EnergyAustralia Lithgow Region
Community Consultative Committee
Final Meeting Minutes – 20 April 2026

Member attendees:

- Rob White
- Auntie Helen Riley
- Jim Whitty
- Brad Cluff
- Cr Ray Smith – Lithgow City Council
- Sandra Politi – Lithgow City Council
- Jonathon English – EnergyAustralia
- Harley McNamara – EnergyAustralia

Also present:

- Dave Simpfendorfer – EnergyAustralia

Apologies:

- Cath Russell – EnergyAustralia
- Julie Favell

Presenters:

- Michael de Vink – Lake Lyell Hydro
- Sarah Harris – Lake Lyell Hydro
- Alex Frolich – EMM
- Romain Tedesco – Lake Lyell Hydro

Chair:

- Brendan Blakeley

Item	Discussion Point

1 **Welcome and introductions**

- The meeting began at 5:30pm.
- The Chair welcomed all members.
- Auntie Helen acknowledged Country.
- The Chair asked for declarations of interest:

Item	Discussion Point
	– 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 community consultative committee (CCC). • The Chair noted apologies from Cath Russell and Julie Favell. • The Chair noted that: – This session was an orientation to the EIS that is currently being exhibited by DHPI. – The intent of this session was to provide information on key EIS topics identified by CCC members, with less focus on receiving feedback. – While minutes were being taken, they would not constitute feedback as part of the exhibition process. – All feedback at this stage should be given to the Department via the Planning Portal. – The Chair handed the session over to Harley McNamara.
2	**Project overview (see slides 5-8)** • Michael de Vink noted that Lake Lyell Pumped Hydro comprises: – a lower reservoir (the existing lake) – an upper reservoir constructed on the southern flank of Mt Walker – an underground station – associated transmission infrastructure and access roads. • The pumped hydro will operate by drawing from the lake within a net maximum working range of 5.5 metres, although the typical scenario is a maximum fluctuation range of up to 2.7 metres. • Pumping water to the upper reservoir for storage is likely to occur twice daily at times when there is excess energy in the network. This is typically around midday and midnight. • Pumped hydro provides voltage control as well as inertia into the grid. It will usually generate power for periods when demand is high or other sources of energy aren't readily available. • The operating regime is one cycle per day, with the flexibility to run this as two-part cycles. Usually, these cycles will be generating to supply the early morning and early evening peaks. A full cycle will generally change the lake level by around 2.7 metres. • *Jim Whitty asked what dictates the operating cycle.* • Michael de Vink responded that it is a combination of market demand and availability of other generating sources. • Michael outlined that the concept had evolved over the past 4.5 years, with the key changes being:

Item	Discussion Point
	– the relocation of the reservoir – defining the study area – optimisation from 335 MW to 385 MW – design enhancements. • *Jim Whitty asked where works would start.* • Michael responded that the initial works would focus on creating access to the build site from Sir Thomas Michell Drive. • *Rob White noted that the daily draw down cycle had changed from 2.5 to 2.85m.* • Michael explained: – that this was due to a smaller surface area if the lake was low - the typical daily cycle would be 2.7m – the net maximum draw down depth would be 5.5m, beyond which the pumps could not be operated due to technical limits. • *Rob White asked if the station could continue to operate in drought with a small volume of water in the lake. He noted that the last few wet years have been atypical and prolonged drought periods are to be expected.* • Michael replied that the intent would be to maintain the lake at a level that enables ongoing generation. If water levels fall below what is required, the station would be unable to generate. EnergyAustralia has modelled a range of drought scenarios, which indicate that it is unlikely the lake would reach such low levels, even with prolonged drought. These assessments account for the fact that the MPPS has a new source of water which enables water levels in Lake Lyell to remain elevated. In addition, other water sources can be drawn upon if Lake Lyell needs to be topped up. • *Jim Whitty noted that TCR is dedicated to Mt Piper but does not seem to be used as a source of water for the station.*
3	**Community Engagement** (see slides 13-15) • Harley outlined key aspects of the engagement program for Lake Lyell Pumped Hydro. • *Rob White expressed disappointment that the project name change and rebranding were not signalled at the last CCC meeting, given they came into effect shortly afterwards.* • *He stated that, with the switch to the new website, a significant amount of previously available information could no longer be accessed, and that documents appear to have been selectively swapped over. These documents were valuable references and useful for navigating the EIS and preparing submissions.* • *Rob considered that these documents should remain available and that the CCC should have been notified in advance of the changes.*

Item	Discussion Point
4	**Heritage** (see slides 15-21) • Harley outlined key aspects of the heritage studies as per the slides. • Points included: – Aboriginal heritage studies were conducted as per the relevant guidelines. In addition to archaeology, the studies also addressed intangible cultural values. – Impacts at varying levels were identified; some can be avoided or mitigated, however impacts will be unavoidable in a few instances. – Impacts on historical heritage were primarily related to the town workers village option, which is in a State Heritage area. • *Rob White asked who the RAPs were and noted that he had previously raised concerns about deficiencies in reports identifying Traditional Owners.* • *Auntie Helen stated the project was on Wiradjuri land and that local knowledge holders are the people who can talk for Country.* • Harley responded that 22 RAPS nominated in response to the notices, in accordance with the guidelines. Of these, 21 names are listed in the EIS report, with one RAP requesting to remain anonymous.
5	**Landscape and Visual Impacts** *(see slides 16-18)* • Alex Frohlch outlined key aspects of the visual impacts assessment studies as per the slides. • Other points included: – Different methodologies were used to identify receptors, including desktop analysis and terrain-based analysis. – There are no existing guidelines for assessing the visual impact of pumped hydro projects. The team therefore adapted guidelines for other types of projects to Lake Lyell. – The study looks predominantly at the visual impacts of the upper reservoir as this is the major visible feature of the project. – In addition to mapping receptors for analysis, they also identified key public views from roads approaching the lake. – Visual impacts include: · Vegetation removal for roads, switchyards, construction pads etc. While removal will be permanent in some cases, other areas will be replaced by a revegetation program at the end of construction. · While there is an existing transmission line, there will be new lines leading to and from the switchyard area. · Vehicles on roads.

