

# EnergyAustralia Lithgow Region Community Consultative Committee

## Final Meeting Minutes – 5 December 2023

### Member attendees:

- Julie Favell
- Rob Cluff
- Jim Whitty
- Rob White
- Jamie Giokaris
- Alex Preema
- Aunty Helen Riley
- Mick Hanly – EnergyAustralia
- Ben Eastwood – EnergyAustralia
- Peter Griffiths –EnergyAustralia *Acting Head of Mt Piper*

### Not present:

- Cr Maree Statham

### Presenters:

- Ben McIver – EnergyAustralia
- Alex Frolich - EMM
- Michael de Vink – EnergyAustralia
- Michael Starkey – Energy Australia
- Ellie Baker – Infrafuture
- Martijn Tiemen – Acciona

### Chair:

- Brendan Blakeley

### Notetaker:

- Elizabeth Moorhead

Item	Discussion Point	Actions
1	<b>Welcome and introductions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The meeting began at 5:03pm</li><li>• The Chair welcomed all members</li></ul>	
2	<b>Acknowledgement of Country</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Aunty Helen Riley acknowledged Country</li></ul>	
3	<b>Actions from the previous meeting</b>  <i>Update on EnergyAustralia's feral animal control programs</i> <i>See slide 6 of the presentation.</i>  <u>Update on pig traps</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pig traps have been set up for the past couple of months down at Lake Lyell and are monitored by remote camera.</li><li>• The Feral Animal Control program, for the removal of feral pigs and rabbits, was completed on 9 - 11 August by an external party. This program was conducted at night to avoid interactions with guests</li></ul>	  Energy Australia will continue Animal Control   Energy Australia will explore increasing number of traps to two

Item	Discussion Point	Actions
	<p>and staff. Summary of the feral animals controlled during the program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 22 rabbits</li> <li>- 1 hare</li> <li>- 2 pigs</li> <li>- 1 goat (trapped in the pig trap)</li> </ul>	
	<p><u>CCC Member discussion</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Members noted the program has been so far unsuccessful at trapping pigs</i></li> <li>• <i>Members noted the number of traps should be increased to two</i></li> <li>• <i>Members advised the traps may need to be baited more regularly</i></li> <li>• <i>Members confirmed dusk and nightfall as the best time for animal control because pigs are not out during daylight hours</i></li> <li>• <i>There was a request for a response from EnergyAustralia about involvement in the Indian Mynah Bird trapping program being conducted by the Lithgow Environment Group.</i></li> </ul>	Ben Eastwood to follow up with LEG re potential involvement in Indian Mynah Bird trapping program.
	<p><i>Response to question: It is understood that EnergyAustralia has stated it will not be involved in Energy from Waste Projects while Mt Piper is in operation. However, the question remains if Mt Piper went into 'caretaker mode', given it is in a precinct the NSW Government has identified as able to accommodate Energy from Waste generation, would EnergyAustralia consider leasing part of the Mt Piper site to an Energy from Waste operator?</i></p> <p><i>See slide 7 of the presentation.</i></p>	
	<p><u>Key points of presentation</u></p> <p>Peter Griffith noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EnergyAustralia formally withdrew from the joint venture with Re.Group in pursuing the Energy Recovery project at Mt Piper.</li> <li>• There is no consideration being given to waste to energy projects by EnergyAustralia. Waste to Energy is not on the company's strategic roadmap.</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Chairs note:</b></p> <p>In the review of the minutes a CCC member noted they felt the long-term aspect of this question has still not been conclusively responded to, and wanted further clarification on whether EnergyAustralia would ever consider leasing land to a Waste to Energy operator once Mt Piper was in caretaker mode. For further discussion in the February meeting.</p>	
	<p><i>Provide an aerial plan showing land around Mount Piper and the ash repositories owned by EnergyAustralia, including Lake Lyell</i></p> <p><i>See slides 8,9,10 of the presentation.</i></p>	Calculation of areas held by EnergyAustralia to be provided.

Item	Discussion Point	Actions
	<p><u>CCC Member discussion</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Members requested that a calculation of areas also be provided.</li> </ul> <p><u>Update on NuRock</u> See slide 11 of the presentation.</p> <p><u>Key points of presentation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is it possible to sell the salt from the dehydrated brine? EnergyAustralia continues to extensively search for possible reuse of the salts. Examples of which include cattle licks, pool salts and fertiliser additives. We are currently testing the chemical/analytical makeup of the salts in greater depths with the intent to approach wholesalers/manufacturers.</li> <li>Where is the NuRock proposal up to? It is expected that commissioning will occur in Quarter 1, 2024.</li> </ul> <p><u>CCC Member discussion</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Members sought clarification about the compounds in the salt brine: a lot of sodium / sodium bicarbonate / lime salt (magnesium hydroxide)</li> </ul>	<p>EnergyAustralia to share pictures of salt from the dehydrated brine at the next meeting.</p> <p>EnergyAustralia to share pictures of NuRock Plant at the next meeting, subject to approvals.</p> <p>EnergyAustralia to extend an invitation to NuRock to present to the CCC.</p>
4	<p><b>CCC Guidelines Updates</b></p> <p>The Chair outlined the NSW Government's revised <i>Community Consultative Committee Guideline June 2023</i> (<a href="http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-02/community-consultative-committee-guideline.pdf">www.planning.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-02/community-consultative-committee-guideline.pdf</a>) This guideline explains the scope and purpose of community consultative committees; sets out the roles and responsibilities of committee members; establishes effective operating procedures. The guideline applies to all community consultative committees set up for State significant projects. The department will review it every 5 years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Chair noted the following differences: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>include a <i>Declaration of Interest</i> at the outset of each meeting (Chair stated that they were paid to perform the role of Chairperson, and that they were also the Chairperson of another CCG for Tallawarra Power Station owned by EnergyAustralia)</li> <li>Organisations have the option to nominate alternates in the event a member of the CCC is unable to attend a meeting, although consistency of attendance is encouraged (Note: the Alternate must sign the Declaration of Interest and the Code of Conduct)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Chair to populate and revise the Terms of Reference in line with the CCC discussion.</p> <p>Append revised Terms of Reference to meeting minutes.</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Meetings optimally to be attended by three representatives from the proponent, the members, and technical presenters.</li> <li>○ It was important that numbers at the meetings be kept to only those necessary for the informed conduct of the meeting, so the focus remains on CCC members.</li> <li>● Chair clarified term Pecuniary Interest: an interest a person has in a matter because of a reasonable likelihood or expectation of financial gain or loss to the person. The material distributed also defines non - pecuniary interest.</li> <li>● Chair lead the group through the revised Terms of Reference. Group was invited to comment on and add to the document.</li> <li>● Chair noted Terms of Reference to be reviewed annually.</li> </ul>	

CCC Member discussion about the Terms of Reference

- Members reiterated that the CCC should be consulted and notified before the broader community, and made aware of relevant activities, developments or plans as soon as possible (this is supported by the Terms of Reference)
- Members agreed that a meeting frequency of three times a year is enough. Scheduling should allow for flexibility to schedule meetings to align with key activities and project milestones.
- Members noted the option for members to request a meeting.
- Members requested that an option for extraordinary meetings be maintained.
- Members supported notice periods for meetings: Two weeks notice for an extraordinary meeting and four weeks notice for a regular meeting.
- Chair noted that there will be a call for agenda items when the meeting is formally notified.
- Members discussed meeting locations and agreed that alternating between the Lithgow venue and Mount Piper venue was suitable. It was noted that face to face remains preferred for regular meetings, although an online format may be preferred for extraordinary sessions.
- The Terms of Reference allows for minutes to be posted online within 3 weeks of the meeting. Members requested they receive a draft set of notes for review within one week of the meeting.
- Members agreed meetings should not be recorded (audio/visual). Members opted for a skilled notetaker to take written minutes.

All members submitted signed *Code of Conduct for Committee Members* and *Declaration of interest* forms at the close of the meeting.

Item	Discussion Point	Actions
5	<p><b>Operations and safety site update</b>  <i>See slides 13, 14, 15, 16 of the presentation</i>  Presenter noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EnergyAustralia have been responding to the market</li> <li>• The coal stockpile is growing following a period where it was quite low due to quality issues.</li> <li>• Unit 2 came out of service briefly for maintenance. This is typical preparation ahead of peak service periods (i.e. warmer months)</li> </ul> <p><i>Pine Dale Mine and Enhance Place</i>  <i>See slide 18 of the presentation</i>  Presenter noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EnergyAustralia are continuing care and maintenance approach, with monthly reports submitted</li> <li>• The mine has stabilised well</li> <li>• Land on the eastern side of the Mining Leases has been returned to the private landowner – EA retains a lease until it is formally relinquished (Pine Dale)</li> <li>• <i>A CCC member requested confirmation that the land relinquished was not Pine Dale but Enhance Place and that this was confusing for community members.</i></li> <li>• An EnergyAustralia representative confirmed that the relinquished land was Enhance Place.</li> </ul> <p><i>Lamberts North Ash Placement Project</i></p> <p>The content of this section is not recorded as it is commercial in confidence.</p> <p><u>CCC Member discussion</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>A member noted ongoing concern about water entering the ash dams and salts leaching into groundwater and creeks.</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Chairs note:</b>  In the review of the minutes a CCC member requested further discussion in a future meeting about why salt is being placed in the ash dams.</p>	<p>EnergyAustralia to circulate link to report re: Pine Dale when it is available</p> <p>EnergyAustralia to bring sample of the capping material used to cover the Brine Conditioned Fly-Ash to future meeting</p>
6	<p><b>Dam Operations Regulatory Update</b></p> <p><i>Lake Lyell Dam</i>  <i>See slide 22 of the presentation</i>  Presenter noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our Dam Safety Management System includes a responsibility to engage with the community and there is a legislative requirement to have a compliant DSMS.</li> <li>• Dams are critical infrastructure for power stations, and are one of the most visible elements, outside the wire fence line of the power station.</li> <li>• Dams hold community recreational value.</li> </ul>	

