EnergyAustralia Lithgow Region Community Consultative Committee
Meeting Minutes – 13 February 2024

Member attendees:

- Julie Favell
- Jim (Cricket) Whitty
- Rob White
- Jamie Giokaris
- Aunty Helen Riley
- Brian Fitzgerald (nominated alternate for Alex Preema)
- Shaun Elwood – Lithgow City Council (nominated alternate for Cr Maree Statham)
- Steve Marshall – EnergyAustralia
- Mick Hanly – EnergyAustralia
- Ben Eastwood – EnergyAustralia

Also present.

- Lauren Stevens – Lithgow City Council support

Apologies:

- Cr Maree Statham
- Rob Cluff
- Alex Preema

Presenters

- Ben McIver – EnergyAustralia
- Michael de Vink – EnergyAustralia
- Justin Courmadias – EnergyAustralia
- Robert Setter – EnergyAustralia
- Jane Keeble – EnergyAustralia (attended Mt Piper BESS topic only)
- Andries van der Merwe – Aurecon (attended Mt Piper BESS topic only)
- Claire Whiteway – Aurecon (attended Mt Piper BESS topic only)

Chair:

- Brendan Blakeley

Notetaker:

- Elizabeth Moorhead

Item	Discussion Point
1	**Welcome and introductions** • The meeting began at 5:05pm • The Chair welcomed all members • The Chair acknowledged Country • The Chair asked for declarations of interest: - The Chair noted he chaired a similar group for EnergyAustralia at Tallawarra Power Station

Item	Discussion Point
	- The Chair declared payment received from EnergyAustralia for role as independent chair of this CCC - No other interests were declared. **Action:** 1.The Chair to provide hard-copy minutes of previous meeting at CCC meetings
2	**Minutes and actions from the previous meeting** <u>EnergyAustralia to share pictures of salt from the dehydrated brine.</u> *See slide 6* EnergyAustralia noted that some plant species were able to grow in the high salt environment. *A CCC member asked if the plants had been identified.* EnergyAustralia noted they hadn't identified the plants. **Action:** 2.EnergyAustralia to obtain photographs to assist with identifying grass growing on and around salt mounds. <u>EnergyAustralia to share pictures of the NuRock plant and extend an invitation to NuRock to present to the CCC.</u> *See slide 7* Update on NuRock presenting to the CCC: - It is not considered appropriate for NuRock to present to the CCC; they hold a lease on EnergyAustralia land but are a separate entity. Key points of discussion: - NuRock's start date is imminent, as the majority of the plant has been built - Forecast for 200,000-250,000t of ash to be used in the first year <u>EnergyAustralia to provide calculations of area around Mt Piper and the ash repositories owned by EnergyAustralia (per image shared at CCC meeting 5 December)</u> *See slide 8* Calculations: - Mt Piper Power Station and Ash Repositories area = ~850 Ha - Lake Lyell = ~1,012 Ha Note: The Mount Piper power station and curtilage accounts for less than half of the 850 Ha area. <u>EnergyAustralia to show a sample of the capping material used to cover the Brine Conditioned Fly Ash</u>

Item	Discussion Point

The CCC was shown a sample of capping and lining materials, including materials engineered to support effective drainage.

EnergyAustralia noted the new area of the repository that is receiving brine conditioned ash is lined and will also be eventually capped. The older areas of the repository will be capped to stop water entering the ash repository and then leaching out.

Question on notice
See slide 24
Could EnergyAustralia/MPPS provide details if the Reverse Osmosis (RO) plant is operational, and please advise where salt is removed to?

The RO plant is in operation.

The solid mixed salts and lime salts (solid salts) from the Springvale Water Treatment Plant are approved for disposal to the Mt Piper Ash Repository (MPAR) and Lamberts North Ash Repository (LNAR). Solid salts have been stored on MPAR while further analysis and detailed design work is completed prior to the co-disposal of solid salt and ash on the lined areas of the LNAR. A risk was identified regarding the structural integrity of the LNAR if solid salts were deposited directly into the area. Engineering consultants, GHD, have been engaged to assist in guaranteeing a suitably engineered and stable repository is designed. Some of the solid salts from MPAR will be relocated to the LNAR.

CCC Member discussion:

EnergyAustralia clarified that Springvale does not provide water if/when the WTP is not operating. Springvale stops pumping if the water treatment plant stops operating.

A member noted that untreated water has entered Thompsons Creek in November 2022 and November 2023.

Energy Australia clarified that Mt Piper does have water licences to discharge into Thompsons Creek dam, administered under the Water Management Act 2000.

EnergyAustralia noted that Lake Wallace was now under management by Bettergrow, and EnergyAustralia no longer has responsibility for Lake Wallace. They also noted that there were no discharges made into Lake Wallace from the Mount Piper site apart from riparian flows from Thompson Creek Reservoir.

A CCC member noted that the NSW Water website shows that under the water agreement involving Lake Lyell, Thompson Creek Dam and

Item	Discussion Point
	Lake Wallace, EnergyAustralia is still named as the licensee for Lake Wallace. If this is not the case, then the information should be updated. Energy Australia responded it had not seen the information on the NSW Water website and that water policy is a complex area with several licences/approvals involved for different water storages and uses including: • Water access licence – entitles the licensee to hold a volume of water • Discharge licences – to put water into a system subject to conditions • Works approval – authorises works and maintenance for dam infrastructure and pipelines • Extraction licenses which allow the licensee to take water subject to certain conditions. **Actions:** 3.EnergyAustralia to investigate how the water Agreement and licenses are described on the Water NSW website. Chairs addenda: 4. Could the member who raised this matter please provide via the chair with a reference or link to the web page that was cited? Details were provided as follows: https://www.energyaustralia.com.au/sites/default/files/2018-07/EnergyAustralia%20Final%20Work%20Approvalv19%2020022014.pdf Licence Holder: EnergyAustralia NSW Pty Ltd Licence Number: 27428 Approval: Water Supply Works and Water Use Approval Summary 5.For ease of understanding at the next meeting could EnergyAustralia supply a few slides that diagrammatically show water flows, use and management across the station's various assets and water storages.
3	**Mt Piper and Pine Dale Update** *Mt Piper* Site safety *See slides 12-13* - One incident resulting in restrictive duties - Two hazards have been identified – reflecting 2024 focus on hazard identification People

Item	Discussion Point

See slide 20

- Two Trainee Administration Officers (January and April start dates for two-year placement)
- Quality Assurance Officer in Maintenance team (January start date)
- Mechanical Fitter in Mills workshop (February start date)
- Across FY 22/23 there were 47 new staff covering retirements and new positions

Operation in the market

Slide redacted as commercial in confidence. High level discussion points only are recorded:

- The market demand pattern shows the importance of being able to store the excess energy being generated in the middle of the day. This is when rooftop solar is making the biggest contribution.
- The station has been operating reliably except for an outage in one turbine in late December.
- The water treatment facility has been operating reliably at capacity of 36-42 megalitres.

A CCC member asked where coal was currently coming from.

Energy Australia noted coal was being sourced from Castlereagh, Invincible and Cullen. EnergyAustralia has also received a small amount of good quality coal from CeeDive which has been extracted as part of the foundation works required for a new development.

6. For clarification at next meeting

Community

See slide 22

Community grants:

- Round 1 opened 1 March 2024. A total of $30,000 available in Round 1
- $5,000 granted to Nanna's Touch Community Connections Soup Kitchen

Events supported:

- Rydal Show
- Portland Art Show (upcoming)
- Lithgow Show (upcoming)

Pine Dale Mine and Enhance Place

See slide 26

Key points of the presentation:

Item	Discussion Point

- 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 has been submitted to the EPA as required
- The 2023 Annual Review is being finalised and will be made available when published
- Continue care and maintenance
- Future mining activities continue to be evaluated

Actions:

7.EnergyAustralia to confirm how long they've been putting ash into Lamberts North.

8. EnergyAustralia to provide a clearer map of the ash dams (ref. slide 28)

Lamberts North Ash Placement Project

Brine Conditioned Fly-Ash Placement

See slide 28

Key points of the presentation Brine Conditioned Fly-Ash storage (BCA) continuing in LNAR Stage 1

- Construction of LNAR Stage 2 Fly-ash repository
  - Commenced Jan 2024
  - Phase 1 completion planned for 30 April 2024
  - Phase 2 completion expected 22 November 2024
  - Nil complaints
  - Nil incidents
- Water Conditioned Fly-Ash (WCA) and Furnace Bottom Ash (FBA) utilised in Stage 2 Subgrade Construction
- GHD Associates are designing the "Whole of Life Plan" for Ash Repository and the MPAR Capping Strategy
- Significant work underway on the detailed design for Stage 2 (the southern section) including the Water Balance Assessment that has been submitted.

CCC Member discussion

A member sought and received confirmation that no brine conditioned ash has been or would be placed without a liner at Lamberts North.

EnergyAustralia confirmed that brine conditioned ash going into Lamberts North will be placed in areas with liners.

A member sought and received confirmation that untreated Springvale Mine water is not used for water conditioned ash.