Item	Discussion Point
	· Water fluctuations, which will be visible around the edges of the lake. · The upper reservoir which, while in the flank of Mt Walker, will be visible from some locations to the south and southwest. • Alex noted that the intent of the analysis was to determine the extent of changes in landscape. The rock-filled embankment that forms the upper reservoir will be most apparent, as fresh rock will take time to weather. • In terms of mitigation, this will primarily involve measures like screening at high and moderately impacted receptor locations. • *Jim Whitty commented that the visual impacts of this project will be less than those of solar or wind farms.*
6	**Noise and vibration** (see slides 19 & 20) • Harley outlined key aspects of the noise and vibration studies as per the slides. • Key points included: – Field studies have established a baseline for background noise across a 24-hour cycle. – Traffic was considered the main contributor to noise, particularly during the construction stage. – Construction is the phase during which noise impacts will be greatest, and likely exceedances have been identified under worst-case modelling – Works will typically occur from 6am to 6pm, with provision for 24-hour tunnelling. • *Rob White noted it was difficult to find information on the actual locations of receivers used for noise monitoring in the EIS.* • Sarah Harris explained that these are mapped in one of the appendices to the noise report, and arranged for the page numbers and name of appendices to be sent to CCC members (see below): – Sensitive Receiver numbers and road addresses are tabulated in EIS Appendix R Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment, Annexure A Noise assessment location (pages A1-A5). – Maps showing those receivers and noise impacts are in EIS Appendix R Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Section 6 (Figures 6.1 to 6.7 pages 38-40, 42-45). – Results of noise assessments are listed for each sensitive receiver are detailed in EIS Appendix R Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment, Annexure C Results tables. • *Rob White commented that the nominated construction hours mean the bulk of traffic impacts will occur outside of these hours, as workers and vehicles access the site for a 6am start and leave after 6pm.*

Item	Discussion Point
	• Michael responded that the study acknowledges these shoulder periods. • *Rob asked if there will be a noise management plan.* • Sarah noted that measures will be outlined in the Construction Management Plan to be developed with the contractor. It is also likely the project will have conditions requiring notice of any significant works and compliance with EPA guidelines and requirements. • Harley also noted that the Community Engagement Plan will outline channels for complaints and queries, and how these are addressed. • *Rob stated that, under CSSI, the EPA may not be able to stop works following complaints.*
7	**Biodiversity** (see slides 21- 23) • Alex spoke to the items outlined on the slides. • Key points included: – Numerous studies and surveys were undertaken to map vegetation and fauna within the impacted area. – The project has taken an avoid, minimise, and offset approach. – There are only limited opportunities to 'avoid' within the zones where new infrastructure will be constructed. – No serious or irreversible impacts were noted; however significant and direct impacts were anticipated for koalas, Gang-gang and Glossy Black cockatoos. – Platypus were a major focus of the ecology studies, and the report identifies barriers to fish and platypus movement at times of low flow. A monitoring program and several mitigation measures will be implemented to support platypus. – Fish restocking will be undertaken in consultation with authorities. • *Rob White noted that the platypus expert is not named in the ecology reports.* • Alex replied it was Dr Gilad Bino, a recognised expert based at UNSW. Austral prepared the report, and Dr Bino was contracted to Austral. • *Rob asked about the detection of koala scat.* • Alex responded that this is covered in the reports. Given the detection of scat, the EIS adopts a precautionary approach and assumes the presence of koalas across the broader study area. Similarly, based on observed vegetation, the EIS also assumes the presence of the Purple Copper butterfly. • *Rob White and Cr Smith expressed concerns about platypus in the Farmers Creek arm.* • *Jim Whitty asked how deep platypus dive for food.*

