REZ” mentality, different priorities between Council and community, missed opportunities, cumulative impacts. Mitigation measures included a virtual town hall, collaboration with Council on priorities.	Section 2.2.3	Section 2.2.3 outlines measures to manage impacts on community. This includes implementing the Community Communication Strategy and Complaints Management System to manage impacts to community cohesion. ACEREZ is exploring opportunities to provide employees with a range of volunteer opportunities in the community and to provide opportunities for volunteers to participate in the Rural Fire Service and State Emergency Services, contributing to the protection and wellbeing of the Central-West Orana region.	
Decision Making	Phase 2	Mudgee Community Session	Mudgee community expressed the need for more young voices and consideration for future generations.	Section 2.3	The Community Communication Strategy (CCS) outlines how ACEREZ will manage communication and consultation during delivery of the project. It identifies stakeholders, consultation approach, the project commitment to best practice engagement, tools, notification timing, and the complaint management system (CMS). Multiple engagement methods are being roll-out to reach out to difference stakeholder groups and cater to their engagement needs.	
Health and wellbeing	Phase 2	Mudgee Community Session	Health and wellbeing is difficult to monitor yet still doable. It was noted that the Council is running mental health first aid (free) to residents (positive). Funding and sponsorship for health staff in public sector not private was suggested to support mitigation of impacts. Attracting doctors was considered a potential strategy and providing incentives for families such as activities.	Section 2.5.3 Section 2.6.3	Section 2.5.3 outlines measures to manage impacts on accessibility to health services. ACEREZ will reduce the demand on local health services through providing onsite and telehealth services at the accommodation camps and supporting mental health wellbeing through the ACMP and workforce wellbeing initiatives. Section 2.6.3 outlines the measures to manage impacts on health and wellbeing. EnergyCo has partnered with Grand Pacific Health to deliver a Mental Health Support Program. This service will provide additional support to individuals owning or residing on a property directly impacted by projects, including the Central-West Orana REZ. This program will provide eligible residents access to comprehensive, personalised and longer-term services delivered under mental health care plans.	
Livelihoods	Phase 2	Mudgee Community Session	Mitigation measures that are proactive not reactive were suggested through education, upskilling and cross skilling by transferring support and investment into non-fossil fuel industries. Upskilling local contractors to receive contracts and prioritising locals was a suggestion to support mitigation management. Connecting with local training providers to discuss options was identified as potential mitigation.	Section 2.4.3	Measures to promote local procurement opportunities include: • Local Business and Employment Strategy (LBES) includes procurement strategies, industry engagement, capability building, and collaboration with other regional projects to support local employment, supply chain engagement, workforce diversity, and skills development, • The ‘Keeping It Local Strategy’, which will build meaningful relationships with industry stakeholders and suppliers, including SMEs and Aboriginal-owned businesses, Assessing suppliers using the ‘Social Benefit Evaluation Criteria’ to provide a structured approach to evaluating tenders and ensuring that procurement decisions contribute to the social and economic well-being,	

Impact Area	Engagement Phase	Stakeholder Group	Issue raised	Where addressed in the SIM Plan	How was the issue resolved in the SIM Plan	If unresolved or only partially resolved in the SIM plan, what are the next steps to seek resolution
					• Delivering programs for local business and industry. Measures for local employment and retention include: • Partnerships with Regional Industry Education Partnerships (RIEP) Program and NSW Infrastructure Traineeship Program, attending local job fairs and career days , • ACEREZ pre-employment and mentoring programs will provide training and support to access jobs and where possible progress to traineeships or apprenticeships , NSW Corrections employment program, Training for existing workforce to develop transferrable skills. • Maximising local business consultation to support local employment. • ACEREZ will support training local workers through programs including partnership with local providers, Training Service NSW and training organisations to support upskilling and development of local workers .	
Surroundings	Phase 2	Mudgee Community Session	Impacts to surroundings included increased risk of natural disasters such as bushfires. Studies to balance increased climate change disasters was suggested as potential mitigation in contrast to project related disasters (risks).	Section 2.5.3	Asset Protection Zones (APZ) buffers and bushfire prevention training and site inductions will be put in place.	
Surroundings	Phase 2	Mudgee Community Session	Amenity impacts were raised as a common concern as the project is observed to bring a greater impact on air quality, increased traffic, noise, vibration and dust. GPS on all work vehicles was raised as potential mitigation and all non-compliance reported and published including subcontractors.	Section 2.3.3 Section 2.6.3	Site-specific Construction Noise and Vibration Impact Survey (CNVIS) will be implemented and will guide communication with affected stakeholders. ACEREZ's Traffic and Transport Management Plan will manage impacts to traffic as a measure to manage impacts to safety from increased traffic Construction related amenity impacts will be managed by implementing the Environmental Management Strategy and Noise and Vibration Management Plan.	
Surroundings	Phase 2	Mudgee Community Session	Collaboration between developers was identified as potential mitigation measure e.g. screening planting to create wildlife and vegetation corridors. Biodiversity surveys was also suggested on a recurring basis	Section 2.8.3	Section 2.8.3 outlines measures to manage impacts on surroundings including reducing the negative impacts to agricultural land and food production and preserving, protecting and planting trees to minimise the impact to the environment. ACEREZ will implement biosecurity measures for accessing properties which sets the overarching measures for protecting biosecurity and resulting impacts to agricultural land and food production for future generations. The following additional measure has been established to respond to consultation feedback during the development of the SIM Plan and enhance project benefits: •ACEREZ will work with EnergyCo and community groups such as Landcare to explore local environmental initiatives (new).	

Impact Area	Engagement Phase	Stakeholder Group	Issue raised	Where addressed in the SIM Plan	How was the issue resolved in the SIM Plan	If unresolved or only partially resolved in the SIM plan, what are the next steps to seek resolution
Way of life	Phase 2	Mudgee Community Session	Integration of all Transport management plans (TMPs) was suggested across mines, solar developers etc. (ACEREZ) with a mined shift (traffic coordination).		Traffic and transport issues are considered in the following strategies and management plans: — Transport Strategies which will be developed in consultation with Transport for NSW and relevant Councils as per condition B31. The strategies will be developed in stages, including: — Merotherie Transport Strategy — Elong Elong and Wollar Switching Station Transport Strategy — Project-wide Transport Strategy — Stringing Transport Strategy — Other stages if required — a Traffic and transport management plan developed in consultation with NPWS, TfNSW, Dubbo Regional Council, Mid-Western Regional Council, Upper Hunter Shire Council, Warrumbungle Shire Council and the NSW Police to the satisfaction of the Planning Secretary (condition B35). In addition, the following conditions of approval will be implemented, which are consistent with measures suggested by community and key stakeholders: — use of designated heavy vehicles routes described in the EIS as per conditions B29 and B30 — road upgrades and relevant mitigation measures established in the Transport Strategies (condition B32) — independent dilapidation survey to establish existing condition of local roads and repair any damage to local roads on the transport routes that are linked to development related road traffic, and preparation of a report on the road repairs completed (condition B34) As a result of SIM Plan engagement a working group for traffic management within the REZ will be established by EnergyCo and traffic management plan will be made publicly available for communities	

Table 44: Consultation feedback from Western NSW Local Health District representative

Impact Area	Engagement Phase	Stakeholder Group	Issue raised	Where addressed in the SIM Plan	How was the issue resolved in the SIM Plan	If unresolved or only partially resolved in the SIM plan, what are the next steps to seek resolution
Community	Phase 2	Western NSW Local Health District	Impact of change in community cohesion - there is a concern about the future of the community. building mistrust, those who support project and those who don't. It was suggested that there is an increase in the community socio-economic divide. the cumulative impacts of multiple REZ projects has caused people to withdraw from the community as there is uncertainty on how the community will be impacted.	Section 2.2.3	The following measures have been developed to manage impacts to community cohesion: • Implementing the Community Communication Strategy and Complaints Management System to manage impacts to community cohesion. Monitoring indicators included in the SIM Plan (Sections 2.2.4 and 2.3.4) include: • Number of people who describes their relationship with their neighbours and members of the community as “good” and “very good” ACEREZ has also allocated funding for community benefit initiatives to leave a legacy that extends beyond	

