



**APPENDIX**

**D**

Project engagement

## Appendix D.1

A summary of the key themes and issues raised by the community during engagement for the project and where they have been addressed in the EIS is provided in Tables D.1 to Table D.4

**Table D.1 Summary of key issues raised during EIS engagement – Government Agencies**

Key theme / Issue	Raised By	EIS / Appendix Reference
<b>Local Government</b>		
Workforce accommodation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussions about the workforce accommodation and cumulative impacts on short-term accommodation provision in the MWRC and WSC LGA and adjoining LGAs is a critical issue for consideration, and</li> <li>Concerned about the capacity of existing short-term accommodation providers to meet project workforce accommodation demands, and the potential indirect impacts on accommodation accessibility for other industry sectors e.g. visitors to the region</li> </ul>	MWRC, WSC	EIS section 6.11 Social and Appendix O
Community: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concerns regarding visual impact of solar projects, and cumulative impact</li> </ul>	MWRC, WSC	EIS section 6.3 Visual and Appendix O, Appendix G
Consultation and assessment process: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>discussed general strategy in regard to lodgement of the EIS and timing of Public Exhibition and determination.</li> <li>discussions regarding the EIS project description and potential for refinements post Public Exhibition</li> <li>discussions on neighbour benefit sharing on what this might look like and broader Central West Community Benefit Sharing scheme</li> <li>discussions about the outcome of community consultation sessions open to all stakeholders to attend</li> </ul>	MWRC, WSC	EIS section 5 Engagement and Appendix O
Biodiversity and environment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Issues discussed included potential for upgrade to roads along Birriwa Bus Route North, Birriwa Bus Route South and the intersection with Castlereagh Highway, disturbance and treatment of roadside vegetation, road drainage, waterways and surface water</li> </ul>	MWRC, WSC	EIS section 6.2 Biodiversity, 6.8 Land resources, 6.9 Water resources and Appendix O, Appendix F

**Table D.1 Summary of key issues raised during EIS engagement – Government Agencies**

Key theme / Issue	Raised By	EIS / Appendix Reference
<p>Traffic and transport</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• site access and potential impacts to community and road users</li> <li>• discussions on the potential impacts to CWC Group and the CWC Trail</li> <li>• discussions on public crossings, intersection, internal roads options, and potential nuisance to close neighbours of roads during construction</li> <li>• discussions and feedback on proposed site access routes along Birriwa Bus Route North, Birriwa Bus Route South and their intersection with the Castlereagh Highway</li> <li>• discussions in relation to the traffic management plan, potential application of a 80km hour speed limit on Barneys Reef Road, and road crossings on Birriwa Bus Route South</li> </ul>	MWRC, WSC	EIS section 6.4 Traffic and transport and Appendix O, Appendix H
<b>State Government</b>		
<p>Biodiversity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conservation and Science Directorate (BCS) raised biodiversity and offsetting, water and soils and flooding as the key three areas to be address in the environmental impact statement (EIS).</li> </ul>	BCS	EIS section 6.2 Biodiversity and Appendix O, Appendix F
<p>EPBC matters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• discussions around vegetation mapping in relation to potential impacts on listed endangered ecological communities.</li> </ul>	Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (DAWE)	EIS section 6.2 Biodiversity and Appendix F
<p>Consultation and environmental assessment process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• discussions around project, the timelines and the EIS and community consultation process</li> <li>• discussions in relation to skill development and engagement with the community and education providers (TAFE and local high schools)</li> </ul>	NSW Government Member for Dubbo	EIS section 5 Engagement, 6.11 Social and Appendix O
<p>Community benefit sharing and investment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• discussions around neighbour payment models and how this is distributed to landholders and the shared benefits with the community</li> </ul>	NSW Government Member for Dubbo	EIS section 5 Engagement, 6.11 Social and Appendix O
<p>Workforce accommodation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• discussion regarding potential workforce accommodation options</li> <li>• discussions regarding the role of the government in the provision of workforce accommodation as the CWO REZ is a government planned initiative</li> </ul>	NSW Government Member for Dubbo	EIS section 6.11 Social and Appendix O
<p>Agriculture:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• discussions around the land use conflict between renewable energy operations and agricultural land use</li> </ul>	NSW Government Member for Dubbo	EIS section 6.8 Land resources, 6.11 Social and Appendix O, Appendix L