Item	Discussion Point
	• Alex replied that platypus mostly feed on macroinvertebrates along the shoreline and creek banks, but studies have tracked platypus diving to depths up to 6 metres. • *Rob expressed concerns that, given their food sources are mostly in the surface layers, constant fluctuations in the lake level and therefore the shoreline may compromise the platypus' ability to find food.* • Alex noted that the study proposed ongoing monitoring of the platypus population.
8	**Recreation** (see slides 24-26) • Michael spoke to the items on the relevant slides. • Key points included: – During consultation, concerns were expressed about how construction and operation may impact recreational activities such as boating, fishing and kayaking. – Mitigation measures can be implemented to ensure that the majority of the lake remains available for recreation. – This will exclude the inlet area and Farmer Creek, noting Farmers Creek is outside the current recreational lease to council. – The major impact will be water level fluctuations, and safe ways for boats, kayaks and swimmers to enter and exit the water when the shoreline changes over four to eight hours need to be identified. There may also be water level variability during construction. – The report proposes several mitigation and operational measures to address impacts on recreation. – Overall, the impacts on recreation are expected to be low. • *Rob White asked how lake users and tourism operators were engaged, given a pop-up session proposed at Lake Lyell was cancelled.* • Michael replied that lake users were engaged via a survey, and noted that the SIA consultant also spoke with some lake-based stakeholders. • *Sandra asked if lake users will notice changes in the water level.* • Michael responded that when they are out on the water, boat users and kayakers are unlikely to notice any changes in levels. However closer to shore, they may detect water receding or rising across a four-to-eight-hour period, depending on the cycle. • *Brad Cluff noted that he thought tourists may be interested in visiting the pumped hydro station.* • *Cr Smith asked if Farmers Creek would be permanently inaccessible as it is currently used by kayakers.* • Michael noted that the creek is not currently in the public access area covered under the lease to council.

Item	Discussion Point
	• *Cr Smith requested a map of the area covered under the lease.* • This was sent out to CCC members.
9	**Traffic & Roads** (see slides 26-28) • Alex covered the items presented on the slides. • Points included: – The primary access route will be the Great Western Highway (GWH), Magpie Hollow Rd (MHR) and Sir Thomas Mitchell Drive (STMD). – The intersection of GWH with MHR will be signalised. – MHR and STMD will be widened to approximately 9 metres. – Works will be required at the intersection of MHR and STMD, including temporary changes to the priority and functioning of the intersection during construction. – In preparing the studies, the team consulted with TfNSW and Lithgow Council. • *Rob White noted that the intersection of MHR and STMD is already dangerous due to the speed at which vehicles approach, and that significant work will be required to improve safety.* • *Cr Smith asked if council had given permission for any works to be undertaken.* • *Sandra said that, if approved, any works on council roads would require a Section 938 certificate; however, minor activities such as surveys can generally be undertaken.* • Michael noted that site inspection works and surveys have been completed, and that there is a concept plan for road upgrades that would be subject to approval. • *Cr Smith questioned the width of STMD and MHR*: – EIS Appendix Q Traffic impact assessment, Executive Summary Section ES4 Road upgrades and mitigation methods (page ES.3): – Magpie Hollow Road 9m wide sealed, Sir Thomas Mitchell Drive 9m wide sealed. • *Cr Smith noted that both roads would require major work to accommodate the proposed level and asked whether these costs have been estimated.* • Michael replied that this is in the concept plan for the roads, and costs of works would be determined in consultation with the appointed contractor. • *Sandra asked about key routes for oversized vehicles bringing in large equipment for the station.*

Item	Discussion Point
	• Michael explained that this would depend on the port at which the equipment arrives and its size. The plan allows for access from the east or west. • Michael added that the closure of the convict bridge at Victoria Pass is a complicating factor that the project will need to work with. • *Jonathon added that, when large equipment has previously been transported to the power station, Victoria Pass has not been used, and vehicles instead take a roundabout route from the west. This has generally been managed on a case-by-case basis with TfNSW.*
10	**Air Quality & Greenhouse Gases** (see slides 29-31) • Alex covered the items presented on the slides. • Key points included: – The study considered all aspects of air quality and greenhouse gases. – Air quality impacts will be most apparent during the construction stage. – These will primarily take the form of dust from machinery operations and excavation, and to a lesser extent, exhaust gases. – Impacts are expected to be negligible once the station is operational. – Management plans will be developed outlining a range of dust avoidance and management measures that can be implemented. • *Cr Smith asked about the risk of silicosis from work on rocks for the dam wall.* • Michael replied that the contractor will have strict requirements to limit dust generation and will need to demonstrate safe work practices in relation to risks such as silicosis. • *Jonathon noted that it is the employer's responsibility to manage this, as EnergyAustralia is required to do on works at Mt Piper where dust may be generated.* • *Rob White commented that the station is a much more controlled environment compared to a large, open-area site where work occurs across several locations.* • *Rob White also noted that the EPA was notified about dust issues during the test drilling process for geotechnical studies*.
12	**Economic & Social Impacts and Workers Accommodation** (see slides 32-38) • Alex covered the items presented on the slides. • Key points included:

  - Both studies assessed the potential positive and negative impacts of the proposed project.
  - The project will bring changes to local character, scenic values and the environment.
  - The project workforce also presents both benefits and challenges. While this will boost the local economy and demand for goods and services, it will also place additional pressure on housing and community services.
- *Jim Whitty noted that the impacts of the construction workforce are temporary but will provide a major economic benefit to the area over five years.*
- *Brad Cluff asked about workforce numbers*.
- Michael noted that this would be around 600 at peak, but this number will not be reached on day one.
- *Rob White questioned the figure of $290 million in regional output once operational and noted that, once operating in terms of direct jobs there will be 18 local jobs at the station (and two in nearby localities). The EIS notes 50 jobs all up (direct and indirect) which provides around $4 million in household income. He noted that 50 direct and indirect operations related jobs (providing $4 M of local household income) was incongruous with the stated claim in the Economic Impact Report of an overall $290 M regional contribution. Rob considered these figures to be headline values that do not represent what will actually be realised locally.*
- Michael replied that the figure is calculated using inputs and outputs and also includes indirect jobs.
- *Cr Smith asked what 'indirect jobs' are likely to be.*
- Michael noted these would including workers in companies supplying services to the new station but not employed directly by Lake Lyell Hydro.
- Michael explained that Lake Lyell Hydro's preferred location for accommodation is the lakeside site. However, some in the business community suggested locating accommodation in town to provide greater stimulus to businesses within Lithgow, while others expressed the view that accommodation should not be located near the lake. Both options have been put forward, and EnergyAustralia will consider what submissions say about these two proposals. A decision will not be made until the views of council, agencies and the community on the benefits and disadvantages of each option are taken into account.
- *Rob White asked if any thought had been given to use of the accommodation after construction.*
- Michael noted there is potential for the lakeside village to be repurposed for tourism. As for the in-town village, some elements may have an ongoing use. However, there is no firm view at this point.