Item	Discussion Point
	EnergyAustralia noted that in addition to the WTP, Mt Piper has access to water from a range of sources to dampen/condition the ash. Water sources included: - Rain run-off in settling ponds - Fish River - Lake Lyell - Water in smaller dams/ponds on site.
4	**Lake Lyell Pumped Hydro Study** *Questions on notice* *Refer slide 30-39* Q1. Could you please advise the current total cost estimated for planning and construction of the Lake Lyell Pumped Hydro should it proceed to completion? The total capital cost for the Lake Lyell PHES Project is a work in progress as the development proceeds and won't be finalised until the project is both approved and has reached an FID. This work in progress is commercial in confidence. However, as an indication we would direct you to the most recent public document which addresses the capex costs of new build pumped hydro expressed as $/kW. Please see the downloadable report and appendix tables "CSIRO – GenCost 2023-24 Consultation Draft Report dated 20/12/23" on the following web site: https://aemo.com.au/consultations/current-and-closed-consultations/2024-forecasting-assumptions-update-consultation *CCC Member discussion* *A CCC member noted that 3 years ago an ARUP report stated the development cost was in the order of $1 Billion.* EnergyAustralia's Project Director noted that was a different concept, and the company would not be talking about costs prior to detailed designs being finalised and other development and investment decisions being made. *A CCC member sought clarification about the average and maximum capacity of the Concept Design.* EnergyAustralia explained that the two proposed pump turbine units have a peak generating capacity of approximately 200MW each giving an overall peak of 400MW generating capacity. If the upper reservoir is full, 400MW is the capacity of the current Concept Design. If the water level drops, the flow of the water has to be increased. More detailed hydraulic design is underway, but the project as currently proposed will have a maximum capacity for 400MW. This will look like generating

Item	Discussion Point
	335MW for 8 hours from beginning to end, but the equipment can generate up to 400MW peak, subject to water levels. It is likely it could only work at this peak rate for 1-2 hours of an eight hour cycle. The publicly available project sheet included maximum flow at 400MW (Note: 2 figures shown are maximum flow and flow rate over 8 hours). *A CCC member requested clarification about how the different flow rates would cause water level change, and how the level change would look to the naked eye observing from beside the lake.* The project Director explained that rough calculations suggest at 400MW maximum rate of flow across the proposed two smaller capacity turbines/units, and at a range of 2.2-2.30 metres across the lake the water level would rise at approximately 6mm/minute. He noted that this level of detail will feature in the final EIS and is currently being refined. The publicly available datasheet includes the bookends for the calculations – minimum operating level and maximum fill level are the parameters. Q2. We would appreciate an aerial plan view of the upper reservoir and reservoir cross sections be made available to the CCC to further analyse the extent and impact of the upper reservoir. To enable a more detailed understanding of the upper reservoir as included in the concept design EnergyAustralia posted selected drawings on the project website ahead of the 13 February meeting, however the quality of the images was compromised when uploaded to the site and will be re-posted at a higher resolution ASAP. The concept design general arrangement and elevation drawings will be able to be downloaded from the project website: www.lakelyellpumpedhydro.com.au Q3. Could you please supply images from an aerial perspective that would clearly identify the planned nature of remodelling of the Farmers Creek Arm of Lake Lyell. This would incorporate a considerable distance from where construction starts at the Farmers Creek entry to Lake Lyell down to the end of the proposed construction / access area approaching the Coxs River convergence. The overall project layout of the concept design in Farmers Creek Arm is shown on drawing LL-MM-30210- CLD010-0001.A.IFR Concept Plan and LL-MM-30210-CLH060-0301.A.IFR Lower Inlet Outlet Plan. The layout as included among the concept design drawings is soon to be posted on the project website. Please note that these drawings are “Concept Only” and are subject to change as design develops. As a general delineation of where the overall construction site will end, we

Item	Discussion Point
	anticipate that it will be in close proximity to the existing 330kV transmission line passing over the lake in Farmers Creek Arm. *CCC Member discussion* *A CCC member sought and received clarification that Farmers Creek is not required for storage, in relation to the images showing the remodelling of the Farmers Creek Arm leading into Lake Lyell.* Q4. Could the environmental assessment team for the feasibility study for Lake Lyell Pumped Hydro project, provide nest box placements in the application area to have a more comprehensive study given a limited number of hours/days with current assessment methods. [written response provided by EMM] The environmental assessment team is currently studying the biodiversity of the area in line with the Biodiversity Assessment Method (BAM) and relevant survey guidelines for threatened species. This includes a mixture of onsite survey effort by ecologists (daytime and night time surveys), remote baited cameras (to identify fauna), owl callbacks, and supplementary techniques such as use of koala detection dogs. Where there is limited guidance on survey methods for specific threatened species at the Lake Lyell site, we have been consulting with the Biodiversity, Conservation and Science Directorate of the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, and their species officers, to obtain further guidance. There are many natural hollows across the site and identifying and recording these hollow-bearing trees is part of the biodiversity study currently underway, as they form habitat for threatened species on the site such as Gang-gang Cockatoo. The placement of artificial nest boxes within the application area would not form part of the survey method however would be considered as part of management recommendations to offset impacts to existing hollows. The placement of any nest boxes would depend on the final location of the impact area, which is still being determined as part of the design and EIS process. *CCC Member discussion* *A CCC member suggested the environmental assessment use a methodology that includes 24/7 cameras for monitoring wildlife, noting that trip cameras proposed in the methodology were effective but not as the only method of video monitoring.*

Item	Discussion Point
	They also sought and received confirmation that no koalas were located by the koala team; and that the search dogs were unable to locate old or new scat. <u>Q5. Community Consultation (a general question asking about the community consultation approach and seeking an opportunity to provide feedback)</u> EnergyAustralia continues to engage extensively across the Lithgow LGA and will continue through the project lifecycle. To ensure best practice our engagement framework covers State Significant and Social Impact Assessment guidelines, IAP2 Core Values and Public Participation spectrum, Clean Energy Council best practice. Methods used are: - Community Information sessions held in various public locations across Lithgow including shopping centres, - Residential door knocks, letter box drops, E news, presentations and briefings to community groups and organisations, Lithgow CCC, local media, site visits, webinar, workshops, individual near neighbour discussions, updates to Council and stalls at local events. Some resources used are: fact sheets, project newsletters, Q& A, maps and videos. In addition, the project has a specific Website, Facebook page and the new Information Hub in Main Street, Lithgow, along with community email and phone contacts. <u>*CCC Member discussion*</u> *A CCC member stated that they have not heard any positive comments about community consultation from community members.* *The member sought and received confirmation that community consultation is a requirement of the EIS and that EnergyAustralia regards the EIS requirements as the bare minimum and seeks to go above and beyond the EIS requirements.* *The Member shared the following concerns about the community consultation to date:* - *Perceived inability of community engagement staff outside of technical members of the project team to be able to provide detailed answers to standard, reasonable and straightforward questions about the project.* - *Perception community engagement staff are inadequately trained on the issues, meaning representatives cannot discuss the information on the materials/images/diagrams.* - *Member reported this was especially frustrating for people seeking technically specific information. The member suggested that an engineer be available for technical information.*

Item	Discussion Point

Energy Australia confirmed that engineers are available for community consultation but not for all the hours HQ is open.

- *The member sought clarification on the process for getting a response to more technical engineering questions about the project.*

EnergyAustralia explained that the community consultation practitioner forwards the question to an EnergyAustralia engineer, who provides a response as soon as reasonably possible. This response is made available for future face-to-face consultation. EnergyAustralia confirmed there is not a set requirement for how quickly the information is turned around.

- *The member reiterated that in the past EnergyAustralia representatives have not followed-up when additional information is requested.*
- *The CCC member noted difficulty accessing face-to-face engagement, with* EnergyAustralia *representatives proposing visits when community are reasonably at work and visiting hours are difficult for working residents, and similarly EnergyAustralia representatives have not shown up for scheduled community meetings.*
- *Biased or unbalanced capturing of concerns and feedback, with suggestion that representatives give more attention to positive responses.*

The EnergyAustralia project director noted the engagement team has a system in place to capture information on each interaction including topics discussed/issues raised, and sentiment. Currently there was sentiment for and against with around 12% of those engaged strongly opposed to the project with a large amount of people being neutral or just seeking more information.

- *The CCC member stated he felt that EnergyAustralia was underestimating the level of community sentiment against the project.*

The chair noted that in his experience of major projects, consultation is not a straw poll about opposition or support but ensuring there is an opportunity to understand the material issues or concerns stakeholders may have about a project. In assessing the EIS the Department will not be looking at sentiment but the adequacy of the studies, how the material issues raised by community and stakeholders have been taken into account in the project design and how the proposal conforms with a range of planning and environmental requirements.

Item	Discussion Point

- *The CCC Member asked how the community could identify and raise a material issue if they do not have access to, or comprehensive knowledge of, the details of the proposal.*

The chair stated the EIS is a process for identifying and exploring the impacts and opportunities, and refining details in response to findings of studies. The tradeoff for pre-lodgment community consultation is that the project design is a work in progress and some of this detail may not be known until the later stages of preparing the EIS. The point of definitive information on the project being fully available is when the EIS is placed on exhibition.

- EnergyAustralia noted that there is an exceptional amount of real data available online – the only data not available online is a work in progress or commercial in confidence. This amount of information was much more than is typically available while an EIS is being prepared.

- *Two other CCC members noted that while detail is good for those who are technically minded, information needs to be provided at a range of levels. Many people in the community want to see simple, factual information about how the proposed project will work and what the main impacts might be and not get lost in the detail.*

<u>Visual Impact Analysis</u>
The chair asked members to identify any public vantage points for inclusion in the visual impact assessment. He noted that private dwellings or sensitive receivers for view analysis would be covered by the Visual Impact Assessment Guidelines. Suggestions from members included:

- AirBNB operators (private)
- Eagleview resort (private)
- Seclusions (private)
- Fire Station at the top of the hill
- Martins Road, at the point where you come down around the lip and back up to Seclusions
- At the lake edge on Lake Lyell
- Magpie Hollow
- From a boat on Lake Lyell – anywhere past the first bend looking towards the mountain

In discussion a CCC member stated that visual impacts were not just in the immediate vicinity of the lake. Given the scale and prominence of the project, changes to the mountain may be visible up to 30km away.

The chair noted CCC members can submit suggestions for the minutes in the days following the meeting, and that this is not the final opportunity to make suggestions.

Item	Discussion Point
	Project fly-through video Meeting watched the fly-through video that has been produced as a CGI 3D video animation of above and below ground aspects of the proposal. Available online here: https://www.energyaustralia.com.au/about-us/what-we-do/new-energy-projects/lake-lyell-pumped-hydro *CCC Member discussion* *Member asked whether the wall would blend into the environment?* EnergyAustralia confirmed the wall will feature locally sourced rock; when it's freshly cut it is a light yellow coloured stone and will be noticeable compared to aged stone. We are looking at ways to potentially encourage endemic lichen/mosses to grow. In some locations, there could be limited grass plantings. With time, it'll look like aged rock but this will take a number of years. **Actions:** 9.EnergyAustralia to email CCC members when the discussed select concept design drawings, including high resolution aerials, are available online. 10.EnergyAustralia to review internal consultation database and ensure responses have been shared with community members where project enquiries have been logged. 11. EnergyAustralia to follow-up and schedule meeting between CCC Member (Rob White) and EA Strategy Director
5 Presented via MS Teams	**Mt Piper Battery EIS: presentation and discussion** Justin Courmadias – Project Director for Mt Piper Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) *Project overview* See slide 41 The Mt Piper BESS project is one of EnergyAustralia's projects helping it transition to a low emissions portfolio. The project has a proposed capacity of up to 500MW and a duration of up to 4 hours (2000MWh in total). This is the 'envelope' for the project; however, the project may be developed in stages.