Item	Discussion Point	Actions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Dam Safety Act came into effect in 2021, and this has led to the introduction of the Dam Safety Management System and ISO 55001, O&amp;M Plan. DSEP reviews and updates to the Dam Safety Management System is legislatively required annually (this is new).</li> <li>Upcoming major works will be visible to the public. The lake will drop approximately 3.5 metres to allow for upcoming major works in 2025/26 and will remain at the lower level for at least a couple of months. For practical reasons, the work will be undertaken in the warmer months. The dam will be allowed to refill naturally once the works are complete.</li> <li>EnergyAustralia are currently conducting thorough investigations and research to confirm project timeframes and processes.</li> <li>The CCC will be kept up-to-date as the project scope and timeline is confirmed.</li> </ul> <p><u>CCC Member discussion</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Members suggested holding additional water in other parts of the system to enable Lake Lyell to be refilled immediately rather than waiting for rain.</i></li> <li><i>Members sought clarification that maintenance works are approved works.</i></li> <li>EnergyAustralia are in touch with Council re: the Winch House Works).</li> <li>They noted there is a standing approval for necessary maintenance works under the Dam Safety Act.</li> <li>If a major change to the Dam were to be proposed beyond maintenance – it would trigger a separate approvals and notification process.</li> <li><i>Members sought clarification that earthquakes and tremors procedures are included in the Dam Safety Emergency Plan.</i></li> <li>EnergyAustralia confirmed this is the case.</li> </ul>	
7	<p><b>Battery Storage</b> See slide 24 of the presentation.</p> <p>Presenter noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The assessments required for Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) are well progressed and expected to be completed in early 2024. Public feedback will form part of the assessment process. No material adverse findings have been identified to date. EnergyAustralia proposes to share key findings with the CCC in early 2024.</li> <li>Working to lodge EIS in May 2024. Public feedback will form part of the assessment process.</li> </ul>	EnergyAustralia to present key findings from Battery Storage assessments with CCC at the next meeting

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Further outreach to neighbours and key authorities will occur prior to ensure there is a good understanding of project plans and potential impacts. Community information to be provided at the EnergyAustralia Project HQ in Lithgow.</li> <li>The subsurface investigation program (which included geotechnical investigations, contamination testing and soil testing) almost complete with reports to be delivered to EnergyAustralia in December and January. Council approval for these works was obtained in August 2023.</li> <li>A total of four threatened flora species listed under the Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act) were recorded within the Project area (only one species naturally occurs within the Project footprint). Habitat for five fauna species listed under the EPBC Act that are either present or have the potential to occur within the Project area would be impacted.</li> <li>A referral decision was expected in December. The likelihood of the Battery Project being declared a controlled action was considered to be low. We have now received notice that the decision on this referral, and it is <b>not</b> a controlled action.</li> <li>After various assessments, a 330 kV underground connection has been identified as the preferred option and the design of this option is likely to start early in the new year. This connection option holds several environmental benefits in comparison to alternatives.</li> </ul> <p><u>CCC Member discussion</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Members sought clarification about how the batteries would be built, and whether they'd be divided into compartments/sections. (Images of the batteries shown during a presentation at a previous meeting showed a modular design with segregation for safety reasons).</i></li> <li><i>There was discussion that saltwater has been shown to extinguish battery fires more effectively than freshwater.</i></li> </ul>	
8	<p><b>Lake Lyell Pumped Hydro Study – revised concept design and outline of planning process</b>  <i>See slide 25 - 57 of the presentation</i></p> <p><i>The Initial Concept Design</i>  Presentation notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concept design developed by Lake Lyell PHES Early Contractor Involvement (ECI) Team. ECI brings together: EnergyAustralia (as client), AMDJV (Construction &amp; Engineering) and Mott McDonald (Design)</li> <li>Concept design is not final and can be modified to address environmental impacts identified during</li> </ul>	<p>EnergyAustralia to share the artists impression (presentation slide 34) as part of public communications about the concept design.</p> <p>EnergyAustralia to share fly-</p>



Item	Discussion Point	Actions
	<p>environmental assessment process and community feedback.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design requirements: 80-year asset that supports NSW's energy network; Flood proof for peak mean flood conditions (+7m higher than Lake Lyell full level); Maximise energy storage and generation efficiency; Maximise construction efficiency, site won materials, local content, local labour and business participation; Minimise environmental impacts, disturbance footprint and visual change; Secures a future for Lake Lyell.</li> <li>• Funded by Pumped Hydro Refundable Grants Program.</li> <li>• At this point, the Concept can be discussed and the CCC is invited to provide feedback.</li> <li>• <b>Visual reference: slide 34</b> Drone view artist impression from an elevation of 150m taken from the bottom of Sir Mitchell Drive</li> <li>• Clarifying features and functions of the proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The diversion is a function for managing flood impacts around the inlet outlet area</li> <li>○ Tunnels feature safety and emergency evacuation elements.</li> <li>○ Power generated underground will be carried via heavy cables through tunnel to switchyard</li> <li>○ The inlet/outlet point would draw from about 15m below the full water level</li> <li>○ A boom will prevent debris and boats from getting into the inlet /outlet area.</li> <li>○ Temporary bridge is needed in the early project delivery stages for access.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>through of the proposal at the next meeting (subject to it being completed).</p> <p>CCC to advise on Views of Importance and areas of public interest for the Land and Visual Impact Assessment (for the EIS) at a future meeting.</p> <p>Revisit discussion about suitable locations for the accommodation camp at a future meeting .</p>

#### CCC Member discussion

- *There were queries about the height of the upper reservoir wall.*
- The project team explained that a small section of the wall face reaches a height of 143 m at the very deepest section of the gully and this section is largely hidden by the fold of a ridge. The inner depth of the dam wall at the deepest point is 60 meters.
- *The significant amount of earth moving / ground disturbances proposed were noted.*
- The project team explained that scoping document overstates the level of disturbance (as a worst-case scenario), and the team will seek to minimise areas of direct disturbance as the plan evolves.
- *There were questions about the significant depth of the powerhouse as proposed. Project team explained that it is about the pressure required for the turbines to generate power as opposed to the speed of the water.*
- *Concerns were noted that the image of the project was very confronting and would change the experience of the lake and surrounds.*



Item	Discussion Point	Actions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Members expressed concern about groundwater impacts, and possible impacts of the tunneling on groundwater. EMM confirmed environmental impacts, including groundwater, will be assessed through the EIS. Project team acknowledges there will need to be a system to manage groundwater.</i></li> <li>• <i>Members sought clarification about where the fill within Farmers Creek would be placed.</i></li> <li>• <i>The project team noted the creek would be filled in between the inlet/outlet and permanent bridge.</i></li> <li>• <i>Members sought clarification that Farmers Creek won't be touched beyond the diversion area where it joins the lake.</i></li> <li>• <i>Members asked about inquiries into local platypus populations.</i></li> <li>• <i>The project team confirmed studies have commenced. So far, seven were tagged during the studies (and another two were tagged further up the creek). EMM are collecting data currently; tracking where the platypus' were caught and where they're burrowing. Some were found in the area around where the inlet /outlets are proposed to be located. Incoming information shows that the platypus may forage in the dam and live in the creek.</i></li> <li>• <i>Members expressed concern that the creek could not support the foraging needs of the platypus population without the dam access. Members noted that platypus are a protected species. Members asked follow up questions about the platypus survey methodology.</i></li> <li>• <i>Project team explained acoustics and radio trackers were attached to the platypus, and the animals were being tracked via pings and downloading data. Activity is during the night and day (nighttime for foraging and daytime tracking for burrows). Data collection will take three weeks and specialists will revisit in February.</i></li> <li>• <i>Members noted the concept design diagram (artists impression slide 34) was difficult to understand and requested more resources demonstrating visual impact from the ground.</i></li> <li>• <i>The project team explained the artists impression from slide 34 was shared because it showed the most visual impact and project footprint to the fullest extent, noting unless you're 150m in the air you would experience the visual impacts to a lesser extent. The project team acknowledged that the further along Sir Thomas Mitchell Drive people travel, the greater the visual impact.\</i></li> <li>• <i>The chair noted the Landscape and Visual Impact assessment will have viewpoint photomontages, when the design has been completed, as part of the EIS. He suggested that the CCC has the opportunity to nominate areas of public interest and views of</i></li> </ul>	

Item	Discussion Point	Actions
	<p>importance to include in the Land and Visual Impact Assessment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Members suggested the following to lessen the visual impact of the raw stone upper reservoir:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Mural</i></li> <li>○ <i>Depiction of an Aboriginal story</i></li> <li>○ <i>Lichen / native growth</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• The project team noted Mount Walker rock is yellow when it's new/cut, and it's expected to darken over time. Project team acknowledged Mount Walker is a significant peak in the Blue Mountains.</li> <li>• <i>It was noted that any rock would take a very long time to discolour.</i></li> </ul>	

### Exploring the Concept Design in detail

#### Presentation notes:

- Construction timeframe is approx. four years, delivered in three stages. Stage 1 includes cutting in from Sir Thomas Mitchell Drive to clear areas. Where possible areas used for set down of equipment and materials will be in areas that will later be used for the project such as the switchyard, to minimize permanent land clearance.
- Total Lake Lyell storage is 34+ GL. Proposed dam storage capacity of 4.65 GL.
- Earthworks will seek to fill areas where staging and project buildings are needed.
- The proposed accommodation camp will house the workforce – 400 people at the project peak. Magpie Hollow Road Lake Lyell (beside free campsite currently there), or Pipers Flat Road Wallerawang. Both options being considered and the project team will be hearing community feedback. Maximum of 10,000sqm needed.

#### CCC Member discussion

- *Members confirmed that materials excavated during tunnelling will be used as infill.*
- *Members sought clarification as to whether the inlet/outlet was a single pipe or two pipes.*
- The project team noted that there were two pipes - one for each turbine. These pipes could function in both directions and work as both inlet and outlet. They could pump water from the lake into the upper reservoir when there was surplus or cheaper power and take water through the station and back into the lake to generate power at times when needed.
- *Members enquired about the option for an above ground station.*
- The project team noted that an aboveground option was considered, but noise generation by an above ground station would be undesirable.

