Brewongle Solar Farm

Social Impact Assessment

PREPARED FOR
Edify Energy Pty Ltd

DATE
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0735137

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Brewongle Solar Farm

Social Impact Assessment
0735137

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Name	Description
AAS	Australian Anthropological Society
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACHAR	Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report
BDAR	Biodiversity Development Assessment Report
CBF	Community Benefit Fund
CHMP	Cultural Heritage Management Plan
DPE	NSW Department of Planning and Environment (formerly DPIE)
DPHI	NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (formerly DPE)
DPIE	NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
DRP	Decommissioning and Rehabilitation Plan
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EPBC	Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act, 1999
GPG	Global Power Generation Australia
GPS	Global Positioning Systems
GW	Gigawatts
ha	Hectares
IAIA	International Association for Impact Assessment
ICNG	Interim Construction Noise Guideline
km	Kilometres
kV	Kilovolts
(L)	Locality
LALC	Local Aboriginal Land Council
LGA	Local Government Area
LVIA	Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
m	Metres
MNES	Matters of National Environmental Significance
MW	Megawatts
MWh	Megawatt Hours
NIA	Noise Impact Assessment
NPI	Noise Policy for Industry
NSW	New South Wales
OSOM	Over Size and Over Mass
PNTL	Project noise trigger levels

Name	Description
RAPs	Registered Aboriginal Parties
REZ	Renewable Energy Zone
RSH	Rotor Sweep Height
RSL	Returned Services League
SA1	ABS Statistical Area 1
SA EPA	South Australia Environmental Protection Agency
SEARs	Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements
SEIFA	ABS Socio-Economic Index for Areas
SEP	Stakeholder Engagement Plan
SSD	State Significant Development
TIA	Traffic Impact Assessment
WHO	World Health Organisation
WTG	Wind turbine generator

1. INTRODUCTION

Edify Energy Pty Ltd ('Edify' or the 'Applicant') proposes to construct, operate, maintain, and decommission the Brewongle Solar Farm and Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) (the 'Project') located in the locality of Brewongle, Bathurst of New South Wales (NSW).

The Applicant is seeking State Significant Development (SSD) consent for the Project under Part 4, Division 4.7 of the *Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act). Environmental Resources Management Australia Pty Ltd (ERM) has prepared this Social Impact Assessment (SIA) for the Project on behalf of Edify, and as part of the SSD consent process. This SIA covers social aspects of planning, construction, operation, decommissioning for the Project.

1.1 THE APPLICANT

Edify is a market leading, Australian-owned renewable energy company with significant experience in developing and project financing renewable projects across NSW and Australia. Since being founded in 2015, Edify has financed seven (7) large-scale solar generation projects (770 megawatt (MW) total combined generating capacity), an 84 megavolt-amperes (MVA) synchronous condenser and three utility-scale BESS, 360MW / 720 megawatt hours (MWh) total generating capacity. Edify has broad energy expertise, covering project development, project design and engineering, financing, asset management and construction management.

The management team at Edify has more than 150 years' combined experience in the power and renewables sector. Collectively they have raised and deployed around $3 billion in capital globally, bringing over 40 solar and wind projects into commercial operation. They have also advised on over 10 gigawatts (GW) (around $25 billion) of projects during development, construction and operation, and managed an operational portfolio of more than 1.7 GW.

Edify supports the full life-cycle of renewable energy projects during development, construction and operation, including greenfield development, project structuring and financing, construction management and a full asset management offering, including trading and operations.

The philosophy of Edify is to ensure that its interests are closely aligned with its investment partners and community stakeholders. In addition to providing long-term asset management services, Edify seeks to maintain a long-term equity interest in its projects, resulting in best-in-class assets. This long-term business model is a distinguishing feature of Edify and should further instil confidence that the community is entering into a credible, long-term partnership. Edify aims to establish relationships with various local stakeholders during the development phase, which will endure for the lifetime of the Projects, with Edify acting as Asset Manager once the Project is operational.

The Australian Business Number (ABN) and address are listed below:

- **ABN**: 85 606 684 995.
- **Address**: Level 4, 22 Darly Road, Manly, NSW.

1.2 PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Project is located at 315 Tarana Road, Brewongle, NSW, approximately 12 kilometres (km) from the Bathurst town centre. The Project Area is located within the Bathurst Regional Local Government Area (LGA) across three (3) separate lot parcels, which have been secured under an option agreement with Edify. The Project Area is located on land predominately used for agricultural activities.

The Project involves the construction, operation, and where relevant decommissioning of:

- Photovoltaic (PV) solar facility with an estimated capacity of up to 90 MW Alternating Current (AC);
- A BESS with a capacity of up to 90 MW/180 MWh;
- Electrical reticulation; and
- Associated and ancillary infrastructure.

The Project is anticipated to connect into the existing TransGrid 132 kilovolt (kV) overhead transmission line, running from Wallerawang to Panorama (transmission line number 94X). Details of consultation undertaken to date with TransGrid regarding the Project connecting to line 94X are provided in **Section 5** of the EIS.

The objective of the Project is to generate new and dispatchable low carbon electricity supply for NSW. Subject to the necessary approvals, Edify anticipates construction of the Project to commence in 2027.

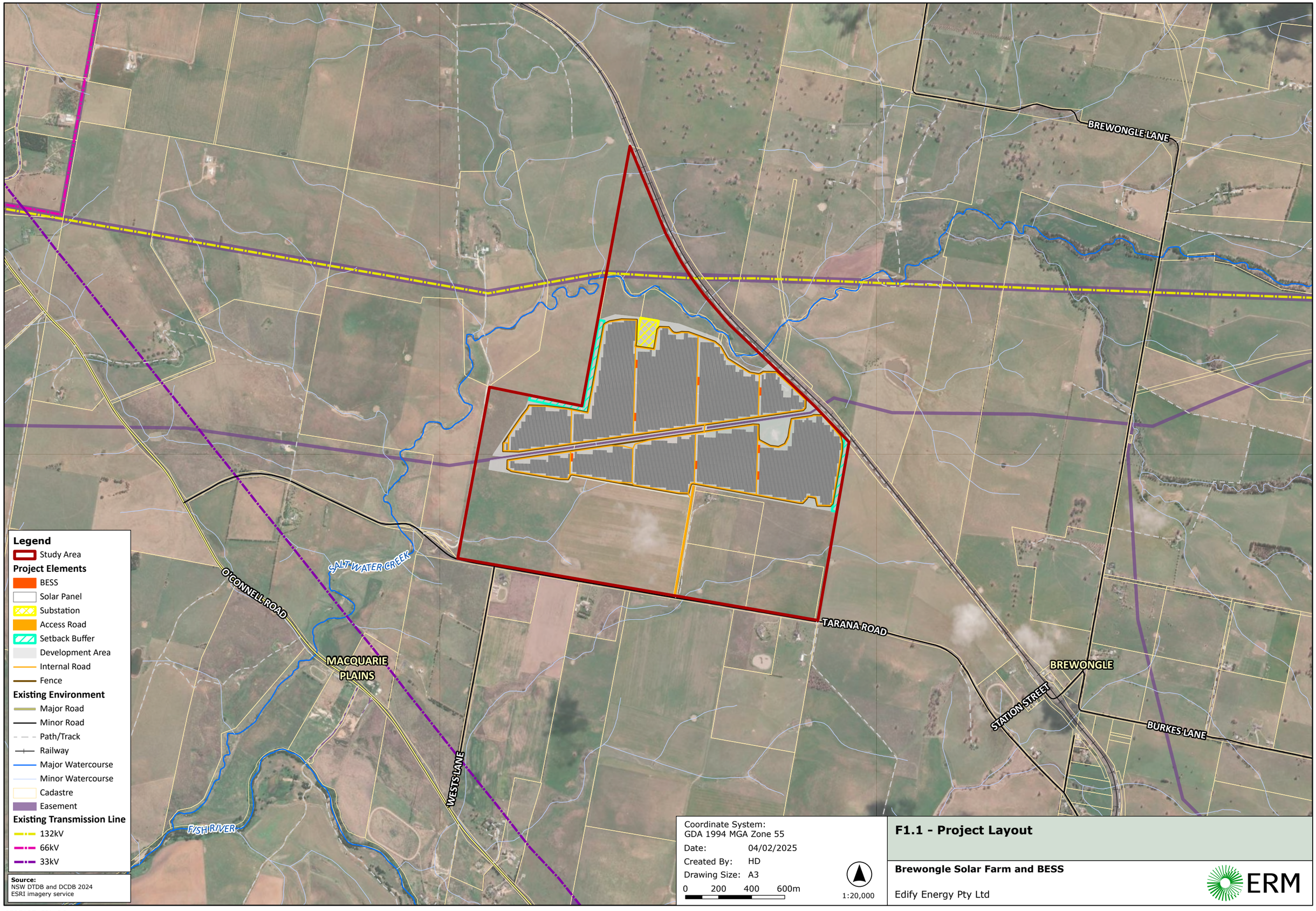
The Project covers a total area of 299 hectares (ha), with an anticipated Impact Area of approximately 153 ha. The Impact Area represents the maximum expected impact area associated with the construction and operation of the Project, consisting of:

- Temporary Impact Area, which is the area of land that will be temporarily disturbed during the construction of the Project, with areas being rehabilitated following construction; and
- Long-term Impact Area, which is the area of land that will remain disturbed throughout the operational life of the Project and will not be suitable for agricultural use. This will include infrastructure areas such as the BESS, switchyard, substation, associated facilities (laydown area, control building) and asset protection zones (APZs).

The final layout remains subject to further detailed design and refinement. To allow the Applicant to make general design refinements without the need to modify the application, the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) has assessed impacts for an area that includes temporary and permanent Project infrastructure.

Figure 1-1 shows the Project Layout comprised of a PV solar farm, BESS and associated infrastructure.

Figure 1-2 situates the Project Area within the context of the surrounding regional setting.



F1.1 - Project Layout

Brewongle Solar Farm and BESS

Edify Energy Pty Ltd

ERM

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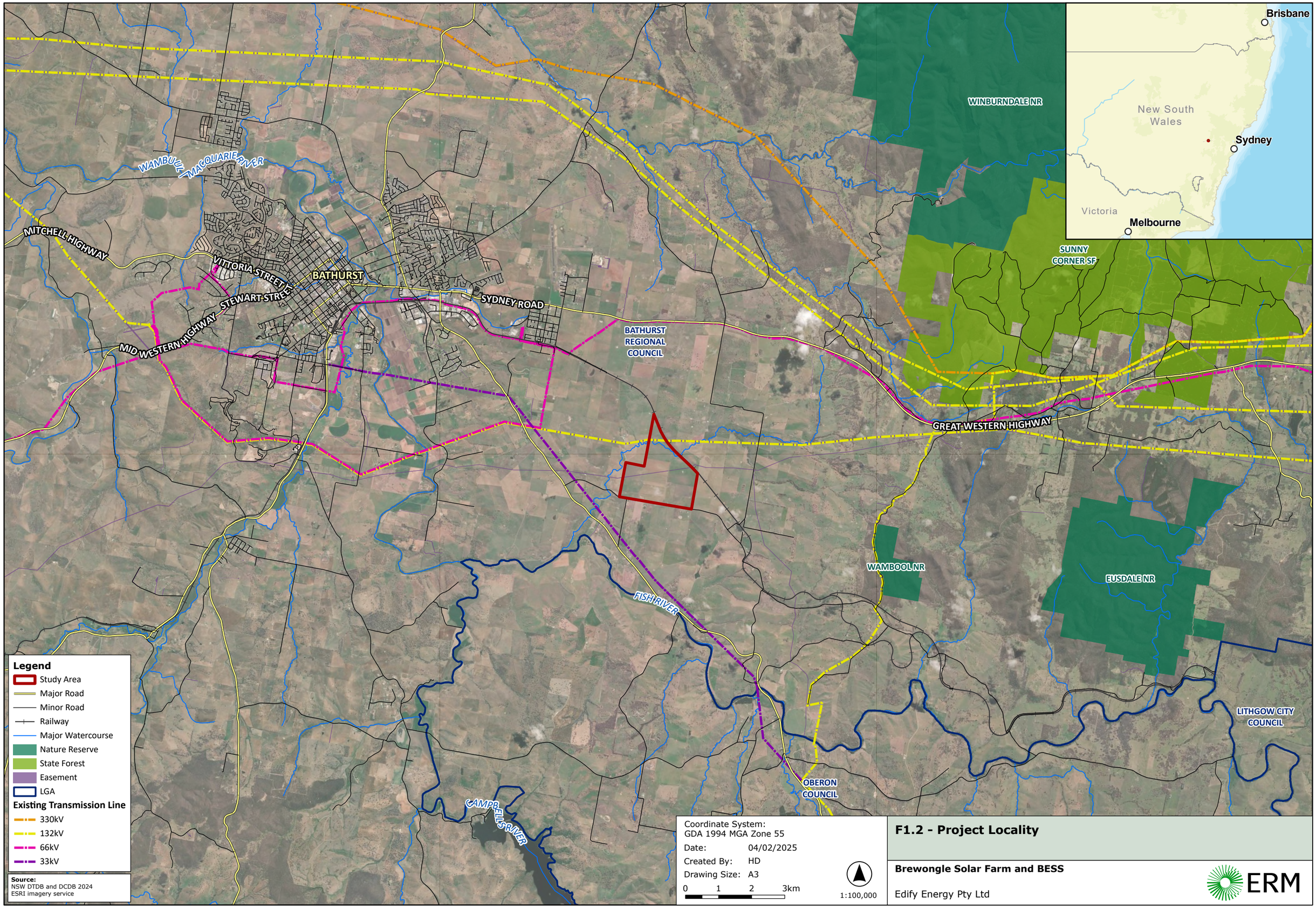

F1.2 - Project Locality

Brewongle Solar Farm and BESS

Edify Energy Pty Ltd

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1.3 PURPOSE AND OUTLINE

This SIA has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the Guideline (DPE 2023a) and Technical Supplement (DPE 2023b). The purpose of this SIA is to provide the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (formerly DPE) (DPHI) with an understanding of the Project's potential social impacts, and how these social impacts are identified, assessed, managed, and monitored, consistent with the legislative and regulatory context outlined above.

The SIA is structured as follows:

- **Section 2** provides an overview of the SIA methodology;
- **Section 3** describes the scoping for the Project's Social Locality and Stakeholder Identification, including **Section 3.3.2**, which provides an overview of stakeholder engagement activities undertaken for the Project to-date, focusing on engagement relevant to the SIA;
- **Section 4** presents the Project's legislative and regulatory context;
- **Section 5** describes the existing baseline conditions in the Project's Social Locality;
- **Section 6** assesses the social impacts that may result from the Project, provides an overview of enhancement and mitigation measures, and a rating of residual impacts; and
- **Section 7** outlines and approach that will be followed in monitoring and managing social impacts into the construction, operation and decommissioning phases of the Project.

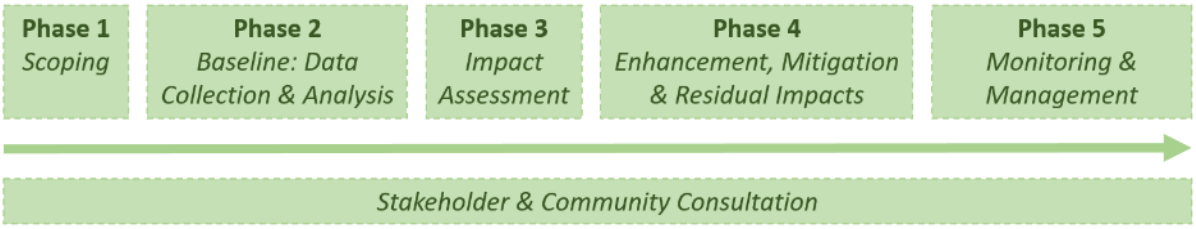
1.4 AUTHORSHIP

The SIA report was drafted by Dr Hilton Penfold who holds a PhD in Human Geography from the University of Wollongong and Loucky Spit, SIA project manager, who holds a MSc in Social Sciences (International Relations) from the University of Amsterdam. The report was reviewed from a technical perspective by Paula Saad, who has over 15 years' experience in the field of social performance (including SIA) and holds a BSc in Urban Planning from the Mackenzie Presbyterian University and a BSc in Anthropology from the University of Barcelona and is a member of the International Association of Impact Assessment (IAIA).

2. SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

This SIA has been prepared in accordance with the NSW Guideline and Technical Supplement (DPE 2023a, 2023b), which aims to enhance the rigour applied to SIAs with a view to minimising impacts and enhancing benefits in line with good international industry practice. The assessment has been undertaken in accordance with these Guidelines and the Project SEARs (outlined in **Section 4.1**). **Figure 2-1** outlines the steps taken to complete the SIA, which are described in the following sections.

FIGURE 2-1 SIA PROCESS



2.1 PHASE 1: SCOPING

Following good international industry practice (Vanclay et al 2015) and the NSW Guideline and Technical Supplement (DPE 2023a, 2023b), the scoping undertaken for this SIA aimed to:

- Capture and characterise the likely social impacts to inform Project planning;
- Enable a consistent but scalable approach to SIA where the level of assessment is proportionate to the scale and nature of the likely social impacts;
- Consider the information to be assessed during the SIA scoping and initial assessment and the approach to community engagement;
- Identify potential Project refinements and possible mitigation and enhancement measures; and
- Identify the impacts that may require further assessment in the EIS and the possible level of assessment for each impact.

The SIA also made use of DPHI's Social Impact Assessment Worksheet (scoping worksheet) (DPHI 2024b), which helped to identify potential social impacts through the following steps:

- Identification of Project activities that may cause impacts;
- Categorisation of impacts according to their effects on way of life, community, accessibility, culture, health and wellbeing, surroundings, livelihoods, decision-making system; and whether the impacts are positive or negative, tangible or intangible;
- Determination as to which prior investigations are relevant to the Project;
- Identification of cumulative and combined impacts, including spatial, temporal, and linked impacts;
- Definition of material impact, including the extent of people affected, duration of impacts, intensity/scale of impacts, sensitivity of the people affected, and their level of concern or interest; and
- Assignment of assessment levels, such as detailed, standard, minor, or not relevant, for each identified impact.

2.2 PHASE 2: SOCIAL BASELINE DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

The social baseline describes the social context without the Project. It documents the existing social environment, conditions and trends relevant to the impacts identified. The social baseline is the benchmark against which direct, indirect and cumulative impacts are predicted and analysed.

The scope and content of the social baseline has been tailored to the Project context and the level of assessment of social impacts using meaningful indicators and information, including stakeholder engagement activities relevant to the SIA (**Section 3.3.4**). Where scoping identified that primary data was required for the assessment, stakeholder engagement activities for the EIS were adapted to provide this information (**Section 3**).

The data collected and presented in this SIA is based on a review of available data from a range of primary and secondary sources. This includes, but is not limited to:

- The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) – Census (Community Profile), Socio-Economic Index for Areas (SEIFA), etc.;
- NSW Government Department data (e.g., NSW Health, Transport for NSW, and NSW Police Force);
- Local Government data;
- Stakeholder engagement outcomes – community insights, including issues and concerns, gathered through the stakeholder consultation process (**Section 3.3.43.3.2**);
- Local and State government planning, policy, and strategy documentation; and
- Company plans, policies and other documents.

Combined, this data seeks to portray community values, and how people and the things they value may be impacted by the Project. This includes consideration of:

- The features of the community, the social locality, and/or the landscape that people value which ranges from urban areas and the sense of community or the accessibility of services that the community experiences, to natural and diverse environments or quiet/vibrant neighbourhoods;
- How these features influence local people's way of life, community, accessibility, culture, health or wellbeing, surroundings, livelihoods, and decision-making systems;
- How the Project might affect these features, and for which groups;
- How the Project could be modified to enhance these features and how they affect people's wellbeing; and
- How the Project may be designed to avoid and minimise any short-term adverse impacts.

In considering the above, the social baseline identifies and describes: the different social groups who may be affected by the Project; all the built and natural features that local people value and why they value them; the historical, current and expected social trends, including as a result of this Project and other projects in the area; the various social elements of value, and interpretations of them[1] while demonstrating appropriate social-science research methods and data limitations.

[1] Social elements of value to people are defined in the Guideline as people's: way of life, community, accessibility, culture, health and wellbeing, surroundings, livelihoods, and decision-making systems (DPIE 2023a, p. 7).

The key limitations of the data collection and analysis undertaken for the SIA are provided in **Table 2-1.**

TABLE 2-1 LIMITATIONS OF THE SIA DATA COLLECTION

Limitations	Description	Adopted Methods to Address
Subjectivity	Qualitative data can be influenced by community perceptions, biases, and values. Whilst these aspects have sought to be validated through the data analysis conducted there always remains the possibility of these influences remaining.	The SIA and amended SIA employed the method of data triangulation to reduce the potential for subjectivity and enhance the reliability of conclusions and strengthen the overall validity of the results obtained in the assessment process. Triangulation entails cross-referencing findings from multiple data sources (qualitative and quantitative), research methodologies (i.e., various methods employed by each technical assessment) and community perspectives (supportive, neutral and oppositional). Accordingly, the SIA draws on a combination of both qualitative and quantitative data sets, including Project specifications, baseline data, multiple sources of stakeholder engagement and technical studies conducted for the EIS.
Data Collection	Time and resource constraints and concern about consultation fatigue in communities make best practice social science data collection difficult to achieve.	In addition to stakeholder engagement data, the SIA and amended SIA have utilised the multiple sources of stakeholder engagement across the various technical studies undertaken for the EIS and subsequent development of the SIA. Accordingly, the extent of data presented within the SIA is appropriate for the nature and scale of the Project.
Cumulative impacts	Cumulative impact assessments are carried out in accordance with Cumulative Impact Assessment Guidelines for State Significant Projects. These assessments are typically based on the limited amount of publicly available information of surrounding projects applying for Development Approval. The limited extent of information, and associated knowledge gaps, results in a fragmented approach to forecasting cumulative social impacts. For example, there is limited data surrounding the various factors affecting the future supply and demand for housing, which could have an impact on the availability of accommodation for the non-local workforce.	Stakeholder engagement asked direct questions about the perception of cumulative impacts to key stakeholders. Additionally, the amended SIA provides an overview of proximate SSDs with potential for cumulative impacts. The SIA has also considered the social implications of the cumulative impact assessments conducted by all relevant technical appendices of the EIS.

Limitations	Description	Adopted Methods to Address
Predictivity	SIAs are conducted before a project is implemented and subsequently prior to the community experiencing both Project benefits and impacts.	Some of the social impacts identified in this report are those which have the potential to occur in the future. In identifying and assessing potential impacts, the SIA has drawn on academic literature (with a focus on studies that have evaluated impacts of similar types of projects), and insights from experienced practitioners. In addition, consideration is given to existing and emerging community trends to help identify potential impacts that may occur, and their likely significance.
Scope	The scope of this SIA may be bounded by its Social Locality, which creates focus but may narrow perspective.	This limitation is addressed through considerations when defining the Social Locality (refer to **Section 3.1**), as well as utilising outcomes of other relevant technical studies.
Stakeholder Engagement	Stakeholder engagement could be insufficient and/or ineffective if not done thoroughly.	An approach for community and stakeholder engagement activities and associated outcomes that are considered desirable and relevant to this SIA are presented in **Section 3.3**. If deemed necessary during stakeholder engagement, the Project will consider alternative engagement options, e.g. to reduce stakeholder fatigue (refer to **Section 6.1.2**).
Effectiveness of this SIA	Often, social impacts assessed during the early stages of a project are not properly addressed afterwards.	This limitation is addressed through an overview of recommended monitoring and management measures, which are to be put in place during the Construction and Operation Phases of the Project, including clarity on roles and responsibilities (refer to **Section 7**).

2.3 PHASE 3: IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The impact assessment undertaken in the SIA differs from the EIS by placing people at the centre and considering the impacts from their perspective. The primary and secondary data collected and compiled for the social baseline, including community voices, is then assessed with the rigorous impact significance methodology, as described in the Technical Supplement (2023b).

In this approach, impact significance is understood as the likelihood of an impact occurring combined with the magnitude of impacts, both positive and negative, and prior to the application of any mitigation or management measures. The likelihood level refers to the probability of a social impact occurring as a result of the Project, while the magnitude is considered as a combination of the following characteristics rated from very low to very high:

- **Extent:** Who specifically is expected to be affected (directly, indirectly, and/or cumulatively), including any potential vulnerable people? Which location(s) and people are affected? (e.g., near neighbours, local, regional);

- **Duration:** When is the social impact expected to occur? Will it be time-limited (e.g., over particular Project phases) or permanent?
- **Severity:** What is the likely scale or degree of change? (e.g., mild, moderate, severe);
- **Sensitivity:** How sensitive/vulnerable (or how adaptable/resilient) are affected people to the impact, or (for positive impacts) how important is it to them?

  This might depend on the value they attach to the matter; whether it is rare/unique or replaceable; the extent to which it is tied to their identity; and their capacity to cope with or adapt to change; and
- **Level of Concern/Interest:** How concerned/interested are people? Sometimes, concerns may be disproportionate to findings from technical assessments of likelihood, duration and/or severity. Concern itself can lead to negative impacts, while interest can lead to expectations of positive impacts.

Qualitative and quantitative indicators described in the social baseline are used inform an understanding of the social impacts identified in the scoping phase across each of these five characteristics.

The **magnitude** for each impact from the following five levels can then be defined on the following scale:

- **Transformational:** Substantial change experienced in community wellbeing, livelihood, infrastructure, services, health, and/or heritage values; permanent displacement or addition of at least 20% of a community;
- **Major:** Substantial deterioration/improvement to something that people value highly, either lasting for an indefinite time, or affecting many people in a widespread area;
- **Moderate:** Noticeable deterioration/improvement to something that people value highly, either lasting for an extensive time, or affecting a group of people;
- **Minor:** Mild deterioration/improvement, for a reasonably short time, for a small number of people who are generally adaptable and not vulnerable; and
- **Minimal:** Little noticeable change experienced by people in the locality.