Impact Area	Engagement Phase	Stakeholder Group	Issue raised	Where addressed in the SIM Plan	How was the issue resolved in the SIM Plan	If unresolved or only partially resolved in the SIM plan, what are the next steps to seek resolution
					the completion of the REZ transmission infrastructure and ensures benefits of the renewable energy transition are directed to regional communities. ACEREZ will consult with the community in 2025 to develop community benefit initiatives and ensure the community has a say on where these funds will be allocated.	
Decision Making	Phase 2	Western NSW Local Health District	Cumulative impact of consultation fatigue: the processes are overwhelming and people withdraw and don't take the information in. It was suggested that there is a lot of people that don't know where to go or talk about it because it is overwhelming. Saturday markets was suggested as a contact point, letting the community know about the project and become familiar with the local community. Project transparency was raised as an issue focused on how project information is communicated to the community. A sense of powerlessness and lack of information was raised. There are a lot of different phrases and acronyms. the community need to spend a lot of time to work it means, they are doing it on top of their daily life. It was suggested that the project needs to shift thinking, focusing on plain English information and language the community understands. There has not been a clear communication on timeline and what is expected with the project, leaving the community in limbo. It was suggested to have consistency with staff, one contact point, a community REZ coordination representative (Concierge role/case management) across the board, they feed the information back to everyone	Section 2.9.3	Section 2.9.3 outlines the measures to manage impacts on decision-making systems including consultation fatigue. The development of this SIM Plan will consolidate social impact management and reduce consultation fatigue. ACEREZ will open a Community Information Centre (location to be determined) – to provide a point of contact for the community. The centre will be open three business days a week, from 9am to 5pm. Staff members are expected to include the local community. The following measures have been established to respond to consultation feedback during the development of the SIM Plan: • EnergyCo to provide a summary of quarterly reporting at the CRG, CWO Working Group and RLE Sub Group. • EnergyCo to submit via email a summary of quarterly report to local community members registered via the survey and EnergyCo's newsletter.	
Health and Wellbeing	Phase 2	Western NSW Local Health District	It was suggested that the project had not considered psychological impacts of the project and property acquisitions. The project hotline was raised as a concern, with a language barrier for community and suspicions on confidentiality, causing stress and trauma. the community do not want to repeat themselves. it was suggested that the project provides the appropriate support, with the first point of project contact to understand the community and provide a more humane and specific experience. Landholders have provided financial and legal support from EnergyCo, why not mental and psychological support? Opportunity for the project to partner with local mental health programs that are contacts for specific needs of the	Section 2.6.3	Section 2.6.3 outlines the measures to manage impacts on landowners' health and wellbeing. EnergyCo has partnered with Grand Pacific Health to deliver a Mental Health Support Program. This service will provide additional support to individuals owning or residing on a property directly impacted by projects, including the Central-West Orana REZ. This program will provide eligible residents access to comprehensive, personalised and longer-term services delivered under mental health care plans. The SIM Plan will monitor via an annual survey the number of landowners who report to be very satisfied or satisfied with the mental health support available for landowners and community members	

Impact Area	Engagement Phase	Stakeholder Group	Issue raised	Where addressed in the SIM Plan	How was the issue resolved in the SIM Plan	If unresolved or only partially resolved in the SIM plan, what are the next steps to seek resolution
			community (something that feels a little closer to home for community members that vouch for them).			
Community	Phase 2	Western NSW Local Health District	A concern or scepticism was raised regarding Community Development funds including how much will go to the community and who will actually benefit from it. Going to different councils that are less impacted.	Section 1.2 Section 2.2.3	As described in Section 1.2, EnergyCo's Community and Employment Benefit Program (CEBP) is funded by access fees and its legislative remit is to provide benefits holistically within the boundary of a REZ where communities are hosting generation activity. The CEPB includes a Legacy Infrastructure Fund (LIF). The purpose of the LIF is to provide funding for infrastructure projects that will deliver long-term and legacy benefits for local communities within the Central-West Orana REZ. The program design of the CEPB was informed by a series of consultation events held in the region in early 2024, which built on previous consultation work. As described in Section 2.2.3, ACEREZ has allocated funding for community benefit initiatives to leave a legacy that extends beyond the completion of the REZ transmission infrastructure and ensures benefits of the renewable energy transition are directed to regional communities. ACEREZ will consult with the community in 2025 to develop community benefit initiatives and ensure the community has a say on where these funds will be allocated.	

Table 45: Consultation feedback from the Central West Cycle Trail (CWCT)

Impact Area	Engagement Phase	Stakeholder Group	Issue raised	Where addressed in the SIM Plan	How was the issue resolved in the SIM Plan	If unresolved or only partially resolved in the SIM plan, what are the next steps to seek resolution
Way of Life	Phase 2	Community – Central West Cycle Trail	Group is concerned about traffic and road safety impacts particularly around the Energy Hub at Merotherie Road and Bus Route South. Concerns are primarily about traffic and amenity impacts for riders – this is for the Project and cumulative impact. Group suggested that there are opportunities to upgrade Barney's Reef Road.	Section 2.3.3	Section 2.3.3 outlines the measures to manage traffic related impacts. ACEREZ's Traffic and Transport Management Plan will manage impacts to traffic as a measure to manage impacts to safety from increased traffic. A Transport Strategy will be developed in stages and in consultation with Transport for NSW and relevant Councils. In addition, an independent dilapidation survey will be delivered to establish existing condition of local roads and repair any damage to local roads on the transport routes that are linked to the Project related road traffic, and preparation of a report on the road repairs completed. As a result of SIM Plan engagement, a working group for traffic management within the REZ will be established by EnergyCo and traffic management plan will be made publicly available for communities	

Impact Area	Engagement Phase	Stakeholder Group	Issue raised	Where addressed in the SIM Plan	How was the issue resolved in the SIM Plan	If unresolved or only partially resolved in the SIM plan, what are the next steps to seek resolution
Community	Phase 2	Community – Central West Cycle Trail	Cumulative pressures on short-term accommodation.	Section 2.2.3	Section 2.3.3 outlines the measures to manage impacts pressures on short-term accommodation. These measures include: - Using accommodation camps to accommodate the non-resident workforce and building the accommodation camps in stages to manage pressure on short-term accommodation and local housing. - Manage pressure on short term accommodation and local housing during construction of the accommodation camp include using a staged approach starting with approximately 50 workers in the first two stages (to mid-2025) and sourcing the initial workforce from within the REZ. - Distribution of equitable accommodation bookings across the local social locality, rather than fully booking with a limited number of providers.	

Table 46: Consultation feedback from Dunedoo Landcare

Impact Area	Engagement Phase	Stakeholder Group	Issue raised	Where addressed in the SIM Plan	How was the issue resolved in the SIM Plan	If unresolved or only partially resolved in the SIM plan, what are the next steps to seek resolution
Community	Phase 2	Dunedoo Landcare	The community is experiencing exhaustion from multiple developments, drought, bushfire, and mining, with the transmission project causing further division and a lack of understanding about its broader impacts. How many projects have been stated?	Section 2.2.3	The following measures have been developed to manage impacts to community cohesion: • Implementing the Community Communication Strategy and Complaints Management System to manage impacts to community cohesion. Monitoring indicators included in the SIM Plan (Sections 2.2.4 and 2.3.4) include: • Number of people who describes their relationship with their neighbours and members of the community as “good” and “very good” Finally, cumulative impacts affecting the wider REZ will be addressed by Whole of Government Initiatives through the Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap Steering Committee, supported by an Implementation Plan Working Group (Refer to Appendix G).	
Surroundings	Phase 2	Dunedoo Landcare	Biodiversity offsets need to be local. Through previous EIS consultation It was noted that offsets are occurring elsewhere. Concerned about tree and vegetation removal, when it will occur, especially along Merotherie Road. Suggested community planting trees as an offset.	Section 2.8.3 Section 2.8.4	Section 2.8.3 outlines measures to manage impacts on surroundings including reducing the negative impacts to agricultural land and food production and preserving, protecting and planting trees to minimise the impact to the environment. ACEREZ will implement biosecurity measures for accessing properties which sets the overarching measures for protecting biosecurity and resulting impacts to agricultural land and food production for future generations. The following additional measure has been established to respond to consultation feedback during the development of the SIM Plan and enhance project benefits: • Work with Landcare and community groups to scope and fund an environmental initiative for community and landowners to increase/restore native vegetation, for example via seed bank collection with local Landcare organisations.	

Impact Area	Engagement Phase	Stakeholder Group	Issue raised	Where addressed in the SIM Plan	How was the issue resolved in the SIM Plan	If unresolved or only partially resolved in the SIM plan, what are the next steps to seek resolution
Way of life	Phase 2	Dunedoo Landcare	Lack of monitoring which gives people an opportunity to not follow the rules. Raised that there needs to be accountability when constructor and developers come in.	Section 3	The SIM Plan will be reviewed annually by EnergyCo to assess if management measures, indicators and monitoring frameworks are still applicable and effective in mitigating impacts and achieving their residual risk ratings. This will be done in consultation with the CRG, Councils (Dubbo, Mid-Western, Upper Hunter and Warrumbungle Regional Councils) and CWO Working Group to seek feedback on the monitoring program and whether actions and targets require revision. The community attitudes survey will allow the community to provide feedback on the management measures and their effectiveness, as well as new or unanticipated impacts. The outcomes from the community attitudes survey, quarterly reporting and consultation led by EnergyCo and supported by ACEREZ's management plans will be incorporated into the annual review of the SIM Plan. The community attitudes survey used in baseline data collection for this SIM Plan and which will be replicated as the annual community attitudes survey	
Accessibility	Phase 2	Dunedoo Landcare	Water security - where water is coming from, increased population in region for the project will be strain on water resources, important to the community due to droughts and lack of options other than water restrictions, previously as high as level 4 water restrictions have occurred in area.	Section 2.5.3 Appendix G	Section 2.5.3 outlines measures to manage impacts on accessibility. These measures include: • Establishing camp specific potable water (purchasing water, storing onsite and developing a potable water treatment plan) and wastewater supply and treatment. Appendix G outlines the Whole of Government initiatives to respond to cumulative impacts including water.	

