

# EnergyAustralia Lithgow Region Community Consultative Committee

## Final Meeting Minutes – 24 February 2026

### Member attendees:

- Julie Favell
- Brian Fitzgerald
- Rob White
- Auntie Helen Riley
- Jim Whitty
- Brad Cluff
- Jamie Giokaris
- Sandra Politi – Lithgow City Council in place of Cr Smith
- David McKee – EnergyAustralia replacing Peter Griffiths
- Ben Eastwood – EnergyAustralia
- Cath Russell – EnergyAustralia

### Also present:

- Maree Young – EnergyAustralia
- Harley McNamara – EnergyAustralia

### Apologies:

- Cr Ray Smith – Lithgow City Council
- Peter Griffiths - EnergyAustralia
- Jonathon English – EnergyAustralia

### Presenters:

- Michael de Vink - EnergyAustralia
- Matt Bruers - EnergyAustralia
- Dave Simpfendorfer – EnergyAustralia (Secretariat)

### Chair:

- Brendan Blakeley

Item	Discussion Point
------	------------------

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 | <p><b>Site Tour</b></p> <p>After a safety induction and site orientation CCC members and EnergyAustralia staff took a 75-minute tour of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the Lamberts North Ash Repository noting the process for:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· lining the repository</li><li>· deposition of brine and water conditioned ash.</li></ul></li><li>• the Mt Piper Ash Repository noting:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· progress with the capping the repository</li><li>· works to divert water away from the repository.</li></ul></li><li>• the BESS site noting:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· the location and proposed layout of Stage 1 of the project</li><li>· the substation that the BESS will connect to.</li></ul></li></ul> |
|---|--|

2

**Welcome and introductions**

- The meeting began at 5:30 pm.
- The Chair welcomed all members.
- The Chair acknowledged Country.
- The Chair introduced David McKee and Brad Cluff to the CCC.
- The Chair asked for declarations of interest:
  - The Chair noted he chaired a similar group for EnergyAustralia at Tallawarra Power Station. He declared payment received from EnergyAustralia for his role as independent chair of this CCC.
  - The Chair noted Auntie Helen's previous declaration
  - Brad Cluff noted that EnergyAustralia sometimes utilises the services of his business in Wallerawang.
    - The chair noted apologies from:
      - Cr Ray Smith – Lithgow City Council
      - Peter Griffiths – EnergyAustralia
      - Jonathon English – EnergyAustralia

---

3

**Questions on notice and actions (see slides 6 to 10)**

Wombat Mange program update

Ben Eastwood noted:

- Team members are undertaking training for treating wombats with sarcoptic mange
- This will allow staff at MPPS to manage all aspects of monitoring and treatment in house
- EnergyAustralia is undertaking surveys around Thompsons Creek Reservoir to identify the number of mange affected wombats
- Cameras have been placed around the biodiversity offset area.

**Questions on notice**

- *Julie Favell asked for an update on the status of the remediation of the 3 dug-out sections Wangcol Ck that are being impacted by leaching of groundwater.*
  - Ben replied that:
    - EnergyAustralia is presently studying options to identify feasible works that would improve water quality in Wangcol Creek.
    - The dug-out areas are old mining voids, and they are being looked at as part of the study.
    - The report is due to be finalised soon and the CCC will be updated.
  - *Julie asked for confirmation that the dugout areas will be looked at.*
  - Ben confirmed that the voids are being considered in the study as they are known areas where groundwater intercepts with the creek. The CCC will be updated on the study and the preferred methodology when the report is completed.
  - *Julie Favell sought clarification about the lifespan of the capping material being used at Mt Piper Ash Repository and what the term "end of project" means.*
-

---

Item	Discussion Point
------	------------------

---

- Ben explained that:
  - An interim capping arrangement would be in place until the end of MPPS operating period, a more permanent capping arrangement would be required for potential closure of the MPAR.
  - Capping does not just refer to the membrane. Longer term it also comprises layers of topsoil, overburden, membrane and geofabric.
  - In the event of closure, it would need to be demonstrated that the final capping design is safe and stable in perpetuity.
  - As part of the decommissioning process a detailed management plan would need to be prepared.
- *Rob White asked about the depth of overburden layer.*
- Ben replied that this would be identified in the decommissioning management plan. Typically, the depth of soil will need to be adequate to support the growth medium that will be planted. Interim capping while the repository is still operating is planned as grasses rather than shrubs and trees. Following closure, alternate native vegetation would be planted.
- *Julie Favell asked what happens to excess unbrined ash that the market cannot take?*
- Ben responded that:
  - currently there is a strong and consistent market for the use of ash in cementitious materials.
  - They pick up ash in vacuum trucks directly after the coal is burned and the ash isn't brine conditioned.
  - EnergyAustralia tries to sell as much ash as possible, and we are actively looking for new purchasers to increase the amount of ash that goes to market.
  - At Mt Piper we keep some ash to be able to deal with brine from water treatment and lay this down as brine conditioned ash.
- David McKee added that internationally research is being done on fly ash as source of rare earth metals.
- *Julie Favell noted it was important to see ash as resource for the future and longer-term look at ways that ash could be moved from the site.*