The likelihood of an impact occurring along with its magnitude of impact as assessed above combine to yield a rating of social impact significance, as described in **Table 2-2**.

TABLE 2-2 ADAPTED DPHI SOCIAL IMPACT SIGNIFICANCE MATRIX (2023B)

		Magnitude level				
		1 Minimal	**2 Minor**	**3 Moderate**	**4 Major**	**5 Transformational**
Likelihood level	A Almost certain	Medium	Medium	High	Very High	Very High
	B Likely	Low	Medium	High	High	Very High
	C Possible	Low	Medium	Medium	High	High
	D Unlikely	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High
	E Very unlikely	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium
*Where impacts are positive the following colour scale is used:						
	Positive		Low	Medium	High	Very High

2.4 PHASE 4: ENHANCEMENT, MITIGATION AND RESIDUAL IMPACTS

Following the assessment of impacts, measures to avoid and/or minimise negative impacts are considered, including those implemented in earlier stages of Project planning and development. Where avoidance or minimisation is not possible, management strategies are identified. Where an impact is predicted to be positive, measures to enhance positive impacts are identified to ensure the maximum benefit to the community across all impact significance ratings.

The following factors (DPIE 2023b, p. 15) were considered in the development of mitigation measures:

- Ensuring a clear connection between the mitigation measure and the negative social impact being mitigated;
- Whether there is an applicable standard that defines what is acceptable;
- Whether the Project is the sole or primary cause of the negative social impact, and the scale of its relative contribution to the overall or cumulative impact;
- Whether the mitigation measure requires action by another party separate to the proponent;
- Whether the mitigation measure itself is likely to cause secondary social impacts;
- Whether the mitigation measure is reasonable or practicable;
- Whether and in what ways the mitigation measure is acceptable to affected people;
- Whether the mitigation measure will address all reasonably foreseeable scenarios; and
- Whether the mitigation approach is prescribed in a government policy, or if alternative formalised arrangements are required.

Social impact significance, as outlined in **Table 2-2**, is used to determine the level of management required with a proportional focus on impacts with a higher impact significance (i.e., medium, high and very high). The impact assessment and impact significance ratings derived in the assessment are revised after the application of management and mitigation strategies have been applied to provide a residual impact significance rating for each impact.

These management and mitigation strategies are arranged according to Project phase (e.g., Construction and Operation) and into in the following categories: stakeholder and community; employment and procurement; local disruptions during construction; accommodation and worker influx; land use and landscape, and cumulative impacts. The management and mitigation strategies summarised in **Section 7** provide a preliminary Social Impact Management Plan (SIMP). The preliminary SIMP focuses on effective, adaptive, and actionable measures and includes consideration of the likelihood of their implementation and sustainability from the community's perspective.

2.5 PHASE 5: MONITORING AND MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

The accuracy of the impact assessment, progress towards implementation of the SIMP, and the effectiveness of measures it contains is accompanied by a monitoring and management framework. The framework (and subsequent plan) includes and program for monitoring the predicted social impacts against actual impacts and describes:

- The desired outcomes in social terms, including measures and strategies detailed in the SIMP;
- The indicator(s) that will be used to monitor change;
- The targets against which performance will be assessed;
- The methods that will be used to monitor the social impact;
- The frequency of monitoring;
- The roles and responsibilities involved in the monitoring framework (and subsequent plan); and
- The process for responding to monitoring results, including the process, and roles and responsibilities for identifying and implementing adaptive management strategies as required.

The framework also outlines any relevant social incident notification and reporting process, a program for ongoing analysis of social impacts positive and negative, identification of any data gaps and how they might be addressed, and processes for reviewing and reporting on the results of monitoring. Monitoring and evaluation plans are conditions typically applied during the Project's state assessment and approvals process. The framework outlined in **Section 7** provides the basis for developing a more detailed plan that will be required to meet this likely condition of approval and will be consistent with any additional SIMP development that may also likely be required as conditions of approval.

3. SCOPING: SOCIAL LOCALITY AND STAKEHOLDER IDENTIFICATION

This section outlines the scoping process for the SIA, which focuses on defining the Social Locality and identifying key stakeholders. It provides detail to the physical and operational attributes of the Project to determine the impacted communities and routes, using demographic and geographic data to support the analysis. It also provides an overview and categorisation of stakeholders identified, including landowners, local councils, and Aboriginal communities, which is essential for undertaking targeted engagement, analysis of engagement data and impact mitigation strategies.

3.1 APPROACH TO DETERMINING THE SOCIAL LOCALITY

The first step in a SIA is the scoping process, which helps to define the social area of influence, or Social Locality, as well as the potential interactions between the Project and people surrounding the Project who may experience impacts. For the purposes of the SIA, these include individuals, households, groups, communities, businesses, and other types of organisations. Key terms that categorise different members of the local population are provided below:

- *Receptors* are defined as those individuals or entities that are directly affected by the project. Various technical studies for the EIS refer to receptors who may be directly impacted by changes to noise, air quality and traffic;
- *Stakeholders*, on the other hand, can refer to groups or organisations that represents several people with an interest in a State significant project. Stakeholders can be more actively involved in the project, having a stake in its process and outcomes;
- *Sensitive receptors* typically refer to specific locations or populations that are particularly vulnerable to changes and impacts from a project. Examples include schools, hospitals, and communities with heightened environmental or social vulnerabilities;
- *Vulnerable groups* are subsets of the population that might experience disproportionate impacts due to their socioeconomic status, health, age, or cultural significance; and
- *Sensitive Receivers* is a term used in the visual impact assessment guidelines (Transport for NSW, 2023).

In determining the Project's Social Locality, the following Project aspects were taken into consideration:

- The number of solar panels and their locations across the Project Area, and the layout of the access tracks, the substation, BESS (centralised and/or decentralised) and transmission line;
- The location of these components within the overall Project Area relative to sensitive land uses. This included proximity to environmental values and topographical features; and
- Construction, operation and decommissioning phase activities, such as:
    - Land clearing and ongoing access for maintenance;
    - Workforce requirements, including skills required and accommodation arrangements;
    - Goods and services required by the Project; and
    - Haulage routes to and from the Project Area.

When considering these aspects, it was determined that the Project's Social Locality should include the Project Area, the area surrounding the Project Area wherein noise, visual and other amenity impacts may occur, the haulage routes where similar amenity impacts may be experienced, and the communities in larger centres that may provide workers or goods and services to the Project.

3.2 DESCRIPTION OF THE SOCIAL LOCALITY

The Project is located on the central eastern portion of the Bathurst Regional LGA. Transportation (e.g., haulage routes) and other impacts are likely to be concentrated to the Bathurst LGA (notably O'Connell Road and Tarana Road) and major highways connected to the Great Western Highway (A32). Bathurst Urban Centres and Localities (UCL) will likely be the primary area for sourcing goods and services to support the Construction Phase of the Project due to its proximity (16 minutes by car) and size (36,230 population).

The Project's Social Locality, as defined for the purposes of the SIA, is comprised of the following three (3) components:

- The **Project Area and immediate surrounding areas**, located within the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) LGA of Bathurst Regional Council. The local level ABS Area containing the Project Area is the Statistical Area Level 1 (SA1) No. 10301106002. A 4 km buffer from the Project boundary was used to capture the visual impact zone for the Project. There are three (3) local level statistical areas that intersect a 4km buffer of the Project Area, which include:
  - ABS Suburbs and Localities (SAL) Glanmire (Adjacent to the North of the Project Area);
  - ABS SAL The Lagoon (1.5 km to the South-South-West of the Project Area); and
  - ABS SA1 No. 10301105903 (1.8 km to the North-East of the Project Area).

  SA1 and SAL data has been used to identify key baseline indicators for the areas of the Social Locality immediately surrounding the Project Area, which encompasses sensitive receptors. Additionally, LGA level data for the Bathurst Regional LGA and State level data for NSW are used to provide an understanding of the broader and comparative social context within which the Project is located;
- The **transportation and haulage routes** to the Project is proposed via a new access road connecting with Tarana Road to O'Connell Road via the A32. It is expected that heavy vehicles would travel along a direct route between Port Botany and the site via the A32 through the Blue Mountains region. Indicative travel distances from the approximate centre of the Project Area are provided in **Table 3-1**. A 1km buffer along the transportation and haulage route connecting the A32 has been provided in consideration of social impacts relating to traffic. The A32 is an approved network for Oversize and Overmass (OSOM) and B-Doubles; and
- The **surrounding towns and regional centres** within a one-hour commute by road vehicle that may provide goods and services to support the Construction Phase of the Project include the following statistical areas:
  - Bathurst UCL;

- Perthville (L)[2] UCL;
- Oberon UCL;
- Blayney UCL;
- Lithgow Significant Urban Areas (SUA); and
- Orange SUA.

Indicative travel distances to the Project Area are provided in **Table 3-1.**

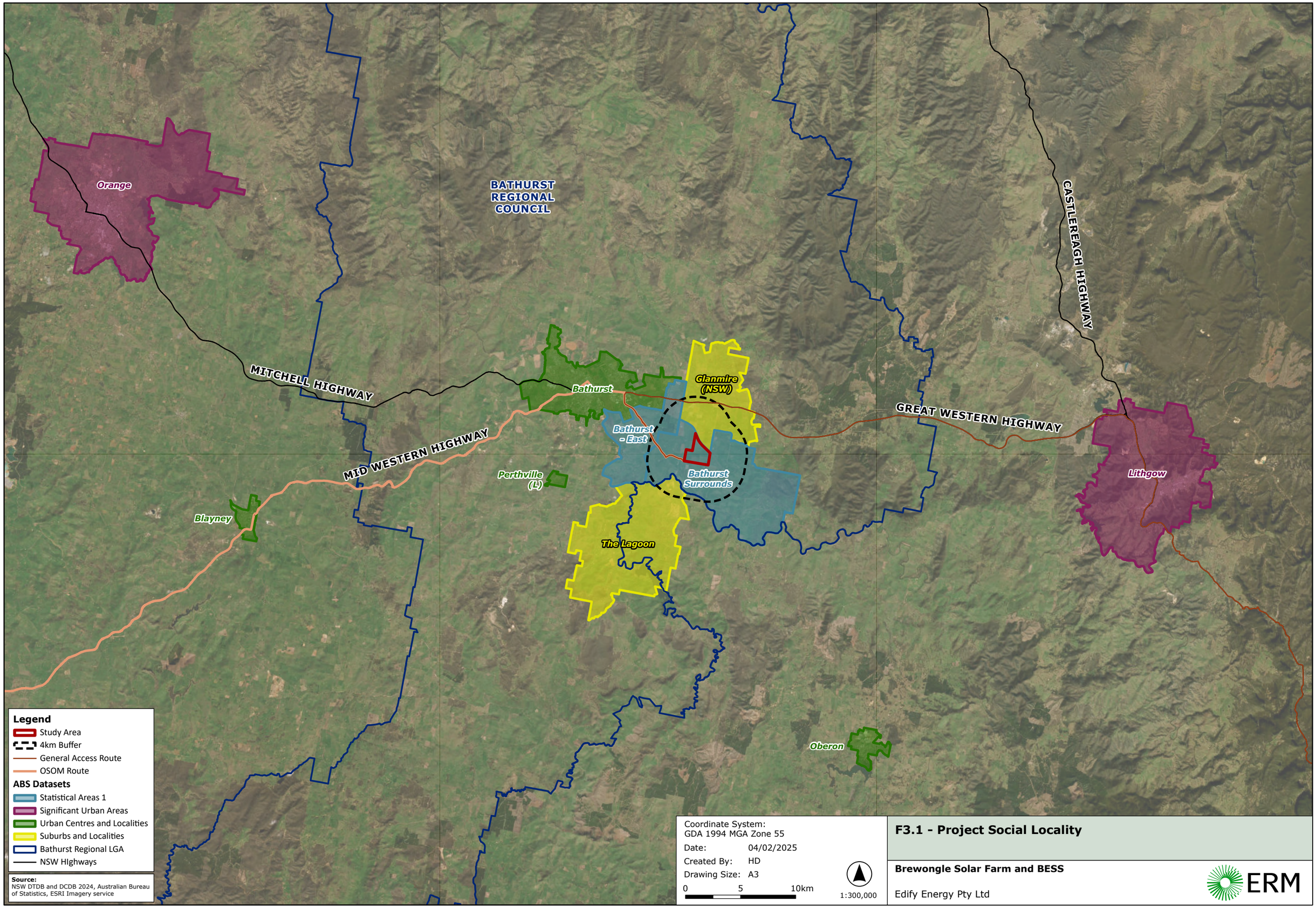
TABLE 3-1 VEHICULAR TRAVEL DISTANCES FROM THE APPROXIMATE ACCESS POINTS OF THE PROJECT AREA

Town/Regional Centre	Travel distance (min)
Bathurst	16
Perthville (L)	19
Oberon	30
Blayney	42
Lithgow	45
Orange	64

ABS UCLs and SUAs provide baseline data for these towns and regional centres.

The Project Area and immediate surrounding areas, transportation and haulage routes, and surrounding towns and regional centres form the Social Locality, as depicted **Figure 3-**.

[2] 'L' is added by ABS to distinguish between small urban localities that surround large regional centres. In some cases, Perthville (L) due to its small size and limited urban infrastructure and services, has been excluded from discussions in **Section 6**.



F3.1 - Project Social Locality

Brewongle Solar Farm and BESS

Edify Energy Pty Ltd

ERM

0735137_SIA_R0.aprx

3.2.1 ABS DATASETS

The data presented in the baseline provides an understanding of the communities within the Social Locality, including the Project Area and immediate surrounding areas, local transportation and haulage routes, and nearby regional centres. It is noted that not all data sets (e.g., health, crime, transport) are readily available at a SA1 level. Where this is the case, the most appropriate data is presented, which may be at a LGA or regional level.

Table 3-2 outlines the primary ABS datasets used to provide key demographic data across the Project's Social Locality. Where available, 2016 and 2021 Census data is used for the purposes of trend analysis. Numerous changes were made to the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) between 2016 and 2021 census (ABS, 2021). Changes to statistical area names and code numbers between 2016 and 2021 did not correspond to boundary or land area changes (as shown in **Table 3-2**). There have been no changes to the land area and boundaries of the LGA, SALs/SSCs, SUAs or SA1s that comprise the Social Locality.

Bathurst, Oberon and Blayney UCLs grew marginally in size between 2016 and 2021; however, this is not a statistically significant change. UCL sizes can change due to developments in infrastructure, adjustments in administrative boundaries, population growth, or changes in the criteria that define urban areas.

SUAs are designed to reflect the functional extent of each urban conglomeration, including closely related peri-urban areas. They are less likely to change because they are defined based on significant population thresholds and functional interactions, such as commuting patterns, rather than merely administrative or infrastructural changes.

The changes in NSW between 2016 and 2021 mainly involved minor adjustments to state land borders based on the latest official delineations provided by Geoscience Australia, intended to enhance geospatial data accuracy and comparability with other government datasets (ABS, 2024).

TABLE 3-2 SUMMARY OF RELEVANT ABS DATASETS[3]

Location	2016		2021	
	Approx. area	ABS Data Reference	Approx. area	ABS Data Reference
Bathurst Regional LGA	3817.9 km^2	LGA10470	3817.9 km^2	LGA10470
SA1 (containing the Project Area)	33.1 km^2	1106002	33.1 km	10301106002
ABS SAL Glanmire (to the North)	46.8 km^2	SSC11640	46.8 km^2	SAL11644
ABS SAL The Lagoon (to the South)	88.5 km^2	SSC13828	88.5 km^2	SAL13844
SA1 (to the North-West)	80.9 km^2	1105903	80.9 km^2	10301105903
Bathurst UCL	53.1 km^2	UCL112002	54.6 km^2	UCL112002
Perthville (L)	1.8 km^2	UCL122119	1.8 km^2	UCL122110
Oberon UCL	7.1 km^2	UCL115107	7.2 km^2	UCL115114
Blayney UCL	5.4 km^2	UCL115018	5.4 km^2	UCL115020
Lithgow SUA	120.0 km^2	1018	120.0 km^2	1019
Orange SUA	144.8 km^2	1025	144.8 km^2	1027
NSW	800,809 km^2	1	800,811 km^2	1

3.3 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

This section provides an overview of stakeholder engagement activities relevant to the SIA. It includes an overview of identified stakeholders and presents engagement findings relevant for the EIS and this SIA specifically. It also presents engagement with Aboriginal communities and information received from Local Councils in relation to the Project's housing and accommodation options.

3.3.1 IDENTIFICATION OF KEY STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

Based on this understanding of the Project's Social Locality, the stakeholder groups identified as potentially impacted by the Project are outlined in **Table 3-3**[4].

[3] Shapefile area data was accessed via the following ABS webpages:
https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/1270.0.55.004July%202016?OpenDocument
https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/1270.0.55.001July%202016
https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/1270.0.55.003July%202016
https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/standards/australian-statistical-geography-standard-asgs-edition-3/jul2021-jun2026/access-and-downloads/digital-boundary-files

[4] This overview is aligned with the overview presented in **Section 5** of the EIS.

TABLE 3-3 KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Category	Stakeholder	Description
Community		
Landowners	• Associated landowner[5]	Resident hosting solar panels on their land. The Project will implement agri-solar activities, and disturbance to soil will be temporary and minimal. The Project will provide a diversified income stream, which can assist host Landowner in making farm more resilient to the impacts of droughts, extreme weather conditions and commodity price fluctuations.
	• Non-associated landowners[6]	Residents within a 4 km radius of the Project site have the potential to be affected by the visual impact of the solar farm, the noise, and heavy vehicle traffic associated with the construction phase.
Nearby communities[7], business and groups[8]	• Brewongle community (2795 postcode) • Rotary Club of Bathurst • Lions Club of Bathurst • Bathurst Multicultural Women's Group • Bathurst Library • Bathurst Senior Citizens Centre	Community members living within the Brewongle township adjacent to the Project. Nearby communities and community groups may be affected by the Project, particularly during the construction phase of the Project with the influx of workforce and service and infrastructure requirements. Impacts will generally be positive through capital investment, the provision of employment and generation of clean energy. To provide information and raise awareness of the Project so local community groups can update their members.
Local Community Groups	Proactive or prominent local community groups	To ensure that strong community groups are supported into the future by local investment.
Regulatory		
Local Councils	Bathurst Rural City Council including: • Cr Robert Taylor, Mayor • Cr Ben Fry, Deputy Mayor • Cr Warren Aubin, Councillor • Cr Natalie Cranston, Councillor • Cr Tony Gullifer, Councillor • Cr Nick Packham, Councillor • Cr Jaclyn Underwood, Councillor • Cr Elaine West, Councillor	The Project is aligned with specific regulatory requirements and provides mitigation measures to achieve compliance as required (refer to Appendix D of the EIS).

[5] Further referred to as 'Host Landowners' in this SIA.
[6] Further referred to as 'Immediate Neighbours' in this SIA.
[7] Further referred to as 'Surrounding Communities' in this SIA.
[8] Further referred to as 'Business/Workforce' in this SIA.

Category	Stakeholder	Description
	• Cr Sophie Wright, Councillor • Mr David Sherley, General Manager • Mr Darren Sturgiss, Director of Engineering • Mr Neil Southorn, Director of Environmental Planning & Building Services • Mr Aaron Jones, Director of Corporate Services & Finance	
State Government Agencies and Representatives	State MP – The Hon. Paul Lawrence Toole (Nat)	
Australian Government Agencies and Representatives	Federal MP – Andrew Gee (Independent, formerly National)	
First Nations Stakeholders[9]		
First Nations communities and groups	• Wiradyuri Traditional Owners Central West Aboriginal Corporation • Bathurst Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC)	Specific cultural values of importance to Aboriginal parties may be affected by the Project. A site survey with RAPs resulted in 4 potential PADs along Salt Water Creek (Salt Water Creek PAD 1 to PAD 4), to the north of the Project boundary. Edify has redesigned the impacts of the Project to avoid all recorded PADs, therefore, a test excavation is not warranted. (Refer to ACHAR)
First Nations Agencies	Office of the Registrar – Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983	A letter was sent on 26 October 2023 for stage 1 of the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report (ACHAR).
Other Industry and Stakeholders		
Infrastructure Owners	• TransGrid • Transport NSW	Infrastructure located within the Project Area could be affected by the Project during construction. Restrictions and covenants have been considered in this EIS and will not be impacted by the Project. Ensure the Project activities abide by safety and regulatory requirements.
Exploration Holders	Nil.	
RFS	• Local volunteers representing the Rural Fire Service • NSW Rural Fire Service • O'Connell East RFS Station	To ensure Project activities abide by safety and regulatory requirements.

[9] Further referred to as 'Aboriginal Communities' in this SIA.

Category	Stakeholder	Description
Schools, TAFEs, and Universities	• Brewongle Environmental Education Centre • O'Connell Public School • Raglan Public School • Galloping Gumnut Preschool • Perthville Public School • Gowrie NSW O'Connell Outside School Hours Care	To ensure organisations are updated on education and vocational opportunities associated with the Project.
Solar Farm Opponents	• Brewongle Action Group • Elders Rural Services • Ray White Emms Mooney • PR Masters Stevens and Co	To be accessible, help to address concerns proactively, and to have a best practice complaints system in place.
Advocacy Groups	• Benalla Sustainable Future Group • Renewable Energy Benalla • Hume Regional Renewables	Discussions on community energy and zero emissions targets.
Transport NSW	• Regulator of made and unmade roads and road reserves.	To ensure Project activities abide by safety and regulatory requirements.
Visitors to the Region	• Tourists within the Social Locality	Tourists visiting the Social Locality.

3.3.2 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Chapter 5 of the EIS provides an overview of the engagement activities carried out before and during the preparation of the EIS. It also provides indicative community engagement planned in the future, including tools and practices, should the project be approved. In line with NSW engagement guidelines for SSD projects, chapter 5 of the EIS provides a summary of how the "engagement has shaped the project being assessed" (DPE, 2022b).

Stakeholder mapping and engagement activities conducted as part of the EIS process also played a critical role in informing the SIA. Through these activities, key stakeholders were identified, and their concerns, expectations, and insights were gathered, providing valuable qualitative data for the SIA. Engagement outcomes, including feedback from community consultations, meetings with Aboriginal groups, and input from government and non-government organizations, were systematically analysed and incorporated into the SIA to ensure a comprehensive understanding of potential social impacts. This integrated approach strengthened the SIA by ensuring that stakeholder perspectives were meaningfully considered in assessing and mitigating social risks and opportunities.

This section provides insight in what was discussed during past and current engagements that is relevant to the SIA.

The Project's Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan (CSEP) was drafted in January 2024 (Premier Strategy, 2024) and the Applicant has engaged with various stakeholder groups, as presented in **Section 3.3.4.**

TABLE 3-4 ENGAGEMENT TO DATE

Stakeholders	Content of engagement
Landholders and near neighbours	Adjacent landholders and those situated within 4 km of the Project Area have been initially contacted via registered mail containing Project specific materials including an introductory letter, concept site map, and FAQs, to inform them about the Project and to offer project briefings. Following the registered mailout, various calls and emails were placed with neighbouring landholders. Edify has provided initial answers to community enquiries, with key areas of discussion including: • Visual amenity changes to the site. • Fragmentation and isolation of agricultural land. • Site access roads and their usage. • The viability of grazing sheep within the solar farm ('Agri-solar'). • Implications for neighbouring landholders regarding insurance or property values; and • Alternative sites and other potential projects occurring in the area.
Bathurst LALC and other representative Aboriginal Groups	Edify consulted with the Bathurst LALC and provided information on the proposed Project. An initial call was made on 25 May 2023 to introduce the Edify Project Manager and the Brewongle Solar Farm site, followed by regular emails with Project updates. A follow up visit in Bathurst was carried out on 24 August 2023. Edify briefly met with members of the Gunhigal Mayiny Wiradyuri Dyilang Enterprise in August 2023 to discuss the Project in its current phase and open up a line of communication to allow sharing of Project updates.
Bathurst Regional Council	Edify convened a preliminary introductory meeting with Bathurst Regional Council representatives on 5 December 2022. This meeting was held before entering into the Option agreement with the landholder, to understand the local context and general considerations towards solar and battery project proposals in the region. Subsequent meetings were held with Council representatives on 17 May 2023 and 9 August 2023, to provide Council with additional information on Edify Energy and the Brewongle Solar Farm, and to gather feedback on the initial planning efforts. Edify will continue to share correspondence with Council as the planning process matures. The key issues raised were: • Community concerns and objections for previous and nearby renewable facilities. • Consideration of the site zoned for agricultural purposes. • Traffic volumes and access routes. • Potential visual impact from adjacent neighbours; and • Potential cumulative impacts from nearby developments. In addition, Edify and Council held an in-person 'Working Party' with various Council representatives on 23 August 2023, to present details of the Project and the Scoping Report as well as the supporting technical studies completed. The meeting served as a 'pre-lodgement meeting' to introduce the Project and gain feedback from the Council on the content and further requirements. Feedback from Council during this meeting focussed on: • Results of soil testing completed for the Agricultural Impact Assessment. Implications on the soil verification for the Project, such as for the footprint and siting of infrastructure. Implications of the Project development on LSC Class Three soils.

Stakeholders	Content of engagement
	• Visual impact on neighbouring landholders. Edify's visual consultant prepared viewshed analyses demonstrating a 'worst case' scenario for viewpoints of landholders within 4 km of the Project which was presented alongside 3D artistic impressions of the development from three different locations proximate to the site. • Community and stakeholder engagement. Council queried stakeholder engagement to date and what the strategy for future engagement contained. • Impacts on the road network and traffic. Council noted Tarana Road and its associated structures were impacted recently by flooding and have since been remediated. • Potential implications on neighbouring landholder insurance.
State and Federal Members	In conjunction with community member engagements, a letter of information was sent on 10 July 2023 to the office of the Federal Member for the Calare Electorate as well as the Member of Parliament of NSW for the Bathurst electorate. The Federal Member's office noted via phone that a meeting would be initiated at the request of Edify later into the EIS phase. The State Member responded via email to note that a firm stance on behalf of the community would be taken for this Project. A meeting has been initiated with the State Member for Bathurst on 27 September 2023 to discuss the community views further as well as share the Project plans in greater detail. A pre-EIS lodgement meeting was requested with both State and Federal MPs. Federal Member Andrew Gee, accepted Edify's invite to attend the Community Session on 5th March 2025. Representatives from State Members Office attended the 5 March 2025 Community Session, State Member Paul Toole attended the November Community session with Edify.

