

New England Renewable Energy Zone

Project update | September 2026

EnergyCo is delivering the New England Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) to provide a clean, affordable and reliable power supply for homes and businesses across NSW.

From the Project Director

The New England REZ is a critical part of the NSW Government's plan to provide affordable and reliable energy as ageing coal-fired power stations retire. There are no other projects that can deliver this scale of generation capacity in the required timeframes, making it essential to keeping the lights on in NSW.

Regional communities will share in the benefits of the energy transition through investment, jobs, improved infrastructure and broader economic development opportunities from the REZs.

To support these outcomes, the Minister for Climate Change, Energy, Heritage and the Environment recently announced an initial \$60 million in funding for the New England REZ Community and Employment Benefit Program (CEBP), which will invest in projects and programs that deliver a legacy for the region. This program will grow with funding from future generation projects that will connect to the new transmission lines in the New England REZ. Our team has been out and about in the region seeking feedback from local communities and councils to help shape how this program is designed and delivered.

Work to develop the new transmission network is progressing and we expect to lodge an environmental impact statement (EIS) for assessment and public exhibition in Q4 this year.

The EIS is a significant milestone, building on 3 years of detailed environmental and technical studies. Anyone can have their say on the EIS during the exhibition. Read more about how we will engage and support you in making informed submissions on page 3 of this update.

Prioritising REZ network infrastructure now is essential. Transmission infrastructure takes years to plan and build, and early work ensures the energy system will be ready to replace retiring coal-fired power stations. It also gives renewable energy developers the certainty they need to plan and fund their projects.

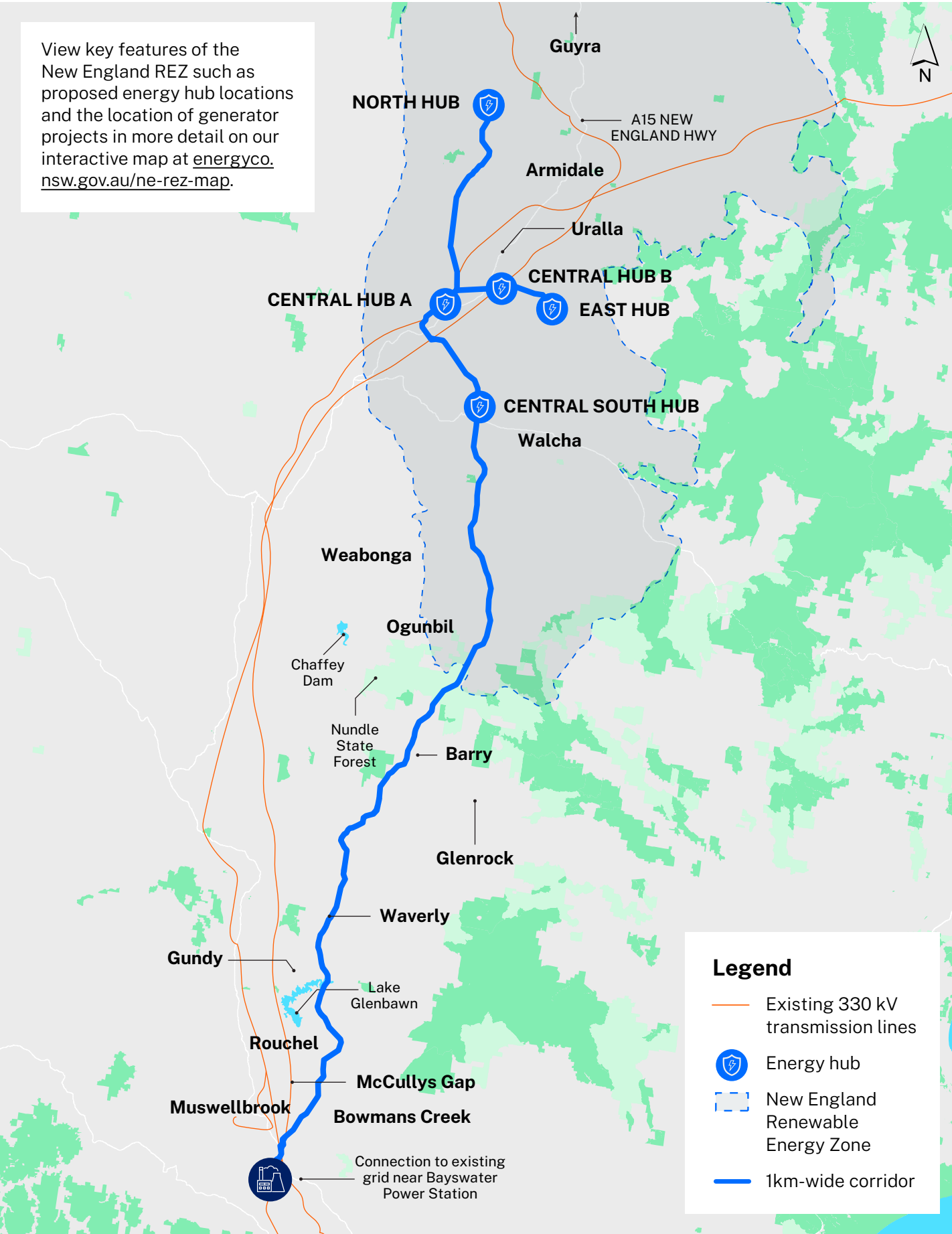
We recently sought feedback on the draft New England REZ access scheme which sets the rules on how solar, wind and storage projects connect to the network. We expect the final access scheme to be declared shortly. Once renewable energy projects are awarded access rights under the scheme, this will give us greater certainty on the scale and timing of renewable energy development in the REZ. Access rights will be awarded in stages over the next few years.