**Table D.1 Summary of key issues raised during EIS engagement – Government Agencies**

Key theme / Issue	Raised By	EIS / Appendix Reference
Economic development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>discussions about long term sustainable economic participation, and skills and training opportunities for the local community</li> <li>discussions regarding engaging with the local TAFE, local high schools and consulting with these stakeholders in relation to upcoming opportunities</li> </ul>	NSW Government Member for Dubbo	EIS section 6.11 Social and Appendix O
Renewable energy industry: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>discussions about the CWO REZ</li> </ul>	NSW Government Member for Dubbo	EIS section 6.11 Social and Appendix O

**Table D.2 Summary of key issues raised during EIS engagement – Associated and non-associated landowners and local community members**

Issue	Raised By	EIS / Appendix Reference
Visual amenity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>discussions around what the solar project will look like once built for road users and tourists from Castlereagh Highway</li> <li>concerns over visual impacts to residents</li> <li>visual impacts of the location of the substation and BESS</li> <li>discussions on mitigation measures such as proposed screening (trees) around the perimeter of the site wherever it is facing public roads to reduce the visual impacts to landholders</li> <li>concerns of the visual impacts of the perimeter fencing that potentially would be installed</li> <li>ongoing consultation and discussion with R3 and R5 associated landholders regarding landscaping mitigation measures</li> <li></li> </ul>	Associated and non-associated landowners, and local community members	EIS section 6. 3 Visual, 6.11 Social and Appendix O, Appendix G
Noise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>concerns regarding potential noise emissions from the BESS, and the potential for nuisance noise</li> <li>concerns expressed in relation to noise from the BESS and the potential for sleep disturbance</li> <li>potential noise impacts in local townships during construction due to project related truck movements</li> <li>concerns regarding the potential for nuisance noise associated with construction activities</li> </ul>	Associated and non-associated landowners, and local community members	EIS section 6.7 Noise and vibration, 6.11 Social and Appendix O, Appendix K

**Table D.2 Summary of key issues raised during EIS engagement – Associated and non-associated landowners and local community members**

Issue	Raised By	EIS / Appendix Reference
<p>Traffic and transport:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• concerns regarding the increased traffic (workforce travel and heavy vehicle truck movements) on local roads and potential impacts during the construction phase such as road safety for road users, and issues with increased traffic on the quiet roads</li> <li>• concerns regarding the potential for increased commuter journey times</li> <li>• concerns regarding impacts on the Central West Cycle Trail and the potential need for rerouting</li> <li>• potential impacts on private property access and discussion on internal roads</li> <li>• concerns regarding potential heavy vehicle volumes associated with the project and potential for interactions with school bus operation</li> <li>• Potential disruption to cattle truck movements along Birriwa Bus Route South</li> </ul>	<p>Associated and non-associated landowners, and local community members</p>	<p>EIS section 6.4 Traffic and transport, 6.11 Social and Appendix O, Appendix H</p>
<p>Consultation and environmental assessment process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• interest in how the planning process works and timelines.</li> <li>• discussions about the location of associated transmission lines and the approvals process</li> </ul>	<p>Associated and non-associated landowners, and local community members</p>	<p>EIS section 6.11 Social and Appendix O</p>
<p>Hazards and safety:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• potential for reduced road safety for road users (including users of the CWC Trail) due to an increase in traffic volumes on the local and regional road network</li> <li>• road safety concerns related to road deterioration resulting from additional project traffic</li> <li>• concerns regarding the potential for increased bushfire risk</li> <li>• concerns regarding future access to land in the event of a fire. Concern was expressed that local farmers may not have access to the site during a bushfire if there were locked gates.</li> <li>• discussions regarding the preparation of a Bushfire/Emergency Response Plan prior to construction commencing.</li> <li>• changes in perceptions of community safety due to increased people in the local area (ie construction workers) and potential impacts on the quiet enjoyment of the local area and the feeling of living in a safe neighbourhood</li> <li>• road safety concerns in relation to interactions between construction vehicle movements and local school bus operations</li> </ul>	<p>Associated and non-associated landowners, and local community members</p>	<p>EIS section 6.6 Hazards and risks, 6.11 Social and Appendix O, Appendix J</p>