3.3.3 ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

By the closing date for registration concerning this project, the following groups or individuals registered to be consulted as Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs):

- Bathurst LALC;
- Didge Ngunawal Clan;
- Geoffrey Toomey;
- Konanggo Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Services;
- Long Gully Cultural Services;
- Mingaan Aboriginal Corporation;
- Murra Bidgee Aboriginal Corporation;
- Anonymous;
- Thomas Dahlstrom;
- Tim Stubbs; and
- Wingarra Wilay Aboriginal Corporation.

An assessment methodology was issued to all RAPs for their consideration on 28 November 2023. Responses were received from Tim Stubbs and Murra Bidgee Aboriginal Corporation advising that they had reviewed and supported the methodology.

3.3.4 ENGAGEMENT FINDINGS

Table 3-5 outlines specific comments provided on each of the areas of interest by various stakeholder groups[10]. In line with participatory research methods, SIA focused engagement recognises all stakeholders as key knowledge holders who can provide valuable information about the local community, economy, infrastructure, and environment (Vanclay, 2003).

TABLE 3-5 ENGAGEMENT FINDINGS

Aspect	Stakeholder	Description
Fire risks	Surrounding Community	Some community members raised concerns regarding fire risks associated with the solar farm.
		Comments were made regarding battery fires in the news.
		"There should be fire water tanks located around the full perimeter of the site to protect neighbouring properties."
		Interested to see widening of tree buffer zones.
Local Employment	Several community members during a Community session in 2024.	"There is no value in noting employment as a project benefit given that Bathurst has 100% employment in its community. Therefore, the only form of employment for this project would be FIFO – not a local benefit."
		Explained that the Project will contribute to building the resilience of Brewongle and Bathurst communities through the generation of jobs and skills development.
Community Benefit Fund (CBF)	Surrounding Community	Interested to see community benefits support local Landcare groups and the Saltwater Creek.
	Local organisations	Requested financial support for local community initiatives.
Stakeholder Engagement	Surrounding Community	"Insufficient notification of meeting to be held on 14 Feb. Most community members at the meeting stated they heard through word of mouth, not direct contact."
		Strong indication from community members present that they had "no interest in meeting individually with Edify". This is because they are fearful of lies (reference to police interviews being an example of how lies are concocted)
		"Community consultation will be a tick-the-box exercise with absolutely no intention of influencing the decision to proceed."
Decommissioning	Surrounding Community	Questions were raised about the decommissioning process and what obligations are required of the Project.
		Concerns were expressed about financial assurances for decommissioning and native vegetation commitments.

[10] This overview is aligned with the stakeholder views presented in **Section 5** of the EIS.

Aspect	Stakeholder	Description
Visual Amenity	Immediate Neighbours	Requested that Edify start planting trees to improve the efficacy of screening visual impacts.
	Surrounding Community	Concerns that vegetation used for screening might not thrive in this area, with comments that trees may struggle to propagate.
		Concerns were raised regarding the visual impact of the Project, with some attendees describing the solar farm as an "eyesore" that disrupts the natural scenic vista.
		Wants to see screening to ameliorate visual impact concerns.
Indigenous Engagement	Immediate Neighbours	Requested information on the traditional owners that were consulted as a part of the ACHAR undertaken by Ozark.
	Surrounding Community	Wanted assurance that consultations with Indigenous peoples have been undertaken.
Property values	Immediate Neighbours	Shared concerns about property devaluation and questioned why the Project could not be relocated to the other portion of the landholder's property.
	Surrounding Community	Some community members expressed concerns that the presence of the solar farm could reduce property values in the area.
		"Loss of land value due to proximity of the Project. The Project devalues our properties because of visual impact, glint and glare and an unacceptable change to our visual vista."
Ecology	Surrounding Community	Concerns were expressed about commitments to maintaining native vegetation.
		"Weed control, who will keep the already significant weed problem on the site from impacting neighbouring land?"
		Noted the regeneration of Saltwater Creek as a potential Project benefit to support local Landcare groups.
		Implementation of a conservation fund.
Agriculture	Immediate Neighbours	Shared concern and doubts over the viability of sheep grazing.
	Surrounding Community	Disbelief that sheep grazing is a viable activity on property with solar farm infrastructure on it.
		References Balranald Solar Farm where sheep became entrapped in tracking panel mechanisms and noting that sheep are no longer grazed on that site.
		Acknowledged the advantages of agri-solar farming activities.
Emergency services	Local Organisations	No concerns were raised by local organisations or emergency services (refer to SEARs).

Aspect	Stakeholder	Description
Insurance	Immediate Neighbours	Questioned whether their general liability insurance coverage would be sufficient in case of potential impacts from the solar farm.
Approvals Process	Surrounding Community	Attendees requested information on who would be responsible for auditing the project to ensure compliance with CoC. Is it Local Council or DPHI?

3.3.5 ENGAGEMENT UNDERTAKEN FOR THE WORKFORCE ACCOMMODATION PLAN

The key stakeholders engaged for the Workforce Accommodation Plan (WAP) were local Councils across the Social Locality in 2024. **Table 3-1** of the WAP outlines specific comments provided on each of the local councils in relation to accommodation options and existing housing pressures in the Social Locality.

4. LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY CONTEXT

The Project has been determined to be SSD under Division 4.7 of part 4 of the EP&A Act. The consent authority in NSW will provide assessment findings and recommendation to the Commonwealth for consideration. The Commonwealth may impose conditions of consent on the Project which are additional to conditions of consent issued by the NSW State Government. DPHI guides all aspects of the EIS through the SEARs.

4.1 NSW LEGISLATION

TABLE 4-1 SEARS REQUIREMENTS RELEVANT TO THE SIA

Issue	SEARs Requirement	Relevance to the SIA

General Requirements	The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the development must comply with the requirements in part 8, Division 5 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021 (the Regulation) and must have regard to the State Significant Development Guidelines and the Large-Scale Solar Energy Guideline (2022) (Solar Guideline). In particular, the EIS must include:
	• a stand-alone executive summary;
	• a full description of the development, including:
	  ◦ details of construction, operation and decommissioning, including any staging of the development;
	  ◦ a high quality site plan at an adequate scale showing all infrastructure and facilities (including any infrastructure that would be required for the development, but the subject of a separate approvals process);
	  ◦ a high quality detailed constraints map identifying the key environmental and other land use constraints that have informed the final design of the development;
		Outlines the project stage and specification requirements for consideration in the SIA (**Section 1**); project phases and cumulative impacts; avoidance, mitigation and offset measures (**Section 6**); and monitoring measures (**Section 7**).

Social impact	Including an assessment of the social impacts in accordance with Social Impact Assessment Guideline (DPIE, 2021) and a draft Workforce and Accommodation Plan outlining the proposed arrangements for the accommodation of the construction workforce.	This standalone SIA addresses this SEARs requirement.
Economic	Including an assessment of the economic impacts or benefits of the project for the region and the State as a whole and provide details of any proposed voluntary benefit sharing programs in accordance with the Solar Guideline.	Gillespie Economics provided a standalone Economic Assessment, which informs the impact assessment in **Section 6**.
Consultation	During the preparation of the EIS, you should consult with relevant local, State or Commonwealth Government authorities, infrastructure and service providers, community groups, affected landowners and any exploration licence and/or mineral title holders. In particular, you must undertake detailed consultation with affected landowners surrounding the development, relevant government agencies including the relevant local Council. The EIS must: • detail how engagement undertaken was consistent with the Undertaking Engagement Guidelines for State Significant Projects (DPIE, 2021); and	Outlines the broader consultation requirements for the EIS. **Section 3** summarises consultation relevant to the SIA.

Issue	SEARs Requirement	Relevance to the SIA
	• describe the consultation process and the issues raised and identify where the design of the development has been amended in response to these issues. Where amendments have not been made to address an issue, an explanation should be provided.	
Legislation, Policies & Guidelines	The assessment of the key issues listed above must take into account relevant guidelines, policies, and plans as identified. While not exhaustive, a list of some of the legislation, policies and guidelines that may be relevant to the environmental assessment of this proposal can be found at: • https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Policy-and-Legislation/Planning-reforms/Rapid-Assessment-Framework/Improving-assessment-guidance • https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/assessment/policies-and-guidelines; and • http://www.environment.gov.au/epbc/publications#assessments	DPE's SIA Guidelines (DPE 2023a, 2023b) are discussed below (**Section 6**).

4.2 NSW SIA GUIDELINES

DPE's *Social Impact Assessment Guideline: For State Significant Projects* ('the Guideline') (DPE, 2023a), *Technical Supplement: Social Impact Assessment Guideline for State Significant Projects* ('Technical Supplement') (DPE, 2023b) and Social Impact Assessment Worksheet (scoping worksheet) (DPE, 2023c), together referred to as 'the Guidelines', provide the most up to date guidance on undertaking SIAs in NSW. Together they update the 2021 draft versions of the same documents and supersede the 2020 Social Impact Assessment Guideline for State Significant Mining, Petroleum, and Extractive Industry Development (DPIE, 2017) which had become the de facto guideline for all SSDs. The Guideline intends to provide a rigorous framework that aims to:

- Identify, evaluate, and respond to social impacts;
- Guide meaningful stakeholder and community consultation on social impacts throughout project phases;
- Obtain reliable, relevant information, insights and analysis for decision-makers; and
- Provide advice on how the SIA can inform ongoing project refinement, monitoring, and adaptive management.

The Technical Supplement provides additional specific advice including on how the SIA should be presented, how to define likelihood and magnitude levels of social impacts, and how to determine impact significance (DPE, 2023b). The Scoping Worksheet is a decision support tool that assists in identifying and considering the likely social impacts of the Project. It is a tool that can be used to demonstrate how scoping has informed the level of assessment undertaken. This SIA has been prepared in line with DPE's preferred approach drawing on the Guideline, Technical Supplement and Scoping Worksheet.

4.3 GOVERNMENT STRATEGIES, POLICIES AND PLANS

While the primary focus of this SIA is on micro-scale, local-level perceptions of the Project, it is critical to acknowledge its broader macro-scale, social significance within the context of renewable energy development. The transition to renewable energy generation represents a vital step in reducing reliance on traditional fossil fuel energy production, which is associated with anthropogenic climate change, pollution across air, water, and land, and negative human health outcomes. This, in turn, aligns with the principles of Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) by safeguarding environmental, social, and economic well-being for both current and future generations.

This Project aligns with broader directives to reduce carbon emissions and deliver social benefits, including improved public health outcomes, enhanced community resilience, and long-term sustainability. The Project supports key goals set out in international agreements, Australian Government policies, and State Government strategies aimed at fostering a low-carbon economy and mitigating the social risks associated with climate change.

4.3.1 INTERNATIONAL TARGETS AND FRAMEWORKS

The Project aligns with international, national, and local efforts to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and accelerate the transition to renewable energy. It supports the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 7 (affordable and sustainable energy) and Goal 11 (sustainable cities and communities), by increasing Australia's renewable energy capacity and contributing to improved air quality. The Project also directly supports Australia's commitments under the Paris Agreement, COP26, and COP28 by generating 90 MW of renewable solar energy, displacing fossil fuel-based energy generation, and reducing GHG emissions by approximately 176,300 t-CO_2^{-e} annually. These contributions are critical to achieving Australia's strengthened emissions reduction targets of 43% by 2030 and net zero by 2050, aligning with the global imperative to limit warming to less than 1.5 °C.

4.3.2 AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT'S RENEWABLE ENERGY TARGET

The Renewable Energy Target (RET) is an Australian Government scheme which has been in operation since 2001. It is designed to reduce emissions of GHG in the electricity sector and encourage the additional generation of electricity from sustainable and renewable sources.

The RET operates as two schemes – small- and large-scale renewable projects, of which the Large-scale Renewable Energy Target (LRET) is relevant for the Project. The LRET encourages investment in large-scale renewable energy projects and incentivizes the development of renewable energy power stations through a market for the creation and sale of Large-scale Generation Certificates (LGCs) to achieve current target under the LRET of 33,000 GWh of additional renewable electricity generation (Clean Energy Regulator, 2022). The current targets, accreditation of power stations, and creation of LGCs will remain until the end of the scheme in 2030.

This is relevant for the Project as, once constructed, it will contribute toward the LRET and will be an eligible large-scale generator under the RET.

The Project could generate 215,000 MW hours (MWh) per annum of renewable energy, powering around 36,000 homes and businesses[11].

[11] From website: Brewongle - Edify Energy

The Project will deliver renewable, low-cost energy to the National Electricity Market (NEM), offsetting energy generation that will be lost with the closure of coal-fired power stations and contributing to the Australian and NSW Government's net-zero emissions by 2050 targets (refer **Section 4.3.3** and **Section 4.3.4**).

4.3.3 AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT CLIMATE CHANGE ACT 2022

The Australian Government *Climate Change Act 2022* outlines Australia's greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets of a 43% reduction from 2005 levels by 2030 and reducing Australia's net greenhouse gas emissions to zero by 2050 (Parliament of Australia, 2022). The Project will assist in achieving this target by providing an estimated reduction in greenhouse gas emissions of approximately 176,300 t CO_2^{-e} pa.

If approved, the Project could be constructed and operational before 2030, which is the year that many nations have pledged significant greenhouse gas emissions reductions relative to 2005 levels.

4.3.4 NSW NET ZERO PLAN STAGE 1: 2020-2030

The 'NSW Government Net Zero Plan Stage 1: 2020–2030' (DPIE, 2020a) sets the foundation for action on climate change and how the NSW Government will deliver on its objective to achieve net zero emissions by 2050, as outlined in the NSW Climate Change Policy Framework (OEH, 2016). The Net Zero Plan Stage 1: 2020–2030 is the NSW Government's overarching strategy to reduce emissions and mitigate the impacts of climate change.

In September 2021, the NSW Government announced ambitious new emission reductions targets to reduce emissions by 50% below 2005 levels by 2030 (DPIE, 2020a). In December 2023, the NSW Government passed the *Climate Change (Net Zero Future) Act 2023* to enshrine in law, emission reduction targets. Targets include a 75% reduction on 2005 levels by 2035 (DPIE, 2023).

The Project will assist the NSW Government to achieve the commitments of the Net Zero Plan by providing an estimated reduction in GHG emissions of approximately 176,300 t CO_2^{-e} pa and in this way contribute to the NSW Government Net Zero Emissions Target by 2050.

4.3.5 NSW ELECTRICITY STRATEGY

The 'NSW Electricity Strategy' (DPIE, 2019) is the NSW Government's plan to achieve reliability, affordability and sustainability for the NSW electricity system, and will support an estimated $8 billion of private investment in NSW's electricity system over the next decade.

An aim of the NSW Government's Electricity Strategy is to improve the efficiency and competitiveness of the NSW electricity market by reducing risk, cost, and government-caused delays, and to encourage investment in new price-reducing generation and energy saving technologies. The Strategy identifies the NSW Government's commitment to energy security, including additional capacity increases via interconnector projects and the rolling out of Renewable Energy Zones (REZs). The Strategy aligns closely with the NSW Government's Net Zero Plan Stage 1: 2020 – 2030, and supports a new affordable and reliable energy system by:

- Delivering the coordinated REZ in the Central West & Orana region;
- Saving energy via the Energy Security Safeguard;
- Supporting the development of new electricity generators;

- Setting a target to increase the state's energy resilience; and
- Making it easier to do energy business in NSW.

The Project is consistent with the Strategy as, although it is not based within a REZ, it provides renewable energy generation and storage capacity that, together with other renewable generation projects, is expected to result in lower cost of energy in the NEM. The Project will also contribute to greater energy resilience using BESS stabilisation technology and the future supply of electricity to the NEM with the impending closure of coal fired power stations over the next 20 years. The Strategy will also benefit the Project by supporting new electricity generation and setting energy security targets.

4.3.6 NSW TRANSMISSION INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

The NSW Transmission Infrastructure Strategy (DPE, 2018) is the NSW Government's plan to unlock private sector investment in priority energy infrastructure projects, which can deliver least-cost energy to customers. The Strategy forms part of the government's broader plan to make energy more affordable, secure investment in new power generation and network infrastructure and ensure new technologies deliver benefits for consumers.

The Strategy seeks to help meet future energy needs by facilitating new transmission that could support up to 17,700 MW of new electricity generation. Other benefits include improved energy reliability, security, timely project delivery, increased affordability, and access to cheaper electricity.

The Project is anticipated to connect to an existing 132 kV line and will contribute to the development of renewable energy, which will result in an overall increase NSW's energy capacity.

4.3.7 NSW ELECTRICITY INFRASTRUCTURE ROADMAP

The NSW Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap (Roadmap), released in November 2020 is the NSW Government's plan to transform the NSW electricity sector into one that is clean, cheap, and reliable. The Roadmap builds on the NSW Electricity Strategy (DPIE, 2019) and the NSW Transmission Infrastructure Strategy (DPE, 2018). It sets NSW on a plan to replace its ageing coal-fired power stations with a coordinated portfolio of generation, storage, and network investment.

The Roadmap emphasises the need to transition to renewable energies, noting the planned closure of NSW coal fired power stations.

Enabled by the *Electricity Infrastructure Investment Act 2020* (NSW), the Roadmap sets out a coordinated framework to support $32 billion in private investment in at least 12 GW of renewable energy generation infrastructure and at least 2 GW of long-duration storage infrastructure by 2030 (DPIE, 2020b).

The Roadmap seeks to reduce GHG emissions from NSW electricity generation by 90 million tonnes by 2030, helping deliver on NSW's emissions targets. The Project will provide 90 MW renewable energy to help offset the retirement of coal-fired power stations in NSW. The Project will assist in meeting the NSW Government's emissions reduction targets, and NSW's energy generation and storage requirements.

4.4 LAND USE PLANNING

Land use planning considerations are integral to this SIA, ensuring the Project aligns with existing land use policies, zoning requirements, and the surrounding community's values and priorities. By evaluating the potential impacts of the Project on land use, including compatibility with current and future land uses, the SIA addresses how the Project can minimize disruption, support sustainable development, and enhance community outcomes. This approach ensures that the Project integrates seamlessly into the local landscape while contributing to broader regional planning objectives.

Table 4-2 provides an overview of the key land use plans and strategies and highlights the relevant components to the SIA and the associated sections where they are addressed.

TABLE 4-2 LAND USE PLANNING RELEVANT TO SIA

Plan/Strategy	Relevance to SIA	Section Addressed
Central-West and Orana Regional Plan 2041	Supports net zero transition, local employment opportunities, protection of environmental and cultural assets, sustainable primary industries, and accommodation for workers.	Local employment (refer to **Section 6.2**) Aboriginal cultural heritage (refer to **Section 6.1.1**) Accommodation and worker influx (refer to **Section 6.4**)
Bathurst Regional Local Environmental Plan 2014	Promotes sustainable primary production, diversified income for landowners, and enhanced farm resilience to environmental and market challenges.	Diversification of income (refer to **Section 6.2.1**) Economic Diversification (refer to **Section 6.2.1**)
Bathurst Regional Development Control Plan 2014	Not applicable as the Project is State Significant Development (SSD).	N/A
Bathurst Community Strategic Plan 2018-2040	Supports local employment, investment, environmental sustainability, reduced dependence on fossil fuels, and ongoing community engagement.	Local employment (**Section 6.2)** Community engagement (refer to **Section 6.1**)
Bathurst Regional Council Workforce Management Plan	Creates local workforce development opportunities, enhances employment pathways, and supports attraction and retention of skilled workers.	Local employment and skilled workforce retention (refer to **Section 6.2**)
Vision Bathurst 2040	Aligns development with infrastructure priorities and supports regional sustainability through renewable energy projects.	Alignment with renewable energy transitions has macro-social relevance but is not specifically addressed in the SIA.
Bathurst Regional Council Renewable Energy Action Plan	Contributes to renewable energy targets and provides opportunities for renewable energy purchase agreements.	As above.
Bathurst Region Rural Strategy 2008	Balances economic, social, and environmental opportunities for rural land management while supporting renewable energy initiatives.	As above.
Bathurst Housing Strategy 2036	Ensuring the Project does not impact housing development objectives.	Accommodation and worker influx (**Section 6.4**)

5. SOCIAL BASELINE

The baseline section is dedicated to establishing a comprehensive understanding of the existing social, economic, and environmental contexts before the implementation of the Project. It aims to present a clear overview of the current conditions, providing a reference point against which the impacts of the Project can be assessed and measured. This analysis includes a detailed examination of demographic profiles, economic activities, housing conditions, and community well-being within the Social Locality. Mapping out these baseline conditions is done with the aim to identify potential vulnerabilities and opportunities, ensuring that Project decision making and interventions are well-targeted and that any mitigation strategies are effectively tailored to the specific needs of the community. This foundational knowledge is crucial for predicting the potential impacts of the Project and for planning sustainable development that aligns with the socio-economic fabric of the local community.

A snapshot of the social baseline is presented in **Table 5-1**.

TABLE 5-1 SOCIAL BASELINE SNAPSHOT

Themes	Key findings
Land use context	• The Project Area's immediate surroundings in characterized by an undulating landscape and numerous nearby watercourses.
Population demographics	• Large surrounding regional centres show moderate increase in population between 2016 and 2021 whilst smaller towns show stagnant (lower than the state average) or declining population trends.
Economic profile	• Bathurst Regional LGA offers consistent supply of skilled workers for technical and trades roles and shows a growing availability of manual labour for construction activities. Statistics on labour for construction activities from Lithgow and Orange indicate sufficient availability.
Vulnerable groups	• Vulnerability in relation to cultural and linguistic diversity (CALD) is deemed low as data presents 0.056% (246) of the total population of Bathurst LGA stated their proficiency of spoken English to be "Not well or not at all", compared to 4.5% in NSW. • Vulnerability in relation to age reflect moderate vulnerability as the elderly population in the immediate surrounding SA1s and SALs remains high whilst data also indicate a growing young demographic. • The proportion of the population within the Social Locality who identifies as Indigenous is higher than that of broader NSW (2.9%). • SEIFA Index Relative Socio-economic Advantage and Disadvantage (IRSAD) ratings indicate a stark contrast within the Project's immediate surroundings with Glanmire persistently disadvantaged, whilst The Lagoon shows a high and increasing level of advantage.
Housing and accommodation	• The median weekly household income has increased over time across the Social Locality, except for Glanmire SAL, whilst The Lagoon SAL experienced the largest increase. • A disparity in the Social Locality's housing situation was found with a lower mortgage stress compared to a steeper increase of rental stress. • Housing stress is highest amongst people renting in Lithgow, with 37.2% of their income spend on monthly rental payments. • In relation to rental availability, long term vacancy rates indicates that Oberon and Orange have the highest vacancy rates, whilst Orange and Bathurst had the largest number of rental listings at the time of writing (97 and 57 respectively). • Rental affordability in Oberon and Lithgow was, respectively, Affordable and Acceptable (SGS, 2024). • Short term accommodation in the Social Locality contained 430 rooms and occupancy rates between 55-100%.

Themes	Key findings
	• Bathurst hosts large-scale race car events that generate significant pressure on short-term accommodation providers during short periods throughout the year, mainly during weekends. • The festivals and events in Oberon, Blayney, Lithgow and Orange are typically small to medium-scale and are not considered likely to generate significant pressure on short-term accommodation providers.
Social Infrastructure and Community Wellbeing	• Based on the proximity and capacity of social infrastructure, Bathurst UCL is the primary service centre that will support the Construction and Operation Phase of the Project for both education and public health services required for the Project workforce.
Access and Connectivity	• The B-Double access route measures approximately 519 km and generally utilises roads that are designated for B-Double vehicles and follows the Class 1 OSOM network. • The O'Connell Road and Tarana Road intersection is able to accommodate the vehicles expected to access the site subject to proposed widening at the Northeast corner. • Tarana Road is unrated for B-Doubles and use of these vehicles would require approval from Bathurst Regional Council. Bathurst Regional Council indicates that the bridge over Salt Water Creek (on Tarana Road) does not currently meet the structural requirements for B-Doubles or OSOM vehicles. However, a replacement bridge has been designed, and the Client will continue to liaise with the Council on the matter.
Aboriginal Cultural Heritage	• No registered Aboriginal or historic heritage sites within or near the study area, except for four potential archaeological deposits along Salt Water Creek, which have been avoided through project redesign.
Community Values	• The social locality hosts a diverse mix of outdoor, cultural, and community-focused activities, ranging from festivals celebrating local food and nature, such as foraging and gardening, to arts exhibitions, car races, creative performances, and community markets. • Strategic plans such as "Vision Bathurst 2040" highlight the region's commitment to economic vitality, environmental stewardship, and community well-being (Bathurst NSW, 2024).

5.1 LAND USE CONTEXT

The Project is located within the Macquarie-Bogan catchment. The Project Area is adjacent to Salt Water Creek, a tributary of the Fish River. The Fish River flows north, joining the Macquarie River approximately 3 km downstream of the Project. The Project Area is located approximately 12 km south-east of Bathurst, with an undulating landscape and numerous nearby watercourses. Local drainage systems within and surrounding the Project Area are well-defined, and existing farm dams influence flow regimes during events. There are three (3) mapped 1st order ephemeral watercourses within the Project Area. The local catchment is dominated by flat topography (Engeny, 2024).

