



23 September 2025

Kurtis Wathen
Senior Environmental Assessment Officer
Department of Planning and Environment

Submitted via online form

Dear Kurtis

Subject: Hunter Transmission Project Environmental Impact Statement

Lake Macquarie City Council (Council) welcomes the opportunity to provide comment on the Hunter Transmission Project Environmental Impact Statement. Council notes Lake Macquarie City Council staff will be making a separate technical submission to the Hunter Transmission Project Environmental Impact Statement.

Lake Macquarie is the host city of Australia's largest coal-fired power station and at the frontline of the energy transition. Eraring, along with two operational underground coal mines, supports around 1,800 jobs and contributes around 15% of our city's economic output, which equates to approximately \$4.5 billion dollars.

The Hunter Transmission Project intends to address the shortfall in energy production as a result of the transition away from coal. It involves building a new overhead 500 kilovolt (kV) transmission line of around 100 kilometres to connect the State's existing 500 kV transmission lines.

Construction of the transmission lines will involve around 750 workers during peak construction, of which 300 are to have access to temporary accommodation at a construction support site on Freemans Drive, Cooranbong in the Lake Macquarie Local Government Area (LGA). This accommodation is intended to minimise daily travel for workers, congestion on the roads and will be central to the work's location. The temporary accommodation locations will also include a helipad, material storage facilities, processing facilities, workshops, firefighting equipment and access infrastructure.

Noting the housing crisis burdening not just Lake Macquarie, but NSW and Australia more broadly, Council suggests construction of the temporary worker accommodation should be completed with materials and methods that enable it to be repurposed by Homes NSW or appropriate Community Housing Providers once its use in the Hunter Transmission Project construction is complete. This may be a modular housing product which can be

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reused and relocated to an alternate, central and accessible location within Lake Macquarie or the broader Hunter Region.

The NSW Government recently released its NSW Homelessness Strategy 2025-2035, which identifies the need to increase supply and range of affordable housing options. Outcome 2.2 of the strategy directs Homes NSW to work with the sector to reform temporary accommodation to improve outcomes and Outcome 2.3 calls on the need to increase supply. Repurposing the temporary accommodation built for the Hunter Transmission Project at the Cooranbong location is consistent with these outcomes. It has the potential to help address the housing shortage in Lake Macquarie and to provide a lasting benefit to our community.

As an additional benefit to the Cooranbong community and Lake Macquarie more broadly, Council encourages EnergyCo to consider the employment or contracting of suitable individuals who are faced with displacement due to the proposed decommissioning of Eraring Power Station set for 2027. This provides an immediate economic benefit to local residents and ensures skilled labour stays in the region. Eraring's existing proposed closure timeline aligns closely with the Hunter Transmission Project's construction timeline.

Noting the significant impact the energy transition is having, and will continue to have, on those who live and work in Lake Macquarie, Council considers legacy benefits such as repurposing the modular housing or redeploying displaced, suitable Eraring employees to be a vital consideration in Hunter Transmission Project planning.

Council appreciates the opportunity to provide comment on the Hunter Transmission Project Environment Impact Statement. Should you require anything further on matters raised, Lake Macquarie City Council Acting CEO, Tony Farrell, can be reached at farrell@lakemac.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'A. Shultz', written in a cursive style.

Cr Adam Shultz
Mayor of Lake Macquarie