Item	Discussion Point
	For the EIS, the 'worst case' total project footprint (including various substation network connections) has been considered. There are several options for network connections. Underground and overhead connections to the network are being considered, noting that underground is the preferred option at this time. Planning pathway: State Significant Development, meaning it requires an EIS. The project team has been going through the EIS preparation process including consultation. The group was shown an aerial project render indicating a proposed 18Ha for battery storage. See slides 42-43 *EIS Update* See slide 45 Intention is to lodge the EIS mid-2024; at this time the EIS will be placed on public exhibition for 28 days. Community and stakeholder consultation is underway and will continue. All going to plan, it is anticipated that DPHI will determine the application early 2025. <u>Technical studies underway:</u> See slides 46 – 54 - Noise and vibration (studies found low impact from this project, with nearest residents ~1.6km away from the project site) - Traffic and transport (studies found no road upgrades required; minimal increase in traffic at peak times) - Visual amenity (studies found low impact from this project, with nearest residents ~1.6km away from the project site - Socio-economic (studies found low community impacts because the project does not require land acquisitions and low impact on community infrastructure. Studies show low impact on local character. Economic opportunity for local talent; project to employ ~177 people during construction) - Bushfire Assessment: satisfies requirements for planning for bushfire protection according to NSW Rural Fire Service and will feature an Asset Protection Zone (APZ), management plans and access roads in place - Hazards and risks (studies found site has been disturbed, cleared and leveled prior to this project; cultural heritage impact is extremely low) - Biodiversity (studies found vegetation on site is regrowth from clearing. Endemic gum species were identified, 23 black gums and 1 stringy bark. 15 black gums and 1 stringy bark will be retained. Non-local species identified also. No significant habitat identified.)

Item	Discussion Point

- Cultural heritage (studies found no significant cultural heritage impacts)
- Surface water and groundwater (no major risks identified)
- Soils and geology (studies identified low risk for erosion)
- Contamination and waste (studies found no significant risks)
- Land use planning (no conflicts identified)
- Electromagnetic Fields (EMF)
- Hazards and risks (studies found project will not constitute a potentially hazardous facility (subject to implementation of recommended risk mitgations, technical and safety measures)

Construction approach

See slide 57

Construction is anticipated to take approximately 18-24 months and will involve several phases. Noise will be greatest during construction rather than operation. All construction will occur between 7am – 10pm on weekdays, and 7am – 6pm on weekends to avoid any potential sleep disturbances. Traffic, noise and visual impacts will all be minimal during this period at nearby residences (over 1.6km away).

CCC Member discussion

A CCC member sought further information about the project timeline. EnergyAustralia noted the 18-24 month projection for construction assumes delivering the project in a single stage, but it may call for a 2-stage approach. The start date is subject to matters including approvals, Government support, contractors ability to supply equipment and materials and final investment decision.

A CCC member sought information about where the power to recharge the batteries would come from.

EnergyAustralia explained that, commonly, during the day, when there is high energy generation and low demand, the batteries will charge, and will discharge during times of high demand / low supply. NSW needs multiple gigawatts of storage; this is contributing to a state-wide network, not a local network. The batteries will receive energy from the grid. This means that they may not be exclusively fed by renewable energy but rather they will be recharged when there is cheaper or excess energy in the system. This is usually when there is a lot of renewable energy in the grid and that over time as coal is progressively taken out of the system energy will increasingly come from renewable energy sources.

When we're assessing a battery project, we analyse load flow, and congestion – one of the advantages of this site is the proximity to network connections.

Item	Discussion Point
	A CCC member sought and received confirmation that the public, and the CCC specifically, would be notified when the public exhibition period for the EIS commences. *Operations and decommissioning* See slide 57 - Anticipated lifespan of 20 – 25 years - BESS will be available to operate 24 hours, 365 days per year - Managed and monitored remotely except for infrequent site maintenance - At the end of its life, decommissioning will likely involve removal and recycling or repurposing (where possible) of above ground components - Land rehabilitation will be undertaken to meet relevant approval requirements *CCC Member discussion* *A CCC member sought and received information about fire suppression systems, noting international examples of saltwater being used to protect batteries from fire.* EnergyAustralia noted the proposed layout of the BESS features separation between the units; fire suppression requires separation/buffers between the units. Additionally, the APZ works two ways – to protect the facility from approaching fire, and to protect surrounding area from a fire at the BESS. Advanced fire detection systems will also be in place. *A CCC member asked about long term job opportunities generated by the BESS during operation.* EnergyAustralia responded that the project would provide only a small number of ongoing jobs (<10) - noting more detail will be in the EIS. *A CCC member noted their community group supports batteries over pumped hydro as a storage solution and agrees this is the right location for the facility, given the minimal impacts identified in the EIS studies.*
6	**General discussion** The chair proposed next meeting be held in 3 months, noting the agreed meeting schedule of 4 meetings/year. A date in May/June will be advised, depending on study completion dates. The third meeting in 2024 will fall in or around August, and then another meeting before the end of the year.

Item	Discussion Point
	A CCC member raised concern about borehole drilling in late 2023 and stated that a complaint had been placed with the EPA, including photos and videos. At the time of the meeting, EnergyAustralia had not been contacted by EPA to provide a response. *A CCC member requested a stronger response from EnergyAustralia Corporate in relation to the long-term position on Waste-to-Energy projects at Mt Piper.* The Chair confirmed he had spoken with EnergyAustralia and they would not be expanding on the company response already provided as EnergyAustralia noted that that is the company position and there are no waste-to-energy projects in the current Strategic Plan. *The CCC member expressed dissatisfaction with this outcome, and noted they would make a complaint directly to the board regarding the quality of the response.* *A CCC member sought clarification about the timing to close Mt Piper.* EnergyAustralia confirmed they have a commitment from their parent company that they'll be out of coal by 2040; Mt Piper has an important interim role in firming up renewables during the transition, but being out of coal by 2040 remains the company's commitment. The chair noted that general protocol for minutes requires minutes go to all members of the group at once. Given the complexity of projects under discussion he proposed sharing minutes with EnergyAustralia before circulating with all members, for review of technical details *only.* Members agreed that EnergyAustralia could review the minutes for technical accuracy only, before circulating with the whole CCC. Members were made aware this may add approximately two days to the turnaround of the minutes.
7	**Meeting close** • 7:15pm • Next Meeting likely to be in May /June 2024 (date to be advised)

EnergyAustralia Lithgow Region

Community Consultative Committee

13 February 2024

Steve Marshall – Head of Mt Piper

EnergyAustralia
LIGHT THE WAY

Agenda

1. Welcome – Acknowledgement of Country – Declarations of Interest
2. Minutes and Actions
3. Mt Piper and Pine Dale Update
4. Lake Lyell Pumped Hydro Study
5. Mt Piper Battery EIS
6. General Discussion
7. Meeting close

EnergyAustralia
LIGHT THE WAY

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

Declarations of Interest

Minutes and Actions

Actions from Previous Meeting

EnergyAustralia to share pictures of salt from the dehydrated brine at the next meeting

EnergyAustralia
LIGHT THE WAY

Actions from Previous Meeting

EnergyAustralia to share pictures of the NuRock plant at the next meeting, subject to approvals

EnergyAustralia to extend an invitation to NuRock to present to the CCC

- It is not considered appropriate for NuRock to present to the CCC. They hold a lease on EA land, but are their own entity.

EnergyAustralia
LIGHT THE WAY

Actions from Previous Meeting

In relation to the aerial plans showing land around Mt Piper and the Ash Repositories owned by EA (provided at last meeting) please provide a calculation of areas

- Mt Piper Power Station and Ash Repositories area = ~850 Ha,
- Lake Lyell = ~1,012 Ha

EnergyAustralia
LIGHT THE WAY

Actions from Previous Meeting

EnergyAustralia to bring sample of the capping material used to cover the Brine Conditioned Fly Ash to future meeting