Edify does not own land within the Project Area and will source all water externally, primarily through a bulk water permit from Bathurst Regional Council, with supplementary potable water trucked in if required. Although unlikely, if required, additional water may be obtained through agreements with landholders from farm dam runoff, sediment basin reuse, and water recycling. No groundwater extraction is planned (Engeny, 2024).

5.2 POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS

Table 5-2 draws on the ABS datasets listed in **Table 3-2** to provide a demographic overview of the Social Locality. As outlined in **Section 3.2**, the Project Area is located within ABS SA1 No. 10301106002.

The large regional centres of Bathurst and Orange show moderate increase in population between 2016 and 2021 (1.5% and 1.5% respectively), meanwhile Lithgow experienced a stagnant population trend (-0.7%). Smaller regional towns of Perthville (L), Blayney and Oberon show stagnant or declining population trends (-3.2%, 0.4% and 0.2%, respectively).[12] The median age is consistently higher than the NSW average across majority the Social Locality. The ABS data relating to language, age and Indigenous populations is assessed in **Sections 5.4.1**, **5.4.2** and **5.4.3** respectively.

[12] Stable or stagnant increase or decrease generally refers to <1% annual change. When referring to slight, moderate, or high increases or decreases the report takes into consideration the rate of variability for the specific socio-economic indicator, the rate of change for NSW and the percentage of change.

TABLE 5-2 KEY POPULATION INDICATORS ACROSS THE PROJECT'S SOCIAL LOCALITY

Region	Year	Population	Population Change %	Median Age	Indigenous Pop. %	Pop. Under 14 years of Age %	Pop. over 65 Years of Age %	Households where a non-English language is used %
Bathurst Regional LGA10470	2016	41,300	1.0	37	6.1	19.7	16.4	4.8
	2021	43,567		38	7.2	18.7	18.5	5.3
SA1 10301106002 (containing the Project Area)	2016	211	0.0	51	4.9	18.8	28.3	5.1
	2021	236		43	5.6	20.0	24.3	5.7
ABS SAL Glanmire (to the North)	2016	158	3.0	50	8.3	13.4	19.7	3.2
	2021	186		40	9.4	17.5	25.8	3.8
ABS SAL The Lagoon (to the South)	2016	216	3.9	42	3.9	20.0	16.2	3.6
	2021	268		39	4.3	22.8	14.8	4.1
SA1 10301105903 (to the North-West)	2016	309	-0.5	48	5.8	18.7	25.1	4.4
	2021	301		48	6.7	17.6	27.6	4.9
Bathurst UCL112002	2016	33,587	1.5	35	4.7	20.1	15.7	5.0
	2021	36,230		37	5.4	19.1	17.9	5.6
Perthville (L) UCL122110	2016	419	-3.2	37	3.3	22.7	14.7	2.9
	2021	362		41	3.8	20.9	16.7	3.3
Oberon UCL115114	2016	2,491	0.4	42	4.2	19.4	22.8	3.5
	2021	2,540		43	4.7	18.5	24.6	3.9
Blayney UCL115020	2016	2,963	0.2	39	5.4	20.6	18.9	4.1
	2021	2,997		38	6.1	20.5	19.9	4.6
Lithgow	2016	12,818	-0.7	44	3.4	16.8	22.9	3.8

Region	Year	Population	Population Change %	Median Age	Indigenous Pop. %	Pop. Under 14 years of Age %	Pop. over 65 Years of Age %	Households where a non-English language is used %
SUA1019	2021	12,385		46	3.9	16.1	25.4	4.2
Orange SUA1027	2016	38,741	1.5	37	6.8	21.5	17.8	5.2
	2021	41,920		37	7.5	21.3	16.7	5.8
NSW Area Code 1	2016	7,480,228	1.5	38	2.6	18.5	16.3	24.5
	2021	8,072,163		39	2.9	18.2	14.4	26.3

*Changes were made to the ASGS between 2016 and 2021 census (ABS, 2021), including statistical area names and code numbers. This report references the 2021 ASGS names and codes for all statistical areas.

5.3 ECONOMIC PROFILE

Appendix A provides an overview of the top occupations and industries for all ABS statistical areas within the social locality. **Table 5-** and **Table 5-** summarise the data from **Appendix A** that have directly informed the determination of social impact significances.

Table 5- characterises the economic profile of the Social Locality through the key industries and areas of employment. For the three major urban areas identified as potential sources of local labour for the Project, the following findings were observed:

- In the Bathurst Regional LGA, the relevant occupations for the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Project include Technicians and Trades Workers, whose presence in the labour force has increased by 277 workers (-0.4%), indicating a consistent supply of skilled workers for technical and trades roles. Labourers have seen an increase of 137 workers (2.6%), suggesting a growing availability of manual labour for construction activities. Machinery Operators and Drivers have remained stable (-0.3%) increasing by 214 people;
- In the Lithgow SUA, the presence of Technicians and Trades Workers has decreased by 54 workers (-1.7%), while Labourers has seen no change to the number of workers (-1.1%). However, Machinery Operators and Drivers have maintained a steady presence (-0.7%) despite decreasing by 49 workers. These trends suggest that while there might be a slight reduction in the availability of technical and manual labour, there is still a substantial workforce to draw from; and
- In Orange SUA, the relevant occupations for the construction and operation of the Project include Technicians and Trades Workers, which has increased by 289 workers (-0.2%). Labourers have seen an increase of 122 workers (-0.9%), suggesting a stable availability of manual labour for construction activities. Machinery Operators and Drivers have increased by 133 workers (-0.1%).

TABLE 5-3 CATEGORISATION OF THE RELEVANT TOP OCCUPATIONS

Region	Year	Labour force[13]	Technicians and Trades Workers # (%)	Machinery Operators and Drivers # (%)	Labourers # (%)
Bathurst Regional LGA	2016	19,329	2,626 (14.6)	1,162 (7.0)	2,074 (8.2)
	2021	21,317	2,903 (14.2)	1,376 (6.7)	2,211 (10.8)
Lithgow SUA	2016	4,947	795 (17.6)	569 (11.9)	536 (12.6)
	2021	4,964	741 (15.9)	520 (11.2)	536 (11.5)
Orange SUA	2016	18,115	2,487 (14.7)	1,163 (6.9)	1,805 (10.7)
	2021	20,351	2,845 (14.5)	1,342 (6.8)	1,927 (9.8)
Total	**2021**	**46,632**	**6,489**	**3,238**	**4,674**

[13] Includes population that is unemployed or looking for work.

Table 5- provides a categorisation of the top industries per statistical area based on five (5) categories:

- Agriculture and Primary Production[14];
- Public and Social Services[15];
- Commercial and Retail Services[16];
- Industrial and Manufacturing Services[17]; and
- Construction and Infrastructure[18].

The Project Area and immediate surroundings display a mixed economic composition dominated by Agriculture and Primary Production, such as beef cattle and sheep farming, with a presence of Public and Social Services industries. However, the surrounding regional centres have a higher portion of the workforce in Industrial and Manufacturing Services, with the highest proportion being in Public and Social Services.

[14] Agriculture and Primary Production combines the following ABS categories: 'Grain-Sheep or Grain-Beef Cattle Farming', 'Sheep Farming (Specialised)', 'Beef Cattle Farming (Specialised)' and 'Vegetable Growing (Outdoors)'.
[15] Public and Social Services combines the following ABS categories: 'Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals)', 'Primary Education', 'State Government Administration' and 'Aged Care Residential Services'.
[16] Commercial and Retail Services combines the following ABS categories: 'Supermarket and Grocery Stores', 'Takeaway Food Services', 'Pubs, Taverns, and Bars' and 'Real Estate Services'.
[17] Industrial and Manufacturing Services combines the following ABS categories: 'Wood Structural Fitting and Component Manufacturing', 'Gold Ore Mining', 'Coal Mining' and 'Log Sawmilling'.
[18] Construction and Infrastructure combines the following ABS categories: 'Road Freight Transport', 'Building and Other Industrial Cleaning Services', 'Electrical Services' and 'Site Preparation Services'.

TABLE 5-4 CATEGORISATION OF TOP INDUSTRIES

Area	Year	Agriculture and Primary Production %	Public and Social Services %	Commercial and Retail Services %	Industrial and Manufacturing Services %	Construction and Infrastructure %
Bathurst Regional LGA10470	2016	*	11.9	2.5	*	8.7
	2021	*	14.5	2.6	*	*
SA1 10301106002 (containing the Project Area)	2016	7.5	25.4	*	*	*
	2021	3.8	9.2	11.5	*	*
ABS SAL Glanmire (to the North)	2016	23.7	*	*	*	19.0
	2021	11.1	4.0	*	*	7.1
ABS SAL The Lagoon (to the South)	2016	16.1	12.2	11.5	*	*
	2021	4.0	16.8	*	*	*
SA1 10301105903 (to the North-West)	2016	7.1	8.0	*	*	5.4
	2021	*	14.5	6.1	*	7.4
Bathurst UCL112002	2016	*	12.8	2.9	*	*
	2021	*	15.0	3.0	*	*
Perthville (L) UCL122110	2016	4.4	11.7	7.3	*	4.4
	2021	*	12.2	3.9	*	3.3
Oberon UCL115114	2016	*	12.4	3.8	12.8	4.2
	2021	*	17.6	3.3	18.9	*

Area	Year	Agriculture and Primary Production %	Public and Social Services %	Commercial and Retail Services %	Industrial and Manufacturing Services %	Construction and Infrastructure %
Blayney UCL115020	2016	*	14.4	5.0	6.4	2.8
	2021	*	15.0	3.7	6.0	*
Lithgow SUA1019	2016	*	14.9	5.7	8.3	*
	2021	*	17.0	6.8	7.3	*
Orange SUA1027	2016	*	15.7	2.5	4.1	*
	2021	*	19.7	*	4.8	*
NSW Area Code 1	2016					
	2021	*	5.4	4.6	*	*

**Indicates that there were no relevant industries present in the top 8 industries for that statistical area and does not equate to 0%.*

5.4 VULNERABLE GROUPS

Vulnerability refers to an individual or groups capacity to adapt to, or cope with changes in their environment and is influenced by a range of different socio-economic factors. Some individuals or groups may be more vulnerable than others due to certain existing socio-economic characteristics including (but not limited to) age, livelihood, language proficiency and health status.

Regional towns throughout NSW are often prone to social, cultural, environmental and economic changes over time. In line with the SEARs requirements to assess social impacts of workforce accommodation for construction, it is noted that an influx of non-local workers could disproportionately affect vulnerable populations by intensifying rental and housing demands within the Social Locality, as outlined in **Appendix C**.

This section considers four (4) groups across the Social Locality with potential social vulnerabilities associated with socio-economically disadvantage, CALD, age, and Indigenous peoples. Refer to **Table 5-2** for an overview of all key population indicators presented in this Section.

5.4.1 CULTURAL AND LINGUISTICAL DIVERSITY

CALD is a broad term used to describe communities with diverse languages, ethnic backgrounds, nationalities, traditions, societal structures, and religions (Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria, 2012), because of this CALD groups are often considered vulnerable people. As per the SIA Guidelines (DPE 2023a, 2023b) special attention is required to ensure culturally appropriate and inclusive engagement.

A total of 246 people of the 43,567 people in Bathurst LGA stated their proficiency of spoken English to be "Not well or not at all" (ABS, 2021), which represents 0.056% of the total population. In NSW, there was a total of 361,688 people who stated their proficiency of spoken English to be "Not well or not at all", which represents 4.5% of the total population. Based on this, the likelihood of CALD groups being excluded from engagement activities due to language barriers is deemed to be low.

The Australian Government Department of Home Affairs provides a free interpreting service, which is accessible to any non-English speaking household living in Australia (Department of Home Affairs, 2024).

5.4.2 YOUTH AND ELDERLY

Youth and elderly populations are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of large development projects due to their specific mobility, health, safety, and social needs. During the construction, operation and decommissioning phases, the Project impacts that have potential to exacerbate the needs of youth and elderly groups are concentrated to the immediate surroundings. In the SA1s and SALs representing the Project Area and its immediate surroundings, there was a combined increase in the population under 14 years from 17.7% in 2016 to 19.5% in 2021, indicating a growing young demographic. The elderly population remains consistently high, though slightly reduced from a combined 22.3% in 2016 to 23.1% in 2021, reflecting moderate vulnerability due to age.

These findings highlight the need for robust measures to mitigate noise, ensure safety, and control dust emissions, especially to protect the well-being of youth and the elderly, who may be more susceptible to environmental hazards.

5.4.3 INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Bathurst Regional LGA experienced an increase in the Indigenous population (from 6.1% in 2016 to 7.2% in 2021). Similarly, increases in Indigenous populations are visible in SA1 and SAL areas such as SA1 10301106002 (from 4.9% to 5.6%) and Glanmire (from 8.3% to 9.4%). Across the Social Locality the proportion of the population who identifies as Indigenous remains higher than that of broader NSW (2.9%).

Aboriginal populations and Aboriginal Communities are culturally vulnerable to the Project impacts that may affect tangible and intangible heritage, particularly given past practices and government policies that may have created detachment from traditional lands.

The increase in Aboriginal population has potential to enhance cultural diversity and visibility of Indigenous culture in the Social Locality, promoting social cohesion. However, it also highlights the need for targeted services in the Social Locality to address health, education, and economic disparities faced by Indigenous communities.

5.4.4 SOCIO-ECONOMIC DISADVANTAGE

SEIFA is a product developed by the ABS[19] that ranks areas in Australia according to relative socio-economic advantage and disadvantage. The indexes are based on information from the five-yearly Census, with SEIFA 2021 based on Census 2021 data. The SEIFA is commonly used to determine areas that require funding and services, identify new business opportunities, and assist research into the relationship between socio-economic disadvantage and various social outcomes. A relative measure of socio-economic disadvantage was first produced by the ABS following the 1971 Census while the SEIFA in its present form was first produced from the 1986 Census data (ABS 2018b).

The IRSAD used in the SEIFA 2021 is the same as that used for the previous three censuses (2016, 2011 and 2006). IRSAD is a general measure of advantage and disadvantage, summarising the economic and social conditions of people and households. It ranks areas from most disadvantaged to most advantaged. The ABS broadly defines relative socio-economic advantage in terms of people's access to material and social resources, and their ability to participate in society. This is broadly defined in recognition of the many concepts that have emerged in the literature to describe advantage and disadvantage.

The dimensions included in SEIFA are guided by international research, given the constraints of Census data. The Census does collect information on the key dimensions of income, education, employment, occupation, housing, and some other miscellaneous indicators of advantage and disadvantage; these are the candidate variables used to construct the SEFIA (ABS 2018b).

The latest available SEIFA indicators across the Project's Social Locality are reported in **Table 5-5**.

[19] Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) is a product developed by the ABS that ranks areas in Australia according to relative socio-economic advantage and disadvantage. The indexes are based on information from the five-yearly Census, available at: https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/detailed-methodology-information/concepts-sources-methods/socio-economic-indexes-areas-seifa-technical-paper/2021#what-is-seifa-.

Glanmire is markedly disadvantaged, maintaining very low SEIFA percentiles of 7 in both 2016 and 2021. This indicates persistent economic and social challenges, significantly lower than other areas. In contrast, The Lagoon shows a high level of advantage, with SEIFA percentiles increasing from 66 in 2016 to 83 in 2021. This growth suggests improving socioeconomic conditions and a relatively high standard of living compared to neighbouring areas. The stark contrast in SEIFA percentiles between Glanmire and The Lagoon suggests that these two areas must carefully considered given the diverse socioeconomic contexts.

TABLE 5-5 SEIFA INDICATORS ACROSS THE PROJECT'S SOCIAL LOCALITY

ABS Statistical Area	SEIFA 2016 (percentile in NSW)	SEIFA 2021 (percentile in NSW)
Bathurst Regional LGA10470	65	63
SA1 10301106002 (containing the Project Area)	64	53
ABS SAL Glanmire (to the North)	7	7
ABS SAL The Lagoon (to the South)	66	83
SA1 10301105903 (to the North-West)	59	47

*SEIFA is not provided for ABS, UCL and SUA Statistical Areas and not relevant to the state.

5.5 HOUSING AND ACCOMMODATION

Key income and housing indicators across the Project's Social Locality are reported in **Table 5-**. A key aim of collecting this baseline data is to inform the assessment of accommodation pressures generated from worker influx during the Construction Phase (refer to **Section 6.4.1**). The median weekly household income has increased across the Social Locality excluding Glanmire SAL, which has experienced a decrease by -$12 weekly household income. A key outlier being The Lagoon SAL where the median household income increased by 64.3%.

The percentage of monthly rental repayments exceeding 30% of household income—a key indicator of rental stress—has generally increased across the regions. In contrast, monthly mortgage repayments exceeding 30% of household income has decreased in both Glanmire and The Lagoon SALs.

The decrease in mortgage stress alongside the rise in rental stress suggests that while economic conditions might be improving, the benefits are not uniformly felt across the housing sector. This disparity underscores the need for balanced housing policies, such as rent control, affordable housing initiatives, inclusionary zoning, and stronger tenant protections, to improve rental price stability.

Rental stress can occur or increase if rental prices rise faster than household income, which is compounded by the variability of rental payments which can adjust with market rates.

Decreases in mortgage stress can be the result of increases in income advancements (i.e., career progression or inflation adjustments), changes in household composition and alterations to mortgage repayments (i.e., refinancing options or reduced principal and reduced interest rates). However, the higher density urban areas of the Social Locality have generally experienced increase in mortgage stress. Increases in mortgage stress can be caused by decreases in income, unaffordable housing prices leading to over-leveraged new mortgages and interest rate increases for variable rate mortgages.

Additionally, housing and accommodation data has been provided in the draft WAP (**Appendix C**), including information on capacity and vacancies in short-term accommodation and private rental and owned housing. The data provided in **Appendix C** has been key in shaping the recommendations outlined in **Section 6.4.1**, ensuring that proposed actions are informed by existing availability within the housing market and associated social impacts.

TABLE 5-6 KEY INCOME AND HOUSING INDICATORS ACROSS THE SOCIAL LOCALITY

ABS statistical area[20]	Census Year	Median weekly household income $	Percentage change in weekly household income %	Unemployment %	Monthly repayments >30% household income Rent % / Mortgage %	Housing Tenure Owned outright % / Mortgage % / Rented %	Household composition Families % / Single % / % group
Bathurst Regional LGA10470	*2016*	1,310	21.0	6.0	11.5 / 5.7	32.5 / 33.7 / 30.7	68.9 / 27.0 / 4.1
	2021	1,585		4.0	30.0 / 10.7	34.0 / 32.8 / 30.3	69.0 / 27.6 / 3.4
SA1 10301106002 (containing the Project Area)	*2016*	1,474	14.9	5.1	3.7 / 6.8	54.3 / 35.2 / 10.5	69.5 / 30.5 / 0.0
	2021	1,694		5.7	0.0 / 17.9	50.5 / 31.5 / 10.8	82.7 / 17.3 / 0.0
ABS SAL Glanmire (to the North)	*2016*	1,410	-0.9	0.0	5.4 / 7.8	47.4 / 35.9 / 12.8	82.1 / 17.9 / 0.0
	2021	1,398		2.3	21.4 / 0.0	51.2 / 34.1 / 9.8	83.6 / 16.4 / 0.0
ABS SAL The Lagoon (to the South)	*2016*	1,402	64.3	8.3	0.0 / 9.2	52.2 / 31.9 / 15.9	85.1 / 14.9 / 0.0
	2021	2,303		0.0	33.3 / 0.0	46.6 / 38.6 / 13.6	80.5 / 13.8 / 5.7
SA1 10301105903 (to the North-West)	*2016*	1,421	37.8	8.4	3.0 / 8.3	47.3 / 34.5 / 18.2	80.2 / 19.8 / 0.0
	2021	1,958		0.0	25.0 / 17.1	42.6 / 39.3 / 23.0	76.8 / 23.2 / 0.0
Bathurst UCL112002	*2016*	1,288	20.1	6.4	13.5 / 5.2	29.8 / 32.5 / 34.6	67.3 / 28.1 / 4.6
	2021	1,547		4.4	30.5 / 10.6	31.3 / 31.9 / 34.2	67.5 / 28.9 / 3.6
Perthville (L) UCL122110	*2016*	1,394	26.2	5.1	2.2 / 9.3	36.2 / 48.6 / 15.2	74.5 / 22.6 / 2.9
	2021	1,759		2.1	21.4 / 19.0	40.3 / 45.3 / 10.1	72.7 / 23.1 / 4.2

[20] We reference the latest ABS statistical area names and codes. However, numerous changes were made to the ASGS between 2016 and 2021 census (https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/standards/australian-statistical-geography-standard-asgs-edition-3/jul2021-jun2026/main-structure-and-greater-capital-city-statistical-areas/changes-previous-edition-asgs).

ABS statistical area[20]	Census Year	Median weekly household income $	Percentage change in weekly household income %	Unemployment %	Monthly repayments >30% household income Rent % / Mortgage %	Housing Tenure Owned outright % / Mortgage % / Rented %	Household composition Families % / Single % / % group
Oberon UCL115114	*2016*	1,109	12.9	7.9	10.0 / 4.0	34.9 / 30.5 / 31.2	63.3 / 34.3 / 2.4
	2021	1,252		4.9	28.6 / 13.7	36.2 / 27.9 / 32.4	62.7 / 34.8 / 2.4
Blayney UCL115020	*2016*	1,017	28.7	8.9	12.9 / 7.4	30.5 / 31.2 / 31.8	67.0 / 31.7 / 1.4
	2021	1,309		6.6	28.5 / 9.7	32.8 / 31.3 / 33.5	67.3 / 30.6 / 2.1
Lithgow SUA1019	*2016*	919	18.4	8.6	13.1 / 3.9	39.6 / 25.8 / 30.2	61.4 / 36.1 / 2.4
	2021	1,088		6.5	37.2 / 12.1	39.0 / 26.0 / 29.8	71.2 / 25.0 / 2.9
Orange SUA1027	*2016*	1,282	28.9	6.5	12.2 / 5.4	30.2 / 32.1 / 33.8	67.8 / 29.0 / 3.2
	2021	1,653		3.6	29.5 / 9.7	30.3 / 33.4 / 33.3	67.5 / 29.2 / 3.2
NSW Area Code 1	*2016*	1,486	23.1	6.3	12.9 / 7.4	32.2 / 32.3 / 31.8	72.0 / 23.8 / 4.2
	2021	1,829		4.9	35.5 / 17.3	31.5 / 32.5 / 32.6	71.2 / 25.0 / 3.8

*The residual percentage comprises other tenure types and tenure not stated. 'Other tenure types' comprises dwellings occupied rent free, occupied under a life tenure scheme and other tenure types.

5.6 SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNITY WELLBEING

Social infrastructure comprises schools and other education institutions, medical services, emergency services, recreational facilities and community organisations. Some commercial services are also listed under social infrastructure, such as childcare facilities.

Based on the proximity and capacity of social infrastructure, Bathurst UCL is the primary service centre that will support the Construction and Operation Phase of the Project for both education and public health services required for the Project workforce. Oberon, Lithgow and Orange are all regional centres approximately within an hour commute of the Project, which can also service the Project to reduce pressure on Bathurst, such as during peak tourism events, or where services are not available.

Public health services in surrounding towns and regional centres which may support the Construction Phase of the Project are identified in **Table 5-7**.

TABLE 5-7 PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

Location	Public Health Service	Percentage of Emergency Department Treatments on Time
Bathurst	• Bathurst Health Service offers a comprehensive array of health services, catering to the diverse needs of its community. The service includes a hospital with emergency, inpatient, and various specialist services like cancer care, maternity, mental health, and more. The hospital is currently undergoing a significant redevelopment, with the government allocating $200 million to enhance and expand its facilities and services (NSW Government, 2024). In terms of community health, Bathurst Health Service operates a Community Health Centre that offers various services including child and family health, women's health, and Aboriginal health education. They also provide essential support like home visits for new parents.	• 80.8% (Jan-Mar 2024)
Oberon	• Oberon Hospital provides emergency Services that are available 24 hours per day, which includes child and family health, district nursing services, dietary advice, mental health and women's health, podiatry, physiotherapy, speech pathology and counselling, aged care services, meals on wheels and immunisation.	• Data not available.
Lithgow	• Lithgow District Hospital provides essential medical services including an emergency department. It provides a 24-hour emergency department, along with various medical and surgical services including cardiology, mental health services, cancer care, maternity, and children's health. The hospital is fully equipped with facilities such as a medical imaging clinic that offers comprehensive diagnostic services like X-rays, ultrasounds, and MRI scans.	• 82.5% (Jan-Mar 2014)
Orange	• Orange Health Service is a public hospital with an emergency department open 24/7. Orange also hosts two private hospitals: Dudley Private Hospital and Orange Private Hospital, although these do not have emergency departments.	• 73.9% (Jan-Mar 2024)

Education facilities that may service the needs of the construction and operation workforces are outlined in **Table 5-8**.

TABLE 5-8 EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

Location	Educational Centres
Bathurst	• Bathurst Public School • Bathurst High School • Kelso High Campus - Part of Bathurst's Denison College, providing secondary education. • The Scots School Bathurst - An independent, co-educational daytime and boarding school. • Charles Sturt University (CSU) Bathurst Campus - A major tertiary education provider offering a wide range of undergraduate and postgraduate courses. • Saint Stanislaus' College • Skillset Senior College • TAFE NSW Bathurst
Perthville (L)	• Perthville Public School
Blayney	• Blayney High School • Blayney Public School • St. Joseph's Catholic School - kindergarten through Year 6.
Oberon	• Oberon High School • Oberon Public School • St. Joseph's Catholic School • Black Springs Public School
Lithgow	• Lithgow High School • Lithgow Public School • St. Patrick's School • Cooerwull Public School • La Salle Academy • TAFE NSW Lithgow
Orange	• Orange High School • Kinross Wolaroi School - A private, co-educational day and boarding school that serves students from Pre-K to Year 12. • James Sheahan Catholic High School • Orange Public School - One of the oldest public schools in the area • Calare Public School - Provides primary education • Canobolas Rural Technology High School - Focuses on technology and applied sciences in a secondary school setting • Charles Sturt University (CSU) Orange Campus - Offers a range of tertiary courses with a focus on health and medical sciences • TAFE NSW Western institute • TAFE NSW Anson Street • TAFE NSW March Street

Key ABS health and education indicators across the Project's Social Locality are reported in **Table 5-9**.