Item	Discussion Point	Actions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Members suggested that the pipes on the tunnels and hydraulics slide (slide 41) should be smoother, rather than angular.</i></li> <li>• <i>The Project team explained the driving energy force is pressure, rather than momentum.</i></li> <li>• <i>Members asked about the rate of energy capture.</i></li> <li>• <i>The project team indicated there is expected to be a 78% energy capture from this project.</i></li> <li>• <i>Member statement: Having seen what's proposed, I suspect the community around the project site will be devastated. Properties in the vicinity of the proposal will be severely impacted. The property values will be devastated, and it is likely to destroy the lives of some people who live in the vicinity of the lake.</i></li> <li>• <i>Another member commented they felt that on balance a hydro solution is preferable because the visual impact to solar and wind power options is greater.</i></li> <li>• <i>Members suggested the accommodation camp be in more than one location to reduce its footprint and impact on Lake Lyell area given that Lake Lyell would be heavily impacted by the bulk of construction.</i></li> <li>• <i>Members also noted the accommodation camp may cause traffic impacts on secondary roads.</i></li> <li>• <i>The proposed camp location at Lake Lyell would have a visual and operational impact upon the recreation area.</i></li> </ul>	

#### *EIS Process (Alex Frolich, EMM)*

*See slide 53 - 57 of the presentation*

#### **Presentation notes:**

- **EIS is conducted in the context of the State Significant Development process (state and federal governments are the consent authorities)**
- **Planned studies will include Terrestrial; Biodiversity; Aquatic Ecology (Including platypus study); Aboriginal Heritage; Landscape and Visual Impact; Contamination; Bushfire; Economics; Land, Soil and Erosion; Waste; Noise and Vibration; Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas; Climate Risk; Traffic and transport; Social Impact; Historic Heritage; Groundwater; Surface Water**

#### **CCC Member discussion**

- *Members sought clarification that agencies and community members would make submissions at the same time.*
- *Members asked about the study methodology for EIS into flora/fauna. Project team confirmed the methodology follows the established species guidelines, and studies are conducted seasonally*

Item	Discussion Point	Actions
	<p><i>depending on the peak seasons for different species. UNSW have provided a preeminent platypus species expert.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Members confirmed fishing/game fishing impacts will be addressed in the social impacts assessment – noting this is a significant consideration for this specific site.</i></li> <li>• <i>Members also confirmed the impact on people's lives would be addressed in the social impact assessment (including way of life, well-being, access to infrastructure and other categories for unmitigated impact, mitigated impacts and social risk).</i></li> <li>• <i>Members sought information about whether any impact on property values would be assessed in the social impact assessment (SIA). Project team confirmed that any impact on property values would not be outlined in the SIA as this is not required by the SEARS in the EIS. Project team also explained that EnergyAustralia has started visiting residents around the lake to understand their personal situations and ways to mitigate personal impacts, noting that the residents who've been visited haven't yet seen the concept renders. The direct approach with surrounding residents is separate from the community consultation process, to allow for privacy of individuals involved, and is ongoing.</i></li> <li>• <i>Chair proposed that given the volume of information and project milestones meetings should be scheduled for February and May 2024.</i></li> </ul>	
	<p><i>Benefit Sharing (Elli Baker, Infrafuture)</i>  <i>See slide 58 - 63 of the presentation</i>            Presentation notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Introduction to co-design benefits and approach to identifying benefits with the community (figuring out what's important for this community)</i></li> <li>• <i>Co-design workshops are planned for first half of 2024.</i></li> <li>• <i>Workstreams:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Tourism, recreation, heritage and environment</i></li> <li>2. <i>First Nations and cultural heritage</i></li> <li>3. <i>Skills, training, services and infrastructure</i>  <i>Note: health and well-being are captured in workstream 3</i></li> </ol> </li> </ul>	
	<p><u><i>CCC Member discussion</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Members noted they couldn't respond to the workstreams during this meeting (as the meeting ran long and members needed to understand and absorb what was being proposed with this project). They stated this could be better looked at in a future meeting.</i></li> <li>• <i>Members noted the workstreams did not capture the needs of directly impacted residents and perhaps the</i></li> </ul>	

Item	Discussion Point	Actions
	<p><i>workstreams should consider the residents whose lives and property values will be directly impacted by the project.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>A CCC member noted that CLC Lithgow was not invited to a stakeholder workshop held earlier in 2023 looking at project benefits.</i></li> <li><i>The project team also noted there was a dedicated stream of consultation with neighbors and people living in proximity to the project to work through these matters.</i></li> <li><i>A concern was expressed that the proposed neighborhood consultation approach may be perceived as 'divide and conquer' and that the project needs to be honest about the extent of any impacts. They also expressed concerns that the proposed project may reinforce the misconception about Lithgow as an unattractive industrial area, a perception that with the growth of tourism many in the local area have worked hard to overcome.</i></li> <li><i>Another member noted it was good that there were multiple stream/ channels of communication with stakeholders.</i></li> </ul>	

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#### General discussion

- There was discussion around a recent report of shooting on the Mt Piper site. A CCC member wanted a contact number so that people could report incidents such as this which were of concern to the community.*
- The project team noted that they were not aware of any such activity. If there was authorized shooting on station land – it is EnergyAustralia's practice to advise neighbors. They noted that they would investigate this report and that the first port of call to report shooting activity should be the police.*

#### Addendum from EnergyAustralia

If there is concern regarding unauthorised shooting on EnergyAustralia land, the process would be to call 000 to notify the Police.

If you wish to also advise EnergyAustralia, please call **1800 756 968** or email [community@energyaustralia.com.au](mailto:community@energyaustralia.com.au) Please note calling or emailing EnergyAustralia will not result in an immediate response.

- The chair proposed the next CCC meetings for February and May 2024.*
- The chair stated that it is important to note that tonight the group was introduced to the Concept Plan, whereas the EIS is the process of refining the design and identifying and addressing impacts. The CCC would play an important role in providing comments on the evolving project.*

Item	Discussion Point	Actions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The chair suggested that a more detailed battery conversation is included at the next meeting.</li> <li>He also: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>noted that future meetings be scheduled for no longer than two hours.</li> <li>asked that EnergyAustralia provide a written response to the member's question relating to shooters (to be appended to these minutes)</li> </ul> </li> <li><i>A CCC member expressed disappointment that no Council representatives attended the meeting tonight particularly given the significant impacts of the project to the community.</i></li> <li>The Chair confirmed the Council representative had been invited.</li> </ul>	
10	<b>Meeting close</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7:35pm</li> </ul>	

# EnergyAustralia Lithgow Region

## Community Consultative Committee

5 December 2023

Peter Griffiths – Acting Head of Mt Piper



**EnergyAustralia**  
LIGHT THE WAY



# Agenda

1. Welcome and introductions
2. Acknowledgement of Country
3. Minutes and Actions
4. CCC Guidelines Update
5. Operations & Site Update from EnergyAustralia
6. Dam Operations Regulatory Update
7. Project in Focus – Lake Lyell Pumped Hydro
8. General Discussion
9. Meeting Close



# Welcome and Introductions

# Acknowledgement of Country

I would like to acknowledge  
the Wiradjuri people as the  
Traditional Owners of the land  
on which we meet today, and  
pay my respects to their  
Elders past, present and  
future

Artwork done by Wurundjeri Traditional Owner, Mandy Nicholson



# **Actions from Previous Meeting**

# Actions from Previous Meeting

**Feral animals –Lake Lyell – Ben M to provide additional information when trapping is underway.**

- Pig traps have been set up for the past couple of months down at Lake Lyell and are monitored by remote camera.
- The Feral Animal Control program, for the removal of feral pigs and rabbits, was completed on 9 – 11 August by an external party. This program was conducted at nighttime to avoid interactions with guests and staff and a summary of the feral animals controlled during the program include:
  - 22 rabbits
  - 1 hare
  - 2 pigs
  - 1 goat (trapped in the pig trap)

Red Deer were also detected in the offsets country towards the dam area whilst surveying the area with thermal devices for pigs. A group of 8 were observed feeding together near the creek line.

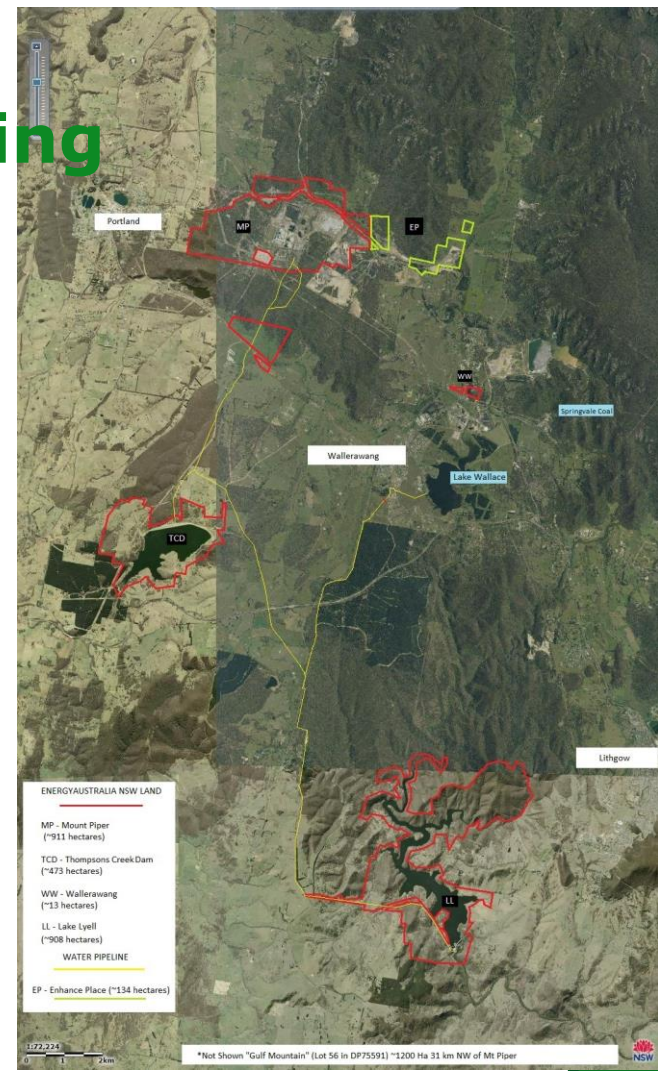
# Actions from Previous Meeting

**EA Corporate to respond to question in Addendum – The CCC member has requested that EnergyAustralia Corporate provide a more detailed response to the following question at the next meeting: It is understood that EnergyAustralia has stated it will not be involved in Energy from Waste Projects while Mt Piper is in operation. However, the question remains if Mt Piper went into 'caretaker mode', given it is in a precinct the NSW Government has identified as able to accommodate Energy from Waste generation, would EnergyAustralia consider leasing part of the Mt Piper site to an Energy from Waste operator?**

- EnergyAustralia formally withdrew from the joint venture with Re.Group in pursuing the Energy Recovery project at Mt Piper.
- There is no consideration being given to waste to energy projects by EnergyAustralia. Waste to Energy is not on our strategic roadmap, which emphasises flexible capacity projects such as gas peaking stations, pumped hydro and batteries, and support for renewable energy with a focus on wind generation.
- Our focus is on Mt Piper, which has a planned closure date prior to 2040. Further details on how Mt Piper will operate from the early 2030s is contained in our Climate Transition Action Plan released earlier this year.
- We are also focused on the development of flexible capacity to support renewables. In the Lithgow region, these are the Lake Lyell Pumped Hydro project and the Mt Piper Battery.