---

#### 4 Environmental Planning Approvals (see slides 12 to 14)

---

- Ben provided a planning overview and noted that most current projects have been approved except for Lake Lyell Pumped Hydro and Mt Piper Mod 10 which is looking at augmenting water management around the coal supply area through diversion and detention infrastructure.
  - Ben noted that EnergyAustralia is currently responding to submissions received during the exhibition of Mod 10 and the report is likely to be submitted to DPHI later in March.
  - *Julie Favell observed that it would be better to stop putting stormwater from operations into Wangcol Creek.*
  - *Brian Fitzgerald asked if it was still practice to add lime to coal to manage sulphur content.*
-

---

Item	Discussion Point
------	------------------

---

- David McKee responded that this is not the practice at Mt Piper as our suppliers generally provide quite low sulphur coal.

5 **Operations update – MPPS (see slides 15 to 21)**

*Some slides have been redacted due to confidentiality. Only high-level discussion points are reported below.*

David McKee noted the following updates on the station operations:

- Mt Piper is generating close to 15% of NSW power needs.
- The station workforce stands at 189 people including 20 apprentices.
- This is more apprentices than compared to previous years.
- It has been calculated that station operations provide a direct input of approximately \$40 M per year into the Lithgow economy.
- Safety – there has been a good start to the year with only 3 near misses and four hazards reported.
- *Rob White asked what constitutes a near miss?*
- David McKee noted that it is an event where there is the potential for injury, but no one is hurt. He cited the example of an object falling from height, but no one is in the vicinity of where the object lands.
- David McKee noted that injuries tend to go up during outages when there are more people working on site who may not be fully familiar with the station. When staffing is stable and consistent there is pattern of very low levels of injuries, near misses or hazards.
- So far this year at Mt Piper the total injury frequency rate is 0 and EnergyAustralia is keen to see it stay at this level.
- Market demand is stable. Generally, across NSW daily demand ranges between 8,000 MW to a peak of 13,000 MW.
- The station fuel supply stockpile is at a very healthy level in terms of size and quality coal from Centennial along with smaller volumes from Castlereagh.
- Planning approval has been given to allow operations at Castlereagh through to 2030.
- Despite some problems with the long wall changeover supply has been constant and high quality.
- MP Unit 1 is performing well.
- MP Unit 2 is working well but had outages due to super heater tube leaks that have since been rectified.
- EnergyAustralia is working with Toshiba to plan for an upcoming outage to service the Unit 2 Steam feed pumps. These works normally occur during outages but due to high workloads in this year's outage in Sep-Dec, it has been bought forward
- Mt Piper is operating very flexibly, and EnergyAustralia is able to cycle the units down to very low generation during times where there is a lot of renewables flowing into the grid and ramp up over nights and when there are wind droughts to support the demand.

6 **Project Updates: Mt Piper BESS** (see slides 22 to 25)

- Matt Bruers played a recent video explaining the Mt Piper BESS
- Matt noted:
  - Early works have commenced to prepare for the final investment decision later this year.
  - AEMO is keen to see more storage introduced into the network.
  - Energy Australia is moving on with procurement planning and sounding out contractors.
- Construction is straightforward and comprises site preparation works to create bays/ platforms and laying conduit to connect the batteries to substation. Then we bring in 278 container sized modules for the first 250 MW tranche of storage. Once the batteries are in place they are hooked up and commissioned. Other works will include:
  - water diversion and settling ponds
  - bunded platforms for transformers etc.
- *Rob White asked about the size of the area involved?*
- Matt replied that EnergyAustralia is looking at the entire 500 MW BESS occupying a six-hectare footprint.
- *Rob White noted that having storage so close to the power station and on land that was designated for energy production was a real benefit.*
- Cath Russell talked through the proposed community benefits program for the BESS which would focus upon First Nations traineeships and employment. EnergyAustralia has started working with local groups on workforce participation. This work is happening in anticipation of a positive financial investment decision and possibly a very quick start to construction in 2027.