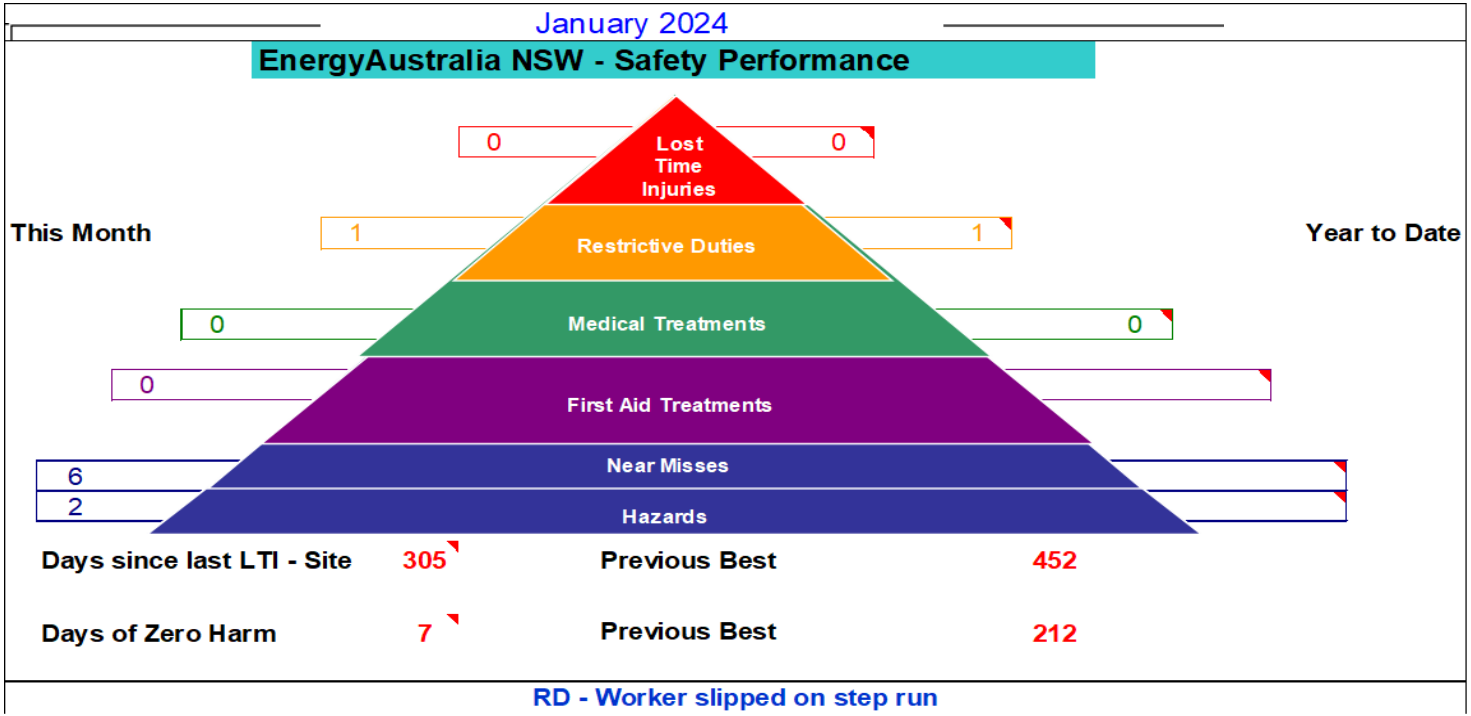
- The design has not been finalised, however a sample of the type of capping which is proposed was shown to the group.

EnergyAustralia
LIGHT THE WAY

Mt Piper Update

Site Safety

Site Safety – January 2024



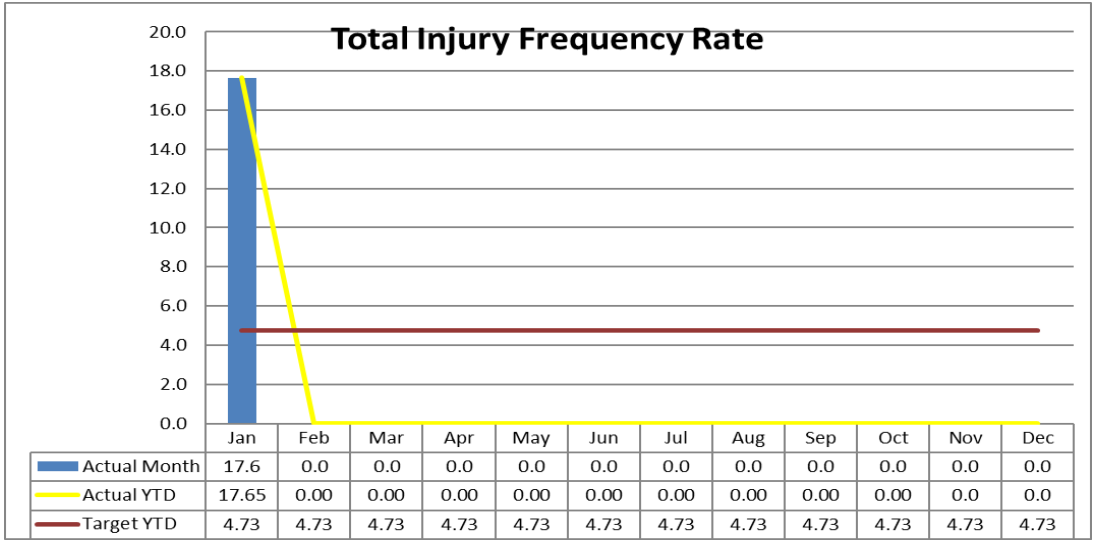
EnergyAustralia
LIGHT THE WAY

Site Safety January 2024

YTD – TIFR (As of January 2024)

Actual = 17.6

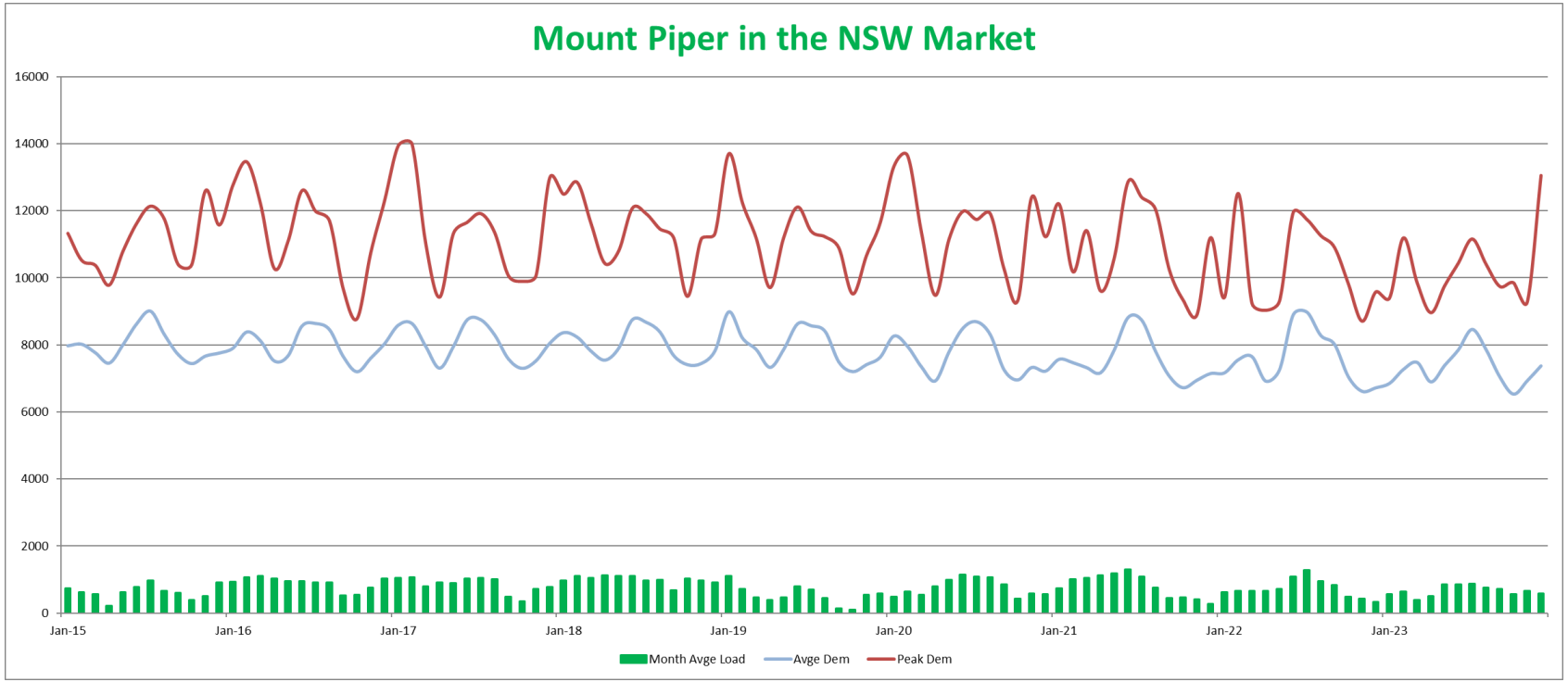
Target = 4.73



	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Actual Month	17.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Actual YTD	17.65	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.0	0.0
Target YTD	4.73	4.73	4.73	4.73	4.73	4.73	4.73	4.73	4.73	4.73	4.73	4.73

Market Update

Operation in the Market



Operations (Site) Update

Operations update – January

Redacted

Operations update – January

Redacted

Operations update – January

Redacted

People

- Trainee Administration Officer x 2 (1 commenced January, the second will commence April) – 2 year placement.
- Quality Assurance Officer commenced in January 2024 in the Maintenance Team
- Mechanical Fitter commenced in February 2024 in the Mills workshop

Community Update

Community

- Round 1 Community Grants opens 1 March 2024. Total of $30,000 available for this round.

Supported Events:

- Rydal Show

Upcoming Events:

- Portland Art Show
- Lithgow Show

Community

Nanna's Touch Community Connections Lithgow Inc Soup Kitchen

- Commenced August 2023
- 3 course sit down meal, home deliveries, takeaways and emergency relief vouchers
- Initially expected to distribute 20 x 2 course meals per week, currently averaging 60 x 3 course meals and hampers per week (to December 2023).
- Also provides a space for people to connect and create new networks with soft service referrals.

Questions on Notice – non project related (project questions are posted under the project)

- ***Could EA/MPPS provide details if the RO plant is operational? As at the last MPPS CCC meeting, I asked what was the white residual on the ash repository. Response was it was salt, but will be removed (correct me if I am wrong). But could EA/MPPS advise: Remove to where?***

The Reverse Osmosis (RO) Plant at Mt Piper Power Station and the RO plant at the Springvale Water Treatment Plant are operation. The solid mixed salts and lime salts (solid salts) from the Springvale Water Treatment Plant, are approved for disposal to the Mt Piper Ash Repository (MPAR) and Lamberts North Ash Repository (LNAR). Solid salts have been stored on MPAR while further analysis and detailed design work is completed prior to the co-disposal of solid salt and ash on the lined areas of the LNAR. A risk was identified in regard to the structural integrity of the LNAR if solid salts were deposited directly into the area. Engineering consultants, GHD have been engaged to assist in guaranteeing a suitably engineered and stable repository is designed. Some of the solid salts from MPAR will be relocated to the LNAR.