# Actions from Previous Meeting

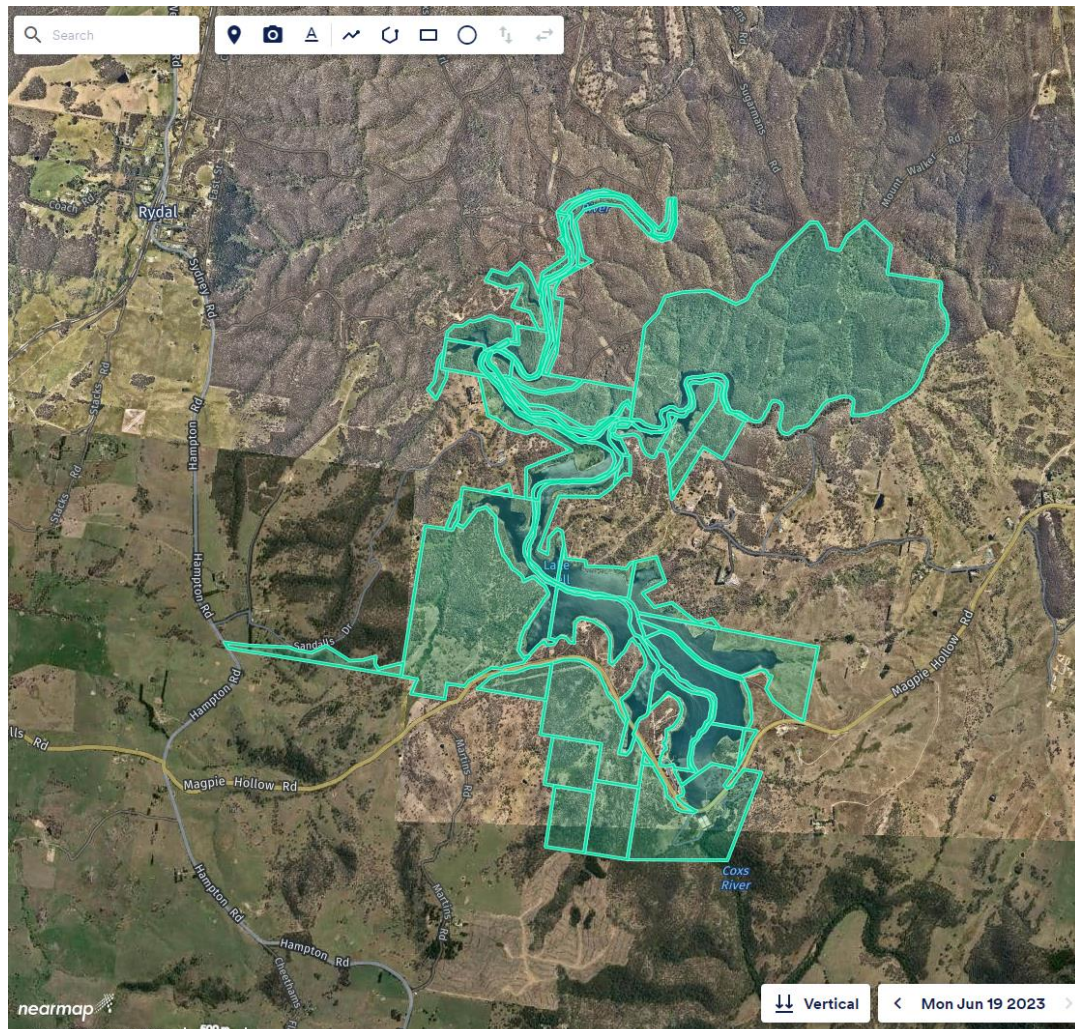
**Provide an Aerial Plan Showing Land around Mt Piper and the Ash Repositories that EA owns, including Lake Lyell**





# Actions from Previous Meeting

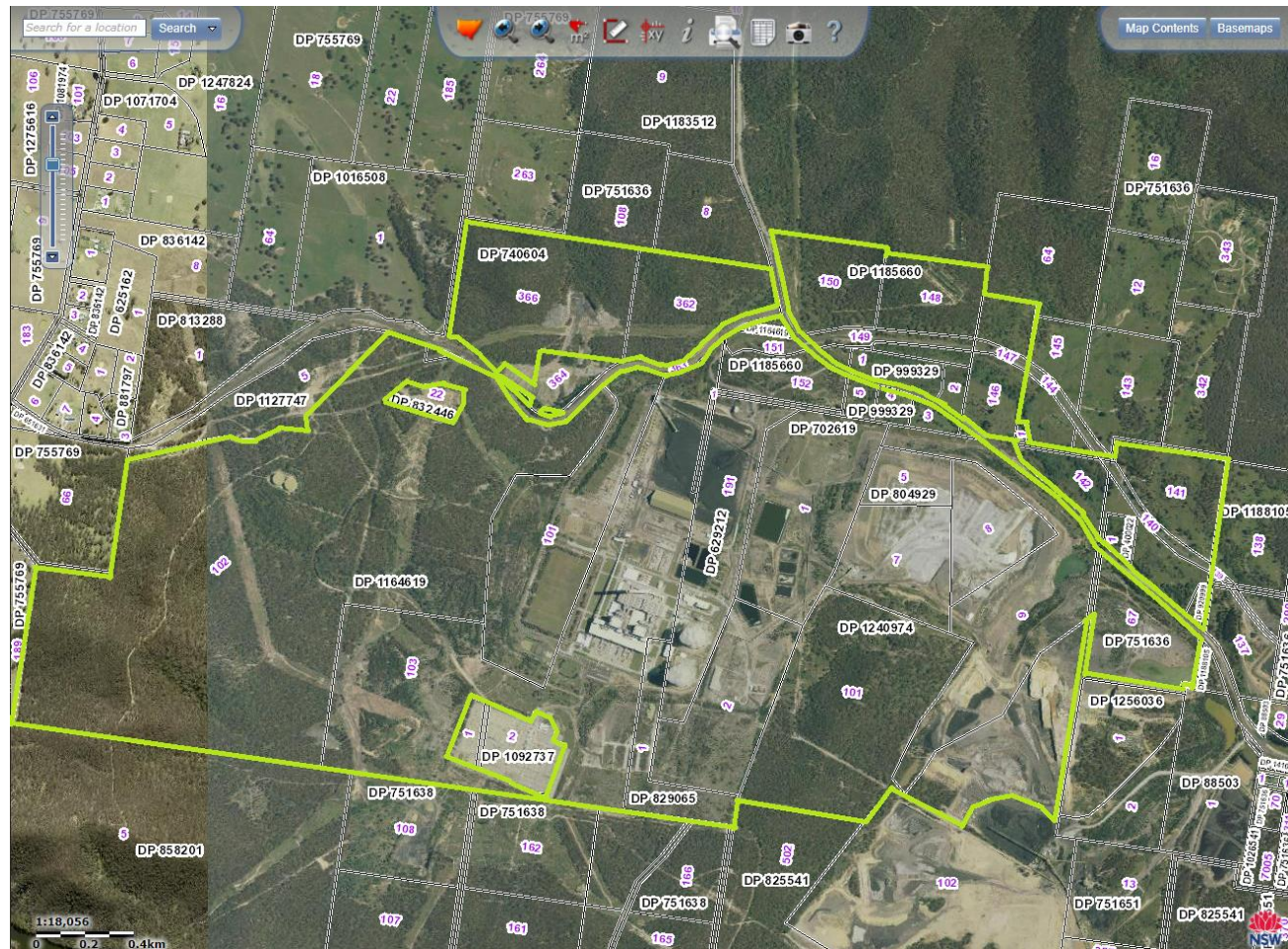
Lake Lyell





# Actions from Previous Meeting

Mt Piper



# Actions from Previous Meeting

## **EA to Provide an Update on NuRock for the next meeting**

### ***Is it possible to sell the salt from the dehydrated brine?***

EnergyAustralia continues to extensively search for possible reuse of the salts. Examples of which include cattle licks, pool salts and fertiliser additives. We are currently testing the chemical/analytical makeup of the salts in greater depths with the intent to approach wholesalers/manufacturers.

### ***Where is the NuRock proposal up to?***

It is expected that commissioning will occur in Quarter 1, 2024.

