

Workforce accommodation

New England Renewable Energy Zone network infrastructure project

Environmental impact statement | Fact sheet | October 2026

The New England Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) network infrastructure project is a key part of NSW's clean energy future, connecting renewable energy projects to the electricity grid and delivering reliable power to homes and businesses across the state.

Overview

Building the New England REZ network infrastructure project will require workers, equipment, materials and temporary facilities to support construction activities across a large project area.

Workforce accommodation camps and construction support sites are proposed to help safely and efficiently deliver the project while reducing pressure on existing housing and accommodation in local communities.

What are workforce accommodation camps?

Workforce accommodation camps are temporary, self-contained facilities that provide accommodation and services for construction workers during the project.



Artist impression of a proposed workforce accommodation camp

The camps would include accommodation, dining facilities, recreation areas, medical support, parking, security and construction support facilities.

Snapshot



1,400 workers across the project during peak construction



Construction expected to take around 6 years



5 workforce accommodation camps proposed along the alignment



Around 320-550 beds at each camp



On-site medical staff and support services



Security cameras and 24/7 on-site security managing gate entries



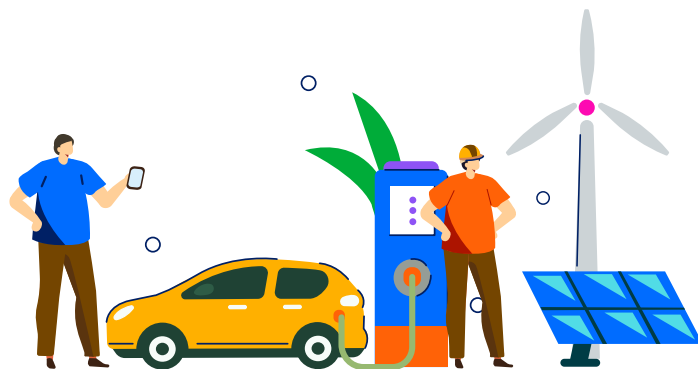
Shuttle buses for transportation



On-site utilities including generators, water recycling and sewage treatment plants



Firefighting equipment and suitably trained personnel



Why are workforce accommodation camps needed?

The transmission corridor extends for around 300 kilometres and construction will occur at multiple locations across the New England and Upper Hunter regions.

Many work areas are located some distance from towns and existing accommodation. Workforce accommodation camps have been proposed to provide workers with a safe place to stay close to construction areas while reducing pressure on local housing and accommodation.

The sites will be planned with workers' health, wellbeing and social connection in mind, ensuring the environment fosters a sense of community throughout the construction period.

Site selection

In identifying suitable locations, we consider factors such as site accessibility, constructability, nearby properties, environmental constraints and existing infrastructure.