Pine Dale Mine and Enhance Place

Pine Dale Mine and Enhance Place

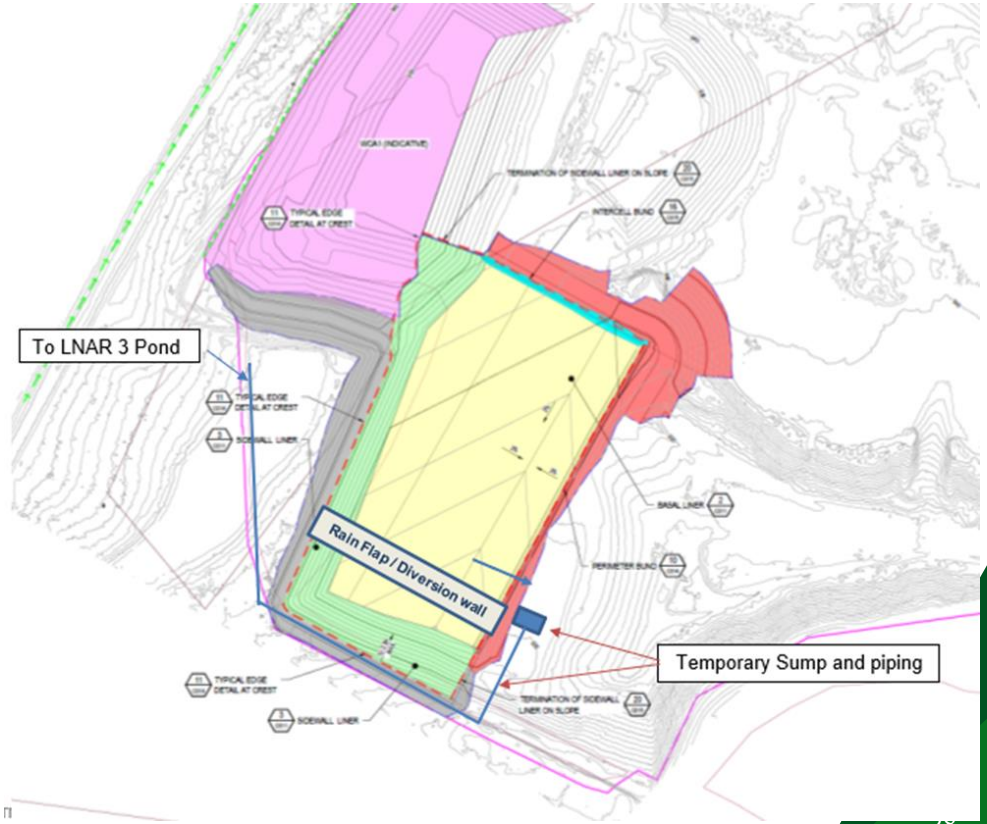
- No non compliances at the Pine Dale Mine
- No community complaints recorded for Pine Dale Mine
- Monthly reports as required under the Pine Dale EPL have been uploaded onto the EnergyAustralia website
- The Annual Return has been submitted to the EPA as required
- The 2023 Annual Review is being finalised and will be made available when published
- Continues in care and maintenance
- Future mining activities continue to be evaluated

Lamberts North Ash Placement Project

Lamberts North Ash Placement Project

Brine Conditioned Fly-Ash Placement

- Brine Conditioned Fly-Ash storage (BCA) continuing in LNAR Stage 1
- Construction of LNAR Stage 2 Fly-ash repository
  - Commenced Jan 2024
  - Phase 1 completion planned for 30.04.24
  - Phase 2 completion expected 22.11.24
  - Nil complaints
  - Nil incidents
- Water Conditioned Fly-Ash (WCA) and Furnace Bottom Ash (FBA) utilised in Stage 2 Subgrade Construction
- GHD Associates designing
  - "Whole of Life Plan" for Ash Repository
  - MPAR Capping Strategy



Lake Lyell Pumped Hydro Study

Questions on Notice

Q1. Could you please advise the current total cost estimated for planning and construction of the Lake Lyell Pumped Hydro should it proceed to completion?

A1. The total capital cost for the Lake Lyell PHES Project is a work in progress as the development proceeds and won't be finalised until the project is both approved and has reached an FID. This work in progress is commercial and in confidence. However, as an indication we would direct you to the most recent public document which addresses the capex costs of new build pumped hydro expressed as $/kW. Please see the downloadable report and appendix tables "CSIRO – GenCost 2023-24 Consultation Draft Report dated 20/12/23" on the following web site: https://aemo.com.au/consultations/current-and-closed-consultations/2024-forecasting-assumptions-update-consultation

Questions on Notice

Q2. We would appreciate if an aerial plan view of the upper reservoir and reservoir cross sections could be made available to

- ***CLC Group to further analyse the extent and impact of the upper reservoir.***

A2. To enable a more detailed understanding of the upper reservoir as included in the concept design we will post selected drawings on the project website early next week. The concept design general arrangement and elevation drawings will be able to be downloaded from the project website: www.lakelyellpumpedhydro.com.au We will email you when these materials are live on the website so you know when to look for them. We will also be sharing an animated "fly-through of the project at the February CCC and we will make that publicly available the following day. This should provide the CLC Group and Lithgow community with a much better visualisation of the project.

Questions on Notice

Q3. Could you please supply images from an aerial perspective that would clearly identify the planned nature of remodelling of the Farmers Creek Arm of Lake Lyell. This would incorporate a considerable distance from where construction starts at the Farmers Creek entry to Lake Lyell down to the end of the proposed construction / access area approaching the Coxs River convergence.

A3. The overall project layout of the concept design in Farmers Creek Arm is shown on drawing LL-MM-30210-CLD010-0001.A.IFR Concept Plan and LL-MM-30210-CLH060-0301.A.IFR Lower Inlet Outlet Plan which is included among the concept design drawings soon to be posted on the project website. Please note that these drawings are “Concept Only”, and are subject to change as design develops. As a general delineation of where the overall construction site will end, we anticipate that it will be in close proximity of the existing 330kV transmission line passing over the lake in Farmers Creek Arm.

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Questions on Notice

Q4. Could the environmental assessment team for the feasibility study for Lake Lyell Pumped Hydro project, provide nest box placements in the application area to have a more comprehensive study given a limited number of hours/days with current assessment methods.

A4. The environmental assessment team is currently studying the biodiversity of the area in line with the Biodiversity Assessment Method (BAM) and relevant survey guidelines for threatened species. This includes a mixture of onsite survey effort by ecologists (daytime and night time surveys), remote baited cameras (to identify fauna), owl callbacks, and supplementary techniques such as use of koala detection dogs.

Where there is limited guidance on survey methods for specific threatened species at the Lake Lyell site, we have been consulting with the Biodiversity, Conservation and Science Directorate of the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, and their species officers, to obtain further guidance. There are many natural hollows across the site and identifying and recording these hollow-bearing trees is part of the biodiversity study currently underway, as they form habitat for threatened species on the site such as Gang-gang Cockatoo. The placement of artificial nest boxes within the application area would not form part of the survey method however would be considered as part of management recommendations to offset impacts to existing hollows. The placement of any nest boxes would depend on the final location of the impact area, which is still being determined as part of the design and EIS process.

Questions on Notice

Q5. Community Consultation

A5. EnergyAustralia continues to engage extensively across the Lithgow LGA and will continue through the project lifecycle.

To ensure best practice our engagement framework covers State Significant and Social Impact Assessment guidelines, IAP2 Core Values and Public Participation spectrum, Clean Energy Council best practice.

Methods used are:

- Community Information sessions held in various public locations across Lithgow including shopping centres,
- Residential door knocks, letter box drops, E news, presentations and briefings to community groups & organisations, Lithgow CCC, local media, site visits, webinar, workshops, individual near neighbour discussions, updates to Council and stalls at local events
- Some resources used are: fact sheets, project newsletters, Q& A, maps and videos
- In addition, the project has a specific Website, Facebook page and the new Information Hub in Main Street, Lithgow, along with community email and phone contacts.

