

# Community Newsletter

March 2026



Workers at Green Connect Farm



Harvest time at Green Connect Farm

## Grant keeps local produce fresh

**On any given week in Warrawong, there's a quiet but powerful operation underway. Crates of freshly picked vegetables are washed, packed and stacked with care, ready to be delivered to more than 160 households across the Illawarra.**

Behind each box of crisp greens and seasonal produce is Green Connect — a local social enterprise growing organic food, building skills, and creating meaningful employment opportunities for young people and former refugees.

At the heart of this operation sits an unsung hero: the on-site cool room. It's what keeps produce fresh, safe and ready for delivery, helping Green Connect meet the rhythm of weekly harvests and distributions that local families rely on.

But like many hardworking pieces of infrastructure, the cool room is in urgent need of attention.

Thanks to funding through Tallawarra Power Station's Community Grants Program, an upgrade is now on the way.

The cool room upgrade will significantly improve performance while reducing energy use and emissions. It will help protect produce from spoilage, cut down food waste, and ensure deliveries continue smoothly week after week.

For the community, the benefits are tangible. Reliable cold storage strengthens local food security, supports sustainable agriculture, and helps Green Connect continue its training and employment programs — giving young people and former refugees real pathways into work, skills development and community connection.

This project is about much more than just infrastructure. It's about backing local organisations that are quietly making a big difference — for people, for the environment, and for the future of the Illawarra.

We are proud to support Green Connect through our Community Grants Program and to play a small part in helping this important work continue. We encourage other community groups with sustainability-focused ideas to consider applying for future grants and turning their own visions into reality — next grant round opens 1 March 2026. Visit our website for more information:

[energyaustralia.com.au/tallawarra](http://energyaustralia.com.au/tallawarra)

**"Reliable and efficient cold storage is critical to our operations at Green Connect. Support like this allows us to explore smarter, more sustainable ways to store food, reduce waste, and keep fresh, local produce flowing to the community, while creating meaningful employment opportunities for young people and former refugees."**

— Robert Servine, CEO, Green Connect Farm

# Tallawarra’s role in “firming” NSW’s Energy Market

As New South Wales’ energy system evolves, reliability remains essential. With more wind and solar generation in the mix, the grid needs to respond quickly when renewable output drops or demand surges.

As the sun goes down, solar generation declines, often at the same time people are getting home, preparing dinner, and relying on lights and air conditioning. Likewise, when the wind isn’t blowing, wind turbines can’t produce electricity. In both cases, the community still needs dependable power.

That’s where Tallawarra Power Station plays a vital role in what’s known as “firming” — fast, reliable energy that helps balance the grid when weather or time of day limits renewable generation.

This ensures homes and businesses continue to receive reliable power. At full capacity, Tallawarra can supply electricity to around 730,000 homes and small businesses, based on average daily usage.



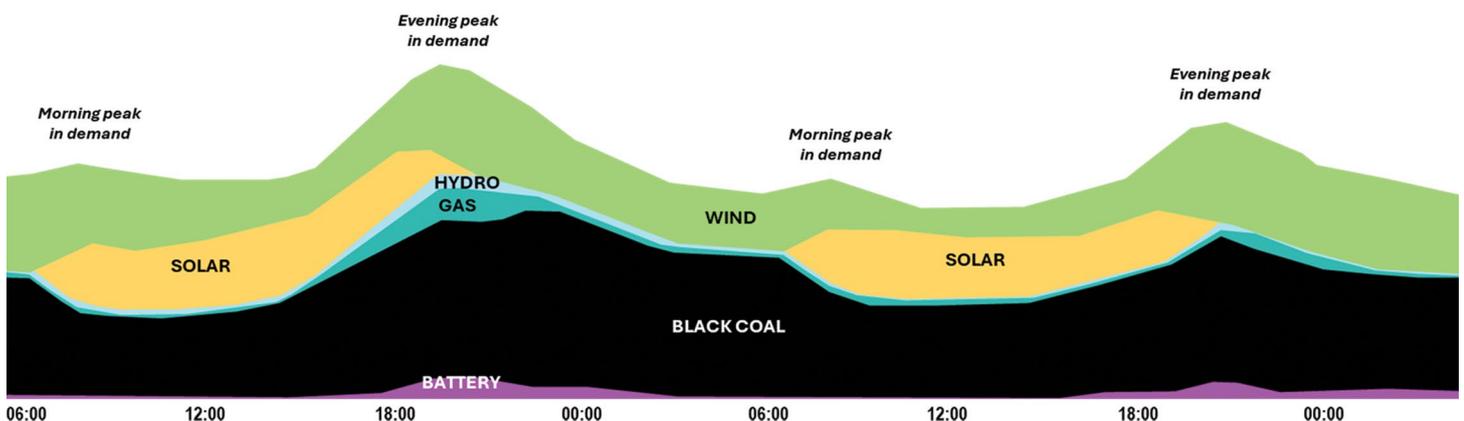
EnergyAustralia’s Managing Director, Mark Collette, at Tallawarra B Power Station

The station includes two gas-fired power generation units designed to meet different system needs.

Tallawarra A, a 460MW station, is built for efficiency and sustained generation. It is a combined cycle turbine, which means it recycles the heat from the exhaust to create steam, which is then used to generate more electricity. This is why Tallawarra A is suited to running over longer periods.