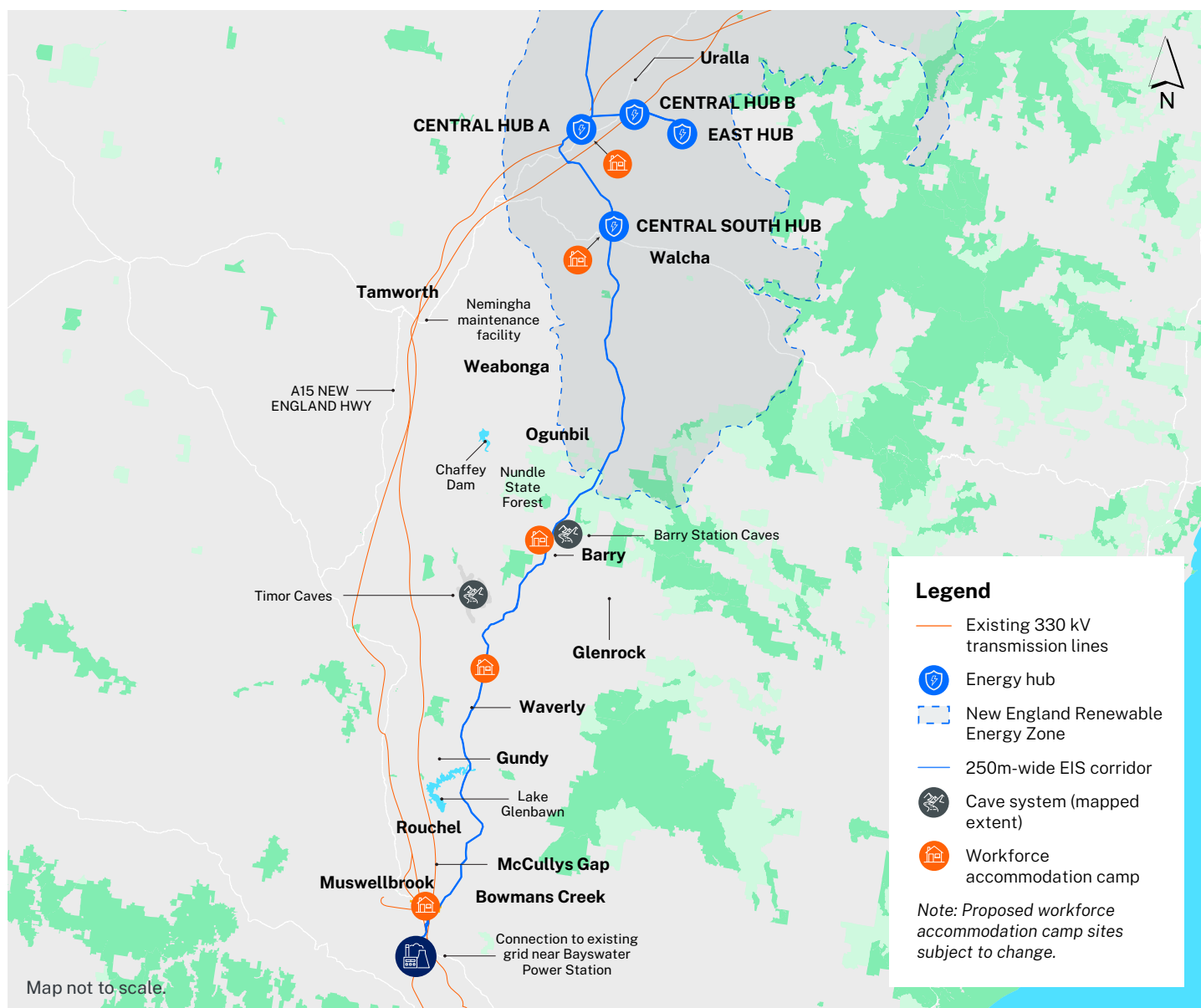
We also look for opportunities to acquire land through the open market or voluntary agreements with landholders who are interested in selling, helping to streamline the acquisition process and minimise the need for compulsory acquisition.

Proposed camp locations

The EIS identifies 5 proposed workforce camps. The proposed camp locations, sizes and worker numbers may be refined as the project moves into its next stage of planning.

The camps have been strategically located near the transmission corridor and energy hubs to reduce travel times and improve construction efficiency. Workforce accommodation camps are intended to house most non-local workers during peak construction periods.

New England REZ network infrastructure project



Temporary workforce camp locations:

Camp	Location	Approximate worker beds
Camp 1 – Muswellbrook	Inglewood Road, Muswellbrook (or a potential alternative option on New England Highway, Muswellbrook)*	320
Camp 2 – Waverly	Waverley Road, Waverly	320
Camp 3 – Barry	Barry Road, Barry*	320
Camp 4 – Central south hub	Oxley Highway, Walcha Road	550
Camp 5 – Central hub A	Glenburnie Road, Kentucky	550

*Camp 3 at Barry and the alternative site for Camp 1 at Muswellbrook were only recently identified. Both locations will be fully assessed as part of the submissions report/amendment report.



Existing workforce camp at Merotherie (1200 beds)



Tower construction underway



Workers

What would a typical camp include?

The sites will vary in size depending on the location and construction activities they support. Each camp would have:



Demountable accommodation and office buildings



Workforce amenities including food and catering, laundry, a gymnasium and first aid



Facilities with onsite health practitioners



Utilities, including telecommunication services, electricity and water (including water treatment plant)