Impact Area	Engagement Phase	Stakeholder Group	Issue raised	Where addressed in the SIM Plan	How was the issue resolved in the SIM Plan	If unresolved or only partially resolved in the SIM plan, what are the next steps to seek resolution
Accessibility	Phase 2	Dunedoo Landcare	Wanted details on Workers Accommodation Camp such as operations, vehicle numbers, impact on health services and emergency services (police), size with office and accommodation.	Section 1.2 Section 2.5.3	Section 1.2 describes the Workers Accommodation Camps. The two workforce accommodation camps include: • The Merotherie Camp, located in the Mid-Western Regional Council LGA, which will have a maximum capacity of 1,200 beds during the construction period (February 2025 to February 2026). • Turill Camp, located at Neeleys Lane, in Turill, in the Hunter Shire Regional Council LGA, will have a peak capacity of 600 people, with construction expected to take place between August 2025 and June 2026. Both facilities are expected to be operational until December 2029. The utilities (water, wastewater, electricity, communications) to serve each accommodation camp will be independent from Council infrastructure. Section 2.5.3 outlines measures to manage impacts on health and emergency services. These measures include: • Reducing the demand on local health services through providing onsite and telehealth services at the accommodation camps and supporting mental health wellbeing through the ACMP and workforce wellbeing initiatives. • Managing the demand on emergency services through emergency planning, coordination and engagement (fire and flood), police) cumulative impacts will be managed by The Central-West Orana REZ Regional Leadership Executive (RLE) Social Services Sub-Group, co-chaired by EnergyCo and the NSW Premiers Department. The RLE social services sub-group will work towards an action plan to address growing social service demand due to increase REZ non-residential workforce. The Social Services Sub-Group will inform the CWO Regional Steering Committee and escalate matters for government attention as needed.	
Community	Phase 2	Dunedoo Landcare	Community feeling they are not being heard, not even the Minister is listening. Community consultation process not considered true consultation lack of communicating with the community, find out information via the "back door'. Some community members completely unaware of what is happening.	Section 2.2.3	This is partially addressed in the SIM Plan. The Community Communication Strategy (CCS) outlines how ACEREZ will manage communication and engagement consultation during delivery of the project. It identifies stakeholders, engagement consultation approach, the project commitment to best practice engagement, tools, notification timing, and the complaint management system (CMS). EnergyCo and ACEREZ are continuing to engage with landholders and community organisations to address issues raised during the development of the Social Impact Management Plan.	This is partially resolved by the SIM Plan. EnergyCo and ACEREZ are continuing to engage with landholders and community organisations to address issues raised during the development of the Social Impact Management Plan. In addition, the Energy & Water Ombudsman NSW (EWON) has expanded its jurisdiction to take complaints from landholders and community members impacted by renewable energy infrastructure. EWON can manage complaints and unresolved issues from landholders and community members related to transmission and new transmission infrastructure. Landholders and community members can escalate unresolved matters to EWON.

Impact Area	Engagement Phase	Stakeholder Group	Issue raised	Where addressed in the SIM Plan	How was the issue resolved in the SIM Plan	If unresolved or only partially resolved in the SIM plan, what are the next steps to seek resolution
Health and wellbeing	Phase 2	Dunedoo Landcare	Concern about mental health and lack of support for a program.	Section 2.6.3	EnergyCo will establish a Mental Health Support Program to provide additional mental health support for landholders and residents of properties impacted by the project. EnergyCo has partnered with Grand Pacific Health to deliver a Mental Health Support Program. This service will provide additional support to individuals owning or residing on a property directly impacted by projects, including the Central-West Orana REZ. This program will provide eligible residents access to comprehensive, personalised and longer-term services delivered under mental health care plans.	
Way of Life	Phase 2	Dunedoo Landcare	Construction of access road to Merotherie camp and the monitoring of road with cameras.	Section 2.3.3	ACEREZ's Traffic and Transport Management Plan will manage impacts to traffic as a measure to manage impacts to safety from increased traffic. Traffic and transport issues are considered in the following strategies and management plans: — Transport Strategies which will be developed in consultation with Transport for NSW and relevant Councils as per condition B31. The strategies will be developed in stages, including: — Merotherie Transport Strategy — Elong Elong and Wollar Switching Station Transport Strategy — Project-wide Transport Strategy — Stringing Transport Strategy — Other stages if required — a Traffic and transport management plan developed in consultation with NPWS, TfNSW, Dubbo Regional Council, Mid-Western Regional Council, Upper Hunter Shire Council, Warrumbungle Shire Council and the NSW Police to the satisfaction of the Planning Secretary (condition B35). In addition, the following conditions of approval will be implemented, which are consistent with measures suggested by community and key stakeholders: — use of designated heavy vehicles routes described in the EIS as per conditions B29 and B30 — road upgrades and relevant mitigation measures established in the Transport Strategies (condition B32) — independent dilapidation survey to establish existing condition of local roads and repair any damage to local roads on the transport routes that are linked to development related road traffic, and preparation of a report on the road repairs completed (condition B34)	

Table 47: Consultation feedback from the Wollar Progress Association

Impact Area	Engagement Phase	Stakeholder Group	Issue raised	Where addressed in the SIM Plan	How was the issue resolved in the SIM Plan	If unresolved or only partially resolved in the SIM plan, what are the next steps to seek resolution
Accessibility	Phase 2	Wollar Progress Association	ACEREZ should have their own firefighting crew so that they do not draw on the RFS.	Section 2.2.3 Section 2.5.3	Section 2.5.3 outlines measures to manage impacts on accessibility. Project personnel are to be trained in emergency management and fire management, to respond to project emergencies. Section 2.2.3 notes ACEREZ is also exploring options to provide opportunities for volunteers to participate in the Rural Fire Service and State Emergency Services, contributing to the protection and wellbeing of the Central-West Orana region.	
Community	Phase 2	Wollar Progress Association	Wollar is cut out of the small community grant process – because they are outside of the REZ – want to access some community funding support. The Wollar Hall is an evacuation centre – seeking Solar battery storage funding.	Section 2.2.3	This is partially addressed in the SIM Plan. As described in Section 2.2.3, ACEREZ has allocated funding for community benefit initiatives to leave a legacy that extends beyond the completion of the REZ transmission infrastructure and ensures benefits of the renewable energy transition are directed to regional communities. ACEREZ will consult with the community in 2025 to develop community benefit initiatives and ensure the community has a say on where these funds will be allocated.	This is partially resolved by the SIM Plan. The Community and Employment Benefit Program (CEBP) is funded by access fees and its legislative remit is to provide benefits holistically within the boundary of a REZ where communities are hosting generation activity. To be eligible for CEBP funding, the funded component of a project must be for a “community purpose” or “employment purpose” and be located within the geographic boundary of a REZ. The program design of the CEPB was informed by a series of consultation events held in the region in early 2024, which built on previous consultation work. We can request ACEREZ to consider this recommendation in the development of their social licence framework - however it is unlikely we will be able to commit to this in the plan submitted to DPHI.
Health and Wellbeing	Phase 2	Wollar Progress Association	Scientific analysis of the electromagnetic radiation – important for EnergyCo to address this	Not applicable to the SIM Plan		This is unresolved in the SIM Plan. This issue was examined in the EIS as part of project potential operational impacts.
Surroundings	Phase 2	Wollar Progress Association	Visual amenity is a significant impact – especially when the towers are brand new – painting them, at least on one side, to mitigate from the setting sun. The Wollar Progress Association achieved with existing transmission lines to be painted green to mitigate the sun light bouncing on them.	Not applicable to the SIM Plan		This is unresolved in the SIM Plan. The SIM Plan focuses on impacts that will arise during the Project construction. The visual impacts of the Transmission infrastructure have been determined as an operational impact of the Project. To mitigate this impact screen vegetation has been determined at specific locations.