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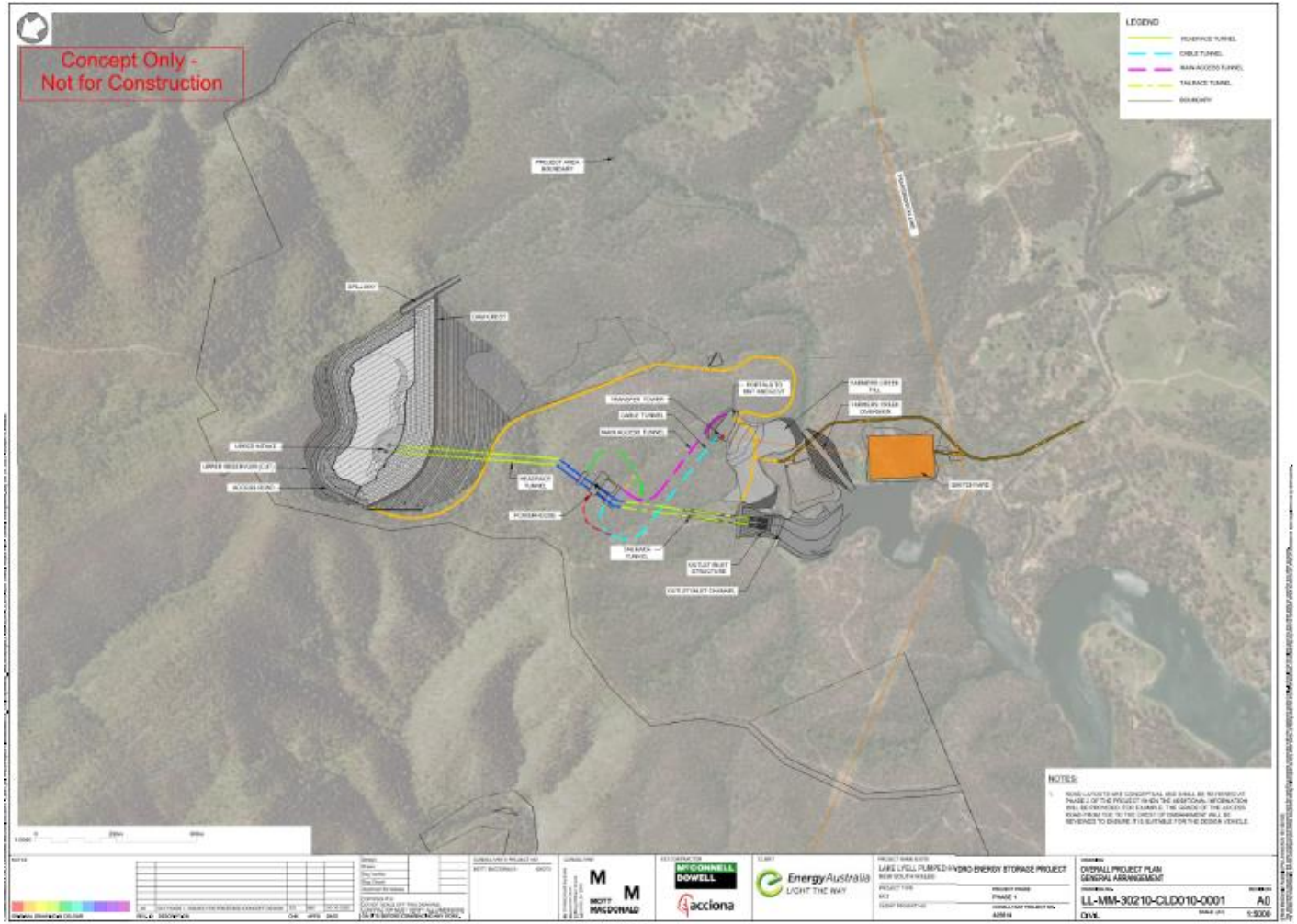
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LEGEND
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OVERALL PROJECT PLAN
GENERAL ARRANGEMENT
LL-MM-30210-CLD010-0001
A0
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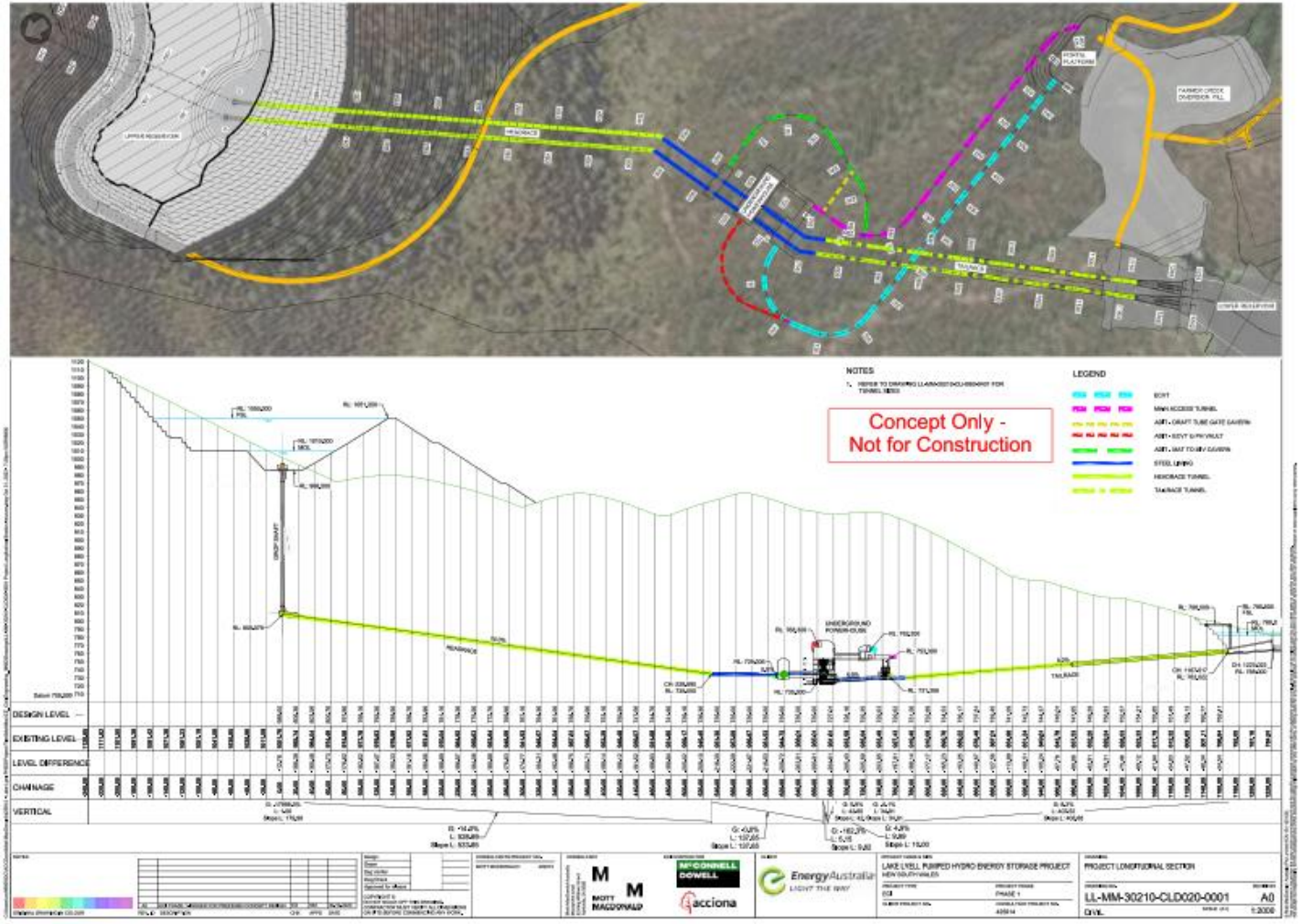
NOTES
LEGEND
Concept Only -
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DESIGN LEVEL
EXISTING LEVEL
LEVEL DIFFERENCE
CHAINAGE
VERTICAL
LAKE LYELL PUMPED HYDRO ENERGY STORAGE PROJECT
PROJECT LONGITUDINAL SECTION
LL-MM-30210-CLD020-0001
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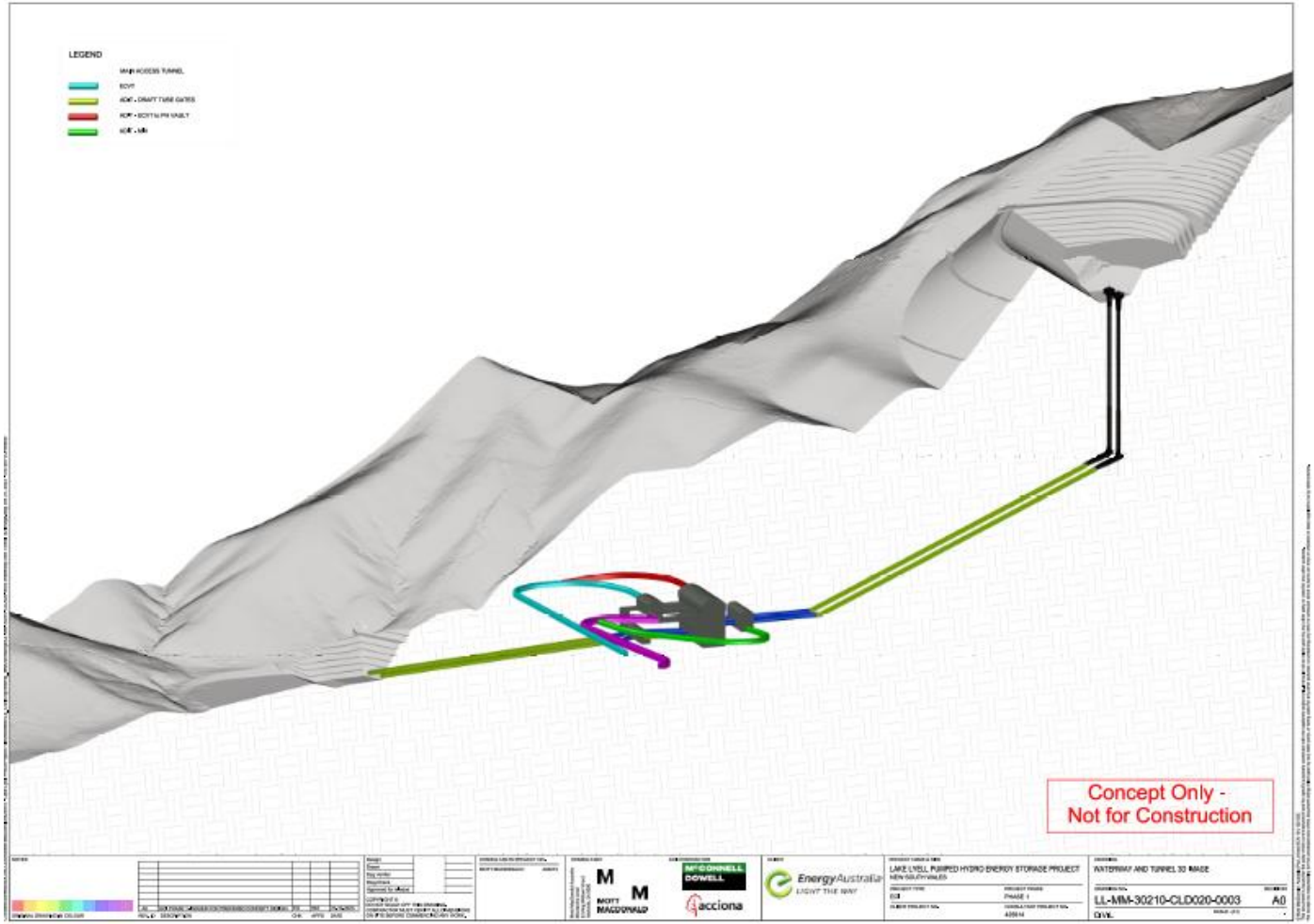
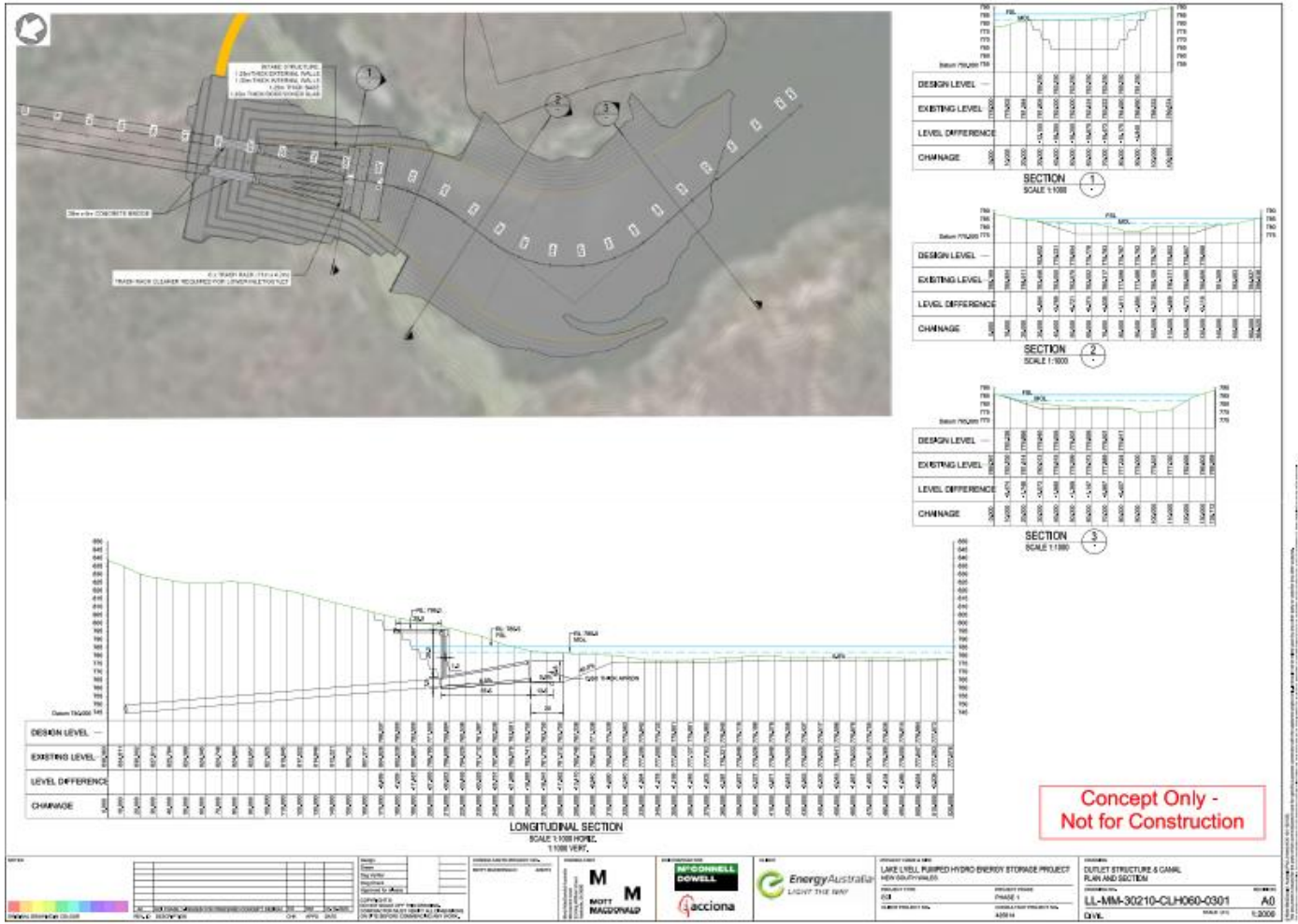