**Project Update: Lake Lyell Pumped Hydro Study** (see slides 26 to 29)

Michael de Vink provided an update on the EIS noting:

- The EIS has been submitted to the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure.
  - As part of the adequacy review DPHI have come back with some questions for the Lake Lyell planning team to work through.
  - Exhibition is imminent.
  - *Julie Favell noted there would be several referring agencies involved in looking at the EIS.*
  - Michael stated that the main body of the EIS is around 320 pages which summarises the proposal and key elements from the various studies.
  - There are 26 chapters in the overall EIS which is close to 5700 pages.
  - Cath Russell noted the consultation team is looking at ways to get the study onto a USB for key stakeholders.
-

---

Item	Discussion Point
------	------------------

---

- *Julie Favell and Rob White commented that this was necessary as they don't want to be always downloading such large files from the planning portal.*
- *Rob White asked if CCC members could receive and advance copy of the EIS.*
- Michael stated the EIS wouldn't be provided in advance of the exhibition.
- *Julie asked if EDF was going to be participating in the CCC.*
- Mike responded that the EIS is being led by EDF. EnergyAustralia has carriage over community engagement. EDF has offices in Melbourne and Sydney and are likely to be part of the exhibition program.
- *There was discussion about the exhibition period for Lake Lyell. Community members on the CCC noted the following points:*
  - *4 weeks was not enough time given the scale of the project and the length of the EIS document*
  - *many community members of groups with an interest in Lake Lyell were doing this work in a voluntary capacity.*
- *Julie Favell observed that reading the summary document would require covering 10 pages per day and reading the whole EIS would mean that a community member has to read 200 pages per day.*
- Cath noted the Department's minimum exhibition period for CSSI projects was 28 days.
- The Chair added that 28 days was becoming typical even for very large projects.
- It was agreed the Chair would write to the planning officer in DPHI responsible for the project, noting community members' request for a longer exhibition period. **(Action)**

### **Addendum**

The Chair sent the following email to the DPHI on Thursday 26 February

The EnergyAustralia Lithgow Region CCC met last night and heard that the EIS for the Lake Lyell Pumped Hydro proposal has been lodged. The community members on the committee have asked me as the independent chair to convey their request that the exhibition period be extended beyond the minimum four weeks.

The reasons for this are:

- the extent of documentation- with the EIS package being just under 6000 pages.
- many of them work in a voluntary capacity for their community groups and have other commitments -they feel that one month is not enough time for them to familiarize themselves with the EIS and provide informed commentary on such a detailed and multifaceted project.

---

Item	Discussion Point
------	------------------

---

It would be appreciated if you could get back to me as to whether a six-week exhibition period is an option the department could consider in this instance.

Kind regards

Brendan Blakeley

Independent Chair

EnergyAustralia Lithgow Region CCC

- The Chair announced there would be an orientation session for CCC members sometime within the exhibition period of the EIS. He suggested that these sessions work best when members have an opportunity to familiarise themselves with the EIS beforehand.
- He noted the session is focused on aiding members' understanding of the EIS and an opportunity for questions of clarification, it is not a forum for commenting on the EIS.
- He also noted that given the uncertainties around the exact timing for exhibition that the usual 4 weeks' notice for the meeting may not be possible.
- He commented that not all experts would be at the session and asked if members could nominate what areas of the EIS would be of most interest to ensure that the right experts can present.
- *CCC member suggestions included:*
  - *Flora and fauna*
  - *Visual Impact Analysis*
  - *Construction impacts*
  - *Indigenous heritage*
  - *Impact upon neighbouring residents – construction and operation*
  - *Impacts on recreation*
  - *Economic Impact Assessment*
- *Rob White observed it was mentioned that the economic contribution of the Lake Lyell project to the local economy would be over \$200 million each year. He noted that this was a large figure in relation to previous presentation that stated Mt Piper contributed about \$40 million per year to the local economy.*
- Cath replied that this was the figure in the EIS and was derived by an economist using an established methodology for both direct and indirect contributions. The Mt Piper figure is only direct contributions.

---

7 **Updates: Lithgow Community (see slides 30 to 31)**

- Cath noted EnergyAustralia recently participated in several engagement /outreach events.
- She noted the 2026 Community Grants will be open from 1-31 March.
- She also announced that EnergyAustralia will join in the SEGRA conference later in March.

---

Item	Discussion Point
------	------------------

---

8

**Other business**

- The Chair asked if committee members agreed to the current terms of reference and code of conduct for the next year.
- *Members agreed.*
- He noted he was finalising the annual report on the CCC and asked if members had any feedback about the CCC.
- *Members noted there were no issues with the current operation of the CCC. However, community members of the CCC noted that if the Lake Lyell Pumped Hydro project is approved, a standalone CCC should be considered. Members felt that given the scale of the project and breadth of stakeholder interests, a separate CCC could support more effective focus and better representation.*
- *Rob White asked if EnergyAustralia could look at the management of pigs on their land around Lake Lyell. Rob had recently dealt with 9 pigs on his property. He noted:*
  - *with the changes in weather, pigs are coming out of the bush and closer to the lake.*
  - *that traps need to be well managed and maintained to work.*
- Ben Eastwood said he would review what is happening in terms of current management and report back. (Action)