Item	Discussion Point
	• *Rob White observed that local residences are subject to stringent sewage controls as the area is a primary catchment for Warragamba Dam. He raised concerns about the potential for water quality issues with 600 people living near the lake and the need to pump and transport sewage waste*. • Michael responded that that is why two options are being considered, and the decision will be informed by advice from water agencies and other subject matter experts. • *Jim Whitty asked whether Lithgow has the capacity to handle additional sewage under the town option.* • *Cr Smith noted that a key issue with the town village location is the need to pump sewage up a steep grade*.
13	**Submissions** (slides 39-42) • Harley spoke to the details of how and where to make submissions to DPHI.
14	**Other business** • *Jim Whitty asked about the operating life of the station.* • Romain explained that: – the team is planning for an operating life of 80+ years, with equipment expected to be replaced after around 40 years. – pumps and turbines are checked frequently and repairs undertaken where required. • *Rob White asked about responses to the questions he raised about impacts on fishing in Lake Lyell.* • Michael noted that responses would be provided to Rob.
15	**Meeting close** • The Chair thanked members and presenters for their attendance. • He noted the next regular CCC meeting would be held at 5pm on Tuesday 2 June. • The meeting closed at 7pm.

Lake Lyell Project EIS Public Exhibition

Lithgow Region Community Consultative Committee – Orientation Meeting

20 April 2026

Lake Lyell Hydro

Acknowledgement of Country

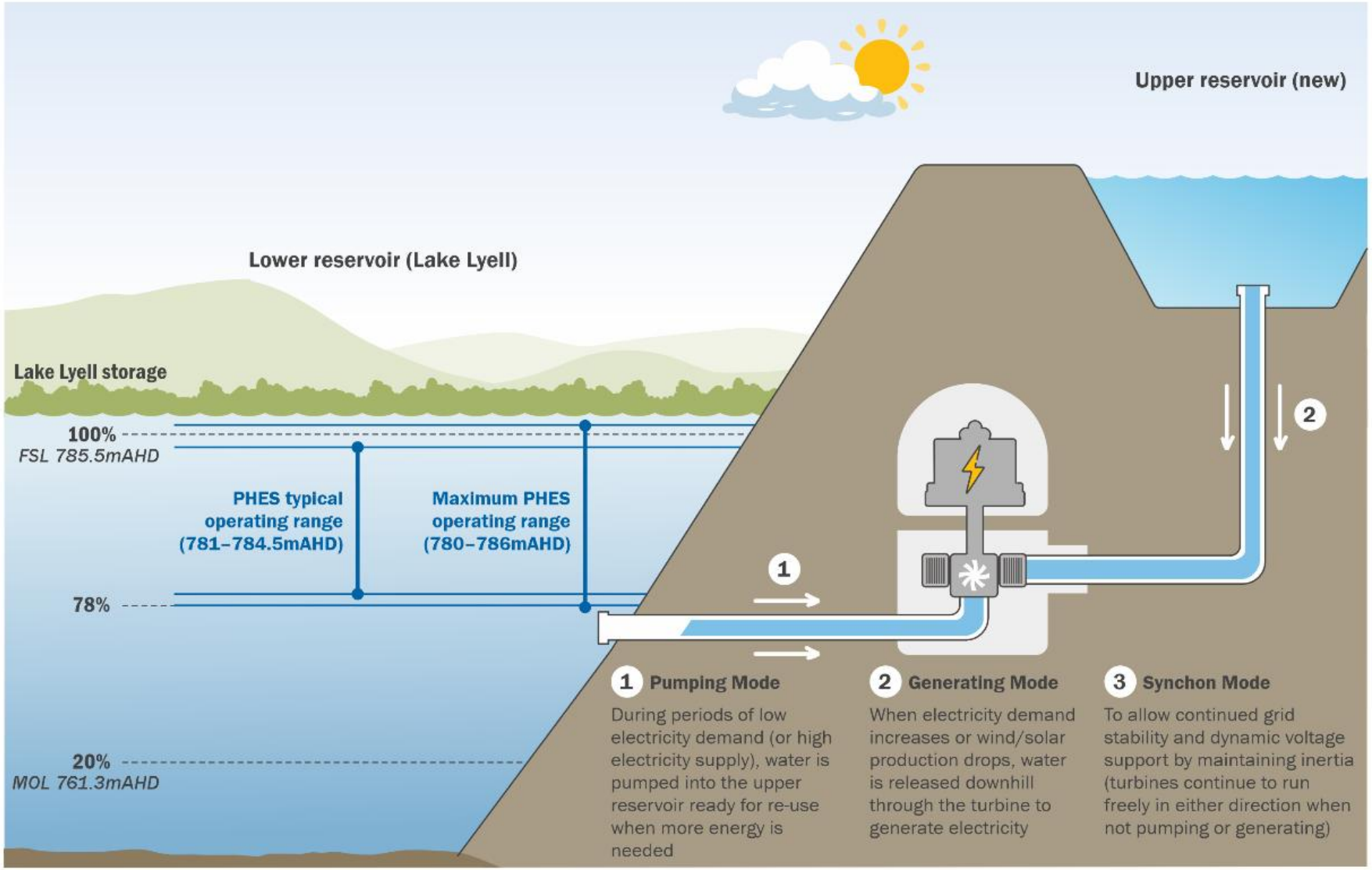
We would like to acknowledge the Wiradjuri people as the Traditional Owners of the land on which we meet today, and recognise and respect their connection to culture, land and unity.