LEGEND
Concept Only -
Not for Construction
LAKE LYELL PUMPED HYDRO ENERGY STORAGE PROJECT
WATERWAY AND TUNNEL 3D IMAGE
LL-MM-30210-CLD020-0003
A0


Concept Only -
Not for Construction
LAKE LYELL PUMPED HYDRO ENERGY STORAGE PROJECT
DULLY DAM
PLAN - ALTERNATIVE SPILLWAY
LL-MM-30210-CLD020-0101
A0
CIVIL


DESIGN LEVEL
EXISTING LEVEL
LEVEL DIFFERENCE
CHAINAGE
SECTION 1
SCALE 1:1000
SECTION 2
SCALE 1:1000
SECTION 3
SCALE 1:1000
LONGITUDINAL SECTION
SCALE 1:1000 HORIZ.
1:1000 VERT.
Concept Only -
Not for Construction
LAKE LYELL PUMPED HYDRO ENERGY STORAGE PROJECT
DUCT STRUCTURE & CANAL
PLAN AND SECTION
LL-MM-30210-CLH060-0301
A0
CIVIL

Project – Mt Piper Battery Energy Storage System (BESS)

Agenda

Item
Presentation of Indicative Render/Layout
EIS Update
Studies overview: Noise, Transport, Bushfire, Hazards and Risks, Biodiversity, Socioeconomic Impact, Cultural Heritage
Feedback to date
Construction approach
Operations and decommissioning
Next steps

Project Overview

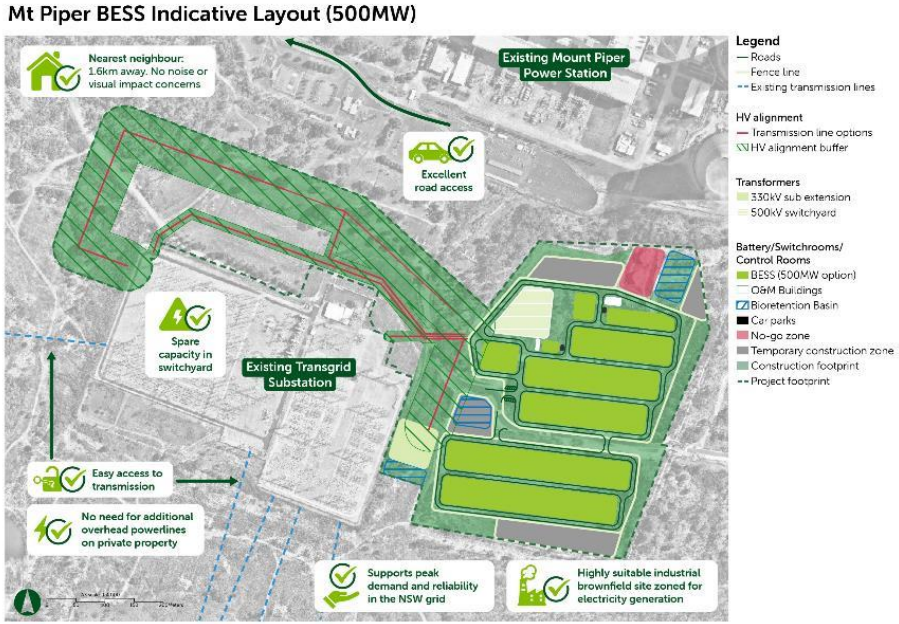
EnergyAustralia is transitioning its existing fleet to a low emissions portfolio with projects that focus on flexible generation and enabling the growth of renewables.

One of these projects is the Mt Piper Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), currently being considered for development.

Mt Piper BESS	
Location	Adjacent to Mt Piper Power Station, Lithgow, NSW
Proposed Capacity	Up to 500 MW/2000 MWh
Preferred Technology	Up to 4-hour Lithium-ion battery storage
Potential Connection Options	Connection to existing substation immediately next to BESS project No infrastructure on private lands Both overhead and underground connection options being considered
Planning Pathway	State Significant Development

Mt Piper BESS Visual Representation

Mt Piper BESS Indicative Layout



EIS update

The Mt Piper BESS requires an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to be prepared to accompany a development application (DA) to the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI)

November 2022: Project Scoping Report submitted

December 2022: SEARs issued

2023 – early 2024: EIS studies being developed, continue community and stakeholder consultation

Mid 2024: EIS studies are submitted to DPHI and go on public exhibition for minimum 28 days

Early 2025: DPHI form decision

Technical studies underway:

- Noise & Vibration
- Traffic & transport
- Visual Amenity
- Socio-economic
- Bushfire
- Hazards & Risks
- Biodiversity
- Cultural Heritage
- Surface water & groundwater
- Soils & geology
- Contamination & waste
- Land use planning
- Electromagnetic Fields (EMF)

EIS Assessments Overview

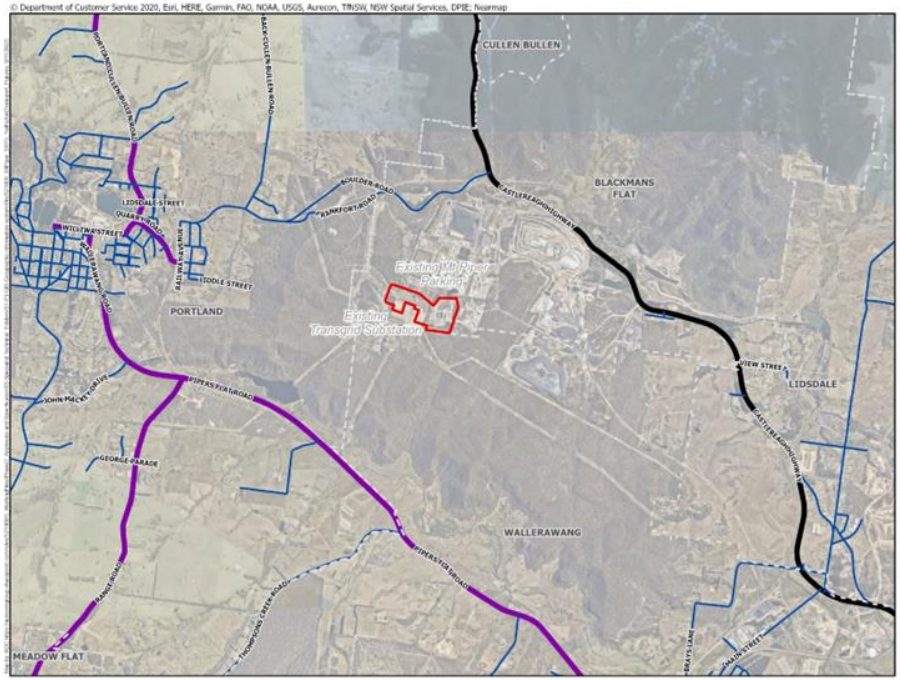
Noise and Vibration Assessment

About the study

- Assessment shows that noise and vibration are within acceptable limits
- No impacts exceeding limits at closest residential properties (who are min. 1.6km away from the Project)
- Assessment involved measuring current conditions and applying worst-case noise impacts to measure impacts at residences
- Even with all machinery operating simultaneously, increase in noise from construction will be minimal given distance from site to nearby residences
- Expected slight increase in noise from construction traffic, inaudible at residences