Impact Area	Engagement Phase	Stakeholder Group	Issue raised	Where addressed in the SIM Plan	How was the issue resolved in the SIM Plan	If unresolved or only partially resolved in the SIM plan, what are the next steps to seek resolution
Surroundings	Phase 2	Wollar Progress Association	Sweeper vehicle to collect roadkill	Not applicable to the SIM Plan		This is unresolved in the SIM Plan. ACEREZ and EnergyCo will undertake ongoing consultation with the Wollar Progress Association and consider as part of development of their social licence initiatives.
Way of life	Phase 2	Wollar Progress Association	The roads are too narrow for the large vehicle traffic. Haven't seen traffic management plan – would like to have input. Don't have a sense of what the movement will be from EnergyCo. Concerned about cumulative impact with the mine (and expansion), solar farm expansion and EnergyCo. Would like to know what time of day workers are coming through, have notification of heavier periods of traffic and coordination between mine, EnergyCo and mine on timing of shifts finishing.	Section 2.3.3	Traffic and transport issues are considered in the following strategies and management plans: — Transport Strategies which will be developed in consultation with Transport for NSW and relevant Councils as per condition B31. The strategies will be developed in stages, including: — Merotherie Transport Strategy — Elong Elong and Wollar Switching Station Transport Strategy — Project-wide Transport Strategy — Stringing Transport Strategy — Other stages if required — a Traffic and transport management plan developed in consultation with NPWS, TfNSW, Dubbo Regional Council, Mid-Western Regional Council, Upper Hunter Shire Council, Warrumbungle Shire Council and the NSW Police to the satisfaction of the Planning Secretary (condition B35). In addition, the following conditions of approval will be implemented, which are consistent with measures suggested by community and key stakeholders: — use of designated heavy vehicles routes described in the EIS as per conditions B29 and B30 — road upgrades and relevant mitigation measures established in the Transport Strategies (condition B32) — independent dilapidation survey to establish existing condition of local roads and repair any damage to local roads on the transport routes that are linked to development related road traffic, and preparation of a report on the road repairs completed (condition B34)	

Appendix D Baseline information

Table 48: Reported major offences for Dubbo Regional Council, 2020 - 2024, year ending December (Source: BOCSAR, 2025)

DUBBO REGIONAL COUNCIL	NUMBER OF REPORTED INCIDENTS					RATE PER 100,000 PEOPLE				
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Murder	2	2	0	1	0	4	4	0	2	0
Domestic violence related assault	631	609	670	662	679	1,149	1,097	1,199	1,171	1,201
Non-domestic violence related assault	403	405	441	600	580	734	729	789	1,061	1,026
Sexual assault	99	110	109	113	138	180	198	195	200	244
Sexual touching, sexual act and other sexual offences	87	93	106	111	79	158	168	190	196	140
Robbery	19	24	23	29	18	35	43	41	51	32
Break and enter dwelling	424	534	555	502	411	772	962	993	888	727
Break and enter non-dwelling	185	186	266	262	240	337	335	476	463	424
Motor vehicle theft	175	227	293	282	215	319	409	524	499	380
Steal from motor vehicle	415	526	590	507	420	756	947	1,056	896	743
Steal from retail store	230	216	322	419	439	419	389	576	741	776
Other stealing offences	472	505	450	486	427	860	910	805	859	755
Malicious damage to property	847	772	839	1,098	1,008	1,543	1,390	1,501	1,941	1,782
Total	3,989	4,209	4,664	5,072	4,654	-				

Table 49: Reported major offences for Mid-Western Regional Council, 2020 - 2024, year ending December (Source: BOCSAR, 2025)

MID-WESTERN REGIONAL COUNCIL	NUMBER OF REPORTED INCIDENTS					RATE PER 100,000 PEOPLE				
	2020	*2021*	*2022*	*2023*	*2024*	*2020*	*2021*	*2022*	*2023*	*2024*
Murder	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	4	0
Domestic violence related assault	159	161	162	139	143	623	626	628	536	552
Non-domestic violence related assault	102	120	113	106	122	399	467	438	409	471
Sexual assault	47	60	47	63	53	184	233	182	243	205
Sexual touching, sexual act and other sexual offences	48	62	33	29	42	188	241	128	112	162
Robbery	2	1	3	2	3	8	4	12	8	12
Break and enter dwelling	56	53	41	50	53	219	206	159	193	205
Break and enter non-dwelling	35	23	15	35	52	137	89	58	135	201
Motor vehicle theft	30	18	35	37	51	118	70	136	143	197

MID-WESTERN REGIONAL COUNCIL	NUMBER OF REPORTED INCIDENTS					RATE PER 100,000 PEOPLE				
	2020	*2021*	*2022*	*2023*	*2024*	*2020*	*2021*	*2022*	*2023*	*2024*
Steal from motor vehicle	64	31	30	40	49	251	121	116	154	189
Steal from retail store	39	32	38	58	54	153	124	147	224	208
Other stealing offences	152	107	95	117	107	595	416	368	451	413
Malicious damage to property	213	189	210	210	208	834	735	814	810	802
Total	947	857	822	887	937	-				

Table 50: Reported major offences for Upper Hunter Shire Council, 2020 - 2024, year ending December (Source: BOCSAR, 2025)

UPPER HUNTER SHIRE COUNCIL	NUMBER OF REPORTED INCIDENTS					RATE PER 100,000 PEOPLE				
	2020	*2021*	*2022*	*2023*	*2024*	*2020*	*2021*	*2022*	*2023*	*2024*
Murder	1	0	0	0	0	7	0	0	0	0
Domestic violence related assault	77	67	69	64	67	540	470	483	446	467
Non-domestic violence related assault	36	30	57	52	50	252	210	399	363	349
Sexual assault	23	35	21	19	21	161	246	147	133	147
Sexual touching, sexual act and other sexual offences	24	27	14	28	27	168	189	98	195	188
Robbery	1	1	1	3	0	7	7	7	21	0
Break and enter dwelling	15	37	42	23	26	105	260	294	160	181
Break and enter non-dwelling	27	13	18	16	31	189	91	126	112	216
Motor vehicle theft	14	10	18	29	22	98	70	126	202	153
Steal from motor vehicle	24	34	38	32	35	168	239	266	223	244
Steal from retail store	10	4	11	15	28	70	28	77	105	195
Other stealing offences	72	89	55	61	78	505	624	385	425	544
Malicious damage to property	94	98	74	66	92	659	687	518	460	642
Total	418	445	418	408	477	-				

Table 51: Reported major offences for Warrumbungle Shire Council, 2020 - 2024, year ending December (Source: BOCSAR, 2025)

WARRUMBUNGLE SHIRE COUNCIL	NUMBER OF REPORTED INCIDENTS					RATE PER 100,000 PEOPLE				
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Murder	0	1	0	0	0	0	11	0	0	0
Domestic violence related assault	33	52	84	72	84	353	562	909	780	910
Non-domestic violence related assault	48	46	49	60	57	514	497	530	650	618
Sexual assault	20	15	21	21	20	214	162	227	228	217

Sexual touching, sexual act and other sexual offences	15	10	14	24	37	161	108	151	260	401
Robbery	1	1	0	0	2	11	11	0	0	22
Break and enter dwelling	49	34	47	50	44	525	367	508	542	477
Break and enter non-dwelling	13	18	22	42	30	139	195	238	455	325
Motor vehicle theft	10	10	16	14	17	107	108	173	152	184
Steal from motor vehicle	31	23	47	34	33	332	249	508	368	358
Steal from retail store	12	10	26	24	35	129	108	281	260	379
Other stealing offences	64	63	78	86	106	685	681	844	932	1,149
Malicious damage to property	88	90	71	117	134	942	972	768	1,268	1,452
Total	384	373	475	544	599	-				

Table 52: Value of weekly rents for local government areas, December 2024 (Source: Department of Communities and Justice, 2025).