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

Declarations of interest

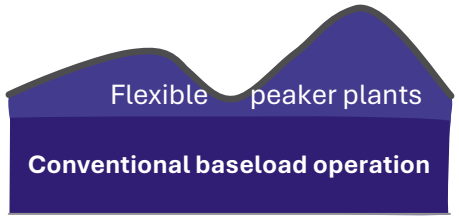
Introductions

Project overview


Upper reservoir (new)
Lower reservoir (Lake Lyell)
Lake Lyell storage
100%
FSL 785.5mAHD
PHES typical operating range (781–784.5mAHD)
Maximum PHES operating range (780–786mAHD)
78%
20%
MOL 761.3mAHD
1
2
1 Pumping Mode
During periods of low electricity demand (or high electricity supply), water is pumped into the upper reservoir ready for re-use when more energy is needed
2 Generating Mode
When electricity demand increases or wind/solar production drops, water is released downhill through the turbine to generate electricity
3 Synchon Mode
To allow continued grid stability and dynamic voltage support by maintaining inertia (turbines continue to run freely in either direction when not pumping or generating)

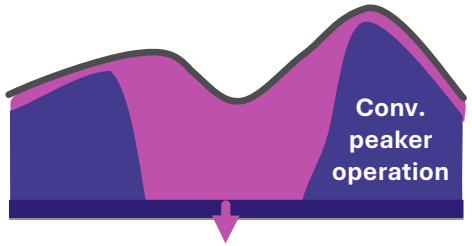
Why Pumped Hydro? As more renewables are integrated into the system, energy storage is becoming increasingly important

Past:
Baseload operation



In the past, stations with **limited flexibility** operated as baseload plants, while flexible plants followed the changes in the demand curve

Present:
Peaker operation

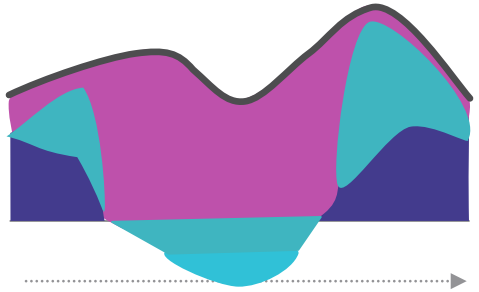


As **renewables** produce more in daytime, even baseload conventional plants increasingly need to turn down their production during the day

Near future:
Emergence of storage

Storage is expected to take over some of peaker and short-term balancing positions from conventionals, which will see even shorter and volatile running pattern

Long-term future:
Seasonal back-up



Conventionals will be utilized in **seasonal balancing**, renewable over generation may be stored through new technologies such as Power-to-Gas/H_2

Electricity demand | Peaker production | Baseload production | Renewable production | Storage | Seasonal storage

Concept evolution

2021

Potential shared with community

2022

Qualifies for NSW Government recoverable grant program

2023

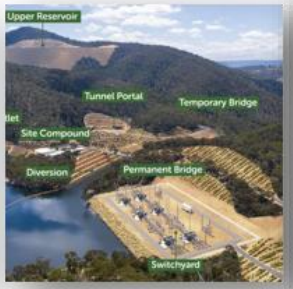
335MW
Initial concept released to community

Upper reservoir relocated following community feedback

2024

335MW
Defined footprint for technical and environmental studies

2025



385MW
Same footprint more energy

Concept improved through value engineering

2025

Clarity in design outcomes improves visual integration into landscape

Engagement and Consultation Report

Appendix D

Over time, we've created many opportunities for people to get involved, gathering a wide range of feedback that is reflected in the report.

96%
Project awareness (by 2025)

81%
Supportive/neutral

19%
Unsupportive

170,000+
Community interaction

11
Newsletters

31
Group meetings

138
In person/online meetings

200+
Visitors to Project HQ

36
Community events

1295
Interactions at events

45,000+
Website visits

159
Social media posts

12
Radio ads

24
Print ads

360+
Email/phone enquiries

Feedback addressed

- Regional energy transition
- Roads, access and traffic safety
- Waste management and utilities
- Public understanding of EIS
- Aquatic ecology and species protection
- Local benefits, workforce and regional development
- Investment profile and regional economic significance
- Construction program and delivery timeline
- Recreation, tourism and public access
- Worker accommodation
- Aboriginal artefacts, cultural landscapes
- Visual and landscape
- Biodiversity
- Platypus
- Fish passage
- Water quality
- Noise dust and vibration
- Blasting or tunnelling disturbance
- Business sustainability

During the EIS exhibition, we provide clear and accessible information on technical and environmental studies to support the community and stakeholders in preparing their submissions.