**Table D.2 Summary of key issues raised during EIS engagement – Associated and non-associated landowners and local community members**

Issue	Raised By	EIS / Appendix Reference
<p>Economics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• positive feedback received in relation to local job creation, also potential upskilling and training opportunities and procurement</li> <li>• positive feedback regarding the potential of the project to create sustainable long-term employment opportunities that support local population growth and flow on benefits for a way of life</li> <li>• concerns in relation to the removal of agricultural land from production and flow-on impacts to the agricultural sector and local economy.</li> <li>• discussions regarding the potential for project induced resident population growth and resulting diversification and growth in the local labour pool for other industries (e.g. health services)</li> </ul>	<p>Associated and non-associated landowners, and local community members</p>	<p>EIS section 6.11 Social and Appendix O</p>
<p>Housing and accommodation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• concern regarding project impacts on short term accommodation availability and private rental availability in Dunedoo, Gulgong, Mudgee during the construction phase</li> <li>• questions in relation to the capacity of short-term accommodation in the regional area to meet the demands of both the tourism industry and major projects</li> <li>• concern that increased pressure on private rental accommodation within the communities of Mudgee, Gulgong and Dunedoo may lead to existing tenants being priced-out of the local area</li> <li>• concern that increased pressure on short-term accommodation may restrict access to accommodation for visitors to the local area</li> <li>• discussion regarding the potential impacts on short-term accommodation and private rental supply in the regional area resulting from the cumulative effect of multiple major projects</li> <li>• concerns regarding the potential for a decline in the value of properties located proximate to the project</li> <li>• discussions around potential workforce accommodation options</li> <li>• discussion regarding the use of temporary accommodation for the construction workforce</li> </ul>	<p>Associated and non-associated landowners, and local community members</p>	<p>EIS section 6.11 Social and Appendix O</p>
<p>Livestock and farming activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• concerns regarding the potential for a reduction in rural agricultural service provision in the local area due to a reduction in agricultural activity associated with the removal of agricultural land from production</li> <li>• discussions regarding the coexistence of solar project operations and agricultural activities e.g. sheep grazing</li> <li>• concerns regarding the potential for disruption to existing agricultural operations due to changes in accessibility and the presence of construction activity</li> <li>• concerns that increased traffic on local roads and project related road works may impact agricultural farming activities such as stock movement across roads, and cattle yard access.</li> <li>• Question raised in relation to construction working hours and impact upon agricultural activities</li> </ul>	<p>Associated and non-associated landowners, and local community members</p>	<p>EIS section 6.8 Land resources, 6.11 Social and Appendix O, Appendix L</p>

**Table D.2 Summary of key issues raised during EIS engagement – Associated and non-associated landowners and local community members**