2024 WEEKLY RENT DECEMBER QUARTER	DUBBO REGIONAL COUNCIL *	MID-WESTERN REGIONAL COUNCIL	UPPER HUNTER REGIONAL COUNCIL	WARRUMBUNGLE SHIRE COUNCIL
First Quartile	$380	$450	$380	$321
Median	$475	$560	$475	$350
Third Quartile	$560	$650	$550	$400

*recognised as Western Plains

Table 53: Events in the local social locality

Event	Timing	Details	Location
Central West Cycle (CWC) Trail	All year	The Central West Cycle (CwC) trail creates a loop around the central west of NSW of almost 400 km. It is a very generous bike trail designed to give cyclists a week-long ride and a great, memorable cycling experience. The loop will encourage new visitors to come the Central West of NSW and breathe life into the small villages and towns (CWC, 2023).	The CWC trail follows the quiet backroads in a circuit through Mudgee-Gulgong-Dunedoo-Mendooran-Ballimore-Dubbo-Geurie-Wellington-Goolma-Gulgong to Mudgee
Kandos Street Machine	January	A car show in the small country town of Kandos, Central West NSW This event is run by car loving volunteers, with the help of local organisations to make this show possible (Mid-Western Regional Council, 2025).	Kandos
Charity Shield	February	Charity shield sporting event (Mid-Western Regional Council, 2025).	Mudgee

Event	Timing	Details	Location
Heritage Lawson Heritage Festival	Annually in June	Gulgong Henry Lawson Heritage Festival is held on the long weekend in June each year to commemorate Henry Lawsons birthday. The event includes market stalls, a street parade, poetry, short story readings and a literary award (Arts Out West, 2023).	Gulgong
Mid-Western Regional Seniors Festival	Annually in February	The festival celebrates the role and contributions of older adults to our local communities. It's the largest of its kind in the southern hemisphere (NSW Seniors Festival, 2023).	Mudgee
Gulgong Show	Annually in February	The Gulgong Agricultural Show is held in February each year.	Gulgong
Rylstone Kandos Show	February	Agricultural show held at the Rylstone Showground, (Mid-Western Regional Council, 2025).	Rylstone
Mudgee Show	Annually in March	Mudgee Show is held on the first full weekend of March each year. The show is a family friendly event with a rodeo on Friday night and family fun on Saturday (Mid-Western Regional Council, 2023).	Mudgee
Mudgee Glow	Annually in March	Mudgee CBD will light up with illuminated displays, food and entertainment on Friday, 31 March for a free family night out. Watch spectacular projections as a number of key buildings, including Mudgee Town Hall, are lit up and enjoy roving entertainment and food trucks (Mid-Western Regional Council, 2023).	Mudgee
Wings, Wheels and Wine	Bi-annual in April	A biannual family event held at Mudgee airport, including an airshow, food and wine stalls and helicopter joy flights.	Mudgee airport
NSW Touch Football	ANZAC Day weekend	NSW Touch Football Junior Regional Champions	Mudgee
18th National Historical Machinery Association Rally	Annually in April	The National Historical Machinery Association (NHMA) Rally involves stationary displays of antique machinery and equipment as well as a tractor pull, grand parade, earthmoving demos and much more.	Bombira
Mudgee Classic	Annually in May	Set in New South Wales' beautiful Mudgee wine region, the Mudgee Classic caters for all levels of cycling ability, the event offers four courses: 175 km Maxi Classic, 125 km Challenge Classic, 65 km Rouleurs Classic and the 55 km Dirty Mudgee (Mudgee Classic, 2023).	Mudgee
Gulgong Clay Festival	Bi-annual in May	A week long internationally renowned festival celebrating ceramics.	Gulgong

Event	Timing	Details	Location
Gulgong Prince of Wales Eisteddfod	June	The Gulgong Eisteddfod showcases the talents of the youth in our region in three disciplines: Dance, Music and Speech. The Eisteddfod gives competitors the opportunity to perform in front of a live audience and professional adjudicators and receive valuable feedback. For many it is an important springboard into varied careers within the performing arts (Mid-Western Regional Council, 2023).	Gulgong
UneARThed	June	UneARThed Art Show and Exhibition is a diverse art and culture event that showcases local, regional and interstate artists (Mid-Western Regional Council, 2023).	Gulgong
Mudgee Small Farm Field Days	Annually in July	The Mudgee Small Farm Field Days is a two-day, annual event that has been running for over 40 years. The event promotes innovation and sustainability in agriculture and rural living (Mid-Western Regional Council, 2023).	Gulgong
Rugby VII State Gala	July 2025 and 2026	Rugby gala celebration	Mudgee
Mudgee Running Festival	Annually in August	Mudgee's running festival includes a marathon, half marathon, 10 km fun run or 5 km fun run (Mid-Western Regional Council, 2023).	Mudgee
Flavours of Mudgee Street Festival	Annually in September	Flavours of Mudgee is a free community street festival event which showcases local stallholders and their regional wine, food, and produce, as well as entertainment in Mudgee's charming CBD (Mid-Western Regional Council, 2023).	Mudgee
Rylstone Street Feast	November	StreetFeast is one of Rylstone-Kandos District's premier annual events allowing patrons to enjoy the scenic beauty of the district and sample the diverse range of local foods, produce, wines, art and craftwork (Rylstone Street Feast, 2025).	Rylstone
Sculptures in the Garden	October	Sculptures in the Garden is an exciting event that combines garden design, Australian sculpture and traditional art mediums in beautiful garden and vineyard surrounds (Mid-Western Regional Council, 2023).	Mudgee
Cementa	Bi-annual in October	Next edition is in 2026. Cementa Inc. is an artist-centred and community-driven regional arts organisation based in Kandos in Central New South Wales (NSW), on Wiradjuri Country (Cementa, 2025).	Kandos/Mudgee
Gardens of Mudgee	October	A fundraising project of the Rotary Club of Mudgee to support local community organisations.	Mudgee
NSW Touch Football	October	NSW Touch football Charity championship	Mudgee

Event	Timing	Details	Location
Rugby Youth State 7s	September / October 2025	NSW Rugby Youth 7s State Championships will be played at Glen Willow Regional Sporting Complex for 4 days.	
Dunedoo Make n' Grown Market	Monthly in June, July & August	The Made n' Grown Market is known as the friendliest little Market in the Central West, with stalls selling fresh produce, small livestock, artisan products and handmade items (Warrumbungle Shire Council, 2023).	Dunedoo
Tunes on the Turf	Annually in November	Tunes On The Turf is a music festival booked in for the second weekend in November every year at the Dunedoo Sports Club.	Dunedoo
Dunedoo Show	Annually in February	Events include steer and poddy calf riding, dog jumping, whip cracking, Jack Russell Races, post splitting and chainsaw races.	Dunedoo
Cassilis Rodeo	Annually in January	The Cassilis Rodeo is held annually in January.	Cassilis
Mudgee Cup	December	Renowned as one of country NSW's premier racecourses, Mudgee Racecourse showcases a calendar of 8 race meetings annually, including the sellout Mudgee Cup.	Mudgee
Mudgee Farmers Markets	Third Sunday of the month	The Mudgee Farmers' Markets are an authentic Farmers' Market and operate under strict Farmers' Market guidelines. All produce sold at the markets is created as close to our market as possible. All products sold have been grown, reared, caught, brewed, pickled, baked, smoked or processed by the stallholders themselves (Mudgee Fine Foods, 2023).	Mudgee
Gulgong Market	Fourth Sunday of the month	Gulgong Markets are a group of local art, crafts, food plants and produce stalls that come together every fourth Saturday in Coronation Park, Gulgong.	Gulgong

Table 54: SALs with the lowest IRSAD scores, change from 2016 to 2021

IRSAD score increased				IRSAD score decreased		
Southern Section	**SALs**	**2016**	**2021**	**SALs**	**2016**	**2021**
	Cumbo, Ulan and Wollar	894	914	Bungaba, Cope, Cumbandry, Yarrawonga	882	877
	Gulgong	903	907	Cooks Gap	899	889
	Turill	909	937			
Northern Section	Dunedoo	922	927	-		
	Cobbora*	922	1016	-		

**Cobbora was included in Dunedoo in 2016 SSC boundaries*

Source: Census of Population and Housing: Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas, 2021

Table D.1: SALs with the highest IRSAD scores, change from 2016 to 2021

IRSAD score increased				IRSAD score decreased		
Southern Section	**SALs**	**2016**	**2021**	**SALs**	**2016**	**2021**
	Eurunderee	1068	1088	Galambine	1057	1035
	-			Goolma	1044	1035
	-			Guntawang, Mebul and Two Mile Flat	1011	992
Western Section	Spicers Creek	1045	1048	Gollan	1044	977
	-			Elong Elong	1040	982

Source: Census of Population and Housing: Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas, 2021

Appendix E EIS and Amendment Report SIM Plan requirements

Table 55: SIA and Amendment Report requirements for SIM Plan

SIA (EIS)	Amendment Report (SI8)	How it is addressed in this SIM Plan	Where it is addressed in this SIM Plan
A Social Impact Management Plan (SIM Plan) will be prepared that will:			
Refine the social impact mitigation measures to be implemented and the impacts that they are intended to address.	*Describe* the social impact mitigation measures to be implemented and the impacts that they are intended to address	The SIM Plan considers a new risk rating, based on the SIA and SIM Plan consultation findings. It sets out the impacts and measures designed to address them, organised into each impact area. New management measures and adaptative management measures will be adopted.	Chapter 2
Set out how the community and stakeholders can provide feedback on the mitigation measures and the effectiveness of their implementation.		The SIM Plan will continuously seek community feedback through: • CRG, CWO Working group and Councils • Annual community attitude survey.	Chapter 3
Monitoring findings will be presented to the project's Community Reference Groups meetings (if active) and to an annual community meeting where feedback will be sought on the monitoring program and whether actions or targets require revision.	Monitoring findings will be presented to the project's Community Reference Groups meetings (if active) *and to the broader local community.* Feedback will be sought on the monitoring program and whether actions or targets require revision.	EnergyCo will produce a quarterly SIM Plan monitoring report to be published on their website. EnergyCo will present findings to the Community Reference Group and to a community meeting annually.	Chapter 3
EnergyCo will track implementation of the SIM Plan and review performance measures quarterly, to facilitate continual improvement. The SIM Plan will be reviewed annually and updated based on monitoring data and community and stakeholder feedback.		The SIM Plan will be reviewed annually and updated based on monitoring outcomes and feedback.	Chapter 3