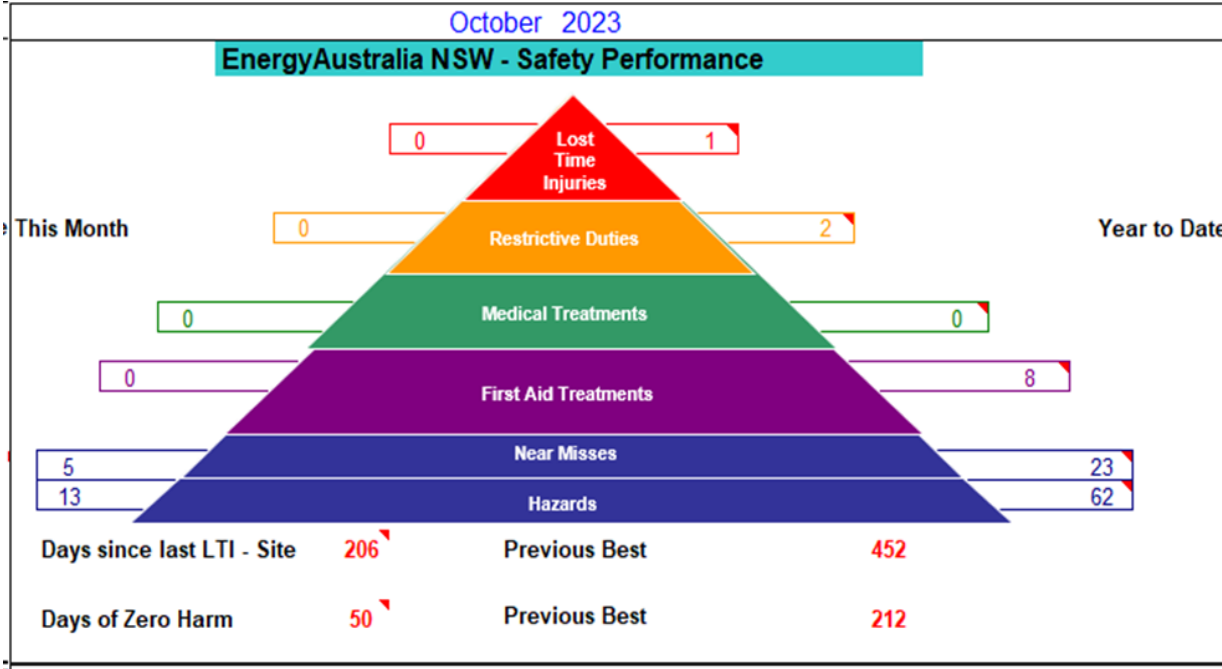
# CCC Guidelines

[Community consultative committee guideline \(nsw.gov.au\)](https://nsw.gov.au)

# Operations (Site) Update

# Site Safety

# Site Safety – 2023



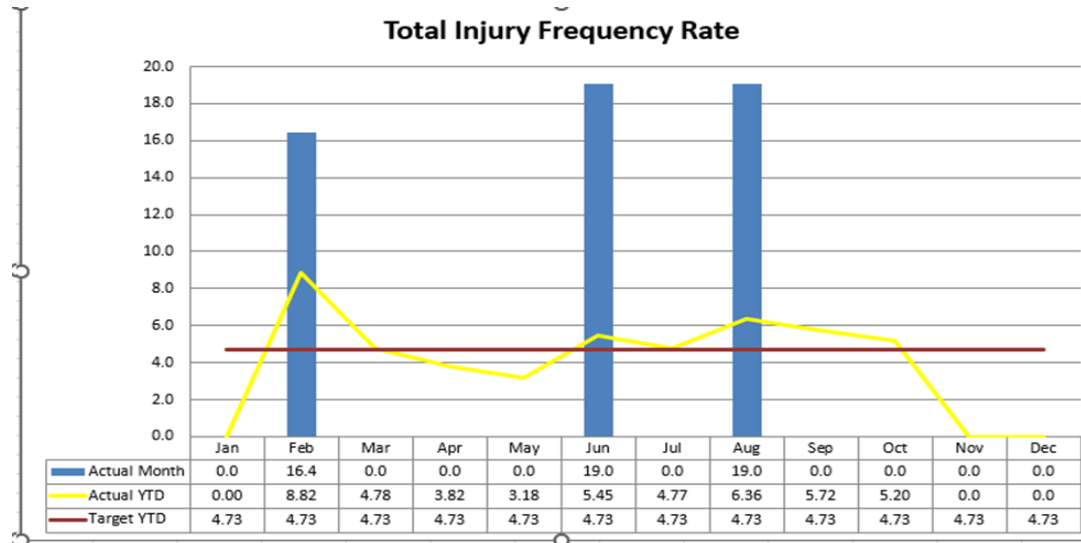


# Site Safety 2023

YTD – TIFR (As of 31st October 2023)

Actual = 5.20

Target = 4.73



# **Pine Dale Mine and Enhance Place**

# Pine Dale Mine and Enhance Place

- No non compliances at the Pine Dale Mine
- No community complaints recorded for Pine Dale Mine
- Monthly reports as required under the Pine Dale EPL have been uploaded onto the EnergyAustralia website
- The Annual Return required to be submitted to the EPA is being prepared, will be available in late January 2024.
- A small area of rehabilitation maintenance has been completed with the addition of topdressing material and pasture seeding
- Continues in care and maintenance
- Future mining activities continue to be evaluated



# **Lamberts North Ash Placement Project**

Commercially sensitive not for website display

# Lamberts North Ash Placement Project

Brine Conditioned Fly-Ash Placement

Redacted due to commercial sensitivity

# **Dam Operations Regulatory Update**

# Lake Lyell Dam

- EA Operate two major dams
  - Lyell Dam 33GL
  - Thompsons Creek Dam 27GL
- Dams operated in strict compliance with NSW Dams Safety Act & Dams Safety Regulations
  - Dam Safety Management System
  - ISO 55001, O&M Plan, DSEP
- Major Works
  - ✓ LD crest reseal and safety barriers 2023
  - LD fusegate major maintenance 2025/26
  - LD concrete face joint repair 2025/26
  - LD spillway concrete crack repair 2018-2026
  - TCD east foreshore slip repair 2024
  - TCD winch-house 2024





# Project – Battery Storage

# Project Update – Battery Storage

- Assessments required for Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) well progressed and expected to be completed in early 2024. No material adverse findings identified to date. Proposing to share key findings with CCC in early 2024.
- Working to lodge EIS in May 2024. Further outreach to neighbours and key authorities will occur prior to ensure good understanding of project plans and potential impacts. Community information to be provided at the EnergyAustralia Project HQ in Lithgow.
- Subsurface investigation program (which included geotechnical investigations, contamination testing and soil testing) almost complete with reports to be delivered to EnergyAustralia in December and January. Council approval for these works obtained in August 2023.
- A total of four threatened flora species listed under the Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act) were recorded within the Project area (only one species naturally occurs within the Project footprint). Habitat for five fauna species listed under the EPBC Act that are either present or have the potential to occur within the Project area would be impacted.
- As such, an EPBC referral was submitted in September 2023. Referral decision expected in December. Likelihood of the Project being declared a controlled action is considered to be low.
- After various assessments, a 330 kV underground connection has been identified as the preferred option and the design of this option is likely to start early in the new year. This connection option holds several environmental benefits in comparison to alternatives.

**Project in Focus:**

**Pumped Hydro Energy Storage  
Project**

# Supported by NSW Government

Supported by



**Public acknowledgement and disclaimer:** This project is proudly funded by the NSW Government's Pumped Hydro Recoverable Grants Program. The views expressed herein are not necessarily the views of the NSW Government. The NSW Government does not accept responsibility for any information or advice contained herein.

# Recap on process to date

Q2 2021	Desktop feasibility studies to confirm project viability
Q2 2022	State government funding to progress feasibility assessment Public consultation commences
Q3 2022	Geotech studies commenced – input into feasibility
Q4 2022	EPBC Referral lodged. Agency consultation
Q1-2 2023	Consultation, door knocking, forums, expos, drop-ins, websites, newsletters. Extensive community feedback collation and consideration. <b>Concept Design commenced</b>
Q3 2023	Scoping report, SEARs released New upper reservoir location in response to public feedback Technical and environmental assessments commence Benefits sharing consultation commences
Q4 2023	Concept Design released



**We're here now**

# Key aspects for discussion

- Concept Design walk through
- Questions and feedback
- Tailoring technical assessments to assess impacts
- Refining environmental studies to assess impacts
- Ongoing community engagement and benefit sharing
- Timeline – recap

## **Outcomes**

- Provide clear information so potential impacts can be readily understood
- Clarify how feedback can influence the project's next phase of Preliminary Design and delivery
- Seek your feedback and local knowledge to further inform our next phase of design thinking



# Background on construction, engineering and design team

- Concept design developed by Lake Lyell PHES **Early Contractor Involvement (ECI) Team**
- **ECI** brings together:
  - EnergyAustralia (as client)
  - AMDJV (Construction & Engineering)
  - Mott McDonald (Design)
- Track record of collaborating on similar projects
- Sharing construction knowledge will contribute to improved design 'buildability' and improved cost/time estimates
- Ensures all parties also in receipt of stakeholder feedback as project progresses through planning and approvals



# Design requirements

- 80-year asset that supports NSW's energy network
- Flood proof for peak mean flood conditions (+7m higher than Lake Lyell full level)
- Maximise energy storage and generation efficiency
- Maximise construction efficiency, site won materials, local content, local labour and business participation
- Minimise environmental impacts, disturbance footprint and visual change
- Secures a future for Lake Lyell

# Engineering design update

**Concept design is not final and can be modified to address environmental impacts identified during environmental assessment process and community feedback**

- The project is economically and technically feasible
- Concept follows successful approaches used by other pumped hydro projects
- Maintains 335MW, 8-hour duration generation output
- Design emphasises EnergyAustralia's commitment to mitigating impacts through site-sensitive design
- Feedback has played a significant role:
  - Relocation of upper reservoir
  - Locating large portion of infrastructure underground
  - Use of natural topography to screen other infrastructure features, i.e. intake
  - Design solutions to avoid impacts to aquatic species
  - No additional transmission lines on private property
  - Lake Lyell maintained and operated as an energy asset and public recreational space for decades to come

# The initial concept design









Drone view. Artist impression only. Subject to change.





Rydall view. Artist impression only. Subject to change.



Not visible from Rec Centre. Artist impression only. Subject to change.