Dedicated car parking and a helipad



Construction laydown area and maintenance / storage sheds



Waste and recycling compound



Diesel generators, solar panels



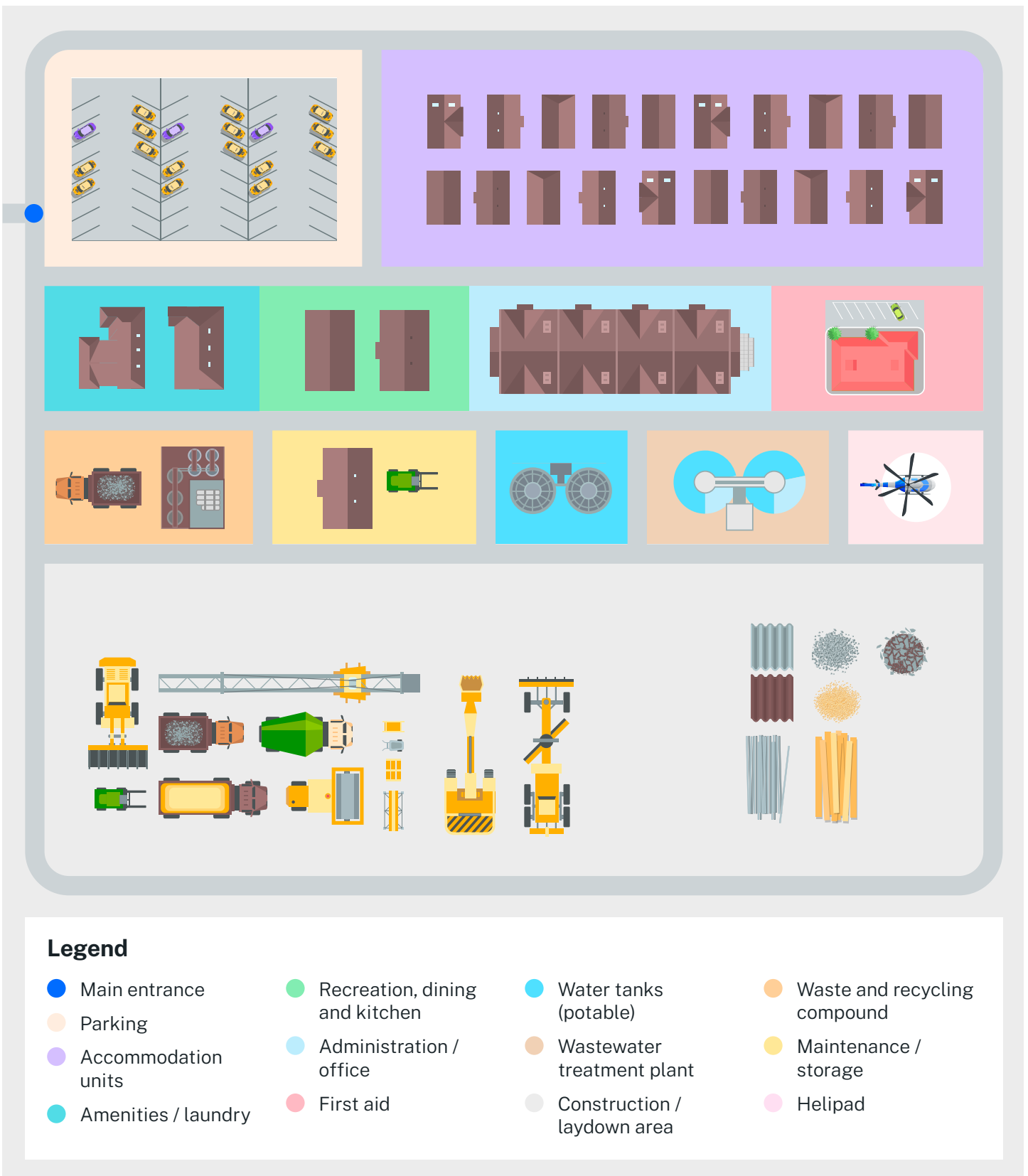
Secure perimeter fencing and security.

Where practical, workers would be transported between the construction areas and the workforce accommodation via shuttle buses to help minimise potential traffic impacts of the project on local roads.

This would mainly occur at the start and end of the working day. Temporary workforce accommodation will operate 24/7 throughout construction.

The temporary sites are intended to support the construction phase of the project and will be decommissioned and rehabilitated once they are no longer required.

Indicative workforce accommodation camp



Note: This camp layout is indicative only and based on a typical workforce accommodation camp constructed for major infrastructure projects in NSW. Temporary workforce accommodation includes lighting throughout for safety and security as well as secure perimeter fencing and controlled access.



Existing transmission line

What did the environmental impact statement find?

The environmental impact statement (EIS) assessed EnergyCo's proposed workforce accommodation camps, including potential impacts on local services, traffic, businesses and communities, and reduced impact on local housing options. The EIS also identified measures to minimise impacts and maximise opportunities to coordinate activities where possible.