Tallawarra B, a 320 megawatt open cycle gas turbine, is designed for speed and flexibility. Able to start and deliver power within 30 minutes, it responds quickly to sudden drops in renewable energy or unexpected demand climbs.

Together, Tallawarra A and B provide a balanced combination of efficiency, reliability and rapid response — helping keep the lights on today while supporting New South Wales’ transition to a lower-carbon energy future.



Energy sources in a typical summer 48-hour cycle of the NSW Energy Market

## Acknowledgement

EnergyAustralia recognises that the site for the Tallawarra Power Station is on the traditional Country of the Dharawal peoples and respects and acknowledges their continued connection to lands, waters and culture.

# More than energy: Tallawarra's thriving biodiversity



Black swans with cygnets at Tallawarra (photo courtesy of Michelle Rower, Illawarra Birders)

Local birdwatchers, such as Michelle Rower from Illawarra Birders, have long been drawn to the Tallawarra wetlands and surrounding bushland, where more than 196 bird species have been recorded. For many, this place is more than a viewing spot — it's a home, a nesting ground, a migration stop, and an inspiring chorus of birdsong.

The land around Tallawarra supports a rich mix of habitats, from native grasses and shrubs to towering eucalypts and freshwater wetlands. Michelle Rower reflects, "We see the wetlands as particularly important, serving as a vital east-coast freshwater breeding and feeding ground."

These environments provide food and shelter for birds, frogs, reptiles, insects and mammals, showing how biodiversity can thrive alongside essential energy infrastructure when managed responsibly.

Pelicans, blue-billed ducks and a wide range of waterbirds are regular visitors, while nearby bushland supports wallabies, possums, bees and butterflies that help keep the ecosystem healthy and resilient.

In coming months, we are kicking off a formal biodiversity study to better understand and document the rich variety of life. Through weed and pest management, habitat restoration, water quality monitoring, and partnerships with conservation groups, EnergyAustralia continues to care for the natural environment surrounding Tallawarra.

## Birds you might spot at Tallawarra:



Eastern Osprey



Azure Kingfisher



Blue-billed Duck



White-faced Heron



Masked Lapwing

# Spotlight: Ivan Currie, leading Tallawarra into the future

As Site Leader of Tallawarra Power Station, Ivan Currie describes his role as leading the site to operate safely, reliably, and efficiently each day. He blends people leadership with technical oversight, supporting the teams on site, managing critical assets, and ensuring Tallawarra delivers power meeting safety, environmental, and operational expectations. What could seem like pure engineering, he frames as supporting people to do their best work.

"What I find most energising is being part of producing something as essential as electricity," Ivan reflects. "There is a strong sense of achievement in knowing that, particularly during critical periods for energy supply, our site supports the broader energy network and contributes to system reliability."

Right now, Tallawarra is between major maintenance outages, giving Ivan space to concentrate on long term planning. He's focused on ensuring the site remains reliable well into the future while delivering that reliability at the lowest cost for customers. For him, "Success always starts with safety—everyone going home healthy each day—followed by ensuring that Tallawarra remains dependable through a time of rapid change in the energy market."

Although his career is firmly rooted in the energy and resources sectors, Ivan's background includes a memorable early job in a sugar mill, where he found himself climbing over equipment and shovelling far more sugar than he had ever imagined. His journey through pharmaceuticals, alumina refining, mining, and electricity generation has shaped the practical, grounded leadership he brings to Tallawarra today.



Ivan Currie, Site Leader, inspecting operations

# Community Grants



Drew Robertson, President of Shellharbour SLSC, using the new fridge.

Each year we provide around \$50,000 in small grants to community organisations making a difference across the Illawarra region.

In 2025 we announced support for:

- **Shellharbour Surf Life Saving Club** – replace its outdated canteen refrigerator with an energy-efficient model, reducing emissions and operating costs
- **SolarBuddy** – deliver a hands-on STEM education program to 125 students in the Illawarra region, empowering them to build solar lights for communities experiencing energy poverty
- **Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect)** – provide Autism-specific motor skill resources for over 110 students at Aspect South Coast School in Corrimal
- **Green Connect** – update its cool room infrastructure

Our investment in local infrastructure, jobs, and community support is part of our long-standing commitment to the Illawarra – and we want to ensure the region continues to thrive as the energy system evolves.

2026 Round 1 Community Grant applications open on 1 March.



Find out more

## Coming up at Tallawarra

**1 March – 31 March**

Tallawarra Community Grants 2026 Round 1 open for submissions

**May**

Planned maintenance outage for Tallawarra

**27 May**

Tallawarra Community Liaison Group meeting

## We're here to help

If you have a question, please don't hesitate to contact us.

✉ [community@EnergyAustralia.com.au](mailto:community@EnergyAustralia.com.au)

☎ 1800 574 947

📍 EnergyAustralia NSW Pty Ltd, Yallah Road, Yallah NSW 2530

🌐 [energyaustralia.com.au/tallawarra](http://energyaustralia.com.au/tallawarra)



Tallawarra Power Station

## About EnergyAustralia

EnergyAustralia is a leading energy retailer and generator with around 1.6 million customers across eastern Australia. We supply energy to our residential and business customers from a modern energy portfolio, underpinned by coal and gas power plants, as well as renewable energy sources.



See our best energy plans