Issue	Raised By	EIS / Appendix Reference
<p>Biodiversity and environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• questions raised in relation to the assessment of potential biodiversity impacts</li> <li>• concerns expressed that the biodiversity surveys were not completed for all seasons</li> <li>• concerns regarding potential surface water impacts and flow-on impacts to farming operations</li> </ul>	<p>Associated and non-associated landowners, and local community members</p>	<p>EIS section 6.2 Biodiversity, 6.9 Water resources and Appendix O, Appendix F and Appendix N</p>
<p>Community benefit sharing and investment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• discussions and questions in relation to project related community benefit sharing initiatives and neighbour benefit sharing schemes</li> </ul>	<p>Associated and non-associated landowners, and local community members</p>	<p>EIS section 6.11 Social and Appendix O</p>
<p>Procurement / local business participation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• questions regarding how local contractors will be notified of opportunities, and how they can apply for the opportunities</li> </ul>	<p>Associated and non-associated landowners, and local community members</p>	<p>EIS section 6.11 Social and Appendix O</p>
<p>Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal heritage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• concerns in relation to the potential impacts of the project on shared community beliefs and connections to land, and potential impacts on Aboriginal cultural heritage</li> <li>• positive discussions about the cultural and historical interest in the Birriwa district</li> </ul>	<p>Associated and non-associated landowners, and local community members</p>	<p>EIS section 6.5 Aboriginal heritage and Appendix O, Appendix I</p>
<p>Community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• concerns that an influx of temporary workers may disrupt rural lifestyle and may impact upon community cohesion in townships</li> <li>• concerns that the project could exacerbate existing tensions within communities between those that benefit financially from renewable projects and those that do not</li> <li>• anxiety regarding project uncertainty and uncertainty of potential impacts on rural lifestyle</li> <li>• concerns in relation to how the transmission line route will impact the community</li> <li>• concern regarding ongoing population decline in small communities and the potential outmigration of generational farming families from the local area</li> </ul>	<p>Associated and non-associated landowners, and local community members</p>	<p>EIS section 6.11 Social and Appendix O</p>

**Table D.3 Summary of key issues raised during EIS engagement – Community and service providers**

Issue	Raised By	EIS / Appendix Reference
<p>Housing and accommodation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• concern regarding project impacts on short term accommodation availability and private rental availability in Dunedoo, Gulgong, Mudgee during the construction phase. It was noted that the private rental markets in these locations already experience significant unmet demand and increasing rental rates</li> <li>• concern that increased pressure on private rental accommodation within the communities of Mudgee, Gulgong and Dunedoo may lead to existing tenants being priced-out of the local area</li> <li>• concern that increased pressure on short-term accommodation may restrict access to short-term accommodation for emergency purposes e.g. for victims of domestic violence, or people experiencing acute homelessness</li> <li>• discussion regarding the cumulative effect of multiple major projects on the private rental market and access for low-income households</li> </ul>	Service providers	EIS section 6.11 Social and Appendix O
<p>Traffic and transport:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• increased traffic (workforce travel and truck movements) on local roads may increase road noise, increase commuter journey times and adversely impact road safety</li> </ul>	Service providers	EIS section 6.4 Traffic and transport, 6.11 Social and Appendix O, Appendix H
<p>Livestock and farming:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• concerns regarding project impacts on agricultural farming activities such as stock movement across roads</li> </ul>	Service providers	EIS section 6.8 Land resources, 6.11 Social and Appendix O, Appendix L
<p>Livelihood:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• employment and training opportunities</li> <li>• project induced labour force growth may present opportunities to fill vacancies in other industry sectors e.g. health</li> <li>• improved access to training and upskilling opportunities for local residents, particularly local Aboriginal people</li> <li>• long term sustainable employment opportunities for local people, particularly local Aboriginal people</li> <li>• potential apprenticeship opportunities</li> </ul>	Service providers / Employment and labour hire agencies	EIS section 6.11 Social and Appendix O
<p>Community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• concern that project induced population growth and an influx of temporary workers could disrupt rural lifestyle and community cohesion</li> <li>• potential for population growth with flow-on benefits to local schools (enrolment increases), and labour force growth with flow-on benefits to other industry sectors with vacant roles e.g. health sector</li> </ul>	Service providers	EIS section 6.11 Social and Appendix O
<p>Visual amenity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• concerns regarding the visual impact of the project, specifically potential impacts on sense of place, rural character, and community values</li> </ul>	Service providers	EIS section 6.3 Visual, 6.11 Social and Appendix O, Appendix G