EIS Key topics

Lake Lyell Hydro

Methodology

- Desktop review of existing records and databases
- Consultation with Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs) in accordance with guidelines
- Field surveys and cultural heritage assessments
- Ongoing engagement to validate findings and significance
- Integration into design and mitigation measures

Heritage (Aboriginal cultural heritage and historic heritage)

Aboriginal cultural heritage impacts

Cultural Context

- Project located on Wiradjuri Country

Assessment & Engagement

- Archaeological surveys and test excavations conducted with Aboriginal representatives
- Continuous feedback incorporated into project planning and design

Avoidance & Design Changes

- Two significant sites avoided or partially avoided
- Upper reservoir relocated away from Mount Walker ridgeline (cultural significance)

Key Impacts

- 21 identified Aboriginal sites/places
  - 5 directly impacted (including 3 high significance sites)
- Partial loss of cultural value to:
  - Mount Walker
  - Platypus Dreaming (Coxs River)
- Indirect impacts:
  - Visual and landscape changes affecting cultural connections

Mitigation

- Subsurface investigations for archaeological salvage
- Development of:
  - Cultural Values Mitigation Strategy
  - Interpretation Strategy
- Ongoing engagement required to finalise long-term management

Historical heritage impacts

Historical Heritage (PHES and Lakeside camp)

- No direct impacts within main disturbance footprint
- Minor indirect visual impacts to:
  - Highland House (low due to distance)
  - Royal Hotel (temporary, roadworks-related)

Alternative Option – "Town Camp"

- 3 heritage-listed sites within footprint
  - Colliery, brickworks, and pottery sites
- Major negative impact to State-significant archaeology
- Loss of research potential

Management Approach

- Avoidance preferred (per Heritage NSW guidance)
- If unavoidable:
  - Minimise impacts to sensitive areas
  - Apply site-specific management measures
  - Comply with planning controls and consultation requirements

Methodology

- Identification of sensitive receptors and viewshed mapping
- Representative viewpoint selection based on publicly accessibly locations
- Visual simulations and photomontages
- Assessment of visual character and landscape values
- Evaluation of construction and operational impacts
- Mitigation measures (screening, design refinement)

Landscape and visual

Landscape and visual impacts

Construction Impacts (Temporary)

- Vegetation clearing
- Vehicle and machinery movements
- Laydown areas, transmission towers, buildings
- Worker accommodation camp (up to 5 years)
- Impacts reduced through careful siting and screening

Operational Impacts (Long-term)

- Permanent infrastructure visibility:
  - Upper reservoir (Mount Walker)
  - Lake infrastructure & access roads
- Lake level fluctuations (around 2.5 m)
- Limited night lighting impacts
- Project generally not highly visible from most public locations

Key Findings

- Visibility varies significantly by location:
  - Highest impacts:
    - Nearby residents
    - South-west viewpoints (roads, visitors) and residents
  - Lower impacts:
    - Most public viewpoints
- Temporary visibility from Lithgow:
  - Reduces over time with vegetation regrowth
- Overall impact range:
  - Very low to high, depending on viewpoint

Landscape and visual impacts

Sensitive receptors (Near neighbours)

- Without mitigation:
  - 5 high impact, 11 moderate, 7 low/very low
- With mitigation:
  - Majority reduced to low or very low impacts

Mitigation Measures

- Design-based mitigation:
  - Infrastructure placement (less exposed locations)
  - Material and colour selection
  - Micro-siting of ancillary elements
- Vegetation strategies:
  - Screening (including at residences, where agreed)
  - Progressive rehabilitation and replanting
- Construction management:
  - Site organisation, fencing, and visual tidiness
- Upper reservoir relocated below ridge line to reduce visibility

Outcome

- Visual landscape will change over the life of the project
- Impacts reduced over time with vegetation re-establishment
- Overall impacts considered manageable with mitigation

Methodology

- Identification of sensitive receivers
- Construction noise and vibration modelling
- Assessment against regulatory criteria and guidelines
- Development of mitigation measures

Noise and vibration impacts

Noise and vibration impacts

Existing Environment

- Nearby sensitive areas:
  - Recreational areas (e.g. Lake Lyell, campgrounds, Mount Walker)
  - Closest residence approximately 250 m from project
- Current noise sources:
  - Rural/natural background noise
  - Intermittent traffic noise
  - Higher noise near highways and urban areas

Construction Noise Impacts

- Exceedances of noise criteria expected during some periods (day & night)
- No locations classified as highly noise affected (above 75 dB)
- Up to 4 receivers may experience noticeable increases (above 30 dB) in early morning
- Impacts from early works:
  - Short-term and temporary as construction progresses

Traffic & Vibration

- Increased road noise from construction traffic
- Vibration impacts unlikely due to distance from residences

Operational Phase

- No exceedances expected for noise, vibration or traffic noise

Methodology

- Vegetation and habitat mapping
- Seasonal and targeted field surveys (flora and fauna)
- Aquatic surveys (incl platypus)
- Impact assessment against legislative frameworks
- Engagement with regulators
- Avoid, minimise and offset strategy development