# Exploring the concept design in detail

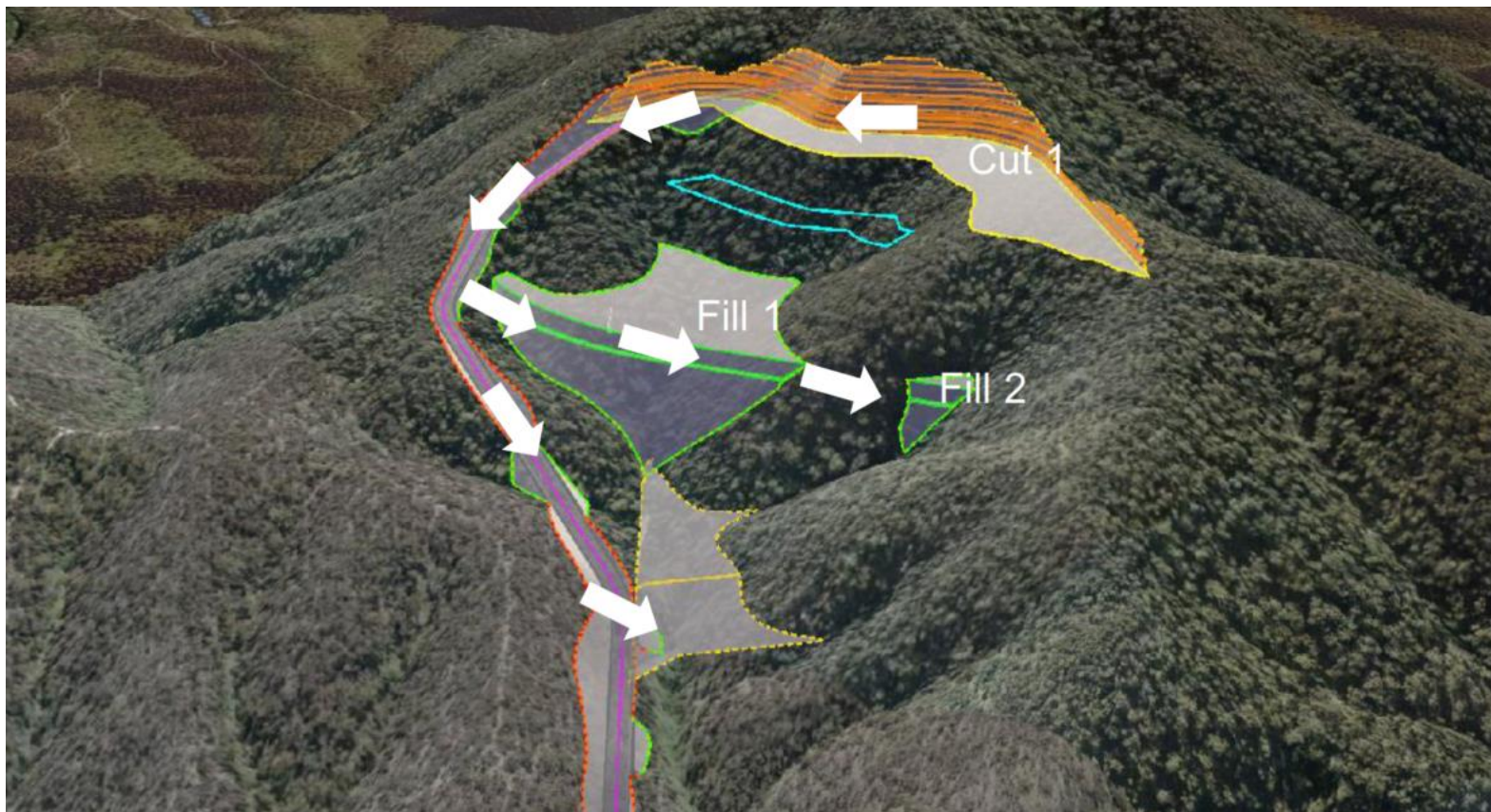


# Form of upper reservoir

- Located within existing gully below ridgeline. No visual impacts for Lithgow township
- Utilises a cut and fill construction approach. Significant reuse of extracted materials
- Exterior dam face will be constructed with natural stone boulders from Mount Walker.
- Rockfill dam with geomembrane liner
- Storage capacity of 4.65GL
- Gross head operational range between 254m and 214m (40m level change)
- 50m reservoir depth
- 63.5m upstream (internal) dam height  
143m downstream (external) dam height
- Potential for further optimisation and size reduction as part of ongoing design.

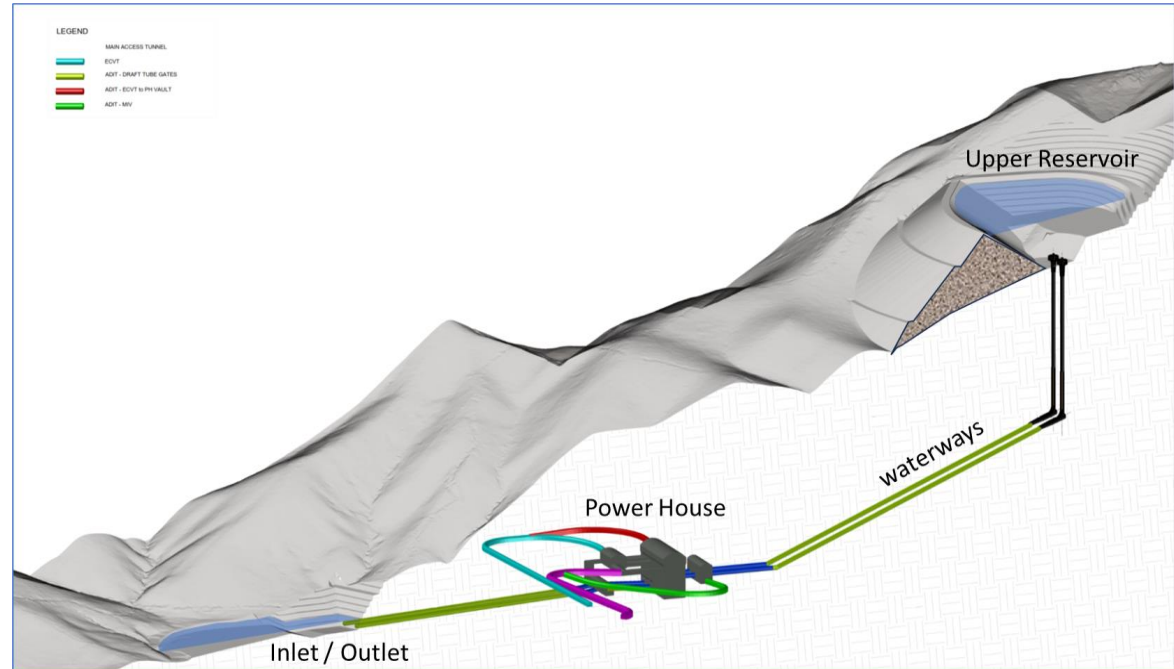






# Tunnels and hydraulics

- The power station will be located underground in a cavern
- The tunnels will be constructed using a drill and blast method – geotechnical investigations are underway now
- Tunnel height will be between 5.5 – 8m
- Total tunnel length approximately 4 kms
- Vertical intake shafts 175m deep



# Powerhouse form

- Home of Lake Lyell PHES reversible turbine and generator
- Entirely underground to reduce noise, vibration and visual impacts
- Main cavern design approx: 62m high x 25m wide and x 67m long
- Once excavated, supported by rock and bolts
- Proven form for hydro generator location
- Access to the powerhouse will be via two tunnels from portals built on the north side of Farmers Creek
- Exact orientation and location flexible depending on further site investigations



**Gordon Power Station, Tasmania**



# Inlet/outlet

- Concrete and steel twin diffuser inlet/outlet structure to draw flow of 160m<sup>3</sup>/s into the inlet waterways to the pump-turbines
- Facilitates gentle current, no noise or splashing
- Includes maintenance gates and screens to prevent ingress of debris
- Dimensions approx. 75m x 45m and 15m deep
- Inlet /outlet located in the upper reaches of Farmers Creek Arm
- Located away from through-flows from Farmers Creek
- Barrier for safety to prevent boats and floating objects





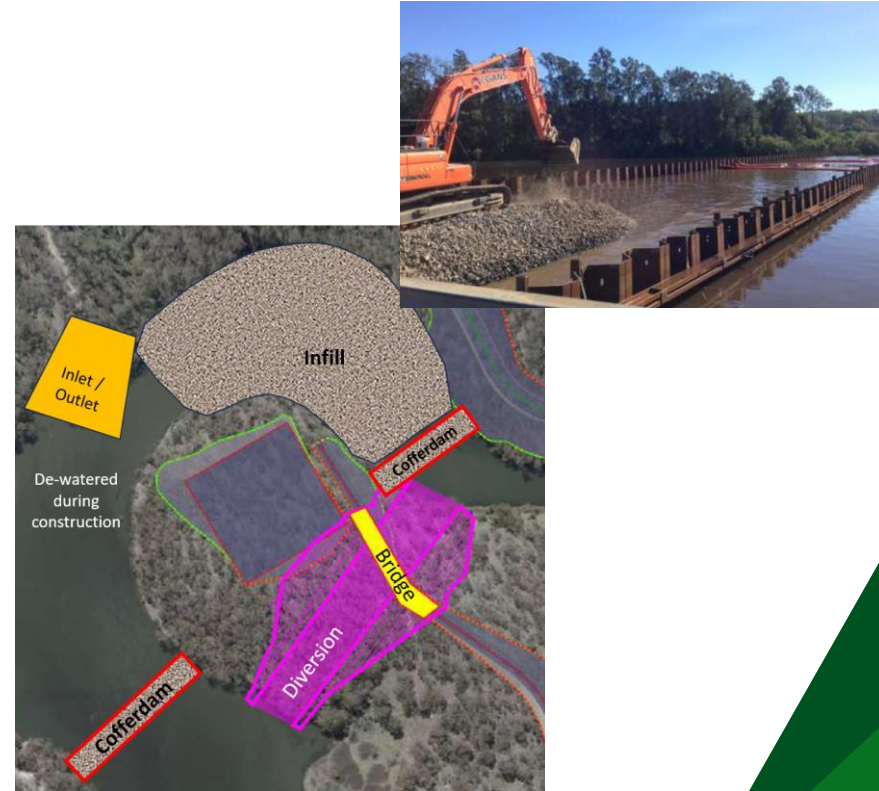
# Diversion location and permanent bridge