Housing and accommodation

Housing availability and affordability are already important issues across parts of the New England and Hunter regions.

The EIS found the proposed workforce accommodation camps would significantly reduce demand on local housing and accommodation during construction.



Local jobs and businesses

Construction of the project is expected to create opportunities for local businesses, suppliers and service providers, including:



Catering and hospitality



Transport and logistics



Civil construction



Maintenance services



Local suppliers



Professional services.

EnergyCo and the future network operator will also work to maximise local participation through local employment, procurement and training opportunities.

Community services

Some communities already have limited access to healthcare and specialist services.

To help minimise impacts, workforce accommodation camps are proposed to include on-site facilities and medical support for workers, reducing reliance on local community services.

What might communities notice during construction?

Depending on location and timing, communities may notice:



Workforce accommodation camps being established



Additional workers in the region



Upgraded roads and traffic changes



Construction traffic travelling between camps and work areas



Deliveries of equipment and supplies



Temporary construction support facilities.

Managing our impacts

A range of management plans would be prepared and implemented before construction starts, in accordance with project approval requirements and conditions of approval. These plans would help manage workforce, traffic, accommodation and community impacts.

Engagement portal

EnergyCo has prepared an EIS for the New England REZ network infrastructure project which describes how the project will be built.

You can find out more about different project features and the construction program in the EIS by scanning the QR code or visiting EnergyCo's engagement portal at energyco.nsw.gov.au/nerez.



Scan the QR code to visit the engagement portal.

What happens to the camps after construction is complete?

Workforce accommodation sites are temporary facilities. Once construction is finished, they are generally decommissioned and the sites restored to their original condition.

Across NSW, temporary workforce accommodation built for major infrastructure projects is increasingly being repurposed into tourism facilities, housing, residential training colleges and even aged care accommodation.

EnergyCo is open to exploring similar opportunities and will work with the future network operator, councils and other stakeholders to identify potential housing and community-focused initiatives once construction is complete.

Next steps

EnergyCo will continue to engage with the community and stakeholders so workforce accommodation camps are designed and operated in a way that minimises impacts to the community as much as possible.

Councils are a key partner in this work and we are working closely with them as the project progresses.



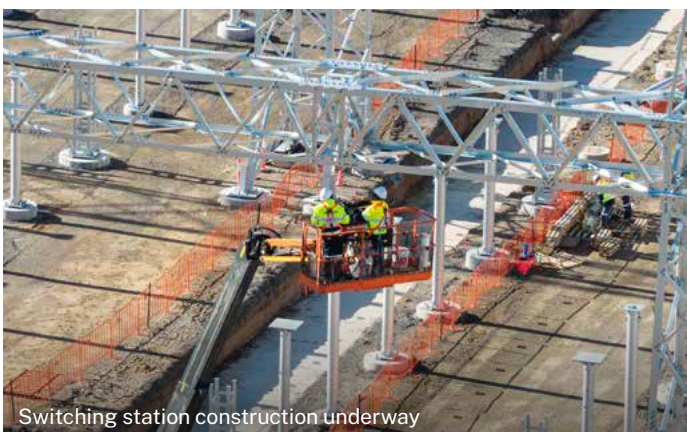
Example of towers being built in stages



Construction worker



Switching station construction underway



Switching station construction underway

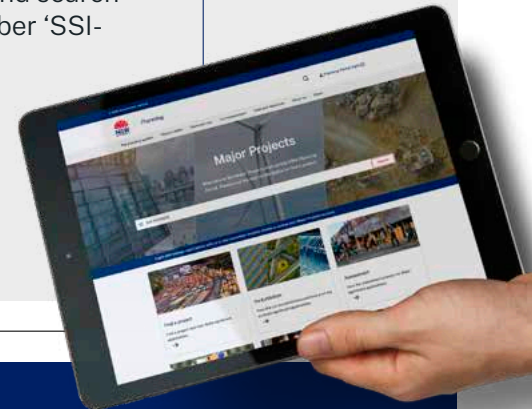
Learn more and have your say on the EIS

The environmental impact statement (EIS) is on public exhibition in October and November 2026. You can have your say on the EIS by making a submission to the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure on the NSW Planning Portal.



Scan the QR code to visit the NSW Planning Portal.

To view the EIS and make your submission, visit planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects and search application number 'SSI-74175972'.



Contact us

EnergyCo wants to hear what you think about our plans. If you have questions or want to give feedback, please get in touch with our team.



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