SIA (EIS)	Amendment Report (SI8)	How it is addressed in this SIM Plan	Where it is addressed in this SIM Plan
In addition to the monitoring review, proposed mitigation measures will also be reviewed to assess whether they are still applicable and on track to meet the residual risk rating applied in the EIS. Any new issues or initiatives that have emerged and that should be included in ongoing mitigations and/or monitoring will be addressed.		The effectiveness of the measures will be reviewed, including implementation of proposed adaptive measures to assess if they are applicable and meet the residual risk ratings. new and unanticipated impacts and management measures will be incorporated into the SIM Plan.	Chapter 3
The results of SIM Plan reviews will be published on the EnergyCo website.		Results of SIM Plan review and subsequent updated SIM Plans will be published on the EnergyCo website.	Chapter 3

Table 56: Amendment Report Updated Mitigation Measures (UMM) for social impacts

Ref	Impact area	Amendment report text	Phase	Applicable locations and affected groups	How addressed in this SIM Plan or other document
SI1	Property acquisition	A Landowner Engagement Strategy will be developed and implemented for the project which will include the following: • appointment of a dedicated Land Acquisition Manager to oversee the implementation of the strategy • ensure personnel appointed to engage with landowners have been suitably trained to undertake engagement with vulnerable people and those potentially affected by mental health issues.	Pre-construction, Construction	Properties hosting infrastructure	As outlined in the Environmental Management Strategy, ACEREZ are responsible for preparing the Landowner Engagement Strategy. Relevant property related impacts and management measures are also outlined in Section 2.6.3 of the SIM Plan.
SI2	Workforce management	A Workforce Management Plan will include: • a code of conduct for workers, which will include a zero-tolerance policy relating to anti-social behaviour • cultural awareness training for the workforce • measures for the workforce residing at the workforce accommodation camps including recreation areas, internet connections etc. The plan will include strategies to promote wellbeing of the workforce and a positive interaction with local community, which may include promoting workforce participation in community life (sports, events, volunteering), providing healthy food options, implementing health and safety assessments, among others. The plan will be reviewed every six months to identify and manage any unanticipated impacts.	Pre-construction, Construction	Regional social locality	As outlined in the Environmental Management Strategy, ACEREZ are responsible for preparing a Workforce Management Plan. In addition, meaures that relate to standards of behavirous (code of conduct), cultural awareness training and

Ref	Impact area	Amendment report text	Phase	Applicable locations and affected groups	How addressed in this SIM Plan or other document
					measures for the workforce residing at the accommodation camp are outlined in Section 2.2.3, Section 2.7.3 and and Section 2.5.3 of the SIM Plan respectively.
SI3	Local workforce participation	A Local Workforce Participation Strategy will be prepared in accordance with the Renewable Energy Sector Board Plan (Office of Energy and Climate Change, 2022) and implemented. It will include the following initiatives: • identification of local skills gaps and potential workforce skills and training requirements • investigate opportunities for the delivery of training and upskilling programs for local labour force • strategies for maximising local training and employment opportunities for residents, especially for First Nations People • initiatives to promote local employment, such as early engagement with local employment agencies and council, communication of employment opportunity via relevant local mediums of information, contract workers through existing local businesses, etc	Pre-construction	Regional social locality	As outlined in the Environmental Management Strategy, ACEREZ are responsible for preparing a Local Workforce and Participation Strategy. In addition, ACEREZ are responsible for prearing an Industry and Aboriginal Participation Plan (IAPP) and a Local Business and Employment Strategy, which are referenced at section 2.4.3 of the SIM Plan.

Ref	Impact area	Amendment report text	Phase	Applicable locations and affected groups	How addressed in this SIM Plan or other document
SI4	Industry participation	An Industry Participation Plan will be prepared in accordance with the Renewable Energy Sector Board Plan (Office of Energy and Climate Change, 2022) and implemented which will: • identify services and goods that could be sourced locally (quarry materials, catering, transport, cleaning, stationery) • identify the capacity of local and Indigenous businesses and suppliers to be ready for potential additional demand • provide local and Indigenous procurement targets • identify tailored 'meet-the-contractor' events for local and Aboriginal businesses to learn about potential opportunities associated with the delivery of the project • monitor the availability of key goods and services to the local community when procured locally.	Pre-construction/ Construction	Regional social locality	ACEREZ has prepared an Industry and Aboriginal Participation Plan (IAPP) in accordance with SI4. A Local Business and Employment Strategy has also been prepared by ACEREZ. This is referenced at section 2.4.3 of the SIM plan.
SI5	Community engagement	A pre-construction and construction Communication and Engagement Plan will be prepared to ensure: • landowners, businesses and local residents with the potential to be affected by construction activities are notified in a timely manner about the timing of activities and potential for impacts, and the measures that will be implemented to minimise the potential for impacts on individual properties • include proactive methods of communication with affected parties and strategies to reach vulnerable members of the community such as doorknocking, text messages, newsletters and or phone calls • ensure receivers identified as eligible for noise mitigation treatments in Technical paper 9 – Noise and vibration Appendix I (Noise and Vibration Impact	Pre-construction/ Construction	Local social locality	As per the Environmental Management Strategy, ACEREZ are responsible for preparing a Commuication and Engagement Plan.

Ref	Impact area	Amendment report text	Phase	Applicable locations and affected groups	How addressed in this SIM Plan or other document
		Assessment) of the Amendment Report are supported and engaged through the delivery process • provide further information in the local social locality about the regional energy strategy, including about community energy schemes, power purchasing agreements and other initiatives • enquiries and complaints are managed, and a timely response is provided for concerns raised and information about how solutions are being investigated is provided to the community • consultation with local health and emergency services to establish processes for managing potential increased demands due to non-resident workforce.			
SI6	First Nations liaison	A First Nations liaison group will be established. It will focus on identifying and implementing strategies to enhance and maximise opportunities for employment, procurement, education and other potential project related benefits. Members of the First Nations liaison group will be identified through collaboration with the existing Central-West Orana REZ Aboriginal Working Group, and will include local and regional members including: • Local Aboriginal Land Councils • Aboriginal Representative Organisations • relevant Aboriginal social, health and support services • educational organisations and services • employment agencies • Aboriginal business organisations/groups	Pre-construction/ Construction	Regional social locality	The CWO Working Group is in place for the purposes of identifying and implementing strategies to enhance and maximise opportunities for employment, procurement, education and other potential project related benefits. Aboriginal employment and procurement measures are also outlined in Section 2.4 of the SIM plan.

Ref	Impact area	Amendment report text	Phase	Applicable locations and affected groups	How addressed in this SIM Plan or other document
SI7	Complaints management	A complaints management system will be maintained throughout the construction period and for a minimum of 12 months after the completion of construction. The complaints management system will include the following (at a minimum): • contact details for a 24-hour response line and email address for ongoing stakeholder contact throughout the project • details of all complaints received will be recorded • target timeframe for responding to complaints • verbal and written responses describing what action will be taken will be provided to the complainant (or as otherwise agreed by the complainant) • an avenue for escalating unresolved complaints.	Construction Initial 12 months of operation	Regional social locality	ACEREZ has prepared the Community Communication Strategy (CCS) and complaints management system. The complaints management system is also addresssed in sections 2.2.3 amd 2.3.3 of the SIM plan.
SI8	Social impact	A Social Impact Management Plan (SIMP) will be prepared that will: • describe the social impact mitigation measures to be implemented and the impacts that they are intended to address • set out how the community and stakeholders can provide feedback on the mitigation measures and the effectiveness of their implementation. Monitoring findings will be presented to the project's Community Reference Groups meetings (if active) and to the broader local community. Feedback will be sought on the monitoring program and whether actions or targets require revision. EnergyCo will track implementation of the SIMP and review performance measures quarterly, to facilitate continual improvement. The SIMP will be reviewed annually and updated based on monitoring data and community and stakeholder feedback. In addition to the monitoring review, proposed mitigation measures will also be reviewed to assess whether they are still applicable and on track to meet the	Pre construction/ Construction	Regional social locality	This Plan. See Appendix E Table 55

Ref	Impact area	Amendment report text	Phase	Applicable locations and affected groups	How addressed in this SIM Plan or other document
		residual risk rating applied in the EIS. Any new issues or initiatives that have emerged and that should be included in ongoing mitigations and/or monitoring will be addressed. The results of SIMP reviews will be published on the EnergyCo website.			
SI9	Operational communications	An Operational Communication Plan will be developed and implemented, which will address the following: • maintaining communications with those located in close proximity to the transmission line to provide updated information and monitor experience and concerns. The Operational Communication Plan will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis.	Operation	Local social locality	Not applicable to this SIM Plan, which is for construction phase.
SI10	Mental Health Strategy	A mental health support telephone service as already established by EnergyCo will be maintained to assist landowners whose properties are subject to acquisition for the transmission line. A broader mental health strategy will be developed and implemented by the EnergyCo to identify other initiatives that could be implemented to provide additional mental health support.	Pre-construction Construction Operation	Local social locality	EnergyCo has implemented the Mental Health Support line and will establish a broader Mental Health Support Program (strategy) to provide additional mental health support. See Section 2.6.3 of the SIM plan.