- Diversion is to divert flood flows entering the lake from Farmers Creek to join downstream of inlet/outlet
- Provides separation between the inlet/outlet and the river channel aquatic species are likely to use to travel up and down Farmers Creek
- Further design will consider details of screens and other measures to prevent intake of aquatic species, debris and sediment
- Permanent bridge provides access over the diversion to the site compound and the infrastructure on north side of site



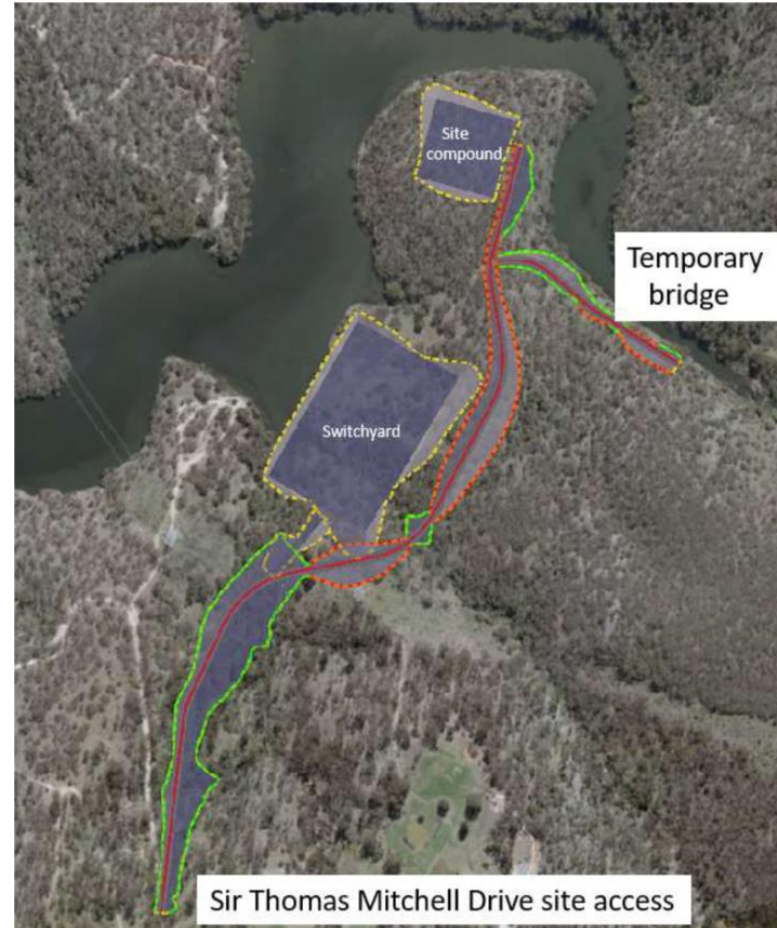
# Inlet/outlet construction and infill

- Upstream and downstream cofferdams are needed to enable de-watering of inlet/outlet construction area
- De-watering enables safe and efficient construction of the inlet/outlet
- After de-watering the inlet/outlet can be constructed with tunnels to the powerhouse which is approx. 50m below lake water level
- Surplus rock material from the tunnels will be stored in the infill. The infill provides a permanent protection to the inlet/outlet from major flood flows



# Access roads

- New access road to support construction from Sir Thomas Mitchell Drive will also be the permanent facility access
- Sir Thomas Mitchell Drive will be improved to be suitable for construction traffic
- A temporary bridge over Farmers Creek will provide initial access to the north side of the site





# Temporary bridge over Farmers Creek

The temporary bridge will be removed when the permanent crossing to the tunnel portals is complete



# Switchyard pad

- The switchyard pad will be built to provide a flat place to work from and used as construction laydown
- Once the access road is built, we'll build the switchyard pad



# 330kV switchyard

- The 330kV switchyard provides electrical connection between the existing transmission lines and the pumped hydro facility
- After construction the switchyard would be operated by TransGrid as part of the NSW network





# Accommodation camp

- We'll provide accommodation for up to 400 workers during construction
- Currently exploring two possible locations:
  - Magpie Hollow Road, Lake Lyell
  - Pipers Flat Road, Wallerawang