---

9

**Meeting close**

- The Chair noted that as agreed by EnergyAustralia there would be an orientation session for the CCC to coincide with the exhibition of the Lake Lyell Pumped Hydro application.
  - The Chair asked if it was OK that the meeting is not on a Tuesday evening and that the requirement for 4 weeks' notice be foregone in this instance.
  - *Members agreed to this.*
  - The Chair thanked members for their participation and asked the CCC members to thank the EnergyAustralia staff who organised and hosted the site tour.
  - Members conveyed their thanks to the team.
  - The meeting closed at 6.40 pm.
-

# EnergyAustralia Lithgow Region

Community Consultative Committee

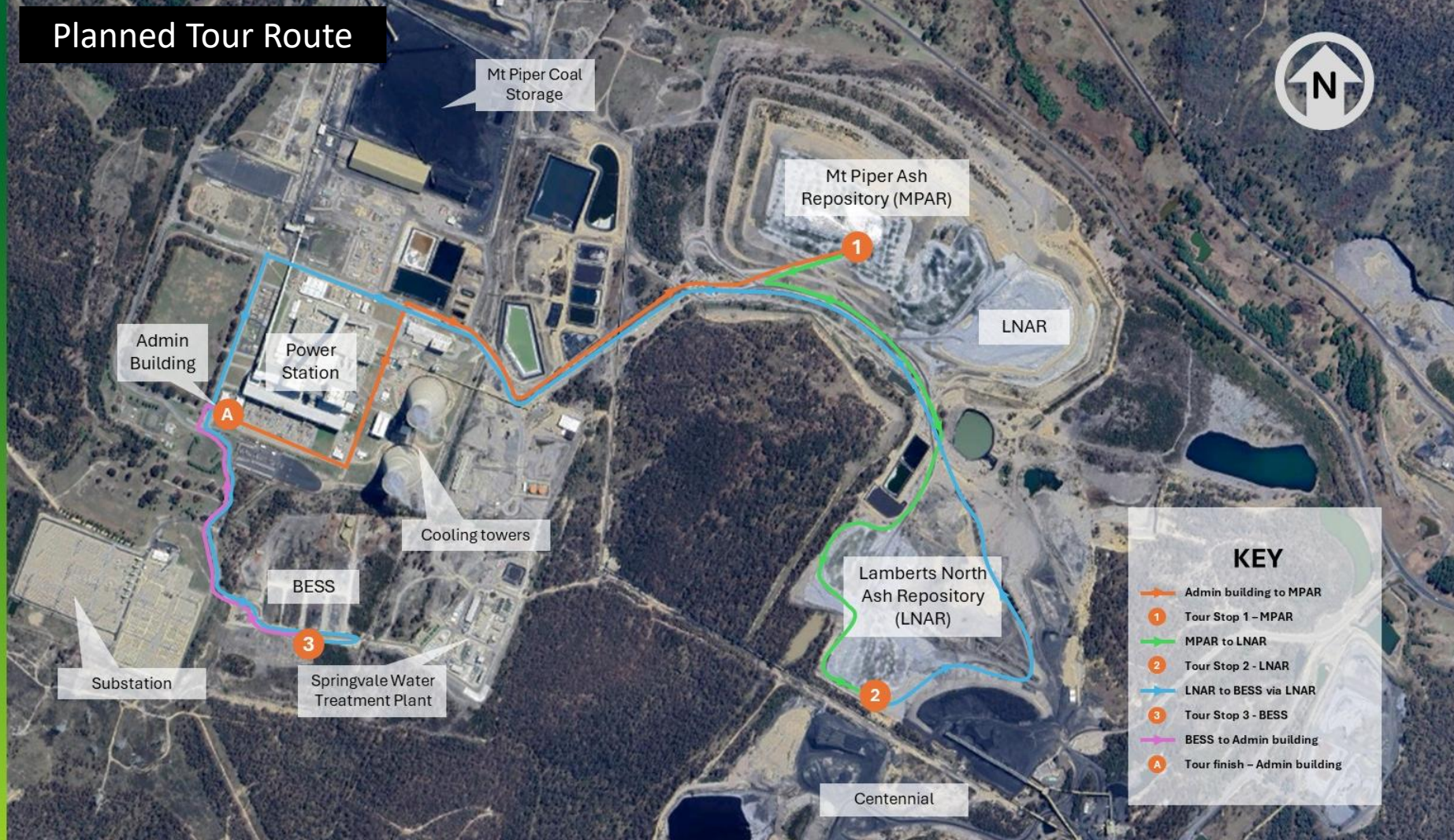
24 February 2025

Presenter: Peter Griffiths – Mt Piper Site Operations Leader



**EnergyAustralia**  
LIGHT THE WAY

# Planned Tour Route



Mt Piper Coal Storage

Mt Piper Ash Repository (MPAR)