Appendix F Community attitudes survey

Central-West Orana REZ transmission project survey

The Central-West Orana Transmission Infrastructure Project (the Project) has received State and Commonwealth planning approval.

The Energy Corporation of NSW (EnergyCo) has engaged WSP to develop a Social Impact Management Plan (the Plan) for the construction phase of the Project. The Plan provides an opportunity for community members and key stakeholders to give feedback about social impacts and management measures.

We have designed this survey to help inform the Plan, to understand community sentiment and to allow us to monitor the effectiveness of the Plan.

We kindly invite you to respond to the survey below.

Your participation in this survey is voluntary and confidential. All information collected will be managed in accordance with EnergyCo's privacy policy, which can be accessed on the webpage at: https://www.energy.nsw.gov.au/privacy.

To complete this survey online, please scan the QR code:

Introductory Questions

Please provide your name: _____

(optional)

Do you identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander?

Yes: ☐ No: ☐ Prefer not to say: ☐

How would you best describe yourself?

☐ Landowner hosting Central-West Orana Transmission Project Infrastructure

☐ Landowner neighbouring or within 1km of the Central-West Orana Transmission Project infrastructure

☐ Local business owner

☐ Community member / local resident

☐ Agencies (Local Council or services: social, health, education, emergency services)

Characteristics of your community

We would like to understand how you feel about your community at present. This will help us monitor management of social impacts during the Project.

For each question, please select a rating of how you would rate the characteristic at present.

	None/ very poor	Poor	Neutral	Good	Very Good
Your relationship with your neighbours and members of the community	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Your sense of safety	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Your enjoyment of the environment (e.g. peace and quiet, the views)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Your access to medical services	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Your access to childcare services	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The availability of local workforce (including technicians, apprentices, seasonal workers, retail workers, etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Your access to local services (e.g. retail goods)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Housing availability and affordability	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Your access to phone services	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Your access to internet services	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Your experience with the volume of local traffic	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The conditions of local roads	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The response of emergency services (e.g. NSW Rural Fire Service, Police, Ambulance)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Biosecurity for local landowners involved in agricultural production	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Satisfaction with the Central-West Orana Transmission Infrastructure Project

The Central-West Orana Transmission Infrastructure Project is commencing the early construction phase, including establishing the accommodation camp at Merotherie

Based on the current stage of the work and your current understanding and experience, we would like to understand your level of satisfaction of how well the following social impacts of the Central-West Orana Transmission Infrastructure Project will be managed.

	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very satisfied	I don't know
The local employment opportunities that will be brought by the Project	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The local skills and training programs that will be brought by the Project	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The local procurement opportunities that will be brought by the Project	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
How the benefits will be distributed across communities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The way in which the Project workforce will be accommodated (i.e. accommodation camp)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The way in which traffic impacts will be managed	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The way that impacts on Aboriginal Culture will be managed	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The way in which the overall social impacts of the Project will be managed	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The mental health support available for landowners and community members	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Access to project information	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ability to lodge queries, complaints and receive a response	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

What could we do to improve your overall satisfaction with the Project?

Access to information and providing feedback

A quarterly social impact monitoring report will be uploaded on the EnergyCo website.

How would you like to receive this information?

☐ Newsletter

☐ Email

☐ Have a summary on the website

☐ Community information session

☐ Other: _____

What information are you most interested in receiving?

☐ Business opportunities

☐ Employment opportunities

☐ Environmental impacts and management (Noise, traffic and transport, biosecurity, heritage, etc)

☐ Social impacts and management (services, community life)

☐ Benefit sharing projects (funding for local projects)

How would you like to provide feedback throughout construction?

☐ Dedicated phone line

☐ By email to a dedicated email address

☐ Text message

☐ Face to face meetings

☐ Other: _____

Would you like to register for project emails?

If so, please provide your email address: _____

Appendix G Whole of Government initiatives to respond to cumulative impacts

5.1 Overview

The approach taken to the assessment of cumulative impacts acknowledges that each project will be required to mitigate its own impacts to acceptable levels, minimising the overall contribution to cumulative impacts. Project specific initiatives are outlined in Section 2.

It is also recognised that not all REZ related cumulative impacts can be addressed through a project-level approach alone, requiring a more strategic and coordinated approach between EnergyCo, government agencies. and generators.

This coordination is managed through a Whole of Government (WofG) Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap Steering Committee supported by an Implementation Plan Working Group (IPWG). Key initiatives relevant to cumulative social impacts and benefits are outlined in the following sections.

5.2 Transport and logistics coordination

Transport and logistics coordination reduces impacts to:

- **way of life** by minimizing disruption to how people live, get around and work
- **livelihoods**, by minimizing disruption to businesses that use the Golden Highway, recognizing its important role in supporting regional economies

5.2.1 Port to REZ road upgrades

The CWO REZ requires the transportation of large and heavy renewable energy components such as wind turbines, towers and transformers, from the Port of Newcastle along the Golden Highway to project sites within the REZ.

TfNSW's Golden Highway Corridor Strategy (TfNSW, 2016) identifies the strategic importance of the Golden Highway as a freight corridor used for the transport of grain, fertiliser and livestock between the central west region, the Upper Hunter and the Port of Newcastle. The Strategy describes the Highway as an essential over-size over-mass route and notes the lack of alternative OSOM routes in the immediate area.

EnergyCo and Transport for NSW (TfNSW) have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to coordinate the approach to the planning, delivery and operation of infrastructure required to support movement of this equipment, referred to as Oversize and Over Mass (OSOM) movements, with EnergyCo leading the delivery of infrastructure and TfNSW leading the operational strategy.

This coordinated workstream has identified the need for upgrades at nineteen locations along a 320 km section of the Golden Highway and Castlereagh Highway (refer to Figure 21). This will allow OSOM equipment to be delivered on time while minimising disruptions to and ensuring safety for road users along this strategically important corridor.

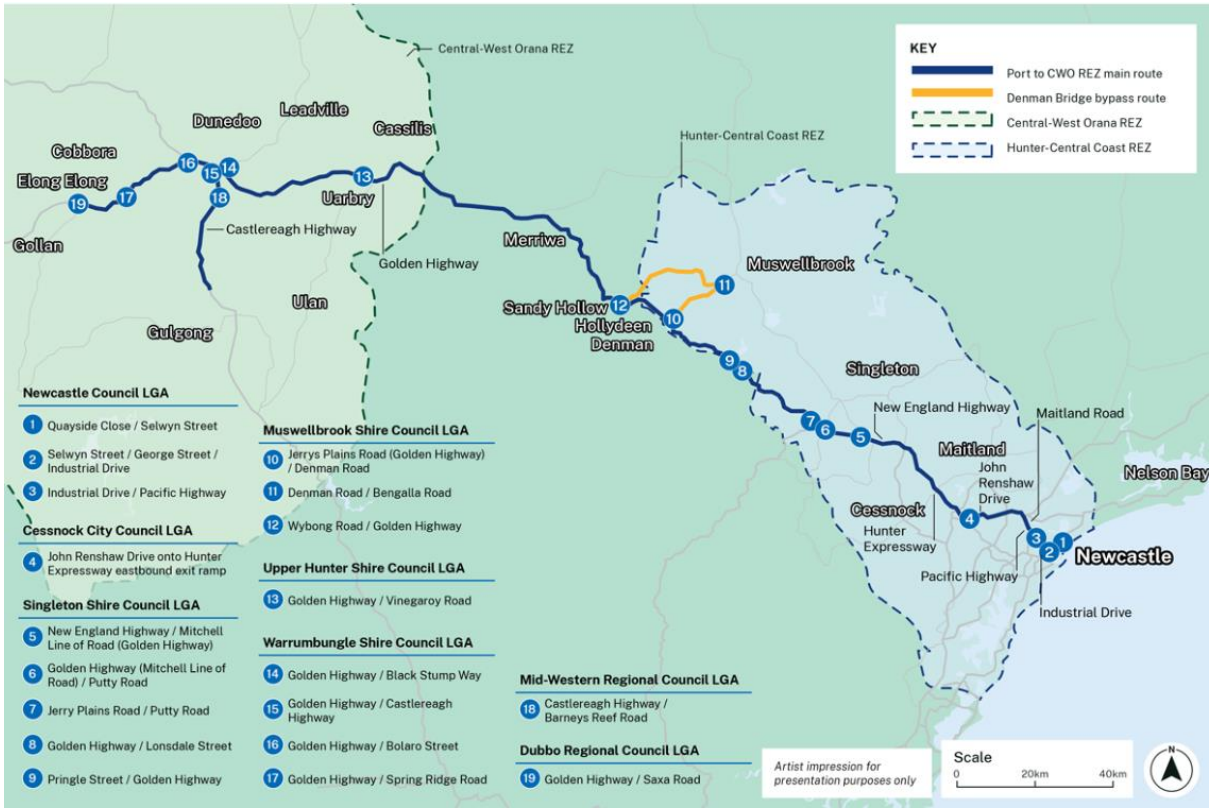
Planning approval for the Port to REZ road upgrades was obtained in 2024 with construction expected to commence in 2025.