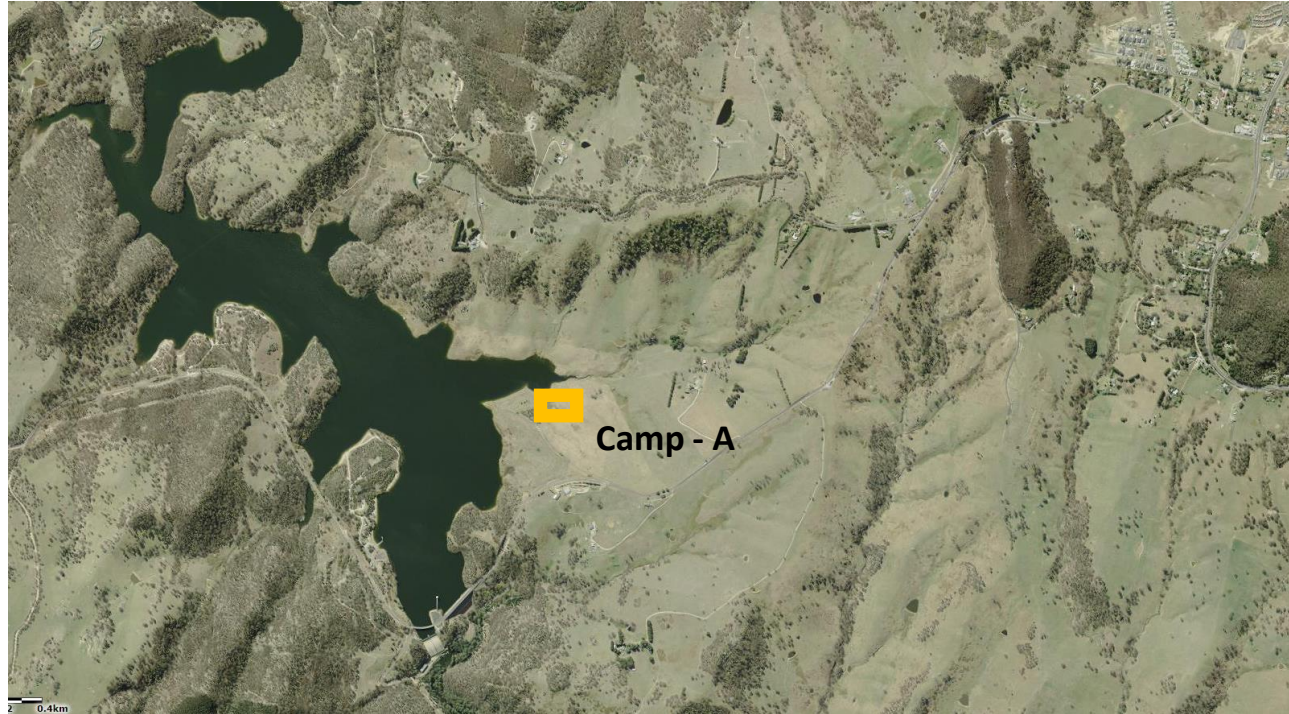


*Example of accommodation camp*



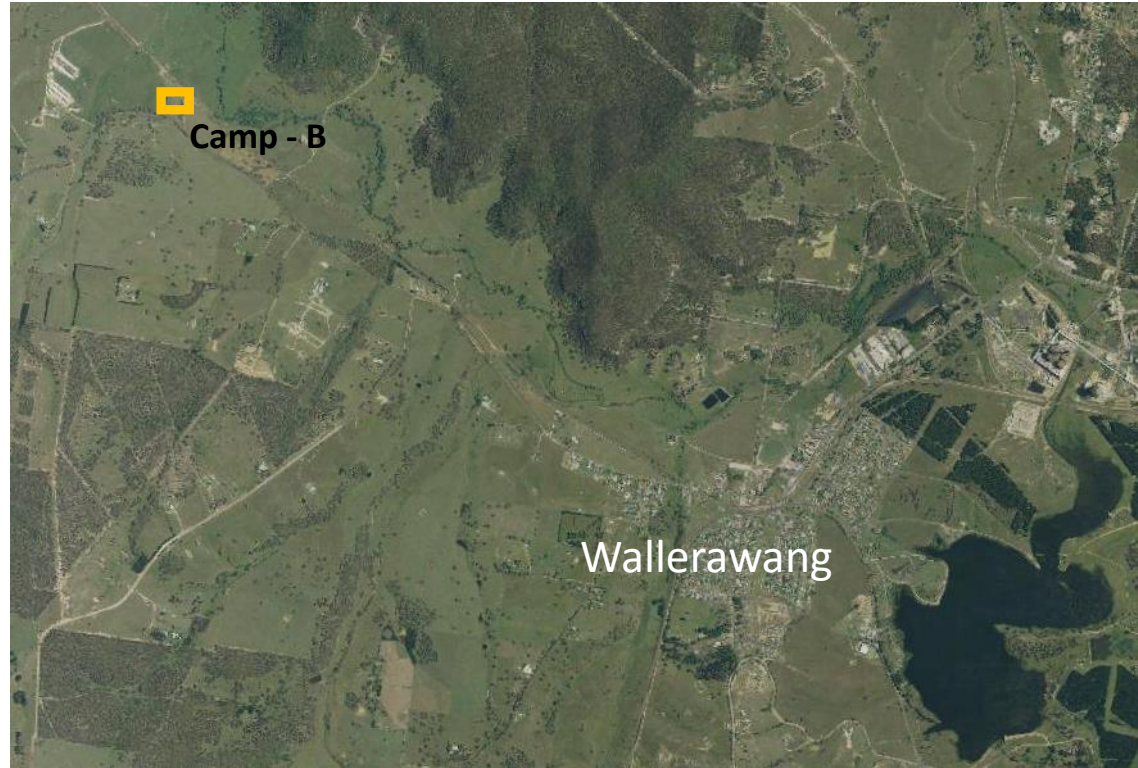
# Magpie Hollow Road, Lake Lyell

Possible camp  
location A



# Pipers Flat Road, Wallerawang

Possible camp  
location B



# Environmental and site assessments

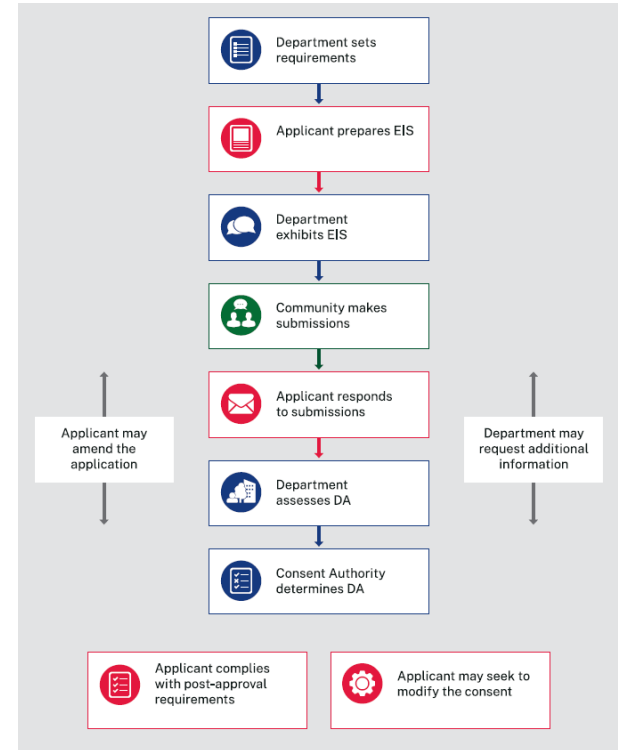
Alex Frolich

Associate Environmental Scientist

EMM

# Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) background

- Required by legislation and relevant guidelines will be followed
- Environmental studies will:
  - Identify environment/characteristics likely to be affected by the project
  - Outline efforts to avoid or mitigate impacts
  - Consider any feasible alternatives
- Community involvement is essential to the process
- Study information will be included in the EIS
- All SSD development applications are on exhibition for at least 28 days



SSD Assessment Process (DPIE, 2022)



# Scope of environmental and technical studies



Planned studies will include:

- Terrestrial Biodiversity
- Aquatic Ecology (Including platypus study)
- Aboriginal Heritage
- Historic Heritage
- Groundwater
- Surface Water
- Landscape and Visual Impact
- Contamination
- Bushfire
- Economics
- Land, Soil and Erosion
- Waste
- Noise and Vibration
- Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas
- Climate Risk
- Traffic and transport
- Social Impact

# Environmental and site assessments

## What we know so far

- Vegetation includes dry woodland and open forest to tall semi-mesic forest (i.e. wetter)
- Flora and fauna surveys are underway and targeting threatened species
- No direct impacts to Marrangaroo National Park are anticipated. Indirect impacts will need to be assessed
- Site investigations and cultural values mapping with registered Aboriginal parties are underway



# Environmental and site assessments

## What we know so far

- Platypus are known to occur in Farmers Creek - the platypus study, including tagging and tracking, has started and is ongoing
- Groundwater monitoring network is being installed to inform understanding of hydrogeological environment and potential impacts
- Site surveys and detailed environmental impact assessments will continue to inform design



# Benefit sharing

Elli Baker

Managing Director

InfraFuture



# 'Do the right thing' Not just words but how we act and behave

## Clean Energy Council Best Practice Charter for renewable Energy Projects

- ① We will engage respectfully with the local community, including Traditional Owners of the land, to seek their views and input before submitting a development application and finalising the design of the project.
- ② We will support the local economy by providing local employment and procurement opportunities.
- ③ We will provide timely information and be accessible and responsive in addressing the local community's feedback and concerns throughout the life of the project.
- ④ We will offer communities the opportunity to share in the benefits of the project, and consult them on the options available, including the relevant governance arrangements.
- ⑤ We will be sensitive to areas of high biodiversity, cultural and landscape value in the design and operation of projects.
- ⑥ We commit to using the project to support educational and tourism opportunities where appropriate.
- ⑦ We will demonstrate responsible land stewardship over the life of the project and welcome opportunities to enhance the ecological, cultural and/or agricultural value of the land.
- ⑧ We will minimise the impacts on highly productive agricultural land and explore opportunities to integrate agricultural production.
- ⑨ During the life of the project, we will recycle waste materials where feasible and commit to responsible decommissioning or refurbishment/repowering of the site at the end of the project's life.
- ⑩ We will consult the community on the potential visual, noise, traffic and other impacts of the project, and on the mitigation options.

⑦ We will offer communities the opportunity to share in the benefits of the project and consult them on the options available

During construction (2025-29)  
the community can benefit from the construction capability and workforce

During operations (2029-onwards)  
the community can benefit from the ongoing economic prosperity the project brings to the region

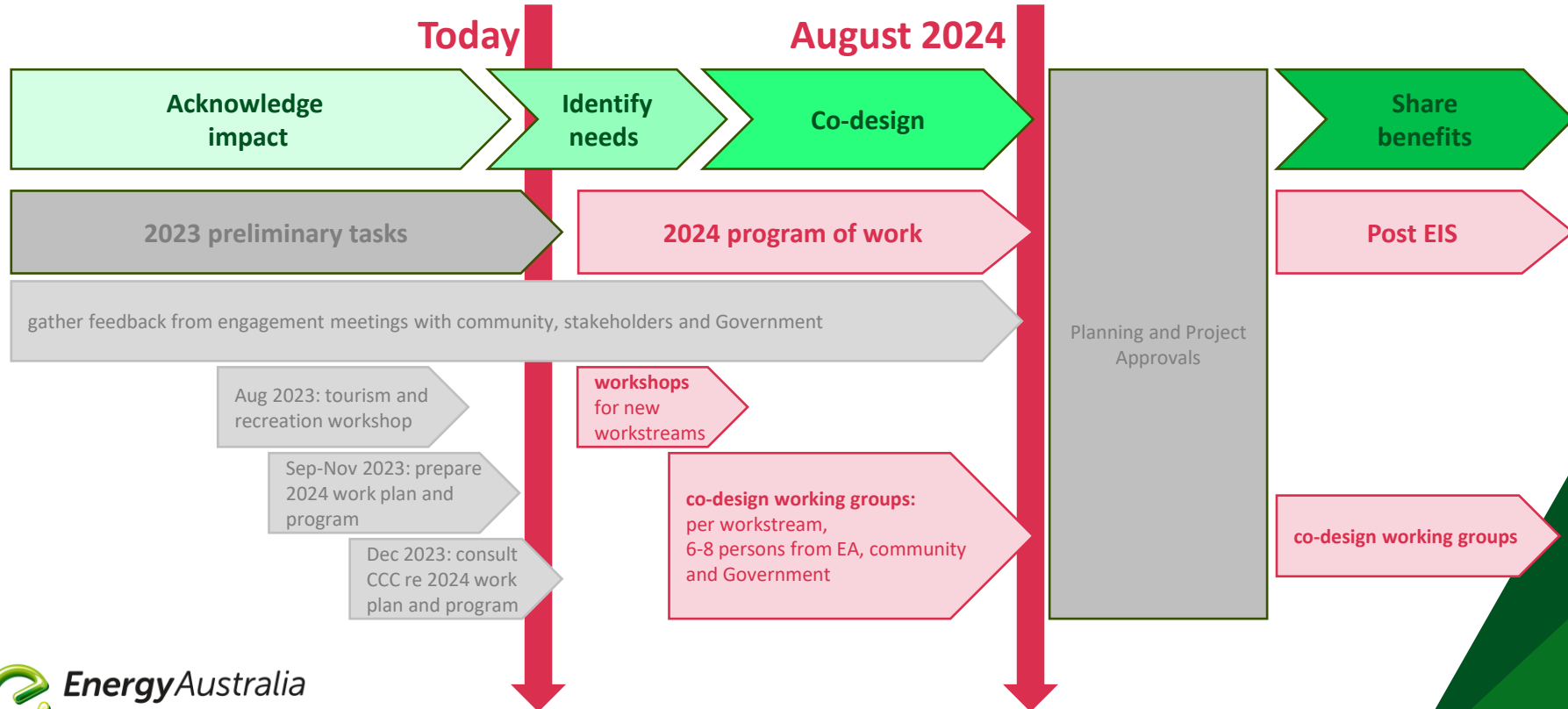
# Co-designing benefits sharing with the community will achieve the best outcomes

Best practice principles:

- The appropriate dollar value of investment is that which achieves the shared benefit objective and is a result of consultation, and not an input to, or valued ahead of consultation
- The benefits shared should be proportionate to the impacts of the project on the community
- The best outcomes will be achieved through co-designing the program with community



# Proposed work plan and program



# 3 workstreams to co-design outcomes

Tourism, Recreation, Heritage and Environment	First Nations and Cultural Heritage	Skills, Training, Services and Infrastructure
✓ benefit the local community ✓ contribute to long term prosperity		
✓ prioritise lifestyle infrastructure ✓ develop a visitor economy ✓ parks and recreation infrastructure ✓ enhance environment and habitat ✓ arts and cultural programs	✓ employment ✓ caring for Country ✓ cultural revitalisation	✓ upskill and educate ✓ create and adapt labour ✓ health services ✓ housing ✓ attract industry ✓ public infrastructure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workshop completed in August 2023</li> <li>Co-design working group to commence 1Q 2024</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ecosystem mapping to be completed</li> <li>Initial workshop to be scheduled for February 2024</li> <li>Co-design working group to commence before 2Q 2024</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engagement with CWO REZ to be completed for skills and training</li> <li>Initial workshop to be scheduled for February 2024</li> <li>Co-design working group to commence before 2Q 2024</li> </ul>

# Our next steps

- Include your feedback in our work plan
- Set Terms of Reference for the co-design process
- Set dates for 2024 meetings (workshops and co-design working groups)
- Continue to update the CCC on progress



Questions?

# Thank you



**EnergyAustralia**  
LIGHT THE WAY