Neurocognitive[21] and respiratory[22] conditions are generally below or comparable to the NSW average in the statistical areas representing the Project Area and immediate surroundings.

[21] Neurocognitive combines the following ABS categories: 'Mental health condition (including depression or anxiety)' and 'Dementia (including Alzheimer's)'.
[22] Respiratory combines the following ABS categories: 'Lung Conditions (including COPD or emphysema)' and 'Asthma'.

Neurocognitive and respiratory condition data are only analysed for the immediate surrounding areas because the impacts associated with the Project, such as dust generation, noise, and localised emissions, are more direct and pose a higher risk to nearby sensitive receptors. In the immediate surroundings, Glanmire SAL has a slightly higher percentage of neurocognitive and respiratory conditions and The Lagoon SAL has a slightly higher percentage of respiratory conditions when compared to the NSW average. However, all areas representing the immediate surroundings remain lower than Bathurst LGA.

The educational profiles in Bathurst LGA and the surrounding SUA and UCLs indicate a strengthening capability to support the families of the Project workforce and may suggest opportunities to source workers locally.

Overall, the Social Locality's population attaining vocational training is lower than broader NSW (36.7%), and lower than NSW's population attaining University (23.4%). Attention may need to be directed towards areas like Bathurst LGA, The Lagoon, Glanmire, and the SA1 containing the Project Area, where vocational training rates have declined. At the same time, vocational training figures in all UCLs have increased from 2016 to 2021 (from 27.1% to 29.9% in Bathurst, from 32.7% to 38.0% in Perthville, from 23.8% to 25.4% in Oberon, from 26.5% to 31.8% in Blayney, and from 27.3% to 28.7% in Orange), suggesting that potential relevant labourers are particularly based in the urban centres of the Social Locality. The increase in higher education levels, coupled with generally stable or improving vocational training figures, provides a strong foundation for the technical needs of the Project.

TABLE 5-9 KEY HEALTH AND EDUCATION INDICATORS ACROSS THE PROJECT'S SOCIAL LOCALITY

ABS Statistical Area	Census Year	Neurocognitive / Respiratory conditions %	Educational attainment year 12 or equiv. %	Educational attainment, vocational training %	Educational attainment, University %
Bathurst Regional LGA10470	*2016*	-	13.1	43.6	16.1
	2021	11.8 / 13.1	12.9	29.4	19.0
SA1 10301106002 (containing the Project Area)	*2016*	-	10.0	30.0	19.4
	2021	9.3 / 7.6	10.1	24.3	22.2
ABS SAL Glanmire (to the North)	*2016*	-	11.3	38.4	18.8
	2021	10.2 / 10.3	7.7	33.6	22.6
ABS SAL The Lagoon (to the South)	*2016*	-	7.5	34.4	18.8
	2021	6.3 / 11.6	8.9	32.9	15.5
SA1 10301105903 (to the North-West)	*2016*	-	13.2	25.7	15.1
	2021	8.3 / 9.0	14.5	42.0	17.4
Bathurst UCL112002	*2016*	-	13.9	27.1	16.2
	2021	12.6 / 13.6	13.4	29.9	18.9

ABS Statistical Area	Census Year	Neurocognitive / Respiratory conditions %	Educational attainment year 12 or equiv. %	Educational attainment, vocational training %	Educational attainment, University %
Perthville (L) UCL122110	*2016*	-	9.4	32.7	13.9
	2021	11.3 / 12.4	11.1	38.0	20.9
Oberon UCL115114	*2016*	-	12.3	23.8	6.6
	2021	11.5 / 12.8	12.5	25.4	8.9
Blayney UCL115020	*2016*	-	10.0	26.5	7.0
	2021	11.7 / 16.4	11.5	31.8	9.2
Lithgow SUA1019	*2016*	-	10.1	26.0	8.3
	2021	13.1 / 13.4	11.2	28.4	10.8
Orange SUA1027	*2016*	-	11.0	27.3	17.3
	2021	13.0 / 12.3	11.3	28.7	21.1
NSW Area Code 1	*2016*	-	15.3	33.6	23.4
	2021	8.8 / 9.5	14.5	36.7	27.8

*Count of select long-term health conditions was not reported in the 2016 Census Quick-stats.

5.7 ACCESS AND CONNECTIVITY

The Project Area is located on the northern side of Tarana Road in Brewongle, approximately 12 km southeast of Bathurst. According to the TIA (Amber, 2025), access to the Project site is proposed via a new access road connecting with Tarana Road to the south of the Project site. Bathurst Regional Council indicates that the bridge over Salt Water Creek (on Tarana Road) does not currently meet the structural requirements for B-Doubles or oversize-overmass vehicles. It is understood that a replacement for the bridge has been designed which would allow access for these vehicles, and the Applicant will continue to liaise with Council to confirm the timing of the bridge reconstruction works which should occur prior to the commencement of the Construction Phase of the Project. An assessment has been undertaken for the intersection of O'Connell Road and Tarana Road to ensure vehicles are able to safely leave the State Road network. The assessment concluded that the intersection is able to accommodate the vehicles expected to access the site subject to proposed widening at the North East corner. It is noted that Tarana Road is unrated for B-Double vehicles and requires approval from Bathurst Regional Council for these vehicles to utilise the road (Amber, 2025).

Heavy vehicles would travel along a direct route between Port Botany and the site which utilises the A32 through the Blue Mountains region. The B-Double access route measures approximately 519 km and generally utilises roads that are designated for B-Double vehicles and follows the Class 1 OSOM network (Amber, 2025).

5.8 ABORIGINAL CULTURAL HERITAGE

An Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report (ACHAR) was prepared in July 2024 (OzArk, 2024a). As stated in the ACHAR, a search of the Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System (AHIMS) register on 27 October 2023 returned 45 results for Aboriginal sites within a 20 km radius of the study area[23]. None of the sites are within or near the study area. Assessment of the study area took place with the assistance of Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs) over two (2) days (14-15 February 2024). The survey resulted in four (4) potential archaeological deposits being recorded along Salt Water Creek, in the north of the study area. The proponent has redesigned the impacts of the project to ensure the potential archaeological deposits are not harmed by the Project (OzArk, 2024a).

Additionally, desktop database searches completed as part of the Historic Heritage Assessment Report (HHAR) (OzArk, 2024b) prior to the survey show that there are no items with local, state or national significance listed within or near the study area. One item of potential historic heritage value, a dilapidated timber and corrugated iron shack, (Salt Water Creek-HS01) was recorded within the study area. No locations within the study area were assessed as having potential to contain significant historic subsurface archaeological deposits. Salt Water Creek-HS01 has been assessed as having no heritage significance under the current Heritage NSW guidelines and the Burra Charter (OzArk, 2024b).

5.9 COMMUNITY VALUES

Bathurst is a regional centre that balances a concern for heritage and wildlife preservation with urban development, which is exemplified by projects like the 'Pillars of Bathurst' that honour the city's historical figures and initiatives like the Regent Honeyeater habitat restoration (VisitNSW, 2024). Strategic plans such as "Vision Bathurst 2040" (refer to **Section 4.4**) highlight the region's commitment to economic vitality, environmental stewardship, and community well-being (Bathurst NSW, 2024).

Table 5-10 highlights some of the key events and festivals across the Social Locality, which reflect the community values across the different regional centres. Bathurst hosts multiple major car racing events that are recognized globally and Orange hosts a range of food and wine events, which are bolstered by a strong wine making industry. Blayney, Lithgow, and Oberon encompass a diverse mix of outdoor, cultural, and community-focused activities, ranging from festivals celebrating local food and nature, such as foraging and gardening, to arts exhibitions, creative performances, and community markets.

TABLE 5-10 SIGNIFICANT FESTIVALS AND EVENTS

Location	Event/Festival	Indicative Start Date	Indicative End Date
Bathurst	Bathurst 12 Hour	16 Feb	18 Feb
	Thrifty Bathurst 500	23 Feb	25 Feb
	Bathurst Hi-Tec Oils 6 Hour	29 Mar	31 Mar
	NRL Telstra Premiership: Penrith Panthers V Wests Tigers	20 Apr	20 Apr
	Bathurst Winter Festival	6 Jul	21 Jul

[23] Study area as per defined in Section 1.3 of the ACHAR (OzArk, 2024a)

Location	Event/Festival	Indicative Start Date	Indicative End Date
	Bathurst Careers Expo	31 Jul	31 Jul
	Bathurst 1000	10 Oct	13 Oct
	Supercheap Auto Bathurst International	10 Nov	12 Nov
	Challenge Bathurst	21 Nov	24 Nov
Oberon	Safety in the Forests Workshop	14 Mar	30 Apr
	Field to Forest 4WD Foraging Experience	14 Mar	30 Apr
	Oberson Winemakers and Distillers Trail	14 Mar	30 Apr
	Field to Forest Festival Oberon	14 Mar	30 Apr
	The Truffle Table: An Exquisite Tasting Experience	14 Mar	15 May
	Oberon Community and Farmers Market	6 Apr	7 Dec
	Oberon Outdoor Festival	30 Nov	1 Dec
	Gairloch Open Garden Autumn 2024	29 Mar	1 Apr
	Mayfield Autumn Glamping	29 Mar	18 May
	Kenzell Farm Easter	30 Mar	31 Mar
	Tarana Charity Dg Trials	1 Apr	1 Apr
	Oberon Outdoor Festival	30 Nov	1 Dec
	Newbridge Swap Meet	09 Feb	-
	River Yarn Fibre Festival	06 Apr	07 Apr
	Sculptures by the Bush	12 Apr	05 May
	Youth Week Dance Classes	29 Apr	-
	Express, Empower, Get Loud!	01 May	-
	Book Fair - Blayney Anglican	03 May	-
	Bucking Bulls Australia Finals	11 May	-
	Mental Health Mates Walk	12 May	-
	Newbridge Winter Solstice Festival	22 Jun	-
	Spring into Art at Newbridge	18 Oct	20 Oct
	Carcoar Running Festival	02 Nov	03 Nov
Blayney	Creative Photography Exhibition	09 May	-
	2024 Beef Muster	31 May	-
	The Golden Plough	08 Jun	-
	Stage Fright ein Kabarett	09 Jun	-
	Newbridge Winter Solstice Festival	22 Jun	-
	Millthorpe Fire Fair	02 Aug	-
	Bush Dance	31 Aug	-

Location	Event/Festival	Indicative Start Date	Indicative End Date
	Spring into Art at Newbridge	19 Oct	-
	Carcoar Show	26 Oct	-
	Millthorpe Garden Ramble	02 Nov	-
	Garage Sale Trail Weekend	09 Nov	16 Nov
Lithgow	Mushroom Foraging Workshop	16 Apr	28 May
	Ironfest 2024	27 Apr	28 Apr
	Lithgow Halloween	26 Oct	-
	Beatlesfest 7 Valleys	4 Oct	6 Oct
	Daffodils at Rydal	7 Sep	15 Sep
	Festival of Natives Exhibition	3 Nov	13 Nov
Orange	Orange Running Festival	9 Mar	10 Mar
	Rainbow Festival	22 Mar	24 Mar
	Orange Chamber Music Festival	7 Mar	10 Mar
	Orange Food Week	5 Apr	14 Apr
	Oriana Grande	18 Apr	-
	Orange Winter Fire Festival	4 Aug	13 Aug
	Orange Wine Festival	29 Sep	29 Oct

6. SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

As outlined in **Section 2.3**, the impact assessment methodology follows that outlined in DPE's Technical Supplement (2023b). Overall, the key drivers of social change that may affect communities in the Social Locality resulting from the Project relate to:

- Procurement opportunities for Local/Regional Businesses and employment opportunities for the local workforce;
- Opportunities for diversification of income streams for host landowners;
- Disruptions due to construction related activities (noise, dust, transportation of materials and workers, etc.);
- Accommodation arrangements for construction workforce; and
- Amenity (noise, visual) and other land use and landscape changes due to altered landscapes.

Technology to support renewable energy projects is continuously evolving and improving. Accordingly, following the 30-year minimum operational timeframe, components of the solar farm may be upgraded to prolong the life of operation, or decommissioned and the land returned to the original land use. Given the timeframe involved, the Decommissioning Phase has been considered at a higher level in the impact assessment than the other phases of the Project. It should be noted however, that the potential social impacts associated with the Decommissioning Phase of the Project will also be considered in greater detail as part of a future Decommissioning and Rehabilitation Plan (DRP) (or similar).

In assessing the potential impacts, ERM has considered the:

- Characteristics of the Project, including the timing, duration and sensitivity of activities (where known);
- Issues raised by stakeholders during the engagement process; and
- Outcomes from technical studies undertaken by the Project (such as noise, visual, cultural heritage etc.).

The impacts have been assessed based on the likelihood of the impact occurring, the magnitude of the impact (degree of change caused by the impact) if it occurs, and the vulnerability of the impacted receptors (refer to **Section 2.3**).

6.1 STAKEHOLDER AND COMMUNITY

6.1.1 POTENTIAL IMPACT ON TANGIBLE AND INTANGIBLE ABORIGINAL HERITAGE

Impact Overview

Altered landscapes can significantly impact both tangible and intangible Aboriginal heritage. Physical changes can impact sacred and archaeological sites, while disrupting traditional practices and cultural connections.

NSW SIA Categories

Culture; Health and Wellbeing; Decision-making Systems.

Affected Stakeholders

Aboriginal Communities.

Findings

The baseline data provides three (3) key findings and assumptions related to employment opportunities:

- **Aboriginal population**: the proportion of the population identifying as Indigenous remains higher than that of broader NSW (2.9%). Bathurst Regional LGA experienced an increase in the Indigenous population (from 6.1% in 2016 to 7.2% in 2021).

Interviews conducted during EIS engagement, and garnered through the engagement received, identified the following comments within the Social Locality:

- **Project neighbours:** Requested information on the traditional owners that were consulted as a part of the ACHAR undertaken by OzArk (OzArk, 2024a);
- **Wider Community:** Wanted assurance that consultations with Indigenous peoples have been undertaken; and
- **Aboriginal Community:** Generally, the Aboriginal community regard all sites as having high cultural significance.

Impacts or changes to tangible or intangible Aboriginal cultural heritage have the potential to cause emotional stress and anguish to Aboriginal Community members, as well as result in a mutual shared loss of values and/or artefacts of importance across the wider community.

The following findings relating to tangible and intangible heritage were identified in ACHAR (OzArk, 2024a):

- **Intangible heritage**: There may be places with intangible cultural significance within the study area, although no specific locations have so far been identified by the Aboriginal community;
- **Aesthetic values**: No locations with significant aesthetic qualities were identified within the study area; and
- **Scientific values**: The scientific value of Salt Water Creek PADs 1-4 cannot be assessed without test excavation. Potential objects would have high cultural significance to the RAPs.

Mitigation and Management Measures:

To manage these potential impacts, a Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) will be developed and implemented and include the following mitigations: cultural awareness inductions for workers, surface collection of artefact scatters, staged salvage excavation, archaeological monitoring, chance finds procedure, repatriation of archaeological material post-construction, fencing and erosion control measures around PADs, and consultation with the local Aboriginal community to seek endorsement of these recommendations (ERM, 2024a).

To minimise impacts on the tangible and intangible Aboriginal heritage associated with the Project, the following mitigation measures will be adopted:

- Develop and Implement a CHMP which includes but is not limited to:
  - Cultural awareness inductions for workers;
  - Surface collection of artefact scatters;

- Staged salvage excavation;
- Archaeological monitoring;
- Chance finds procedure; and
- Repatriation of archaeological material post-construction; and Consultation with the local Aboriginal community.

- Implementation of recommendations provided in the ACHAR and HHAR;
- The implementation of the CSEP will be important to facilitate stakeholder appropriate, transparent, and meaningful engagement; and
- The community feedback mechanism should be maintained throughout the life of the Project to manage concerns that may arise during operational activities.

Impact Significance

A summary of the impact assessment characteristics associated with the potential impact on tangible and intangible Aboriginal cultural heritage is provided in **Table 6-.**

TABLE 6-1 IMPACT CHARACTERISTICS ABORIGINAL CULTURAL HERITAGE

Impact Characteristics	Key Finding
Extent	The impact is limited to the Project Area.
Duration	The duration of the Construction Phase is 12-18 months.
Severity	The ACHAR suggests that the Project presents low risks to tangible and intangible heritage (refer to ACHAR (OzArk, 2024a)).
Sensitivity	Aboriginal Communities are culturally vulnerable to Project impacts that will affect tangible and intangible heritage.
Level of Interest	RAPs engaged shared positive sentiment towards the Project. Noting that the Bathurst area generally has a high cultural significance.

Based on the findings outlined in this section, the pre-mitigation and post-mitigation impact significance across all relevant project phases is outlined in **Table 6-.**

TABLE 6-2 IMPACT SIGNIFICANCE ABORIGINAL CULTURAL HERITAGE

Phase	Pre-mitigation			Post-mitigation		
	Magnitude	Likelihood	Impact Significance	Magnitude	Likelihood	Impact Significance
Construction	Major	Unlikely	Medium	Moderate	Unlikely	Medium
Operation	Major	Unlikely	Medium	Moderate	Very Unlikely	Low

6.1.2 REDUCED COMMUNITY COHESION AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT APPROACH

Impact Overview

Increased social tensions due to divergent opinions related to the desirability of the Project and population influx may reduce community cohesion and result in negative mental health and wellbeing impacts to the local community.

Additionally, the influx of workers into a Social Locality can impact community cohesion, as the introduction of a large non-local workforce can bring cultural differences that strain social norms and interactions (further impacts related to influx of workers are discussed in subsequent sections). These tensions could lead to a fragmentation of community bonds and decrease the sense of identity and belonging in the local population. A lack of meaningful stakeholder engagement increases the risk of reduced community cohesion and increased negative sentiment within the community. It is critical that engagement and communications materials are made available in accessible formats to ensure the inclusion of vulnerable groups outlined in **Section 5.4**.

NSW SIA Categories

Health and Wellbeing; Way of Life; Community.

Affected Stakeholders

Business/Workforce; Aboriginal Communities; Surrounding Communities; Immediate Neighbours; Host Landowners.

Findings

During the engagement carried out for the Project it was suggested by some stakeholders that the community within the Social Locality was divided in relation to their support for the Project proceeding. Some community members held firm negative sentiments in relation to the Project, whilst others expressed supportive views, often focusing on the potential benefits. This concern around a reduced sense of community cohesion was also expressed during stakeholder engagement for the EIS, with the following comments raised:

- **The wider community** expressed mixed sentiments towards the Project development, with a larger proportion being supportive;
- **Immediate Neighbours** expressed negative sentiments towards the development of the Project;
- **Local Council** sentiments were mixed with a general concern around the potential cumulative impacts in some LGAs, but mostly neutral to positive sentiments;
- **State and Federal elected members** overall expressed neutral / inquisitive sentiments towards the Project;
- **Emergency services** expressed neutral sentiment towards the Project; and
- **Accommodation providers** were mixed with some real estate agents expressing negative views whilst short-term accommodation providers held neutral sentiments about the Project.

There were no suggestions during stakeholder engagement that any vulnerable groups would be disproportionately impacted by community division. To this end, it should also be noted that metal health and wellbeing impacts may be more acutely experienced during the period of construction as stakeholders are exposed to other social impacts related to the Project. Potential social impacts, such as local disruptions (refer to **Section 6.3**) may only serve to exacerbate underlying social tensions between members of the community and subsequently result in a greater extent of community division than during the Pre-Construction Phase.

Mitigation and Management Measures

To manage the potential for the local community to become more divided over the Project and address the mental health and wellbeing of stakeholders involved, it will be important to ensure that there is ongoing stakeholder engagement conducted with surrounding communities, including those stakeholders that have voiced concern in relation to the Project. Further engagement should take into consideration the concern of potential engagement fatigue that may be present among some stakeholders in the community.

Specifically, the following management measures are proposed to be adopted by the Project:

- The implementation of a CSEP, including the community engagement action plan (Premier Strategy, 2024), will be important to facilitate stakeholder appropriate, transparent, and meaningful engagement. The SEP will include the requirement to provide regular Project updates and seek input from stakeholders in relation to their concerns and/or impacts that are being experienced;
- Establishing clear behaviour standards for non-local workers to help maintain community cohesion and sense of belonging within the local community through a workers Code of Conduct;
- A community feedback mechanism will also be developed and implemented by the Project to manage concerns that may arise during day-to-day construction activities;
- The Project will promote awareness of mental health through their website and ongoing engagement activities; and
- If deemed necessary during stakeholder engagement, the Project will consider alternative engagement options to reduce stakeholder fatigue but ensure it remains meaningful.

Impact Significance

A summary of the impact assessment characteristics associated with the potential impact on community cohesion is provided in **Table 6-**.

TABLE 6-3 IMPACT CHARACTERISTICS COMMUNITY COHESION

Impact Characteristics	Key Finding
Extent	The loss of community cohesion has the potential to impact all stakeholders within the immediate surrounds of the Project.
Duration	The Construction Phase is 12-18 months. It is anticipated that the loss of community cohesion will be most acutely experienced during the period of construction. The duration of this impact is also expected in the early stage of the Operational Phase but not persist for the lifespan of the Project.
Severity	Stakeholder engagement suggested that the scale of community opposition is mixed according to stakeholder groups.
Sensitivity	Brewongle and surrounding suburbs contain small and interconnected communities. Accordingly, the loss of community cohesion may elicit a higher degree of change for impacted stakeholders.
Level of Interest	Perceptions about the level of opposition and related community division were mixed.

Based on the findings outlined in this section, the pre-mitigation and post-mitigation impact significance across all relevant project phases is outlined in **Table 6-**.

TABLE 6-4 IMPACT SIGNIFICANCE COMMUNITY COHESION

Phase	Pre-mitigation			Post-mitigation		
	Magnitude	Likelihood	Impact Significance	Magnitude	Likelihood	Impact Significance
Construction	Major	Likely	High	Moderate	Possible	Medium
Operation	Moderate	Possible	Medium	Moderate	Unlikely	Medium

6.2 EMPLOYMENT AND PROCUREMENT

6.2.1 INCREASED DIRECT AND INDIRECT EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Impact Overview

Increased demand for labour creates direct jobs in operations and maintenance while indirectly supporting Local/Regional Businesses and services. This boosts the local economy, promotes skill development, and strengthens community resilience.

NSW SIA Categories

Livelihoods.

Affected Stakeholders

Business/Workforce.

Findings

The construction period is expected to commence in 2027 and take approximately 12-18 months, with the peak construction period expected to take six (6) months. A workforce of 200 people would be on-site during peak construction periods with the workforce expected to be primarily located in the surrounding region. The local employment target for the construction phase of the Project is to utilise the maximum extend of local workers that is feasible. The local employment target during operation is expected to be 100% and located in the Social Locality.

The baseline data provides three (3) key findings and assumptions related to employment opportunities:

- **Population growth and stagnation**: The large regional centres of Bathurst and Orange show moderate increase in population between 2016 and 2021 (1.5% and 1.5% respectively), meanwhile Lithgow experienced a stagnant population trend (-0.7%);
- **Ageing population**: The median age is consistently higher than the NSW average across majority the Social Locality, which suggests an ageing population; and
- **Economy diversification:** The Project Area and immediate surroundings display a mixed economic composition dominated by Agriculture and Primary Production, such as beef cattle and sheep farming, with a presence of Public and Social Services industries.

Building on these findings, small rural townships surrounding regional centres could be at risk of experiencing rural decline if new and diverse large-scale projects do not occur within the local area to bolster local business. The expansion of agricultural enterprises in NSW has led to farm consolidation, reducing the need for labour and contributing to the decline of small towns while shifting population and services toward larger regional centres (Argent, 2017).

Interviews conducted during EIS engagement, and garnered through the engagement received, demonstrated a desire for local employment opportunities to be realised within the Social Locality, with stakeholders commenting:

- **Several community members** stated during a Community Session in 2024 that there is "no value in noting employment as a project benefit given that Bathurst has 100% employment in its community. Therefore, the only form of employment for this project would be FIFO – not a local benefit". Other stakeholders explained that the Project will contribute to building the resilience of Brewongle and Bathurst communities through the generation of jobs and skills development.

The following findings relating to direct and indirect employment were identified in economic assessment:

- **Construction jobs:** 428 direct and indirect (regionally) (Gillespie Economics, 2025);
- **Operation jobs:** eight (8) direct and indirect (regionally) (Gillespie Economics, 2025);
- **Decommissioning:** economic impacts associated with decommissioning the Project and removing solar panels and associated infrastructure would only be short-term and less than those associated with the construction of the Project; and
- **Agricultural practices:** The Project operation will have negligible agricultural impacts because sheep will be able to graze between solar panels and other infrastructure (Gillespie Economics, 2025).

The economic assessment (Gillespie Economics, 2025) notes that the main cumulative economic impact of this and other prospective projects in the region is to generate large demand for a suitably qualified construction workforce in the region and surrounds. This demand can help address the jobs growth imbalance between Australia's biggest cities and regions. The Project will provide opportunities for the existing and future regional workforces, attracting middle skilled and high skilled workers and families to regional areas, reducing outmigration of the regional workforce to look for employment in cities, and increase regional labour force participation. Notwithstanding, cumulative demand for construction workers can in the short run potentially lead to increased construction wages, attraction of workers from other relevant sub-sectors and sectors of the economy leading to labour shortages in these other areas of the economy (and associated shortages of goods and services), rising prices as firms pass wage costs onto consumers. The extent of these impacts for regional economies will depend on the balance of labour supply from inside the region, outside the region and drive-in drive-out (DIDO)/fly-in fly-out (FIFO), as well as adjustment of the overall labour market to respond to increased demand (Gillespie Economics, 2025).