Biodiversity

Biodiversity impacts

Project Context

- Located in largely forested, minimally disturbed land
- Some impact avoided by using existing infrastructure corridors
- Significant vegetation clearing still required for construction and operations due to limited disturbance in the past

Key Biodiversity Impacts

- About 130 ha vegetation loss, including:
  - 102 ha native vegetation & threatened species habitat
- Removal of habitat features:
  - 568 hollow-bearing trees (greater than 7 cm)
  - 294 hollow-bearing trees (greater than 20 cm)
  - 11 breeding trees for endangered Gang-gang Cockatoos

Affected Species

- No risk of *serious or irreversible impacts* overall
- Significant impacts likely on:
  - Gang-gang Cockatoo
  - Glossy Black Cockatoo
  - Koala

Indirect Impacts

- Habitat edge effects
- Construction disturbance (noise, activity)
- Vehicle strike risks
- Potential water quality changes

Biodiversity impacts

Aquatic Environment

- No threatened fish recorded
- Dominated by invasive species, but supports platypus habitat
- 17 platypuses recorded (2023–2024 surveys) across Farmers Creek and Coxs River

Key Risks to Platypus

- Loss of burrowing and feeding habitat
- Changes to movement and behaviour
- Increased predation and entrapment risks
- Limited research on impacts in dynamic water systems

Fish & Aquatic Habitat Impacts

- Around 11.88 ha key fish habitat loss
- Potential barriers to fish and platypus movement during low flow
- Mitigation included in design:
  - Deep pools
  - Riffle sequences

Mitigation & Management Measures

- Preventative and adaptive approach:
  - Platypus exclusion methods
  - Ongoing monitoring and adaptive management
- Offsets strategy:
  - Habitat offsets at catchment level
  - Fish re-stocking (in consultation with authorities)

Plans

- Biodiversity Management Plan
- Platypus Management Plan
- Biosecurity Management Plan

Methodology

- Social and economic impact assessment
- Survey of lake users and tourism operators
- Co-design Community Benefit Sharing

Lake Lyell Recreation

Lake Lyell Recreation

Recreational Access

- Boating, fishing, swimming and general lake use will continue
- Temporary disruptions during construction:
  - Changes to jetty access (Lake Lyell Recreation Park)
  - Restricted access to Farmers Creek arm

Access During Construction & Operation

- Construction areas:
  - Fenced and signposted – no public access
- During operation:
  - Restricted access near inlet/outlet via floating safety boom
- Around Mount Walker:
  - Activities (4WD, biking, hiking, walking) can continue
  - Some temporary access changes due to construction traffic and roadworks

Lake Lyell Recreation

Lake Level Changes

- Operational phase:
  - Around 2.5 m fluctuation over 8 hours (daily cycle)
- Construction phase:
  - Potential for greater short-term variation

Impacts on Recreation & Environment

- Minimal impact on recreational use
- Water quality: neutral or beneficial impact downstream (Coxs River)

Mitigation & Management

- Implementation of:
  - Construction mitigation measures
  - Operating rules
  - Water management plans
- Safety & environmental oversight:
  - Dedicated Riverkeeper Ranger role
- Community communication:
  - Advance notice of changes via social media, advertising, newsletters

Methodology

- Traffic counts and baseline data collection
- Road network capacity and safety assessment
- Construction traffic modelling
- Consultation with road authorities and councils
- Mitigation strategies (routing, timing, upgrades)

Traffic and roads

Traffic and roads impacts

Construction Traffic (Peak Activity)

- High vehicle volumes expected:
  - 1,144 daily movements (construction site)
  - 604 daily movements (accommodation camp)
  - 493 peak hour movements (construction site)
  - 276 peak hour movements (accommodation camp)

Operational Phase

- Minimal additional traffic during operation and decommissioning

Impact on Local Roads

- Increased traffic may affect:
  - Road performance (congestion)
  - Safety for road users
- Overall impacts assessed as manageable with mitigation

Traffic and roads impacts

Key Transport Route

- Via the Great Western Highway, Magpie Hollow Road and Sir Thomas Mitchell Drive

Planned Road & Intersection Upgrades

- Signalised upgrade:
  - Great Western Highway / Magpie Hollow Road intersection
- Road widening and sealing (to a 9m width):
  - Magpie Hollow Road
  - Sir Thomas Mitchell Drive
- Intersection improvement:
  - Left-turn treatment at Magpie Hollow Rd / Sir Thomas Mitchell Dr
- Additional upgrades for worker accommodation routes

Safety & Management Measures

- Construction Traffic Management Plan:
  - Traffic coordination and risk minimisation
- Traffic Code of Conduct for drivers:
  - Includes school bus awareness
- Permits for over-size/over-mass vehicles

Outcomes

- Traffic impacts manageable with mitigation
- Upgrades provide long-term benefits to local road users
- Temporary traffic controls (e.g. signals) to maintain performance during construction

Methodology

- Meteorological and background air quality analysis
- Emissions inventory
- Dispersion modelling
- Assessment against criteria
- Management and mitigation measures
- GHG guide for large emitters