LNAR

Admin Building

Power Station

Cooling towers

BESS

Lamberts North Ash Repository (LNAR)

Substation

Springvale Water Treatment Plant

Centennial

## KEY

- Admin building to MPAR
- 1 Tour Stop 1 - MPAR
- MPAR to LNAR
- 2 Tour Stop 2 - LNAR
- LNAR to BESS via LNAR
- 3 Tour Stop 3 - BESS
- BESS to Admin building
- A Tour finish - Admin building

# Agenda

1. 4:00pm: Site Tour
  1. Mt Piper Power Station – Level 11, Control Room
  2. Mt Piper Ash Repository (MPAR)
  3. Mt Piper BESS site
2. 5:30pm: Welcome – Acknowledgement of Country – Declarations of Interest
3. Minutes and Actions
4. Operations and Project Updates
  1. Environmental Planning Approvals
  2. Mt Piper Power Station
  3. Mt Piper BESS
  4. Lake Lyell Pumped Hydro
  5. Lithgow Community
5. General discussion
6. Meeting Close

# Acknowledgement of Country

We would like to acknowledge the Wiradjuri people as the Traditional Owners of the land on which we meet today, and recognise and respect their connection to culture, land and unity.

We pay our respect to their Elders past, present and emerging.



Artwork by Wiradjuri Elder and Mindaan Wiradjuri Aboriginal Corporation  
Representative Aunty Sharon Riley

# Declarations of Interest

## **2. Minutes and actions**

# Standing Item 1 –Wombat Mange Program

## Wombat Management Program

*CCC requested an update be provided on a regular basis*

### **Current activities**

- MPPS Environment Team members are undertaking training for Treating Wombats with Sarcoptic Mange
- MPPS Environment Team to manage the Wombat Treatment Program – dosing, monitoring & recording
- Undertaking surveying at TCR Biodiversity offset area to identify mange affected Wombats to target mange treatment



# Question on Notice 1 – Wangcol Creek

## Raised by Julie Favell

When and what type of remediation will commence for the 3 large dugs outs in Wangcol Creek where its leaching from ground water?

*Julie requested an update be provided on a regular basis.*

## Response

EA is progressing an options study to identify reasonable and feasible works that would improve water quality in Wangcol Creek. The three known legacy mining voids in Wangcol Creek have been considered in this study.

This report is anticipated to be finalised in March 2026. EA will provide an update on this study to the CCC when finalised.

We will continue to report when new information is available.

# Question on Notice 2 – MPAR Capping

## Raised by Julie Favell

Previous Dec 2025 CCC Julie queried the lifespan of the capping material on Mt Piper Ash Repository. Ben stated till the end of project. What does that actually mean?

## Response

The capping strategy has been developed to support the long-term closure of the MPAR while simultaneously providing the opportunity for ash to be reclaimed for beneficial reuse.

The capping material at MPAR consists of several layers including topsoil, overburden, synthetic HDPE liner and geofabric.

In the event of closure the capping design would need to demonstrate a safe stable, landform in perpetuity. The geosynthetic layers will be well protected by the overburden material. The capping layer has been installed to reduce the rate of salt migration.

# Question on Notice 3 – Ash Management

## Raised by Julie Favell

At the last CCC meeting Julie asked Ben where the ash that is not brine concentrated is being placed.

Ben said it was sold as produced. Follow up question: What if there is excess ash to market need? Where is this placed and managed?

## Response

If MPPS has surplus fly ash it is sold to third party business for use in cementitious materials such as cement for construction. All ash storage for Mt Piper is now at Lamberts North Ash Repository (LNAR).

Typically, MPPS cannot produce sufficient fly ash to meet the demand by third parties. Fly ash is always in high demand for use in making cement.