Enhancement and Management Measures

To maximise employment benefits associated with the Project, with following enhancement measures will be adopted:

- Develop and implement a Local Employment Plan (LEP) for the Project. The LEP is to include measures to encourage and set targets for local employment for the EPC Contractor;
- Create awareness amongst the community, in partnership with the Bathurst Regional Council, and other partner organisations to foster a better understanding of the ways prospective workers may be able to take part in the Project.

This awareness is to be generated using a Project specific website and existing communication channels within the Social Locality;

- Work with the EPC Contractor during the Construction Phase to achieve maximum local employment targets set;
- The LEP for the Project is to include the following measures:
  - Host information sessions to engage with the community and Local/Regional Businesses who can provide inputs or services and other prospective contractors/subcontractors, regarding construction timing, workforce estimates and accommodation requirements;
  - Engage local media including radio, newspaper and social media to advertise expressions of interest for employment or provision of services or materials;
  - Engage with the local employment agencies to identify access pathways for local workers. Assess the candidate pool to determine suitable labour, trade or other employment on the Project;
  - Investigate any local and regional community social media channels which can disseminate information to the community and Local/Regional Businesses which can provide inputs or services and prospective subcontractors;
  - Set up a dedicated employment opportunity platform on the Project's website in consultation and coordination with the EPC contractor;
  - Consult with local Business Chambers and provide their members with relevant details such as Project construction timing, workforce estimates and accommodation requirements;
  - Implement shuttle bus services where practical to enable local workforce in the respective locations to easily commute to the project site;
  - Encourage businesses with an ABN register their business and submit expressions of interest on the Industry Capability Network (ICN) Gateway;
  - Provide opportunities for Local/Regional Businesses to submit proposals and tenders and prioritise the use of goods and services that can be sourced locally and are competitive for price and quality;
  - Encourage subcontractors to employ local workers wherever practicable and reasonable;
  - Use local presence and content as a criterion when awarding contracts to subcontractors; and
  - Identify positions where training would allow additional local workers and encourage local workers and businesses to undertake training to provide for specialist works.
- Implement the recommendations of the economic assessment (Gillespie Economics, 2025) to enhance positive local employment opportunities.

Impact Significance

A summary of the impact assessment characteristics associated with the potential impact on employment is provided in Table 6-.

TABLE 6-5 IMPACT CHARACTERISTICS EMPLOYMENT

Impact Characteristics	Key Finding
Extent	The Project will provide opportunities for direct and indirect employment across the Social Locality and for a range of industries through 428 direct and indirect jobs (regionally) during construction and eight (8) direct and indirect jobs (regionally) during operation. The extent of employment during decommissioning will likely be limited depending on the availability of workers at the time.
Duration	The Construction Phase is 12-18 months and Operation Phase is at least 30 years; therefore, the duration of employment opportunities will vary by phase.
Severity	Baseline and engagement data suggests the Project will contribute towards economic resilience in the social locality. Based on the range and scale of workers, this will be higher during the Construction Phase than during the Operation Phase. It is expected that the decommissioning period for the Project will require the employment of a limited number of local workers and result in a short-term increase in economic growth for the Social Locality.
Sensitivity	The elderly and Indigenous population in the social locality was above the state average and these groups may have limited capacity to secure employment opportunities unless supported by the Project.
Level of Interest	There was a desire to bring employment opportunities to the Social Locality expressed in the engagement received. However, there were also concerns that employment opportunities will not be locally sourced.

Based on the findings outlined in this section, the pre-enhancement and post-enhancement impact significance across all relevant project phases is outlined in **Table 6-**.

TABLE 6-6 IMPACT SIGNIFICANCE EMPLOYMENT

Phase	Pre-mitigation			Post-mitigation		
	Magnitude	Likelihood	Impact Significance	Magnitude	Likelihood	Impact Significance
Construction	Major	Possible	High	Major	Likely	Very High
Operation	Moderate	Possible	Medium	Moderate	Likely	High

6.2.2 INCREASED LOCAL PROCUREMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Impact Overview

Increased demand for goods and services helps to stimulate the local economies. Businesses within the Social Locality benefit from increased economic activity associated with the construction workforce and Project material requirements.

NSW SIA Category

Livelihoods.

Affected Stakeholders

Business/Workforce.

Findings

The baseline data provides three key findings and assumptions related to employment opportunities:

- **Economy diversification:** The Project Area and immediate surroundings display a mixed economic composition with some relevant industries ('Industrial and Manufacturing' and 'Construction and Infrastructure' refer to **Table 5-**) in most UCLs, with potential to supply the Project.

As stated in **Section 5.2**, the small rural townships surrounding regional centres are at risk of experiencing rural decline if new larger-scale projects do not occur within the local area which can help to bolster local business (Argent, 2017).

The following findings relating to procurement opportunities were identified in economic assessment:

- **Machinery:** Conservatively, all machinery manufacturing is assumed to occur outside the region/NSW; and
- **Key procurement sectors:** 'Residential Building Construction,' 'Wholesale and Retail Trade,' 'Cement Lime and Ready-Mixed Concrete Manufacturing,' 'Non-Residential Property Operators and Real Estate Services,' 'Employment, Travel Agency and Other Administrative Services,' 'Building Cleaning, Pest Control and Other Support Services.'

The flow-on effects of the Construction Phase are anticipated to include increased demand for the key sectors listed above. Where possible, these demands are sought to be met through Local/Regional Businesses and organisations within the Social Locality. In addition to providing employment opportunities, the Project has the potential to provide opportunities for the local procurement of goods and services during the Construction Phase, which will benefit local and regional businesses.

The economic assessment (Gillespie Economics, 2025) states that the average annual impacts of the Project on the regional economy are estimated at up to:

- Between $56M and $58M in annual direct and indirect output24 during construction, and $11M during operations;
- Between 19 and $20M in annual direct and indirect value-added25 during construction, and $9M during operations; and
- $12M in annual direct and indirect household income26 during construction, and $1M during operations.

It is also noted that, in the short run, excess demand for inputs to construction such as quarry materials and concrete can result in rising costs for these factor inputs and potentially shortages for other uses (Gillespie Economics, 2025).

[24] 'output' refers to gross regional output – the gross value of business turnover in a region.
[25] 'value-added' refers to the difference between the gross value of business turnover and the costs of the inputs of raw materials, components and services bought in to produce the gross regional output. These costs exclude wage costs.
[26] 'household income' refers to the wages paid to employees including imputed wages for self-employed and business owners.

Enhancement and Management Measures

To maximise local procurement opportunities and with following enhancement measures will be adopted:

- Develop and implement local content initiatives which includes measures to encourage local procurement for the EPC Contractor;
- Create awareness amongst the community, in partnership with the Bathurst Regional Council and other partner organisations to foster a better understanding of the ways Local/Regional Businesses may be able to take part in the Project. This awareness is to be generated using a Project specific website and existing communication channels within the Bathurst LGA;
- Work with the EPC Contractor during the Construction Phase to track and report on the local content used for the Project to demonstrate the extent to which local content is being accessed;
- Implement the recommendations of the economic assessment (Gillespie Economics, 2024) to enhance positive local procurement opportunities; and
- Assist respective Local/Regional Businesses in becoming 'job ready' by:
    - ensuring lead contractors are encouraged to hire regional residents where they have the required skills and experience and can demonstrate a cultural fit with the organisation;
    - participation in business group meetings, events or programs in the regional community to increase transparency in relation to upcoming opportunities; and
    - encouraging lead contractors to purchase local non-labour inputs to production, where local producers can be cost and quality competitive, to support local industries.

The Project will also implement measures to encourage local content where importance is placed on procurement of local non-labour inputs to production where local producers can be cost and quality competitive.

The measures would include the following three (3) steps:

- **Step 1 - Expressions of Interest:** Businesses with an ABN register their business and submit expressions of interest on the ICN Regional Gateway. Businesses which have registered their interest with the Applicant, or the EPC Contractor prior, will be directly contacted by the EPC Contractor and notified of the Expression of Interest process;
- **Step 2 - Further Information:** The EPC Contractor with the Applicant's support will hold information sessions in Bathurst to provide Local/Regional Businesses with additional information about the available work packages and the process of bidding for subcontracting or supply opportunities with the main subcontractor(s). The database prepared by the EPC Contractor in Step 1 will be used to contact interested business to participate in the information sessions; and
- **Step 3 - Engagement of Suppliers and Subcontractors:** The EPC Contractor and main subcontractor(s) engage the suppliers and subcontractors directly according to their procurement processes. A target local worker ratio may be imposed to allow an estimate of non-local workers and to measure effectiveness of the local procurement initiatives.

Impact Significance

A summary of the impact assessment characteristics associated with the potential impact on local procurement is provided in **Table 6-**.

TABLE 6-7 IMPACT CHARACTERISTICS LOCAL PROCUREMENT

Impact Characteristics	Key Finding
Extent	Opportunities for local procurement across all phases not only extends throughout the Social Locality.
Duration	The Construction Phase is 12-18 months and the Operation Phase is at least 30 years.
Severity	There are relevant industries in most of the UCLs across the Social Locality with potential to adapt to the procurement opportunities presented by the Project across all phases.
Sensitivity	There is potential for procurement opportunities resulting from all project phases to contribute to the economic resilience of the Social Locality. Meanwhile, various stakeholders may require support from the Project to identify and secure procurement opportunities.
Level of Interest	Engagement received did not identity interest in procurement opportunities.

Based on the findings outlined in this section, the pre-mitigation and post-mitigation impact significance across all relevant project phases is outlined in **Table 6-**.

TABLE 6-8 IMPACT SIGNIFICANCE LOCAL PROCUREMENT

Phase	Pre-mitigation			Post-mitigation		
	Magnitude	Likelihood	Impact Significance	Magnitude	Likelihood	Impact Significance
Construction	Major	Possible	High	Major	Likely	Very High
Operation	Moderate	Possible	Medium	Moderate	Likely	High

6.2.3 POTENTIAL TO CREATE SKILLS SHORTAGES

Impact Overview

The increased demand for labour driven by the Project may contribute to skills shortages. The need for specialized skills may outstrip the available regional workforce, creating gaps in relevant industries. Economic benefits notwithstanding, the Project also has the potential to negatively impact the availability of skilled workers within the Social Locality and wider region. This impact is typically recognised when a considerable proportion of skilled workers available in a region are employed on a single large Project, meaning that other businesses and/or operations are unable to draw from the same pool of skilled workers to fulfil their job requirements. Skills shortages can be mitigated by providing on-the-job training, preferring to hire contractors, partnering with educational institutions, and creating a target for apprenticeships.

NSW SIA Categories

Livelihoods; Accessibility.

Affected Stakeholders

Business/Workforce.

Findings

A portion of the Social Locality's workforce have relevant occupations and skills required for the Construction Phase of the Project (skills as outlined in **Section 5.3**). This crossover of relevant skillsets increases the possibility that workers may decide to leave their current employer and accept an opportunity with the Project for the duration of the Construction Phase. Where this occurs, Local/Regional Businesses may be negatively impacted as they are unable to hire and/or retain suitable staff, and in-turn their economic output is diminished as they cannot fulfil contracts and business commitments.

However, the risk the Project will contribute to skills shortages within the Social Locality and impact local business is lessened by the existing mobility of prospective employees. Nationally, 'Technicians and Trades Workers' and 'Labourers' have the largest proportion of independent contractors (17% and 11%, respectively). The tendency for workers within these industries of employment to operate as independent contractors is an indicator for existing employee mobility within the workforce, with the potential for these independent contractors to align themselves with an EPC Contractor rather than be already employed long-term by Local/Regional Businesses (ABS, 2023a).

Mitigation and Management Measures

To address the potential creation of skills shortages within the Social Locality, the Project will adopt the following management measures:

- Develop and implement the LEP for the Project, including the proposed Mitigation and Management Measures contained therein;
- Monitor for skills shortages within the region and take this into consideration with EPC Contractor recruitment objectives;
- Implement the CSEP, inclusive of the requirement to maintain ongoing communication with Bathurst Regional Council and local business groups;
- Develop and implement a community feedback mechanism to ensure that concerns / complaints raised by stakeholders, including in relation to skills shortages and local business impacts, are identified and acted upon;
- Ensure that on-the-job training programs are provided to upskill local workers with transferable skills;
- Preference hiring contractors to meet short-term labour demands with specialized skills.
- Partner with educational institutions to create apprenticeship programs and internships, ensuring a steady supply of semi-skilled workers; and
- Create and implement a target for apprenticeships to foster local employment and build a skilled workforce for the future.

Impact Significance

A summary of the impact assessment characteristics associated with the potential impact on skills shortages is provided in **Table 6-**.

TABLE 6-9 IMPACT CHARACTERISTICS SKILLS SHORTAGES

Impact Characteristics	Key Finding
Extent	Skill shortages have potential to generate impacts throughout the social locality across a range of industries.
Duration	The Construction Phase is 12-18 months and therefore impacts will be time limited.
Severity	The Social Locality is located adjacent to large regional centres with large labour markets capable of adapting to shifting labour dynamics.
Sensitivity	The Social Locality contains a portion of occupations relevant to the skill requirements of the Project.
Level of Interest	This concern was not raised as a concern during stakeholder engagement; however, it is a known concern for other renewable developments in regional areas.

Based on the findings outlined in this section, the pre-mitigation and post-mitigation impact significance across all relevant project phases is outlined in **Table 6-**.

TABLE 6-10 IMPACT SIGNIFICANCE SKILLS SHORTAGES

Phase	Pre-mitigation			Post-mitigation		
	Magnitude	Likelihood	Impact Significance	Magnitude	Likelihood	Impact Significance
Construction	Moderate	Possible	Medium	Minor	Unlikely	Low
Operation	-	-	-	-	-	-

6.3 LOCAL DISRUPTIONS

6.3.1 CONSTRUCTION-RELATED DISTURBANCES TO SOCIAL AMENITY

Impact Overview

Construction-related disturbance impacts including noise, visual, vibration and dust, influence social amenity and potentially cause an impact on community health and wellbeing. Social amenity impacts have potential to exacerbate the needs of youth and elderly groups.

NSW SIA Categories

Health and Wellbeing; Livelihood, surroundings.

Affected Stakeholders

Host Landowners; Immediate Neighbours; Surrounding Community.

Findings

The following baseline findings relate to social amenity impacts:

- **Sensitive receptors**: In the immediate surrounding areas of the Project, the youth and elderly population remained consistently above the NSW average. These findings highlight the need for robust measures to mitigate noise, ensure safety, and control dust emissions, especially to protect the well-being of youth and the elderly, who may be more susceptible to environmental hazards;
- **Rural land use**: Land use zoning within and surrounding the Project Area is primarily agricultural (RU1; Primary Production) which has been previously cleared for grazing activities; and
- **Natural areas**: The Project Area is adjacent to Salt Water Creek, a tributary of the Fish River. The Fish River flows north, joining the Macquarie River approximately 3 km downstream of the Project.

The issues of construction noise, vibration, dust, and visual amenity were key concerns that were raised by Immediate Neighbours but were not a key concern for the Wider Community. Generally, concerns stemmed from the extent of construction works that would need to be caried out on land that that has been primarily used for agriculture in the past, aside from road construction and property maintenance activities, and therefore the perception that there would be impacts on their general health and wellbeing for the duration of the Construction Phase.

The following findings relating to construction-related disturbances to social amenity were identified in technical studies within the EIS:

- **Noise**: During construction of the Project, worst-case predicted construction noise impacts indicate that the Interim Construction Noise Guideline (ICNG) 'noise affected' management level is likely to be exceeded at times at up to 12 sensitive receivers within 1,500 m of the Project boundary; however, noise impacts are predicted to be below the ICNG 'highly noise affected' management level at all assessed sensitive receivers (ERM, 2024b). It should be noted that the predicted noise levels represent a worst-case impact based on the shortest separation distance between mobile construction source and sensitive receiver;
- **Air quality**: Low risk of impacts associated with dust emissions generated by traffic on unsealed roads, vegetation removal and land disturbance during construction and operation. Further, the Project will implement dust suppression mitigation measures such as water carts and road polymers (refer **Section 6.14** of the EIS); and
- **Visual**: The landscape and visual impacts associated with the construction activities are expected to be of greater magnitude than those associated with operation, as these impacts have a short duration and are temporary in nature, as a result the significance of impact is limited.

Mitigation and Management Measures

To address the potential negative changes in social amenity, the Project will adopt the following management measures:

- Implement the CSEP, inclusive of the requirement provide frequent updates around local impacts arising from construction related activities to Host Landowners, Immediate Neighbours and the Surrounding Community;

- Implementation of the measures stated in the Glint and Glare Assessment (Moir Studio, 2024);
- Continue to engage with Immediate Neighbours to ensure that suitable landscaping solutions are implemented to minimize visual impact, where required;
- Develop and implement a community feedback mechanism to ensure that concerns / complaints raised by stakeholders during construction are identified and acted upon; and
- Develop and implement a CEMP that will include specific mitigations for:
  - Dust management;
  - Construction hours align with statutory requirements / approvals;
  - Conduct Health, Safety and Environment (HSE) awareness training where appropriate;
  - Bushfire risk management; and
  - Biosecurity risk management.

Impact Significance

A summary of the impact assessment characteristics associated with the potential impact on social amenity is provided in **Table 6-**.

TABLE 6-11 IMPACT CHARACTERISTICS SOCIAL AMENITY

Impact Characteristics	Key Finding
Extent	Impacts are mostly at the local level with direct impacts to Immediate Neighbours, with indirect impacts experienced by the Surrounding Community.
Duration	The Construction Phase is 12-18 months and therefore impacts will be time limited.
Severity	The social amenity disruptions expected during construction are not likely to be experienced by other stakeholders in the Social Locality but will be more acutely experienced by Immediate Neighbours.
Sensitivity	Most of the impacts likely to be experienced by Immediate Neighbours. The youth and elderly population remained consistently above the NSW average.
Level of Interest	Based on feedback received there was a low level of concern regarding Construction Phase amenity impacts raised by stakeholders.

Based on the findings outlined in this section, the pre-mitigation and post-mitigation impact significance across all relevant project phases is outlined in **Table 6-**.

TABLE 6-12 IMPACT SIGNIFICANCE SOCIAL AMENITY

Phase	Pre-mitigation			Post-mitigation		
	Magnitude	Likelihood	Impact Significance	Magnitude	Likelihood	Impact Significance
Construction	Moderate	Likely	High	Moderate	Possible	Medium
Operation	-	-	-	-	-	-

6.3.2 TRAFFIC CONGESTION, COMMUNITY SAFETY CONCERNS AND DETERIORATION OF ROAD SURFACE CONDITIONS

Impact Overview

Transportation of materials and equipment to the Project Area has the potential to cause wear and tear on roads, road traffic congestion and community safety impacts for road users along the haulage routes and on local roads. Risk of traffic injury or in the worst case a fatality, resulting from increased vehicle movements during the transportation of goods and workers to and from the Project Area.

NSW SIA Categories

Surroundings; Way of Life; Accessibility; Health and Wellbeing.

Affected Stakeholders

Host Landowners; Immediate Neighbours; Surrounding Community; Visitors to the Region.

Findings

Stakeholders and community raised the potential for the increase in construction traffic to impact upon their way of life and health and wellbeing (including community safety). Concerns raised by stakeholders included:

- **Wider Community** expressed safety concerns with the increased traffic of heavy vehicles on Tarana Road and O'Connell Road.

These concerns can be grouped into three (3) main categories:

- **Traffic Congestion** – congestion arising from an increased volume of traffic between the regional centres of the Social Locality. Ongoing construction activities will necessitate the movement of workers and materials to/from the Project Area. Traffic congestion caused by increased vehicle movements, and the potential establishment of detours or other road blockages, may cause disruptions to daily commutes and local business operations which may impact on stakeholder *way of life* and *accessibility*, or increase stress and anxiety, impacting on their *health and wellbeing*;
- **Community Safety** – an increased volume of daily traffic may result in compromised emergency response times, a higher potential for unsafe driving (i.e. speeding, distracted driving etc.) to occur, resulting in an accident, and a heightened exposure to air pollution from vehicle dust and exhaust emissions – all of which can impact upon community *health and wellbeing*. In addition, the use of roads frequented by school buses[27] for material transport will increase the frequency of larger vehicles interacting with children walking to/from bus stops, which poses a safety concern; and
- **Road Surface Conditions** – the use or larger vehicles (i.e. B-Doubles) and the high volume of traffic has the potential to cause a deterioration of road pavement conditions, which in turn, increases the risk of a traffic accident occurring affecting community *health and wellbeing*.

[27] Bus routes no. 515, S782 and S786 drive along O'Connell Road and Tarana Road within the vicinity of the site. Details are outlined in Table 4 of Section 2.4 of the TIA (Amber, 2024).

The Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) (Amber, 2024) anticipates that during peak construction the Project could generate up to 40 light and 80 heavy vehicles per day.

Construction of the solar farm is expected to generate approximately 41 vehicles per hour in the morning and evening peak hours during the peak Construction Phase, which would reduce to 22 vehicles per hour during the average Construction Phases. Overall, the construction traffic is expected to have a minimal impact on the operation of the road network. Accordingly, it is concluded that the road network can accommodate the traffic generated by the development during the Construction Phase. (Amber, 2024).

During operation, the Project is expected to generate up to eight (8) vehicles per day associated with four (4) maintenance personnel accessing the Project Area. Decommissioning is anticipated to generate a similar level of traffic to the construction stage.

The transportation route for OSOM vehicles travelling from Port Botany will require minor road upgrades such as additional hardstand areas and temporary removal of traffic signs in order to allow the vehicles to successfully access the Project Area.

Although flood modelling shows that flood impacts within the Project Area associated with the Project infrastructure are typically minor, the alignment of the proposed access road may result in some increases to flooding on Tarana Road in the event of a Probably Maximum Flood (PMF) (Engeny, 2024). This may cause safety concerns in relation to traffic. However, the SWIA states that flood depths across Tarana Road are expected to increase from 0.54 m to 0.57 m in the PMF, with negligible change to time and duration of inundation (Engeny, 2024).

Mitigation and Management Measures

To address traffic and transport related disruptions to stakeholders, the Project will adopt the following management measures:

- Develop and implement a Traffic Management Plan (TMP) which draws on the Project TIA. The TMP should include the following measures to manage the social dimension of the impact:
  - Ensure drivers observe road traffic rules and speed limits;
  - Ensure all vehicle drivers have a relevant licence and training before mobilisation;
  - Use road signs at strategic points, sirens and public announcements where necessary to warn people of oncoming heavy vehicles;
  - Ensure all vehicles are certified roadworthy and well maintained;
  - Avoid night driving to the extent possible; and
  - Heavy vehicle movements should avoid peak school bus times to limit the interaction with these larger vehicles and vulnerable road users.
- Implement the CSEP, inclusive of the requirement provide frequent updates around local impacts arising from construction related activities to Host Landowners, Immediate Neighbours and the Surrounding Community;
- Continue to engage with Immediate Neighbours to ensure that matters raised in relation to traffic concerns, including school bus routes, are appropriately considered and incorporated into construction management processes and procedures; and
- Develop and implement a community feedback mechanism to ensure that concerns / complaints raised by stakeholders during construction are identified and acted upon.

Impact Significance

A summary of the impact assessment characteristics associated with the potential impact on traffic and roads is provided in **Table 6-**.

TABLE 6-13 IMPACT CHARACTERISTICS TRAFFIC AND ROADS

Impact Characteristics	Key Finding
Extent	It is anticipated that traffic disruptions will be experienced in the Social Locality, specifically on Tarana Road and O'Connell Road. The geographical extent of the cumulative impact is across the Social Locality but will be primarily experienced on the A32 and at the larger townships.
Duration	Most impact is expected during Construction Phase, which is 12-18 months, with up to 40 light and 80 heavy vehicles per day at peak construction. Up to eight (8) vehicles per day are expected during the Operation Phase.
Severity	The TIA identified that the current road network has adequate capacity to handle the additional construction traffic. Construction traffic does have the potential to impact upon stakeholders through delays due to congestion, the potential for a traffic accident, and increased road surface deterioration.
Sensitivity	It is unlikely that vulnerable groups who direct and/or indirectly use the roads (i.e. elderly, emergency services, youth, etc.) may be affected.
Level of Interest	There were some concerns raised in engagement received about traffic related impacts.

Based on the findings outlined in this section, the pre-mitigation and post-mitigation impact significance across all relevant project phases is outlined in **Table 6-**.

TABLE 6-14 IMPACT SIGNIFICANCE TRAFFIC AND ROADS

Phase	Pre-mitigation			Post-mitigation		
	Magnitude	Likelihood	Impact Significance	Magnitude	Likelihood	Impact Significance
Construction	Major	Possible	High	Major	Unlikely	Medium
Operation	-	-	-	-	-	-

6.4 ACCOMMODATION AND WORKER INFLUX

6.4.1 INCREASED DEMAND FOR LONG- AND SHORT-TERM ACCOMMODATION

Impact Overview

The influx of workers during the Construction Phase has the potential to increase the demand for both short-term and long-term accommodation within the Social Locality. Pressure on long-term accommodation has the potential to contribute to tight rental markets if substantive construction workforces are brought into an area without an appropriate means to manage the worker influx. A sudden increase in the population can exacerbate existing accommodation shortages and cost of living pressures through increased rents in areas with low vacancy rates. Increased pressure on the long-term rental and homeownership markets and changing demographic in the community may result in out-migration.

NSW SIA Categories

Livelihood; Community; Way of Life; Accessibility.

Affected Stakeholders

Local/Regional Businesses; Visitors to the Region; Surrounding Communities.

Findings

The peak construction workforce is expected to be 200 workers, with an average of 100-150 FTE on site at one time. The Operational workforce is expected to comprise of 100% local workers; hence no housing and accommodation impact is expected during the Operational Phase.