Thank you to everyone who has shared feedback with us as we continue planning the New England REZ. Your insights on social impacts, local priorities and community values are helping shape how the REZ will be delivered.

Doug Parris

Project Director of the New England REZ

Project map





Upcoming environmental impact statement public exhibition

EnergyCo is preparing an environmental impact statement (EIS) for the New England Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) network infrastructure project, which includes new transmission lines, energy hubs (substations) and related infrastructure needed to connect renewable energy projects to the electricity grid.

The EIS is a key part of the NSW planning approvals process. It assesses potential impacts on the environment, communities and local economies, including biodiversity, visual amenity, traffic and transport, water resources, land use and biosecurity. It also outlines measures to avoid, minimise and manage impacts.

The EIS is expected to be publicly exhibited by the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) in late 2026 for a minimum of 28 days. During this time, everyone will have the opportunity to review the EIS and make a submission.

To help the community understand the project and the assessment process, EnergyCo will host a range of engagement activities during the exhibition period, including community information sessions, webinars, digital resources, interactive mapping tools, artist impressions and fact sheets.

All submissions received during exhibition will be considered and responded to in a Submissions Report, which will support DPHI's assessment of the project.

How to get involved and have your say

During the EIS exhibition period, you can make a submission to DPHI about the project or review the EIS documents and supporting studies by visiting planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects and searching SSI-74175972.

You can also attend our information sessions and webinars, ask questions of project team members and subject matter experts, and access our online resources and interactive tools.

Keep up to date

- Subscribe at energyco.nsw.gov.au/nerezsubscribe to receive project news, webinar invitations and major project milestones directly to your inbox
- Visit energyco.nsw.gov.au/ne for the latest project information, engagement opportunities and project resources.

Connecting renewable energy projects to the REZ

The proposed access scheme for the New England REZ was open for public consultation from 6 July to 6 August 2026. The access scheme outlines how solar, wind and large-scale energy storage projects will connect to REZ network infrastructure.

Thank you to everyone who took time to review the draft access scheme and provide comments. We received over 30 submissions.

The Minister for Climate Change, Energy, Heritage and the Environment will review all submissions before deciding whether to make a final access scheme declaration for the New England REZ.

After this decision, EnergyCo will publish a positions paper outlining any changes made to the scheme in response to stakeholder feedback.

We expect the final access scheme to be declared in late 2026, subject to approval by the Minister.

Generator access rights will be awarded in 2027/2028 through a competitive tender process. As access rights are awarded, we will gain more certainty about the scale and timing of renewable energy development in the REZ.

Read more about the proposed access scheme on our website at energyco.nsw.gov.au/ne-rez.



Planning workforce accommodation for the New England REZ

Building the project will need a large workforce and while there will be strong job opportunities for locals, many workers will travel from outside the region.

Workers will need to be housed in temporary accommodation camps close to where the transmission lines and energy hubs will be built.

Temporary accommodation for construction workers will be critical to help reduce pressure on existing local housing, accommodation and local services. We have heard this is a key concern for communities in the region.

We are working with landholders to secure suitable sites. Where practical, the camps will form part of key construction sites, like energy hubs. Establishing camps within construction sites will help consolidate activity and minimise journey times for the workforce.

We are speaking with site neighbours to discuss what this could mean for them, and to understand the concerns and constraints.

The EIS will include a detailed assessment of workforce accommodation camps and other temporary construction sites. Anyone can have their say on the EIS when it is placed on exhibition later this year.