5.2.2 Newcastle Logistics Precinct

EnergyCo has also entered into a MoU with Port of Newcastle to identify opportunities to support renewable energy industries in NSW and assess port capacity and infrastructure requirements. To support the coordinated delivery of renewable energy equipment to the port and onward transfer to the road network, EnergyCo is developing the Newcastle Logistics Precinct (NLP) on the Maitland Intertrade site.

The NLP will provide a dedicated area for the laydown and temporary storage of equipment prior to road transport to the REZ and project sites. This will allow a coordinated and planned approach to OSOM movements along the Golden Highway to ensure timely delivery to project sites while minimising disruption to road users.

Figure 21: Port to REZ road upgrades



5.2.3 TfNSW Operations strategy for OSOM movements

TfNSW is developing a strategy for how OSOM movements would operate in practice, taking into consideration police resources required to escort movements, the size of OSOM convoys, scheduling of movements and trip duration including the need for stopovers.

The operational strategy would also coordinate the operation of the NLP and with other freight users of the Golden Highway.

5.2.4 Local roads

EnergyCo and TfNSW have also identified two local roads in the Muswellbrook local government area that are important for freight movements – Bengalla Road and Wylong Road. These roads have been reclassified as state roads to enable State investment so that they can continue to support renewable energy projects.

5.3 Responding to increased demand for social and environmental services due to construction workforce

Government and project responses to increased demand for social and environmental services will reduce impacts to:

- **accessibility** and **health and wellbeing**, by enabling people to continue to access important services, including health services, by providing additional social and environmental services that reflect the temporary increase in population and take into consideration project specific responses.

5.3.1 Understanding scale and timing of construction workforce

Transmission, renewable energy and non-renewable energy projects in the CWO REZ will require a significant construction workforce many of whom will be housed in temporary workforce accommodation camps. The increase in temporary population will lead to an increase in demand for social and environmental services such as health services, drinking water, non-drinking water for construction, wastewater treatment and solid waste management.

As population forecasts are critical to understand the scale and timing of increased demand for services, DPHI has prepared a CWO REZ Population, Workforce and Housing and Accommodation study to project workforce population and timing. The study accounts for the CWO REZ transmission project, CWO REZ renewable generation projects, other renewable energy projects in the REZ and non-renewable energy projects in the REZ such as transport infrastructure and mine extensions.

The study recognises the projected changes in workforce and population are not well understood due to uncertainty over the scale and timing of projects. It notes that population impacts have implications for accommodation, labour, housing, social infrastructure as well as key servicing infrastructure such as water and waste. A key objective of the Plan is to provide DPHI and other Government agencies and Councils with a population dataset that ensures alignment of assumptions and consistency across studies.

The study identifies peak construction jobs estimates for the REZ at approximately 9,700 in August 2026, with the CWO REZ transmission project and related renewable energy projects accounting for approximately 5,000 construction jobs.

5.3.2 Strategies to assess approach for social and environmental services

The results of the population study are being used by Government agencies to plan their approach to social and environmental services, with strategies currently being prepared for health services, water (including wastewater), waste and housing.

Work is underway to assess current levels of service or infrastructure provision, the additional demand resulting from temporary workforce population including peak and duration, identify constraints or capacity shortages and recommended solutions to meet demand. This analysis will also consider project specific responses to meet services demand such as on-site wastewater treatment.

5.4 Maximising benefits to communities and businesses

Government initiatives to maximise the benefits of the renewable energy transition will positively impact:

- **Livelihoods**, by increasing the capacity of individuals and businesses to participate in the delivery and operation of the REZ through employment and supply opportunities
- **Community,** by sharing the benefits of the renewable energy transition with more people and communities.

5.4.1 Community and Employment Benefits Program

The CWO REZ Community and Employment Benefit Program (CEPB) aims to share the benefits of the renewable energy distribution to more people by investing in regional communities in renewable energy zones.

The Programme provides initial funding to communities and Councils through four grant streams:

- Local Community Fund: $15 million for community and First Nations projects that improve local amenity and foster community connections
- Local Community Small Grants: $500,000 to support small-scale events, initiatives or projects that deliver tangible benefits for local and First Nations communities
- First Nations Fund: $10 million for projects that empower local Aboriginal organisations, create job opportunities and enhance outcomes for Aboriginal people (fact sheet)
- Legacy Infrastructure Fund: $45 million for eligible councils to work with communities to deliver infrastructure projects that boost liveability and drive regional economic development.

The programme is funded from access fees paid by generation and storage projects with an access right to connect to the network infrastructure. These funds have been brought forward so that communities can benefit from the renewable energy transition before construction begins.

5.4.2 Benefit sharing guidelines

The Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure published a Benefit Sharing Guideline for renewable energy project (DPHI, November 2024). The Guidelines recognises that host communities experience the changes

caused by renewable energy but may not necessarily see a proportionate level of benefits, requiring mechanisms to fairly share the proceeds from the transition within the areas in which it is focused.

The guideline recommends a benefit sharing dollar value per megawatt (MW) of energy generation based on renewable energy type (wind, solar, battery). Based on these recommended values, the Guidelines estimate the benefit sharing value in the CWO REZ at $118 million.

The intent of the guidelines will be implemented through the development application process, with large-scale renewable energy projects required to outline their proposed model for community benefit-sharing in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The applicant's proposed model must include:

- an indication of the types and scale of benefit-sharing (including neighbourhood and local community benefits) that will be offered by the applicant and used to distribute and share the proceeds of the project with neighbours and the broader community
- the estimated total value (financial amount or equivalent) of community benefits (both neighbourhood and local community benefits) that will be provided as part of the renewable energy proposal, including any funding to be included in a planning agreement and the financial value of any other programs
- details of specific benefit-sharing programs if known at the time.

The guidelines also note that benefit-sharing funds should be targeted towards the people and communities that are most likely to experience the effects of the proposed development with a balanced consideration of the impacts experienced and the presence and size of different population centres and communities.

5.4.3 Employment, training and local supply opportunities

The Renewable Energy Sector Board (RESB) has developed a plan for the renewable energy sector which includes details on how to maximise the employment of local workers and foster training and apprenticeship opportunities. The Consumer Trustee uses the Board's plan when granting authorisations for renewable energy projects to operate in each REZ, resulting in coordinated job and supply-chain opportunities for businesses in those areas.

Building on the work of the RESB, research commissioned by the government projected that the roadmap would create up to 7,000 new jobs across the state. Many of these jobs are expected to be in areas of skills shortage, such as electricians, metal trades workers, and civil and electrical engineers

These skills shortages highlight the need for the government to coordinate a joint effort across industry, the education and training sectors, regional communities and others to attract, train, employ and support the workforce required. Consultations have also highlighted the importance of ensuring the roadmap leaves a positive skills and employment legacy for affected communities, particularly under-represented groups such as First Nations Australians and women.

In response, the NSW Government has committed to developing the 2030 Renewable Energy Workforce Plan (REWP). The Plan aims to develop the skilled workforce needed to deliver the Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap and ensure the roadmap delivers skills and employment legacies for local communities and under-represented groups.

The Plan will focus actions to deliver the following outcomes:

- Awareness – so that students are informed about, interested in, and get a taste of renewable energy pathways
- Access – so that students can access renewable energy pathways where there are renewable energy jobs
- Support – so that students are supported through renewable energy education, training and employment pathways
- Equity – so that under-represented cohorts have a fair share of renewable energy opportunities
- Mobility – so that employers can access skilled workers from other sectors, regions and countries to meet critical skills gaps.

Options for delivering these outcomes are currently being considered by Government and will be communicated in further updates to the Plan.