**Table D.3 Summary of key issues raised during EIS engagement – Community and service providers**

Issue	Raised By	EIS / Appendix Reference
Decommissioning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>potential future impacts associated with project decommissioning and future land use</li> </ul>	Service providers	EIS section 6.11 Social and Appendix O
Hazards and safety: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>public safety / fire risks concerns and the perceived view on public safety and health risks due to the project</li> </ul>	Service providers	EIS section 6.6 Hazards and risks, 6.12 Bushfire, 6.11 Social and Appendix O, Appendix J and Appendix P
Community benefit sharing programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>discussions regarding community investment opportunities. e.g. potential shared value opportunities for ACEN to include the direct provision of training programs, particularly targeting youth and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander</li> </ul>	Service providers / Employment and labour hire agencies	EIS section 6.11 Social and Appendix O
Housing and accommodation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>concerns regarding the capacity of the regional area to meet workforce accommodation demands in light of existing sustained high demand from the tourism industry and other projects</li> <li>discussions in relation to potential workforce accommodation options including the availability and capacity of existing accommodation options</li> </ul>	Short-term accommodation providers / Real Estate Agents	EIS section 6.11 Social and Appendix O
Economics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>potential economic benefits for short-term accommodation operators in the regional area</li> </ul>	Short-term accommodation providers / Real Estate Agents	EIS section 6.11 Social and Appendix O
Noise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential for sleep disturbance due to increased truck movements in towns</li> </ul>	Service providers	EIS section 6.7 Noise and vibration, 6.11 Social and Appendix O, Appendix K
Health and wellbeing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>concerns regarding the capacity of the local and regional health services to meet workforce health demands in light of existing high demand from the existing community</li> </ul>	Service providers	EIS section 6.11 Social and Appendix O
Biodiversity and environment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>questions raised on the assessment of potential biodiversity impacts and concerns the biodiversity surveys were not done at adequate seasons</li> <li>concerns regarding the decommissioning and rehabilitation of the site</li> <li>concerns expressed regarding potential post decommissioning land capability due to reduced investment in infrastructure fertilizer use etc over the operations phase</li> </ul>	Service providers	EIS section 6.2 Biodiversity, 6.9 and Appendix O, Appendix F

**Table D..4 Summary of key issues raised during EIS engagement – Other stakeholders**

Issue	Raised By	EIS / Appendix Reference
<p>Community benefit sharing and investment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• potential for the project community benefit sharing scheme to assist the CWC Trail Inc with improvements to the CWC Trail</li> <li>• potential opportunities for funding of community projects</li> </ul>	<p>Central West Cycle Trail Inc, Broader community members / Rural fire service / Dunedoo show society</p>	<p>EIS section 6.11 Social and Appendix O</p>
<p>Housing and Accommodation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• concerns about the Impacts on short term accommodation during construction and the impacts on cyclists and general tourists to the area</li> <li>• discussions around construction workforce accommodation and strategic planning around the accommodation</li> </ul>	<p>Central West Cycle Trail Inc</p>	<p>EIS section 6.11 Social and Appendix O</p>
<p>Social fabric and community cohesion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• concerns on the Impacts on close neighbours providing morning teas to cyclists</li> <li>• positive support for the project and the flow on effects e.g. increased population might bring more children for the schools or skills works for health care roles</li> </ul>	<p>Central West Cycle Trail Inc, Broader community members</p>	<p>EIS section 6.11 Social and Appendix O</p>
<p>Visual amenity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• concerns of the visual and rural amenity of the area and if this would impact CWC</li> </ul>	<p>Central West Cycle Trail Inc</p>	<p>EIS section 6.3 Visual, 6.11 Social and Appendix O, Appendix G</p>
<p>Safety:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• concerns were raised regarding the safety of cyclists on the CWC Trail given the potential increase in vehicle movements (light and heavy) during project construction</li> <li>• concerns raised regarding the impact of the project on the attractiveness of the CWC Trail given the potential increase in vehicle movements during project construction</li> </ul>	<p>Central West Cycle Trail Inc</p>	<p>EIS section, 6.4 Traffic and transport, 6.11 Social and Appendix O, Appendix H</p>
<p>Hazard and safety:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• concerns regarding the fire risk associated with solar projects and resulting demands on local and district rural fire services</li> </ul>	<p>Rural fire service</p>	<p>EIS section 6.12 Bushfire, 6.11 Social and Appendix O, Appendix P</p>