Air Quality & Greenhouse Gas Methodology

Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Air Quality Impacts

- Construction phase:
  - Dust from earthworks and spoil movement
  - Emissions from diesel equipment
- Compliance maintained with environmental standards at all locations
- Operational phase:
  - Negligible air quality impacts (reduced traffic and fuel use)

Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions

- Main sources include fuel use, explosives, vegetation clearing and electricity use
- Highest emissions during construction
- Emissions decrease:
  - After first year of operation
  - Over time as electricity grid decarbonises

Mitigation & Management

- Construction Noise & Vibration Management Plan:
  - Monitoring and validation of noise levels
  - Adaptive work practices to reduce impacts
- Standard air quality controls (e.g. dust suppression)

Outcome

- Temporary construction impacts managed and localised
- Operational impacts minimal to negligible across noise and air quality

Methodology

- Baseline socio-economic profiling
- Stakeholder and community consultation
- Assessment of local and regional economic impacts
- Workforce and housing considerations
- Identification of benefits and mitigation measures

Economic and social impact

Economic and social impacts

Overview

- Project generates both positive and negative social impacts during construction and operation

Key Negative Impacts

- Changes to local character, scenic, cultural and environmental values
- Workforce influx:
  - Potential pressure on housing and accommodation
  - Possible impacts on community cohesion

Workforce Impacts

- Peak workforce: ~600 workers
  - ~80% requiring temporary accommodation
  - ~20% commuting locally
- Increased demand on local services, but also:
  - Boost to local businesses, accommodation and recreation

Accommodation Options

- Lakeside Camp:
  - Higher amenity impacts for nearby residents and lake users
- Town Camp:
  - Broader (moderate) impacts across more residents
  - Greater economic benefits to Lithgow businesses
  - Adverse impacts on heritage values

Community Management

- Community & Stakeholder Engagement Plan:
  - Maintain social cohesion
  - Preserve local character

Economic and social impacts

Economic Contributions

- Construction phase:
  - $400M regional output annually
  - 658 jobs (direct & indirect)
- Operational phase:
  - $290M regional output annually
  - 50 ongoing jobs (direct & indirect)

Key Benefits

- Employment, training, and local business opportunities
- Local procurement targets and partnerships
- Continued and enhanced recreational use of Lake Lyell
- Long-term future use of the site (post power station closure)

Long-Term Opportunities

- Potential to:
  - Upgrade or repurpose infrastructure post-project
  - Enhance recreation and tourism (e.g. pumped hydro tourism)
- Opportunities delivered via a Shared Benefits Program

Mitigation Measures

- Targeted plans for workforce management, local procurement and Aboriginal participation
- Shared Benefits Program to:
  - Support community and recreational initiatives

Outcome

- Short-term social pressures balanced by significant long-term economic and community benefits
- Impacts manageable with proactive planning and engagement

Methodology

- Site selection assessment and constraints analysis
- Demand forecasting for workforce numbers
- Consultation with Council and community
- Assessment of social and infrastructure impacts
- Management measures for operation and behaviour

Workers accommodation

Workers' accommodation impacts

Accommodation Options

- Two proposed sites:
  - Lakeside camp (preferred): near Lake Lyell
  - Town camp (alternative): former Pottery Estate
- Final decision to consider:
  - Environmental, social and economic impacts
  - Stakeholder and community feedback

Construction timeline

- Worker accommodation delivered during early works phase

Local Employment Commitment

- Target: around 35 per cent local workforce
- Focus on:
  - Training and upskilling programs
  - Pathways into construction and long-term operational roles

Procurement and Local Business Support

- more than 20 per cent local procurement during construction
- Collaboration with Lithgow City Council and local and regional suppliers
- Supports traineeships and local employment pathways

Workers' accommodation impacts

Workforce & Service Planning

- Workforce Management Plan:
  - Coordinates accommodation and worker needs
  - Developed with local service providers
- Supports planning for:
  - Utilities and infrastructure demand
  - Local service capacity

Protecting Community Character

- Community Engagement Plan:
  - Maintain social cohesion
  - Ongoing consultation with local and First Nations communities

Worker Behaviour & Integration

- Worker Code of Conduct:
  - Respectful behaviour
  - Compliance with local laws
  - Cultural awareness
  - Safe driving practices

Outcome

- Balanced approach to:
  - Maximising local employment and economic benefits
  - Minimising impacts on community character and cohesion
- Ongoing engagement ensures community concerns are addressed

Making a submission

Lake Lyell Hydro EIS

- 21 specialist studies assess impacts and mitigation
- Inform the EIS technical reports
- Detail methodology, impacts and mitigation
- Summarised in the EIS, with full studies in the appendices

Chapters

Appendices

Lake Lyell Hydro EIS

Three ways to find information in the EIS

How much of the EIS you will need to read will depend on the level of detail you are looking for.

Option 1 – Environmental Impact Statement – Summary

Option 2 – Environmental Impact Statement – Chapters

Option 3 – Technical Reports

Written by independent subject matter experts, the EIS Technical Reports

Make a submission through the NSW Major Projects Portal by 28 April

Why make a submission

- Is the formal way to have your views considered
- Submission are reviewed by the Department
- We are required to respond to all submissions
- Feedback can lead to changes to projects

What to include

- Your feedback on the project
- Any local knowledge or concerns
- Comments on specific studies and impacts

What happens next

- Submissions may be made public
- All issues raised must be addressed
- The project may be refined before a final decision is made

www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/have-your-say.

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