The baseline data provides four (4) key findings and assumptions related to demand for long and short-term accommodation:

- **Rental affordability**: Orange and Bathurst are moderately unaffordable with RAIs of 111 and 115, respectively. Oberon is affordable with a Rental Affordability Index[28] (RAI) score of 187. Lithgow is acceptable at 127, and Blayney is also moderately unaffordable with an RAI of 115;
- **Rental vacancy**: The rental vacancy rates are 1.5% for postcode 2800 (Orange), 1.0% for 2795 (Bathurst), 2.0% for 2787 (Oberon), 0.7% for 2790 (Lithgow), and 1.2% for 2799 (Blayney);
- **Short-term capacity:** 512 rooms available within the towns and regional centres of the Social Locality; and
- **Short-term occupancy rates:** across the Social Locality range between 40.8-100%. Importantly, the most proximate UCL Bathurst has the lowest annual occupancy rate at 40.8%.

Interviews conducted during EIS and WAP engagement, and garnered through the engagement received (refer to **Appendix C** and **Section 3.3.4**), provided the following stakeholder comments relating to worker influx:

- **Bathurst Council** identified opportunity to use short-term accommodation with an annual occupancy rate of 40.8% in 2023. Suggested there is no cumulative pressure with the hold on Regis gold mine;
- **Orange Council** stated that occupancy rates are between 75-90% and identified three potential projects that have potential to overlap;
- **Oberon Council** explained that occupancy rates are at 100% capacity and noted a degree of cumulative pressure from other renewable energy projects and Jenolan caves work; and
- **Lithgow Council** suggested that availability in short and long-term housing is currently manageable. However, shared concerns about cumulative impacts if Lake Lyell pumped hydro and Gardens of Stone State Conservation Area are approved alongside renewable projects. Suggested there might be a squeeze on the medium to long-term options.

[28] The Rental Affordability Index (RAI) is a measure where a score of 100 indicates that a median-income household is spending 30% of its income on rent, with lower scores reflecting greater unaffordability and higher scores indicating better affordability.

The draft WAP (refer to **Appendix C**) identifies 12 SSD/SSI projects with potential to overlap with the construction phase and therefore generate cumulative pressure on various accommodation options. To address this, the assessment considered only a fraction of available rooms available (i.e., total number of unoccupied rooms divided by the number of potential SSD/SSI projects surrounding the UCL). In addition, the recommendations that will be assessed in this section for social impacts has also allowed for additional rooms by excluding 10% of unoccupied rooms from consideration.

Recommendations:

Table 6- outlines the prioritisation of accommodation options based on the data summarised above and further detailed in the draft WAP (refer to **Appendix C**).

TABLE 6-15 PRIORITISATION OF ACCOMMODATION OPTIONS

Priority	Accommodation Option	Priority	Social Impact	Details
1	Usage of STA, avoiding peak tourism periods	High	Positive	**Section 5.3** of **Appendix C**
2	Usage of private rental	Low	Negative	**Section 5.2** of **Appendix C**
3	Usage of privately owned housing through a housing registry	Low	Negative	**Section 5.1** of **Appendix C**

Table 6- provides initial estimates based on the data available at the time of writing about how the non-local workforce may be accommodated using existing short-term and long-term accommodation availability. The areas listed have been chosen for how they avoid negative social impacts associated with high occupancy rates and both rental and housing affordability. It should be noted that this is a 'worst case scenario' based on a hypothetical scenario that has been tested based on a conservative view of the Project requirements. The impact assessment has considered the scenario where non-local workers are accommodated based on the estimates outlined in **Table 6-**.

TABLE 6-16 ESTIMATED USE OF EXISTING ACCOMMODATION OPTIONS

Accommodation Type	Location (justification for inclusion)	Estimated percentage of peak non-local workforce (No. of workers (%))
Short-term Accommodation	Bathurst (55% occupancy)	46
	Orange (82.5% occupancy)	20
	Lithgow (80% occupancy)	9
Private Rental Housing	Oberon (Affordable)	5
	Lithgow (Acceptable)	9
Privately owned housing	Bathurst (10.6% mortgage stress)	13
	Oberon (13.7% mortgage stress)	3
	Orange (9.7% mortgage stress)	41

Accommodation Type	Location (justification for inclusion)	Estimated percentage of peak non-local workforce (No. of workers (%))
	Lithgow (12.1% mortgage stress)	8
	Blayney (9.7% mortgage stress)	6
Total	**-**	**160 (100)[29]**

Mitigation and Management Measures

To address the increased demand for services and recreation facilities as a result of worker influx during the Construction Phase, the Project will adopt a suite of management measures comprising:

- Continue to engage with local councils to understand pressures experienced across the Social Locality in relation to worker influx and accommodation;
- Continue to engage with relevant health (e.g., hospitals, medical clinics, etc.) and emergency services (e.g., ambulance, police, fire brigade, State Emergency Service (SES), etc.);
- Implementation of recommendations in the WAP;
- Develop a detailed WAMP as outlined in **Section 7**.
- Develop and implement a CSEP; and
- Develop and implement a community feedback mechanism to ensure that concerns / complaints raised by stakeholders are identified and acted upon.

Impact Significance

A summary of the impact assessment characteristics associated with the potential impact on housing and accommodation is provided in **Table 6-**.

TABLE 6-17 IMPACT CHARACTERISTICS HOUSING AND ACCOMMODATION

Impact Characteristics	Key Finding
Extent	Extends to urban centres across the Social Locality, with the most pressure expected in Bathurst and Orange.
Duration	Duration is limited to 12-18 months and the peak period will have a narrow duration, where some pressures on existing short-term accommodation in particular may be experienced depending on surrounding SDD/SSI projects.
Severity	The Social Locality is known for adapting to tourism influx's during major tourism events and has experienced worker influx for major development projects.
Sensitivity	Key sensitive receptors are tourism businesses and vulnerable populations who are affected by changes to rental and housing affordability.
Level of Interest	There was moderate level of concern expressed by local councils regarding pressure on short and long-term accommodation.

[29] It should be noted that this is a 'worst case scenario' based on a hypothetical scenario that has been tested based on a conservative view of the Project requirements. Although it is likely that the actual use of accommodation will be considerably less than these estimates, the impact assessment has considered the scenario where non-local workers are accommodated based on the estimates outlined in this table.

Based on the findings outlined in this section, the pre-mitigation and post-mitigation impact significance across all relevant project phases is outlined in **Table 6-**.

TABLE 6-18 IMPACT SIGNIFICANCE HOUSING AND ACCOMMODATION

Phase	Pre-mitigation			Post-mitigation		
	Magnitude	Likelihood	Impact Significance	Magnitude	Likelihood	Impact Significance
Construction	Major	Possible	High	Major	Unlikely	Medium
Operation	-	-	-	-	-	-

6.4.2 INCREASED DEMAND FOR SERVICES AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Impact Overview

Worker influx may create pressure on recreational facilities as the increased demand for leisure activities can strain resources and restrict access for the existing community. This demand may lead to overcrowding, extended wait times, and impact on recreational experiences, which may lead to a sense of frustration and dissatisfaction among the community, impacting the health and well-being of residents.

NSW SIA Categories

Livelihood, Accessibility; Way of Life; Health and Wellbeing.

Affected Stakeholders

Aboriginal Communities; Surrounding Communities; Immediate Neighbours; Host Landowners.

Findings

Section 5.6.2 outlines public and private health services within the Social Locality. It is anticipated that these medical services will be used by workers during the Construction Phase, when required, to treat illnesses or accidents. If the Social Locality experiences increased the pressure on major medical facilities there is potential to generate more impacts to vulnerable groups reliant on health services (refer to **Section 5.4**), including elderly, youth, and Indigenous peoples. The following baseline finding has informed the impact assessment:

- **Scale and range of health services:** Bathurst Health Service has 100 beds, Orange Health Service includes a 100-bed mental health unit and a 20-bed forensic unit, Oberon Multipurpose Service has eight (8) acute and 10 aged care beds, and Lithgow Health Service has 46 beds.

While the demand for medical and other services will increase it is likely to be absorbed by the existing medical clinics, hospitals, and other social service organisations currently operating within the Social Locality. Similarly, the existing recreational facilities available within the Social Locality are expected to have capacity to support an increase in up to 160 workers (refer to **Table 6-** for further details) for an 18-month period of construction.

If the peak construction workforce overlaps with a significant event (refer to **Section 5.9**), the level of demand and resultant pressure on these services and recreational facilities will be further increased.

Mitigation and Management Measures

To address the increased demand for services and recreation facilities as a result of worker influx during the Construction Phase, the Project will adopt a suite of management measures comprising:

- Continue to engage with local councils to understanding pressures experienced in the Social Locality in relation to worker influx and pressure on services;
- Continue to engage with relevant health (e.g., hospitals, medical clinics, etc.) and emergency services (e.g., ambulance, police, fire brigade, State Emergency Service (SES), etc.);
- Implementation of recommendations in the WAP;
- Develop a detailed a WAMP;
- Develop and implement a CSEP; and
- Develop and implement a community feedback mechanism to ensure that concerns / complaints raised by stakeholders are identified and acted upon.

Impact Significance

A summary of the impact assessment characteristics related to the increase in demand for services and recreational facilities is provided in **Table 6-**.

TABLE 6-19 IMPACT CHARACTERISTICS DEMAND FOR SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Impact Characteristics	Key Finding
Extent	Stakeholders in Bathurst are most likely to be impacted by increased pressure on social and emergency services resulting from the 160 expected non-local workers.
Duration	The construction period is 12-18 months. The period of influx and pressure on services and facilities will be time limited. Given the pipeline on renewable energy projects, the timeframe for cumulative impact is anticipated to be far longer.
Severity	Existing social and emergency infrastructure appears to have capacity to service the workforce required for the Construction Phase (160 people) and have experience catering for fluctuating populations. Notably, Bathurst accommodated over 100,000 tourists during major tourist events.
Sensitivity	The region has demonstrated a capacity to accommodate fluctuating populations during tourist events, and therefore the modest increase in population during the Construction Phase will limit the intensity.
Level of Interest	There was a moderate level of concern expressed regarding this impact within engagement received.

Based on the findings outlined in this section, the pre-mitigation and post-mitigation impact significance across all relevant project phases is outlined in **Table 6-**.

TABLE 6-20 IMPACT SIGNIFICANCE DEMAND FOR SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Phase	Pre-mitigation			Post-mitigation		
	Magnitude	Likelihood	Impact Significance	Magnitude	Likelihood	Impact Significance
Construction	Major	Possible	High	Major	Unlikely	Medium
Operation	-	-	-	-	-	-

6.5 LAND USE AND LANDSCAPE

6.5.1 PERCEIVED IMPACTS TO LAND VALUES

Impact Overview

Perceived impacts on neighbouring land values may arise due to changes in rural character associated with solar technology; however, these concerns are largely subjective, and there is limited evidence to confirm measurable long-term effects on property values. While some landholders may anticipate reduced demand for rural properties near solar farms, studies on actual market trends indicate that impacts can vary depending on factors such as screening, ongoing land use compatibility, and community sentiment (Abashidze & Taylor, 2022; Hao & Michaud, 2024).

NSW SIA Categories

Livelihoods; Way of life; Community.

Affected Stakeholders

Immediate Neighbours, Surrounding Communities; Wider Community.

Findings

The baseline data in the draft WAP (refer to **Appendix C**) provides the following finding related to land values opportunities:

- **Decrease in median house price:** All areas in the Social Locality experienced an increase in median sales price changes between 2021 and 2024; and
- **Agricultural land use:** with existing farm dams and well-defined drainage systems suggests the Project is less likely to impact agricultural land values significantly, as solar farms have limited long-term effects on productive land use compared to other developments.

Interviews conducted during EIS engagement, and garnered through the engagement received, demonstrated a desire for local employment opportunities to be realised within the Social Locality, with stakeholders commenting:

- **Local / near neighbours:** identified perceived concerns regarding the negative impact of the Project on property prices.

Depending on land use, impacts will vary. However, agricultural land is mostly linked with economic productivity whereby land values are associated with economic returns and the landscape character.

The economic assessment (Gillespie Economics, 2024) states that the Construction Phase of the Project will result in a temporary reduction in up 170 ha of land available for agricultural activity – assumed to be sheep grazing. The economic activity impacts associated with this were assessed and identified as negligible relative to the economic activity impacts of the Project construction. The economic assessment also states that the Project operation will have negligible agricultural impacts because sheep will be able to graze between solar panels and other infrastructure (Gillespie Economics, 2024).

The cumulative visual impact assessment revealed impacts with Glanmire Solar Farm located approximately 3 km from the Project. Both projects may be visible from Brewongle Lane and R11 when looking in the same direction, with sequential views also possible from the Main Western Railway Line and local roads, including Brewongle Lane and Tarana Road.

Mitigation and Management Measures

Initial engagement with the community resulted in the Project being set back from Tarana Road to mitigate visual impact to nearby residence. To further minimise perceived land devaluation impacts associated with the operation of the Project, the following management and mitigation measures will be adopted:

- Apply mitigations recommended in the Land Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) (GHD, 2025);
- The CBF will ensure that local initiatives with the potential to provide value to the Brewongle community are prioritised;
- Publish the CBF to the Wider Community via community newsletters and other communications channels as per an Operation Phase CSEP; and
- Develop and implement a community feedback mechanism, so that community concerns can be identified and actively managed.

Impact Significance

A summary of the impact assessment characteristics linked to perceived potential impacts to neighbouring land values resulting from altered rural character and amenity is provided in **Table 6-**.

TABLE 6-21 IMPACT CHARACTERISTICS LAND VALUES

Impact Characteristics	Key Finding
Extent	The perceived impact is generally limited to surrounding agricultural land and a small number of stakeholders in surrounding communities where visual impacts will be negligible.
Duration	The duration of the Project is at least 30 years. However, the perception of this impact is not likely to persist for the life of the Project.
Severity	A literature review does not suggest property devaluation of Immediate Neighbours that are visually impacted or Surrounding Communities.
Sensitivity	The VIA revealed three (3) lots with dwelling entitlements requiring a detailed assessment, whereby the three lots resulted in very low visual impacts. Nevertheless, the link with visual impacts and property values is unclear.

Impact Characteristics	Key Finding
Level of Interest	There was a high degree of concern expressed in the engagement data received.
Likelihood	The perception of the impact pre-mitigation is Possible despite the assessment determining low impacts to property values.

Based on the findings outlined in this section, the pre-mitigation and post-mitigation impact significance across all relevant project phases is outlined in **Table 6-**.

TABLE 6-22 IMPACT SUMMARY LAND VALUES

Phase	Pre-mitigation			Post-mitigation		
	Magnitude	Likelihood	Impact Significance	Magnitude	Likelihood	Impact Significance
Construction	-	-	-	-	-	-
Operation	Moderate	Possible	Medium	Minor	Unlikely	Low

6.5.2 ALTERED RURAL CHARACTER

Impact Overview

Altered rural character as the Project has the potential to cause stress and anxiety amongst the local community.

NSW SIA Categories

Health and Wellbeing, Community, Way of life

Affected Stakeholders

Host Landowners, Immediate Neighbours, Surrounding Communities, Aboriginal Communities, Visitors to the Region.

Findings

From interviews conducted during EIS engagement, and garnered through the engagement received, it was found that:

- **Local Councils:** Council expressed an early interest in the potential visual impacts. Edify has since provided advanced copies of the LVIA to Council, which notes a low visual impact is anticipated and shared a positive sentiment about the Project overall;
- **Immediate Neighbours:** Requested that Edify start planting trees to improve the efficacy of screening visual impacts; and
- **Wider Community:** Concerns were raised regarding the visual impact of the project, with some attendees describing the solar farm as an "eyesore" that disrupts the natural scenic vista.

The following findings relating to social amenity were identified in technical studies within the EIS:

- **Visual** (GHD, 2024): 77 sensitive receivers were identified within a 4 km study area[30], comprising of both public and private receiver types. 12 private receivers and one (1) public receiver location require a detailed viewpoint assessment. The findings of the assessment were that all private receivers resulted in a ***low visual impact***, and P8, representing the Main Western Railway Line, resulted in a ***moderate visual impact*** due to the proximity to the Project and subsequent very high magnitude. Three (3) lots were determined to require a detailed visual assessment. All three dwelling entitlements resulted in a very low visual impact. Although the landscape and visual impacts associated with the construction activities are expected to be of greater magnitude than those associated with operation, as these impacts have a short duration and are temporary in nature, as a result the significance of impact is limited;
- **Glint and glare**: A Glint and Glare Assessment was undertaken in 2024 (Moir Studio, 2024). A total of 33 private receptors within 3 km with a line of sight to the Project (based off the zone of theoretical visibility) were identified as sensitive Observation Points (OP) but no potential glare was detected for private receptors. A total of one (1) road receptor (Tarana Road) and one (1) rail receptor (Main Western Railway) were assessed within 1 km of the PV Array. The results indicate no instances of potential glare for Tarana Road and the potential for glare along Main Western Railway. No aviation receptors were identified within 5 km of the PV Array (Moir Studio, 2024); and
- **Noise**: Operational traffic noise impacts arising from additional traffic associated with the Project have been assessed. During operation of the Project, compliance with the NSW Noise Policy for Industry (NPI) Project noise trigger levels (PNTLs) is achieved at all identified sensitive receivers under worst-case noise-enhancing meteorological conditions (ERM, 2024b).

Mitigation and Management Measures

To minimise the real or perceived changes to landscape character associated with the Project, and the resultant impact on stakeholders, the following mitigation measures will be adopted:

- Implement the mitigation measures outlined in the LVIA, Glint and Glare, and Noise Impact Assessment (NIA) (latter does not require any during operation);
- Ongoing consultation with Immediate Neighbours;
- The implementation of a CSEP tailored to Operation Phase of the Project will be important to facilitate stakeholder appropriate, transparent, and meaningful engagement; and
- The community feedback mechanism should be maintained throughout the life of the Project to manage concerns that may arise during operational activities.

Impact Significance

A summary of the impact assessment characteristics for altered rural character (visual amenity) impacts is provided in **Table 6-**.

[30] Study area as per defined in Section 2.2 of the LVIA (GHD, 2024)

TABLE 6-23 IMPACT CHARACTERISTICS ALTERED RURAL CHARACTER

Impact Characteristics	Key Finding
Extent	The impact is primarily limited to host landowners and immediate neighbours.
Duration	Duration of construction phase is limited to 12-18 months and the operation is at least 30 years.
Severity	With wind and solar farms existing or approved in the Social Locality the degree of change associated with the Project is limited. However, the cumulative degree of change to landscape character resulting from renewable energy project is high.
Sensitivity	There are a limited number of sensitive receivers identified in the LVIA (three (3) dwellings with very low visual impacts)
Level of Interest	There was a high level of interest in the engagement received.

Based on the findings outlined in this section, the pre-mitigation and post-mitigation impact significance across all relevant project phases is outlined in **Table 6-**.

TABLE 6-24 IMPACT SUMMARY ALTERED RURAL CHARACTER

Phase	Pre-mitigation			Post-mitigation		
	Magnitude	Likelihood	Impact Significance	Magnitude	Likelihood	Impact Significance
Construction	Moderate	Possible	Medium	Minor	Possible	Medium
Operation	Major	Possible	High	Moderate	Possible	Medium

6.6 SUMMARY OF SOCIAL IMPACTS

Table 6- provides an overview of all social impacts as described in this section, including a description of the impact, directly affected stakeholders, and related NSW SIA categories. The overview presents the impact significance pre- and post-mitigation or enhancement measures to show the current situation and where the Project could be after implementation of the measures.

This overview presents the Construction and Operation Phases only. The impact significance of cumulative impacts and the Project's Decommissioning Phase are discussed in the above.

TABLE 6-25 SUMMARY OF SOCIAL IMPACTS

Category	Impact Description	Directly Affected Stakeholders	NSW SIA Categories	Project Phase	Pre-Mitigation/Enhancement			Summary of Mitigation Measures	Post-Mitigation/Enhancement
					Magnitude	Likelihood	Significance		
Stakeholder and Community	**Tangible and Intangible Aboriginal Heritage:** There is potential that the Project damages, disturbs or interferes with Aboriginal cultural heritage. Tangible and intangible heritage were identified in the ACHAR and consultation with REPs has started.	Aboriginal Communities	Culture; Health and Wellbeing; Decision-making Systems	Construction	Major	Unlikely	Medium	• CHMP • Implementation of recommendations ACHAR and HHAR • CSEP • Community feedback mechanism	Medium
				Operation	Major	Unlikely	Medium		Low
	Reduced Community Cohesion and Stakeholder Engagement Approach: There may be increased social tensions due to divergent opinions related to the desirability of the Project and population influx.	Business/Workforce; Aboriginal Communities; Surrounding Communities; Immediate Neighbours; Host Landowners	Health and Wellbeing; Way of Life; Community	Construction	Major	Likely	High	• CSEP • Workers Code of Conduct • Community feedback mechanism	Medium
				Operation	Moderate	Possible	Medium		Medium
Employment and Procurement	**Increased Direct and Indirect Employment Opportunities:** The Project is expected to create 428 direct and indirect jobs (regionally) during construction and 8 during operation.	Business/Workforce	Livelihoods	Construction	Major	Possible	High	• LEP • Awareness raising • Work with EPC Contractor to achieve maximum local employment target • Implementation recommendations Preliminary Hazard Analysis • Implementation recommendations in Economic Assessment	Very High
				Operation	Moderate	Possible	Medium		High
	Increased Local Procurement Opportunities: The Project will require goods and services which can sourced from Local/Regional Businesses and organisations within the Social Locality.	Business/Workforce	Livelihoods	Construction	Major	Possible	High	• Local content initiatives to include measures to encourage local procurement • Awareness raising • Work with EPC Contractor to achieve maximum local employment target • Implementation recommendations Economic Assessment • Assist Local/Regional Businesses in becoming 'job ready' • Implement measures for local producers to compete on cost and quality	Very High
				Operation	Moderate	Possible	Medium		High

Category	Impact Description	Directly Affected Stakeholders	NSW SIA Categories	Project Phase	Pre-Mitigation/Enhancement			Summary of Mitigation Measures	Post-Mitigation/Enhancement
					Magnitude	Likelihood	Significance		
	Potential To Create Skills Shortages: The Project's increased demand for labour may lead to skills shortages, as the need for specialized skills could exceed the regional workforce.	Business/Workforce	Livelihoods; Accessibility	Construction	Moderate	Possible	Medium	• LEP • Monitor skills shortages within the region • CSEP • Community feedback mechanism • On-the-job training programs to upskill local workers	Low
Local Disruptions	**Construction-Related Disturbances to Social Amenity:** The Project may cause construction impacts like noise, vibration, dust, visual changes, and fire risks	Host Landowners; Immediate Neighbours; Surrounding Community	Health and Wellbeing; Livelihood	Construction	Moderate	Likely	High	• CSEP, including continued engagement with Immediate Neighbours on visual impacts where required • Implementation measures as stated in the Glint and Glare Assessment • Community feedback mechanism • CEMP	Medium
	Traffic Congestion, Community Safety Concerns and Deterioration of Road Surface Conditions: The Project wis expected to generate up to 40 light and 80 heavy vehicles per day at peak construction, and up to 8 vehicles per day during operation. Transporting materials and equipment to the Project Area may cause road wear, traffic congestion, and safety risks for road users.	Host Landowners; Immediate Neighbours; Surrounding Community; Visitors to the Region	Way of Life; Accessibility; Health and Wellbeing	Construction	Major	Possible	High	• TMP • CSEP, including continued engagement with Immediate Neighbours on traffic concerns • Community feedback mechanism	Medium
Accommodation and Worker Influx	**Increased Demand for Long- and Short-Term Accommodation:** The Project's peak workforce is expected to be 200 workers. Workers from outside the region would require accommodation in a Social Locality where rental affordability is overall moderately unaffordable, and vacancies are low.	Local/Regional Business; Visitors to the Region; Surrounding Communities	Livelihood; Community; Way of Life; Accessibility	Construction	Major	Possible	High	• CSEP, including continued engagement with local Councils to understand pressures, and relevant health and emergency services • Implementation of recommendations WAP • WAMP • CSEP • Community feedback mechanism	Medium
	Increased Demand for Services and Recreational Facilities: It is anticipated that medical services will be used by workers during the Construction Phase, potentially putting pressure on these services, impacting especially vulnerable groups.	Aboriginal Communities; Surrounding Communities; Immediate Neighbours; Host Landowners	Accessibility; Way of Life; Health and Wellbeing	Construction	Major	Possible	High	• CSEP, including continued engagement with local Councils to understand pressures, and relevant health and emergency services • Implementation of recommendations WAP • WAMP • CSEP • Community feedback mechanism	Medium

Category	Impact Description	Directly Affected Stakeholders	NSW SIA Categories	Project Phase	Pre-Mitigation/Enhancement			Summary of Mitigation Measures	Post-Mitigation/Enhancement
					Magnitude	Likelihood	Significance		
Land use	**Perceived Impacts to Land Values:** Stakeholders have expressed concerns regarding negative impact on property prices impacted by the Project.	Immediate Neighbours, Surrounding Communities; Wider Community	Livelihoods; Way of Life; Community	Operation	Moderate	Possible	Medium	• Implement recommendations LVIA • CBF • CSEP • Community feedback mechanism	Low
	Altered Rural Character: The Project is expected to have a low to moderate visual impact within a 4 km radius and no potential glare was detected for private receptors, Tarana Road or the Main Western Railway. However, worst-case predicted construction noise impacts indicate that the ICNG 'noise affected' management level is likely and stakeholders have described the Project as an "eyesore" that disrupts the natural scenic vista.	Host Landowners, Immediate Neighbours, Surrounding Communities, Aboriginal Communities, Visitors to the Region	Health and Wellbeing; Community; Way of Life	Construction	Moderate	Possible	Medium	• Implementation of measures LVIA, Glint and Glare and NIA • CSEP, including ongoing consultation with Immediate Neighbours • Community feedback mechanism	Medium
				Operation	Major	Possible	High		Medium

7. MONITORING AND MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

This section provides an overview of the recommended monitoring framework for the social impact management measures put in place during the construction and operation phases of the Project. For the post-mitigation impact significant levels to be achieved, as outlined in **Section 6**, the social impact mitigations will need to be monitored in accordance with the framework plan outlined in **Table 7-1** and integrated with the broader Environmental Management Strategy (EMS) to be developed for the Project.