Traffic and Transport Assessment

About the study



- Assessment focus is on impacts to nearby roads, intersections and public transport services
- No road upgrades or new access entries are proposed, and all parking will be on existing EnergyAustralia land
- Lithgow Council data and field survey informed traffic modelling, also considers future growth
- No road capacity concerns, even during peak construction period
  - Delays and queuing will remain minimal during peak hour
  - Any impacts will be temporary, short term, and minor in nature

Socio-economic Impact Assessment

Key points

General

- Assessment considers feedback given to community engagement team

Community

- No private land acquisitions required
- No impacts on community infrastructure
- Negligible impact on neighbourhood character
- Very low impact on local roads/public road users

Neighbours

- Project will not be visible to nearby residents
- Air/noise impacts will not impact on residents' enjoyment of outdoor activities

Economy

- Project a major development with indicative capex likely more than $500 million
- A peak workforce estimated at up to 177 people during construction - positive impact via new jobs
- Further, additional economic uplift via indirect investment/jobs
- Real option for local construction talent pool to fill new roles
- Low impact on local/tourism accommodation during the peak workforce period

Bushfire Assessment

Key points

- Bushfire assessment satisfies the requirements of Planning for Bushfire Protection from NSW Regional Fire Service (RFS)
- BESS will be required distance away from potential fuel for a fire – established through Asset Protection Zone (APZ), to prevent any bushfire from spreading onto the site
- Project design includes road around the site perimeter suitable for firefighting vehicles
- Bushfire Emergency Management and Evacuation Plan will be established for construction and operation

Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment

About the study

- Study provides assessment of specific cultural and archaeological heritage impacts
- Consultation with Aboriginal stakeholders and field studies key part of assessment process
- Enables development of responsive, appropriate management/mitigation measures
- Bathurst Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC) identified as relevant LALC for entirety of the Study Area
- Mingaan Wiradjuri Aboriginal Corporation (MWAC) also identified as an Aboriginal community controlled non-profit organisation operating in the Study Area

- No Aboriginal sites recorded within the Study Area
- Very low potential for intact Aboriginal sites to be present given past land use practices
- Highly unlikely scarred trees present due to the lack of native vegetation
- No escarpments or outcropping rocks onsite – therefore very low potential for rock art
- Burials highly unlikely given the unsuitability of the landscape
- No new Aboriginal sites or Potential Archaeological Deposits (PADs) identified within the Project area
- Based on this assessment **no** impacts to Aboriginal heritage expected to occur

Biodiversity Assessment

About the study

- Project area previously cleared for the Power Station in 1980s (majority highly disturbed land)
- Some native vegetation will be affected, however the Project layout avoids impacts where possible and prioritises development on already disturbed areas
- Biodiversity impacts not considered significant by the Commonwealth agency
- No significant biodiversity impacts expected from construction or operation
- Two endemic tree species identified on site:
    - 23 Black Gums, 15 will be retained
    - 1 Stringybark, will be retained
- Three other non-local species of eucalyptus trees in the project area that were planted, some of which will be removed
- Not a significant habitat for any threatened species given the highly altered landscape
- Clearing will have negligible impact on fauna

General Assessments

Visual Amenity

- Assessment considers the area around the project, the distance to and sensitivity of residences in the surrounding area, and the landscape character / scenic significance of the area.
- No major impacts identified with very limited opportunity to view the project due to its location within the existing station landholdings.

Land Use

- Purpose is to assess potential land use conflict risks and to objectively assess the effect of the Project on land use and neighbouring land uses.
- No conflicts identified which impact on suitability of Project at identified location.

Waste

- Assessment focus is on considering the quality and quantity of fill material which will be disturbed, and identification of management measures for waste minimisation.
- No significant risks identified, management protocols to manage risks during construction are identified.

Surface water & groundwater

- Assessment focus is on any potential impacts on water quality, hydrology, and flooding including consideration of location within Sydney Drinking Water Catchment.
- No major impacts identified. Construction management requirements identified to provide suitable protection / mitigation measures.

General Assessments

Soils & geology

- Assessment focus is on potential ground risks associated with the project; site investigations undertaken to provide detailed information.
- Low risks for erosion, stability, acid sulphate soils, or salinity.

Contamination

- Assessment focus is on identifying potential risks from contamination, quality of fill material at the site, and suitability of the soils / groundwater on site for the proposed use.
- No significant risks identified, management protocols to manage risks during construction are identified.

Hazards & Risks

- Risk screening process undertaken to examine natural hazards, risks associated with lithium-ion batteries and transformers, other hazards (such as traffic, waste)
- Project will not constitute a potentially hazardous facility, subject to the implementation of recommended risk mitigations, technical and safety measures
- Mitigations, technical and safety measures will reduce risk as much as possible and make off-site risks unlikely
- Management plans will be put in place through detailed design stage

Feedback, approach and next steps

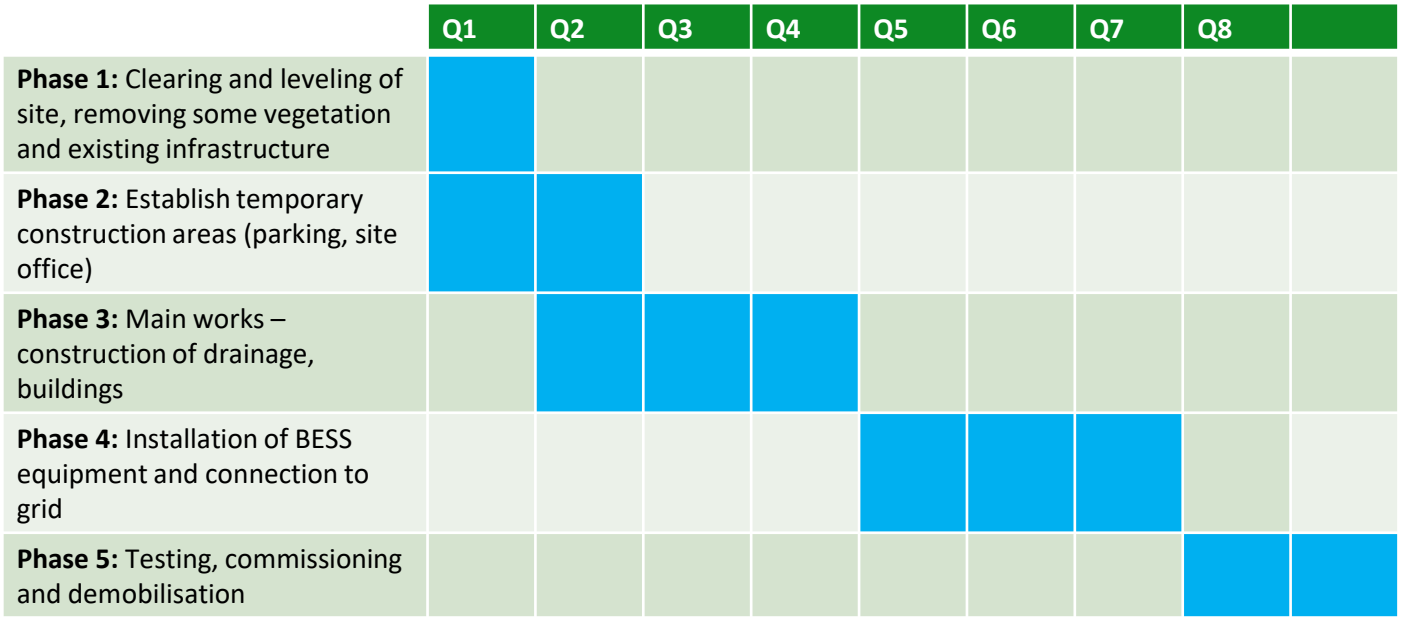
Feedback to date

Feedback is important to ensure best project outcomes and minimise negative impacts wherever possible by taking local knowledge and concerns into account.

Feedback received	How this is being addressed in EIS
Positive feedback about the project being on disturbed land at the existing EA site.	Chapter 1 provides a history of the site selection process including demonstration of avoidance of impacts.
Design amendments should be adopted to avoid clearing of native vegetation and to avoid impacts to protected species.	Chapter 7 describes the process of design refinement to avoid clearing of vegetation on site.
Concern as to likelihood of battery noise disturbing nearby resident.	Noise and Vibration study provides a quantitative assessment of the noise impacts to nearby residents. These have been found to be compliant with relevant standards, with no significant impacts at residences.
Interest in how this project will work alongside other large-scale batteries in the region.	The EIS considers the need for this project in a national context, along with other proposed energy storage projects. National policy outlines a need for multiple storage projects to meet demand. Each EIS study considers cumulative impacts of this project and others in the nearby area.
Availability of local jobs (construction)	Socio-Economic Impact Assessment assesses the project's potential to generate local jobs. EnergyAustralia will continue to investigate options for local procurement.

Construction approach

- Construction is anticipated to take approximately 18-24 months, and will involve several phases.
- Noise will be greatest during construction rather than operation. All construction will occur between 7am – 10pm on weekdays, and 7am – 6pm on weekends to avoid any potential sleep disturbances
- Traffic, noise and visual impacts will all be minimal during this period at nearby residences



Operations and decommissioning

- Anticipated lifespan of 20 – 25 years
- BESS will be available to operate 24 hours, 365 days per year
- Managed and monitored remotely except for infrequent site maintenance
- At the end of its life, decommissioning will likely involve removal and recycling or repurposing (where possible) of above ground components
- Land rehabilitation will be undertaken to meet relevant approval requirements

Next steps

Early 2024: EIS studies and technical assessments being finalised, continue community and stakeholder consultation

Mid 2024: EIS studies are submitted to the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Industry

After being submitted, the EIS studies be released on the DPHI Major Projects website for **public exhibition** for a minimum of 28 days.

This will be advertised and we will look to hold community drop-in sessions during this period to give opportunity for feedback.

Interested parties can make written submissions to DPHI about the project.

If you have questions or feedback about the project, please get in touch:
community@EnergyAustralia.com.au
1800 574 947

Thank you

EnergyAustralia

LIGHT THE WAY