# **4. Operations and Project Updates**

## **4.1 Environmental Planning Approvals**

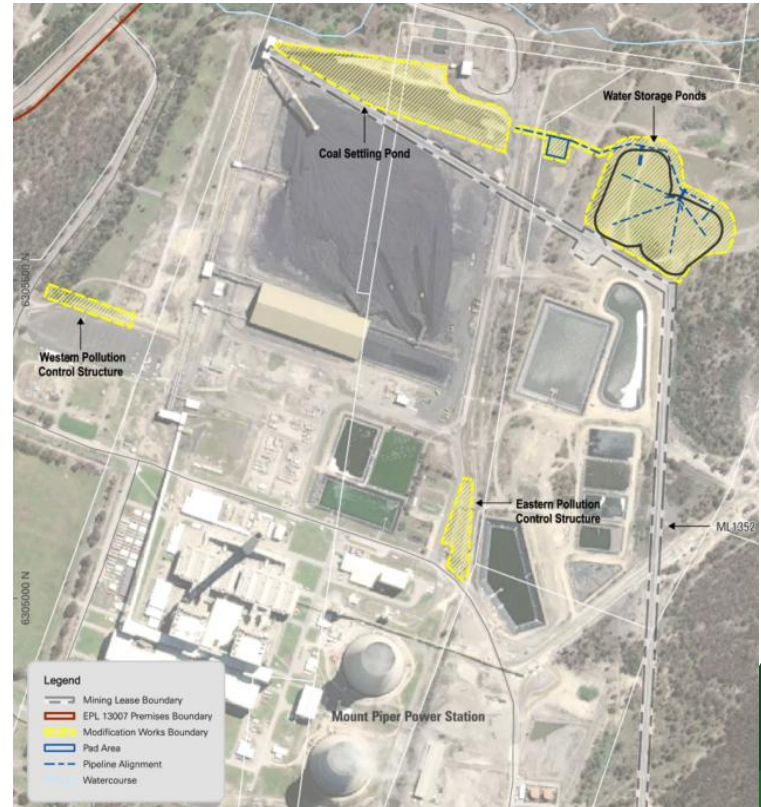
# Environment Planning Approvals

	Approval Stage					
	Project Description/ Introduction (SEARs or MOD briefing, application briefing)	Complete Environmental Studies & Prepare Report (SEE, EIS, or Mod report)	Lodge Application with Determining Authority (DPHI or LCC)	Public Exhibition	EA Response to Submissions	Determining Authority Assessment & Project Determination
EA Project	Community Consultation					
Lake Lyell Pumped Hydro Site Investigation Geotech (Council DA)	→ Approved					
Lake Lyell Pumped Hydro Site Investigation Geotech Mod 1 (Council DA)	→ Approved					
Lake Lyell Pumped Hydro (CSSI)	→					
Mt Piper Battery Energy Storage System (SSD)	→ Approved					
Lamberts North Ash Repository Mod 2 – extension of operating hours (SSD)	→ Approved					
Mt Piper MOD 9 – Ash repository capping (SSD)	→ Approved					
Mt Piper Mod 10 – Coal Settling pond augmentation (SSD)	→					
Springvale Water Treatment Plant Mod 11 – Transfer of water from SWTP to TCR (SSD)	→ Approved					

# Environment Planning Approvals

## MPPS – Modification 10 (Coal Settling Pond Augmentation)

- Modification report submitted to DPHI in November 2025
- Public exhibition 12 – 26 November 2025
- Response to Submissions Report currently being prepared including an abbreviated Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment



## **4.2. Operations - Mt Piper Power Station**

# Mt Piper Power Station

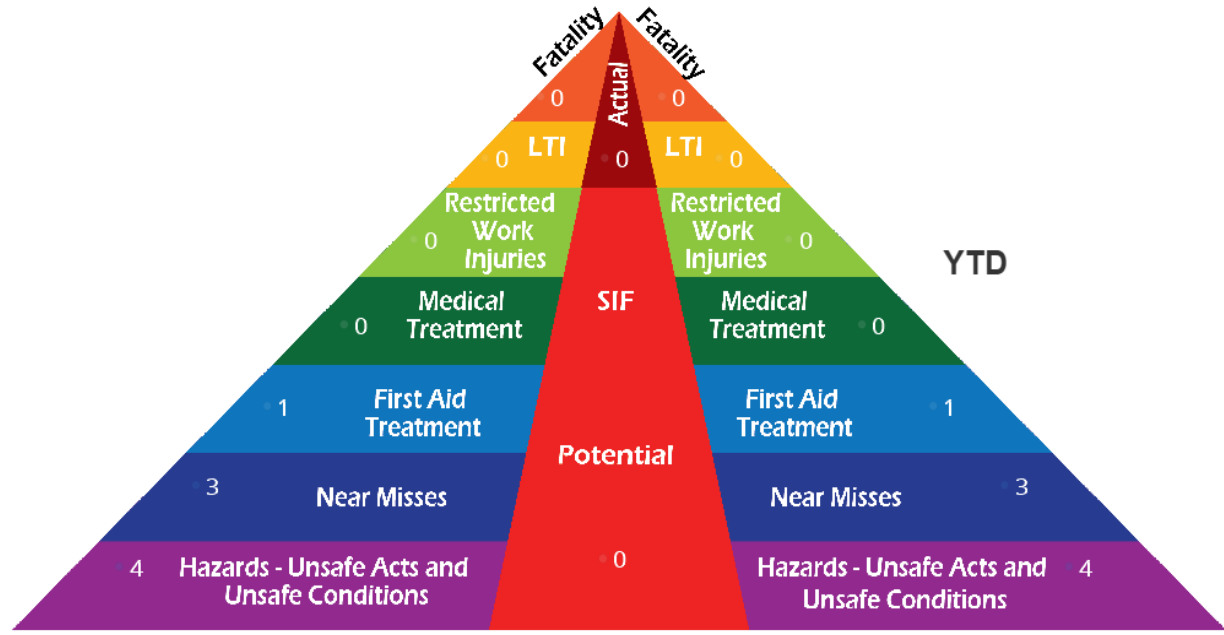
## Highlights

-  **15%** NSW electricity supply
-  **189** permanent jobs
-  **20** apprentices
-  **\$40** million annual injection into local economy
-  **1430** mega-watts



# Site Safety – January 2026

Jan 26



YTD is calculated to the end of the previous month

# Site Safety – January 2026

YTD – TIFR (As of Jan 2026)

**Actual** = 0

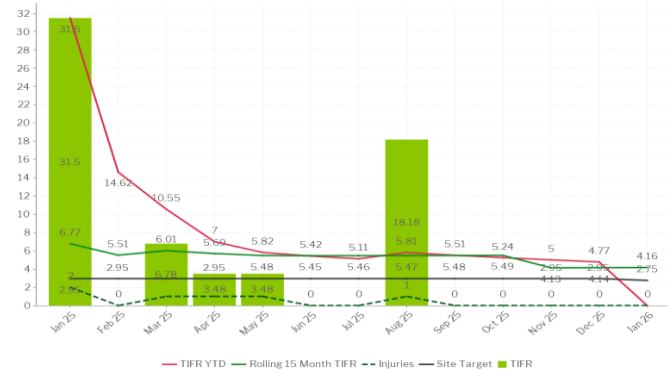
**Target** = 5.5

Ops and Projects

(Note 2.95 is EA Target overall)

## TIFR

Total Injury Frequency Rate (TIFR)



Month	TIFR	TIFR YTD	Rolling 15 Month TIFR	Site Target	Injuries
Jan 25	31.50	31.50	6.77	2.95	2
Feb 25	0.00	14.62	5.51	2.95	0
Mar 25	6.78	10.55	6.01	2.95	1
Apr 25	3.48	7.00	5.69	2.95	1
May 25	3.48	5.82	5.48	2.95	1
Jun 25	0.00	5.42	5.45	2.95	0
Jul 25	0.00	5.11	5.46	2.95	0
Aug 25	18.18	5.81	5.47	2.95	1
Sep 25	0.00	5.51	5.48	2.95	0
Oct 25	0.00	5.24	5.49	2.95	0
Nov 25	0.00	5.00	4.13	2.95	0
Dec 25	0.00	4.77	4.14	2.95	0
Jan 26	0.00	0.00	4.16	2.75	0