Northern connection deferral

Recent national energy system planning and network modelling has determined the section of transmission line north of the north energy hub, known as the northern connection, is not required to unlock the initial 6 GW of network capacity of the New England REZ network infrastructure project.

As a result, the northern connection will not be delivered as part of the REZ's current network infrastructure project.

The update removes around 13 kilometres of transmission line north of the proposed north hub and a proposed switching station near Boorolong.

It also removes 6 impacted landholders from the project. There are no changes to the hubs or other transmission lines.

The updated project alignment will be reflected in the project's EIS which is planned for public exhibition later this year.

EnergyCo will continue to deliver the broader New England REZ project, including infrastructure within the north hub footprint.

If you have any questions about this update, please call our community information line on 1800 061 114 (toll free) or email us at nerez@energyco.nsw.gov.au.

Working together to address regional priorities

EnergyCo is working with NSW Government agencies, councils and regional service providers to plan the New England REZ in a way that is sustainable for the region.

In December 2025 we released a series of Regional Major Infrastructure Studies which consider the challenges, opportunities and potential impact of cumulative development in the region.

To support the release of the studies, we invited the community to provide feedback on local priorities through an online survey.

Thank you to everyone who shared their feedback. Your insights will help EnergyCo and partner agencies better understand local pressures and shape initiatives to support regional growth. A summary of survey feedback is available at energyco.nsw.gov.au/ne-rez.

Next steps

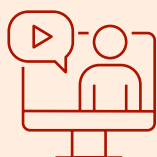
EnergyCo is working with councils and stakeholders to identify opportunities that align with regional priorities and is assessing these alongside community feedback to prioritise options for the region.

Watch our webinars

EnergyCo regularly hosts webinars where landholders and the community can hear directly from the team, learn about the project and ask questions. Recent sessions include:

- a webinar for landholders hosting transmission infrastructure explaining easement acquisition and compensation under the *Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991* and Strategic Benefit Payments
- an overview of the access scheme process for the New England REZ
- community and employment benefits for the region.

Upcoming webinar dates and recordings of past sessions are available at energyco.nsw.gov.au/ne/working-community.



Community engagement in Tamworth

Prioritising water security in New England

Protecting local water supply is a priority for the New England REZ. In NSW, town water supplies and critical human water needs are always prioritised above industrial and construction water use. This means water for REZ projects cannot come at the expense of local households or communities.

Like other water users in NSW, renewable energy projects must secure their own water licences and allocations for construction and operational activities.

Water is allocated according to NSW legislation and water-sharing rules, with town water supplies, stock access and essential community needs always receiving the highest priority.

To support this, EnergyCo is working closely with government agencies and local councils to identify dedicated water solutions for the region.

The aim is to meet project water needs without placing additional pressure on local water supplies or existing town infrastructure. If new water infrastructure is needed, we will work with stakeholders to determine the best approach to fund and deliver it.

The New England REZ network infrastructure project's EIS will assess water use and potential impacts during construction and operation of the new transmission network.

Individual renewable energy projects will also need to show how they will manage their water requirements as part of their own planning and approval processes. This helps ensure local water security remains protected throughout the delivery of their projects.



First transmission tower installed in the Central-West Orana REZ

Visit our regional mobile offices

Communities in the region can visit our REZ mobile offices where our team members will be available to provide information, answer questions and collect feedback on the project. The mobile offices will be set up regularly in different locations across the project area, including local libraries and council offices. Anyone is welcome to walk in and chat with our team during the advertised opening hours.

Our team also regularly attends events in the region. View our full schedule of upcoming engagement activities at energyco.nsw.gov.au/nerez.



EnergyCo at the 2026 Aberdeen Highland Games



Wind farm in the New England REZ

Feedback and support services

We are committed to working with communities, landholders and stakeholders to ensure everyone is informed about the development of the New England REZ. Local input is vital to help shape delivery of the REZ and we welcome your feedback. You can contact our team at any time by calling 1800 061 114 (toll free) or emailing nerez@energyco.nsw.gov.au.

Support is available for landholders 24/7 and you can find a full list of support services in our 'mental health support for residents' fact sheet at energyco.nsw.gov.au/nerez.

Contact us

EnergyCo wants to hear what you think about our plans. If you have questions or want to give feedback, please get in touch with our team.



nerez@energyco.nsw.gov.au



1800 061 114 (toll free)



energyco.nsw.gov.au/nerez



Scan the QR code for more information.

If you need help understanding this information, please contact the Translating and Interpreting Service on **131 450** and ask them to call us on **1800 061 114**.