# Market update – operation in the market

Commercially sensitive information  
REDACTED

# Operations update – February

Commercially sensitive information  
REDACTED

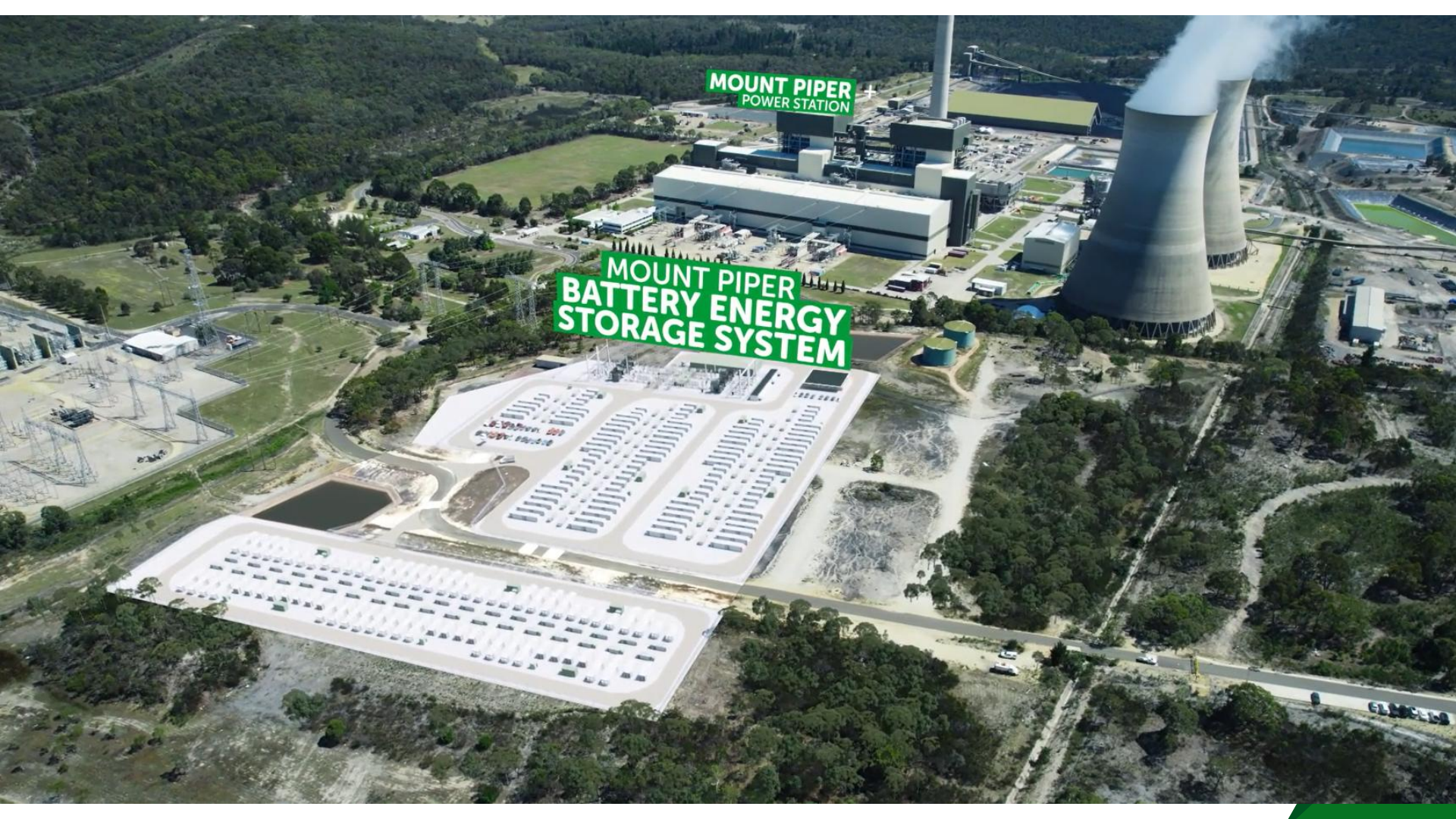
# Operations update – February

Commercially sensitive information  
REDACTED

## **4.3 Project - Mt Piper BESS**

**MOUNT PIPER  
POWER STATION**

**MOUNT PIPER  
BATTERY ENERGY  
STORAGE SYSTEM**



# Early works underway

- Early works commenced to prepare the project for **Final Investment Decision (FID)**.
- Progressing detailed design, technical studies and site readiness activities.
- Advancing procurement planning and contractor engagement.
- Targeting FID and construction commencement in late 2026.

Project timeline



# Activating Community Benefit Program

Beginning structured engagement with community groups and stakeholders.

Early activation of the Community Benefit Program to align with project milestones.

Priority focus:

- First Nations traineeships and employment pathways
- Local workforce participation

Positioning social impact initiatives to scale alongside construction in late 2026.



## **4.4 Project – Lake Lyell Pumped Hydro**

# EIS Submitted

- Submitted to the **NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI)**.
- This marks a significant regulatory milestone for the project.
- DPHI will now undertake its adequacy review.
- DPHI will determine when the EIS proceeds to public exhibition.



# What to expect during exhibition

The EIS will be placed on public exhibition for community and stakeholder review.

Submissions can be made via the **NSW Major Projects Portal**.

The EIS will be publicly available:

Online | Local libraries | Project HQ | Pop-ups | USB for selected stakeholder groups

Our team will be available throughout the exhibition period to:

- Answer questions
- Explain technical findings
- Support stakeholders in understanding the process

We are also exploring additional ways to make the document accessible and easy to navigate.

# CCC EIS Orientation meeting

- A dedicated **EIS Orientation Session** will be held for the Community Consultative Committee (CCC).
- Two dates pending the exhibition period
- We welcome input on what CCC members would like this session to focus on.

**Monday 23 March or  
Wednesday 25 March**

**5-7PM**

**ProjectHQ**

## **4.5 Community engagement**

# Community engagement

## Mt Piper and Projects

### RECENT EVENTS

1. 5 new apprentices started
2. Volunteering: tree planting
3. Christmas Concert pop-up
4. Rydal Show pop-up
5. Police training days at Pine Dale

### COMING UP

1. LLPHEs EIS exhibition
2. 2026 Grants open 1 to 31 March
3. Portland Art Show sponsorship
4. Lithgow Show
5. Volunteering Program
6. SEGRA conference

Gang Gang Markets pop-up



New apprentices



Volunteering in November



Grants – "Cluckingham Palace"



Schools awards



Lithgow Christmas Concert



Rydal Show



## **5. General discussion and closing remarks**

**Thank you**