The objectives of monitoring are to:

- Verify the predicted impacts and identify any other impacts that may arise;
- Verify that management measures are being implemented as planned;
- Assess the effectiveness of the management measures; and
- Provide data for any necessary regulatory reporting to the State Government or other internal compliance reporting.

Accordingly, **Table 7-1** identifies the following:

- **Management Goals:** The overarching objective is to minimise the negative social impacts associated with the Project and enhance the positive impacts. As such, specific goals corresponding to each impact have been provided. These can be used to determine whether the management measures have been effectively implemented;
- **Proposed Monitoring Activities:** The monitoring activities proposed will ensure that relevant data is collected (e.g. the performance indicators) during the various phases of the Project to ensure the effectiveness of the management measures;
- **Desired Social Outcome**: Articulate desired social outcomes to measure the social performance of the Project;
- **Performance Indicators:** The indicators provide a mechanism to determine whether the goals have been met;
- **Target:** Provides the aspirational target for performance indicators that have been estimated based on the best available data and assumptions at the approvals stage. These targets may change upon receipt of additional data post-approvals;
- **Monitoring Frequency:** Outlines the period for data collection; and
- **Responsible Person:** Assigns the relevant person and/or entity to take charge of the proposed monitoring in order achieve the management goal.

TABLE 7-1 PROPOSED MONITORING FRAMEWORK

Management Goals	Proposed Monitoring Activities	Desired Social Outcome	Performance Indicator(s)	Target	Monitoring Frequency	Responsible Role
Construction Phase						
Stakeholder and Community						
Avoid damage, disturbance or interference of Aboriginal cultural heritage	• Record queries and complaints received from stakeholders	• Foster trust and transparency by ensuring stakeholders feel heard and that their concerns are addressed promptly and effectively.	• Number of complaints relating to reduced community cohesion • Percentage of complaints satisfactorily resolved	100% of complaints resolved	Ongoing	Applicant
Management of stakeholder engagement and minimise potential to reduce community cohesion			• Percentage of chance finds comply with CHMP. • Number of project-related impacts to tangible cultural heritage items.	100% compliance with CHMP. No impacts to known cultural heritage items.	Ongoing	Applicant
Employment and Procurement						
Maximise local employment	• Record local employment • Record employee retention rate • Ensure major contractors report on local employment • Record the number of training programs undertaken	• Enhance local economic development and community well-being by increasing job opportunities, retain local skills, and building workforce capacity.	• Percentage of people from the Region employed by the Project (including contractors) • Number of training programs delivered • Number of apprenticeships involved	TBD - % local employment	Quarterly	Applicant / EPC Contractor
Maximise local procurement	• Report on number of, and value of contracts with local and regional businesses	• Stimulate regional economic growth by increasing procurement from local suppliers (notably Tamworth and Armidale).	• Percentage of local and regional businesses involved in the Project • Percentage of total value of relevant Project expenditure awarded to local and regional businesses	TBD - % local procurement	Quarterly	Applicant / EPC Contractor
Minimise potential to create skills shortages	• Record queries and complaints received from businesses	• Support local business by monitoring skill gaps, particularly those related to the Project.	• Number of local job vacancies in construction-related roles in the Social Locality. • Number of applicants for construction roles in the Social Locality.	100% of complaints from local businesses resolved	Quarterly	Applicant / EPC Contractor
Local Disruptions						
Minimise potential environmental and social amenity impacts (i.e. noise, vibration, dust) on community members.	• Record queries and complaints received from stakeholders	• Protect the health and well-being and way of life of the local community by proactively managing and addressing environmental and social amenity concerns.	• Number of complaints	90% resolved	Quarterly	Applicant / EPC Contractor
Minimise potential traffic inconveniences, safety concerns and contributions to road deterioration.	• Record queries and complaints received from stakeholders	• Ensure community safety and convenience by addressing traffic disruptions, improving road conditions, and responding to related stakeholder concerns.	• Number of complaints	90% resolved	Quarterly	Applicant / EPC Contractor
Accommodation and Worker Influx						
Maximise local employment and minimise potential impacts on accommodation availability, community and emergency services, and community wellbeing.	• Record local employment • Record employee retention rate • Monitor annualised occupancy rates in short-term accommodation through consultation with local council.	• Balance local economic opportunities with accessibility and availability of both short and long-term accommodation to support both workers, businesses and residents.	• Percentage of people from the Region employed by the Project	Above noted TBD	Quarterly	Applicant / EPC Contractor

Management Goals	Proposed Monitoring Activities	Desired Social Outcome	Performance Indicator(s)	Target	Monitoring Frequency	Responsible Role
Operation Phase						
Stakeholder and Community						
Avoid damage, disturbance or interference of Aboriginal cultural heritage	• Record number of tangible cultural heritage chance finds. • Number of project-related impacts to tangible cultural heritage items. • Record number of complaints received about impacts to intangible heritage.	• Protect Aboriginal cultural heritage by appropriately managing tangible heritage finds and addressing concerns about intangible heritage impacts.	• Percentage of chance finds comply with CHMP. • Number of project-related impacts to tangible cultural heritage items.	100% compliance with CHMP. No impacts to known cultural heritage items.	Annually	Applicant / O&M Contractor
Management of stakeholder engagement and minimise potential to reduce community cohesion	• Record queries and complaints received from stakeholders	• Foster trust and transparency by ensuring stakeholders feel heard and that their concerns are addressed promptly and effectively.	• Number of complaints relating to reduced community cohesion • Percentage of complaints satisfactorily resolved	80% of complaints resolved	Ongoing	Applicant
Employment and Procurement						
Maximise local employment and procurement	• Record local employment • Record employee retention rate • Report on number of, and value of contracts with local and regional businesses	• Enhance local economic growth and community well-being by creating job opportunities and supporting local businesses.	• Percentage of people from the Region employed by the Project • Percentage of local and regional businesses involved in the Project • Percentage of total value of relevant Project expenditure awarded to local and regional businesses	TBD - % of regional employment	Annually	Applicant / O&M Contractor
Land Use and Landscape						
Minimise (perceived) impacts to land values	• Track property sales data within a 5km radius. • Record number of complaints	• Ensure equitable treatment of surrounding landowners by mitigating negative perceptions.	• Annualised percentage change in average property values using standardized criteria for comparable properties.	100% of complaints on land values resolved	Annually	Applicant / O&M Contractor
Minimise impacts to visual amenity and rural character	• Record number of trees planted to fulfil required screening planting mitigations	• Preserve the aesthetic and rural character of the landscape.	• Percentage survival rate of trees planted • Reduce complaints about visual impacts by 70%	60-70% survival rate. 50% reduction in complaints	Annually	Applicant / O&M Contractor
Decommissioning Phase						
Management of intergenerational Equity and Waste Management	• Record a list of project components that are disposed, recycled and reused. • Record the approximate weight of project materials that are disposed and recycled.	• Ensure sustainable waste management practices to minimize intergenerational equity associated with long-term environmental impacts	• Percentage of project materials recycled by approximate weight: panels, metals, cables, inverters and batteries. • Percentage of project materials reused recorded by percentage of units.	80% of project components recycled. at least 80% of mounting infrastructure to be reused.	Quarterly	Applicant / O&M Contractor
Management of short-term increase in employment and procurement opportunities	• Record local employment • Record employee retention rate • Ensure major contractors report on local employment • Record the number of training programs undertaken	• Enhance local economic development and community well-being by increasing job opportunities, retain local skills, and building workforce capacity.	• Percentage of people from the Region employed by the Project (including contractors) • Number of training programs delivered • Number of apprenticeships involved	40% local employment. TBD - % of the total project workforce hours to be completed by apprentices, trainees or cadets.	Quarterly	Applicant / O&M Contractor

Management Goals	Proposed Monitoring Activities	Desired Social Outcome	Performance Indicator(s)	Target	Monitoring Frequency	Responsible Role
Management of retrenchment of Operational workforce	• Monitor the number of retrenched workers • Number of queries and complaints about unfair dismissals	• Support affected workers by providing fair retrenchment processes	• Percentage of compliance with redundancy entitlements under the Fair Work Act 2009.	100% compliance	Quarterly	Applicant / O&M Contractor
Minimise traffic congestion, community safety concerns, and deterioration of road surface conditions	• Record queries and complaints received from stakeholders	• Ensure community safety and convenience by addressing traffic disruptions, improving road conditions, and responding to related stakeholder concerns.	• Number of complaints	100% resolved	Quarterly	Applicant / O&M Contractor
Cumulative						
Management of cumulative impacts arising from the transportation of materials and equipment during Construction Phase.	• Record queries and complaints received from stakeholders about cumulative traffic congestion, road safety, and wear and tear.	• Ensure community safety and convenience by addressing traffic disruptions, improving road conditions, and responding to related stakeholder concerns.	• Number of complaints	Resolve 100% of complaints	Quarterly	Applicant / EPC Contractor
Management of cumulative visual amenity impacts from other renewable energy projects during Operation Phase.	• Record queries and complaints received from stakeholders about visual amenity impacts.	• Preserve the aesthetic and rural character of the landscape.	• Number of complaints	100% of complaints resolved	Annually	Applicant / O&M Contractor
Management of cumulative increase in demand for short and long-term accommodation during Construction Phase.	• Monitor occupancy rates in short-term accommodation through consultation with local council.	• Balance local economic opportunities with accessibility and availability of both short and long-term accommodation to support both workers, businesses and residents.	• Percentage of workforce accommodated in short-term accommodation, rental and privately.	Occupancy rates in short-term accommodation remain below 90% annually.	Quarterly	Applicant / EPC Contractor

Management Goals	Proposed Monitoring Activities	Desired Social Outcome	Performance Indicator(s)	Target	Monitoring Frequency	Responsible Role
Construction Phase						
Stakeholder and Community						
Avoid damage, disturbance or interference of Aboriginal cultural heritage	• Record queries and complaints received from stakeholders	• Foster trust and transparency by ensuring stakeholders feel heard and that their concerns are addressed promptly and effectively.	• Number of complaints relating to reduced community cohesion • Percentage of complaints satisfactorily resolved	100% of complaints resolved	Ongoing	Applicant
Management of stakeholder engagement and minimise potential to reduce community cohesion			• Percentage of chance finds comply with CHMP. • Number of project-related impacts to tangible cultural heritage items.	100% compliance with CHMP. No impacts to known cultural heritage items.	Ongoing	Applicant
Employment and Procurement						
Maximise local employment	• Record local employment • Record employee retention rate • Ensure major contractors report on local employment • Record the number of training programs undertaken	• Enhance local economic development and community well-being by increasing job opportunities, retain local skills, and building workforce capacity.	• Percentage of people from the Region employed by the Project (including contractors) • Number of training programs delivered • Number of apprenticeships involved	TBD - % local employment	Quarterly	Applicant / EPC Contractor
Maximise local procurement	• Report on number of, and value of contracts with local and regional businesses	• Stimulate regional economic growth by increasing procurement from local suppliers (notably Tamworth and Armidale).	• Percentage of local and regional businesses involved in the Project • Percentage of total value of relevant Project expenditure awarded to local and regional businesses	TBD - % local procurement	Quarterly	Applicant / EPC Contractor
Minimise potential to create skills shortages	• Record queries and complaints received from businesses	• Support local business by monitoring skill gaps, particularly those related to the Project.	• Number of local job vacancies in construction-related roles in the Social Locality. • Number of applicants for construction roles in the Social Locality.	100% of complaints from local businesses resolved	Quarterly	Applicant / EPC Contractor
Local Disruptions						
Minimise potential environmental and social amenity impacts (i.e. noise, vibration, dust) on community members.	• Record queries and complaints received from stakeholders	• Protect the health and well-being and way of life of the local community by proactively managing and addressing environmental and social amenity concerns.	• Number of complaints	90% resolved	Quarterly	Applicant / EPC Contractor
Minimise potential traffic inconveniences, safety concerns and contributions to road deterioration.	• Record queries and complaints received from stakeholders	• Ensure community safety and convenience by addressing traffic disruptions, improving road conditions, and responding to related stakeholder concerns.	• Number of complaints	90% resolved	Quarterly	Applicant / EPC Contractor
Accommodation and Worker Influx						
Maximise local employment and minimise potential impacts on accommodation availability, community and emergency services, and community wellbeing.	• Record local employment • Record employee retention rate • Monitor annualised occupancy rates in short-term accommodation through consultation with local council.	• Balance local economic opportunities with accessibility and availability of both short and long-term accommodation to support both workers, businesses and residents.	• Percentage of people from the Region employed by the Project	Above noted TBD	Quarterly	Applicant / EPC Contractor

Management Goals	Proposed Monitoring Activities	Desired Social Outcome	Performance Indicator(s)	Target	Monitoring Frequency	Responsible Role
Operation Phase						
Stakeholder and Community						
Avoid damage, disturbance or interference of Aboriginal cultural heritage	• Record number of tangible cultural heritage chance finds. • Number of project-related impacts to tangible cultural heritage items. • Record number of complaints received about impacts to intangible heritage.	• Protect Aboriginal cultural heritage by appropriately managing tangible heritage finds and addressing concerns about intangible heritage impacts.	• Percentage of chance finds comply with CHMP. • Number of project-related impacts to tangible cultural heritage items.	100% compliance with CHMP. No impacts to known cultural heritage items.	Annually	Applicant / O&M Contractor
Management of stakeholder engagement and minimise potential to reduce community cohesion	• Record queries and complaints received from stakeholders	• Foster trust and transparency by ensuring stakeholders feel heard and that their concerns are addressed promptly and effectively.	• Number of complaints relating to reduced community cohesion • Percentage of complaints satisfactorily resolved	80% of complaints resolved	Ongoing	Applicant
Employment and Procurement						
Maximise local employment and procurement	• Record local employment • Record employee retention rate • Report on number of, and value of contracts with local and regional businesses	• Enhance local economic growth and community well-being by creating job opportunities and supporting local businesses.	• Percentage of people from the Region employed by the Project • Percentage of local and regional businesses involved in the Project • Percentage of total value of relevant Project expenditure awarded to local and regional businesses	TBD - % of regional employment	Annually	Applicant / O&M Contractor
Land Use and Landscape						
Minimise (perceived) impacts to land values	• Track property sales data within a 5km radius. • Record number of complaints	• Ensure equitable treatment of surrounding landowners by mitigating negative perceptions.	• Annualised percentage change in average property values using standardized criteria for comparable properties.	100% of complaints on land values resolved	Annually	Applicant / O&M Contractor
Minimise impacts to visual amenity and rural character	• Record number of trees planted to fulfil required screening planting mitigations	• Preserve the aesthetic and rural character of the landscape.	• Percentage survival rate of trees planted • Reduce complaints about visual impacts by 70%	60-70% survival rate. 50% reduction in complaints	Annually	Applicant / O&M Contractor
Decommissioning Phase						
Management of intergenerational Equity and Waste Management	• Record a list of project components that are disposed, recycled and reused. • Record the approximate weight of project materials that are disposed and recycled.	• Ensure sustainable waste management practices to minimize intergenerational equity associated with long-term environmental impacts	• Percentage of project materials recycled by approximate weight: panels, metals, cables, inverters and batteries. • Percentage of project materials reused recorded by percentage of units.	80% of project components recycled. at least 80% of mounting infrastructure to be reused.	Quarterly	Applicant / O&M Contractor
Management of short-term increase in employment and procurement opportunities	• Record local employment • Record employee retention rate • Ensure major contractors report on local employment • Record the number of training programs undertaken	• Enhance local economic development and community well-being by increasing job opportunities, retain local skills, and building workforce capacity.	• Percentage of people from the Region employed by the Project (including contractors) • Number of training programs delivered • Number of apprenticeships involved	40% local employment. TBD - % of the total project workforce hours to be completed by apprentices, trainees or cadets.	Quarterly	Applicant / O&M Contractor

Management Goals	Proposed Monitoring Activities	Desired Social Outcome	Performance Indicator(s)	Target	Monitoring Frequency	Responsible Role
Management of retrenchment of Operational workforce	• Monitor the number of retrenched workers • Number of queries and complaints about unfair dismissals	• Support affected workers by providing fair retrenchment processes	• Percentage of compliance with redundancy entitlements under the Fair Work Act 2009.	100% compliance	Quarterly	Applicant / O&M Contractor
Minimise traffic congestion, community safety concerns, and deterioration of road surface conditions	• Record queries and complaints received from stakeholders	• Ensure community safety and convenience by addressing traffic disruptions, improving road conditions, and responding to related stakeholder concerns.	• Number of complaints	100% resolved	Quarterly	Applicant / O&M Contractor
Cumulative						
Management of cumulative impacts arising from the transportation of materials and equipment during Construction Phase.	• Record queries and complaints received from stakeholders about cumulative traffic congestion, road safety, and wear and tear.	• Ensure community safety and convenience by addressing traffic disruptions, improving road conditions, and responding to related stakeholder concerns.	• Number of complaints	Resolve 100% of complaints	Quarterly	Applicant / EPC Contractor
Management of cumulative visual amenity impacts from other renewable energy projects during Operation Phase.	• Record queries and complaints received from stakeholders about visual amenity impacts.	• Preserve the aesthetic and rural character of the landscape.	• Number of complaints	100% of complaints resolved	Annually	Applicant / O&M Contractor
Management of cumulative increase in demand for short and long-term accommodation during Construction Phase.	• Monitor occupancy rates in short-term accommodation through consultation with local council.	• Balance local economic opportunities with accessibility and availability of both short and long-term accommodation to support both workers, businesses and residents.	• Percentage of workforce accommodated in short-term accommodation, rental and privately.	Occupancy rates in short-term accommodation remain below 90% annually.	Quarterly	Applicant / EPC Contractor

7.1 IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMUNITY BENEFIT FUND

The CBF is designed as a mitigation measure to address a range of the social impacts identified in the SIA. The fund aims to enhance positive outcomes and mitigate negative impacts on the community. The CBF will be informed by impact assessment conducted in this SIA, which triangulated findings from socio-demographic data, stakeholder engagement and technical EIS studies. In addition, the CBF will be informed by ongoing engagement to ensure that emergent social impacts are considered. The identified socio-economic impacts will serve as key indicators for fund allocation priorities, ensuring that the most critical community needs are addressed. This alignment ensures that the fund contributes effectively to mitigating the impacts detailed in the SIA.

To ensure the CBF aligns with community needs and benefit sharing guidelines (DPHI, 2024) the following measures will be adopted:

- Consult with key stakeholders and potential partners (e.g., Bathurst Regional LGA, community groups, etc.);
- Publish the CBF to the Wider Community via community newsletters and other communications channels as per an Operation Phase SEP;
- The geographic scope of the CBF that will be implemented is outlined below:
  - Local initiatives refer to those that will directly affect areas or residents within a 5 km buffer of the Project, or within the two SA1s representing the immediately surrounding area (refer to Section 3.2); and
  - Initiatives outside of the local area will need to demonstrate direct or indirect benefits to residents within the immediately surrounding area.
- Ensure that the CBF prioritises local initiatives that will benefit or mitigate impacts to vulnerable groups (refer to **Section 5.4**);
- Ensure that the CBF prioritises local initiatives that foster long-term social, economic and environmental benefits and encourage greater self-reliance, which will persist post-decommissioning;
- Prior to decommissioning the Project, the Project will engage with the Bathurst Regional Council to consider ways to transition the community to provide an opportunity for social infrastructure funded through the CBF to be maintained post-decommissioning; and
- Ongoing engagement with Bathurst Regional Council in relation to CBF spendings to facilitate a seamless transition of funding and/or spending (dependent upon initiatives funded).

7.1.1 FUNDING ALLOCATION

Edify will enter into a Voluntary Planning Agreement (VPA) with Bathurst Council and Council will manage the allocation of funding under the VPA.

Edify will separately have a CBF that will be managed by Edify. The broad intention of the CBF is that funds would be allocated to support local non-profit organisations, community programs/events, Local/Regional Businesses, training, and services/infrastructure.

7.1.2 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

To ensure the CBF achieves its intended goals, a standalone monitoring and evaluation framework will be implemented for the CBF. This framework will assess the effectiveness of funded initiatives and the fund's overall impact on mitigating and enhancing social impacts. Adjustments will be made based on these evaluations and community feedback to align fund objectives with community outcomes.

7.2 REPORTING AND AUDITING

In addition to ongoing monitoring, regular audits are to be undertaken by the Project. These audits are to be conducted throughout the Construction and Operation Phases of the Project, will likely be informed by the outcomes of the EIS process and DPHI's conditions of approval and will be updated accordingly.

Audit findings will be reviewed, and where corrective actions are deemed necessary, specific actions (with designated responsibility and timing) will be developed. The focus of these actions will be on achieving the objectives set out in **Table 7-1**, as well as continuous improvement in performance.

A summary of the audit findings is to be reported externally on an annual basis. This will include an evaluation of the objectives set out in **Table 7-1** and any corrective actions that have been developed because of the audit process.

It is recommended that the predicted impacts and corresponding management measures (i.e. Project performance) be internally audited annually and externally audited once every three years. This timeframe may be extended or reduced based on the findings of ongoing audits.

7.3 ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

The Project will be principally responsible for implementation of the management measures and the monitoring activities carried out for the Project. However, there will be instances where data will need to be obtained from a third party, or implementation will require cooperation and involvement of others (e.g. contractors and relevant local stakeholders).

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APPENDIX A: TOP OCCUPATIONS AND INDUSTRIES DATA FOR SOCIAL LOCALITY

Region	Year	Labour force	Top Occupations	Top Industries
Bathurst Regional LGA	2016	19,329	Professionals (19.7%), Technicians and Trades Workers (14.6%), Managers (11.8%), Community and Personal Service Workers (11.0%), Clerical and Administrative Workers (13.4%), Sales Workers (10.8%), Labourers (8.2%), Machinery Operators and Drivers (7.0%)	Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals) (3.4%), Higher Education (3.3%), Primary Education (2.7%), State Government Administration (2.5%), and Supermarket and Grocery Stores (2.5%).
	2021	21,317	Professionals (19.1%), Community and Personal Service Workers (15.0%), Technicians and Trades Workers (14.2%), Managers (12.1%), Clerical and Administrative Workers (11.9%), Labourers (10.8%), Sales Workers (8.6%), Machinery Operators and Drivers (6.7%)	Hospitals (4.2%), Social Assistance Services (4.0%), State Government Administration (3.3%), Aged Care Residential Services (3.0%), Supermarket and Grocery Stores (2.6%)
SA1 10301106002 (containing the Project Area)	2016	96	Professionals (22.0%), Managers (18.0%), Technicians and Trades Workers (18.0%), Clerical and Administrative Workers (14.0%), Community and Personal Service Workers (9.0%), Machinery Operators and Drivers (8.0%), Labourers (5.0%), Sales Workers (3.0%)	Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals) (10.4%), Primary Education (9.0%), Grain-Sheep or Grain-Beef Cattle Farming (7.5%), Building and Other Industrial Cleaning Services (6.0%), Secondary Education (6.0%)
	2021	130	Professionals (20.6%), Technicians and Trades Workers (15.3%), Clerical and Administrative Workers (15.3%), Labourers (14.5%), Managers (13.0%), Community and Personal Service Workers (9.9%), Sales Workers (9.2%), Machinery Operators and Drivers (7.6%)	Pubs, Taverns and Bars (6.9%), Takeaway Food Services (4.6%), Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals) (4.6%), Other Agricultural Product Wholesaling (3.8%), Real Estate Services (3.8%)
ABS SAL Glanmire (to the North)	2016	95	Professionals (25.6%), Managers (22.2%), Technicians and Trades Workers (20.0%), Clerical and Administrative Workers (15.6%), Sales Workers (7.8%), Machinery Operators and Drivers (5.6%), Community and Personal Service Workers (3.3%)	Beef Cattle Farming (Specialised) (9.5%), Site Preparation Services (9.5%), Electrical Services (9.5%), Sheep Farming (Specialised) (7.1%), Sheep-Beef Cattle Farming (7.1%)
	2021	99	Managers (30.3%), Professionals (16.2%), Community and Personal Service Workers (11.1%), Technicians and Trades Workers (9.1%), Labourers (9.1%), Machinery Operators and Drivers (8.1%), Clerical and Administrative Workers (4.0%), Sales Workers (3.0%)	Beef Cattle Farming (Specialised) (11.1%), Road Freight Transport (7.1%), Sheep-Beef Cattle Farming (4.0%), Correctional and Detention Services (4.0%), Secondary Education (4.0%)

Region	Year	Labour force	Top Occupations	Top Industries
ABS SAL The Lagoon (to the South)	2016	108	Technicians and Trades Workers (23.6%), Labourers (16.4%), Managers (15.5%), Professionals (14.5%), Clerical and Administrative Workers (11.8%), Sales Workers (7.3%), Machinery Operators and Drivers (5.5%), Community and Personal Service Workers (2.7%)	Sheep Farming (Specialised) (11.6%), Takeaway Food Services (7.2%), Local Government Administration (7.2%), Other Horse and Dog Racing Activities (5.8%), Horse Farming (4.3%)
	2021	149	Managers (21.5%), Clerical and Administrative Workers (18.1%), Professionals (15.4%), Technicians and Trades Workers (12.8%), Community and Personal Service Workers (9.4%), Machinery Operators and Drivers (9.4%), Labourers (6.7%), Sales Workers (5.4%)	Other Horse and Dog Racing Activities (9.4%), Aged Care Residential Services (6.0%), State Government Administration (5.4%), Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals) (5.4%), Sheep Farming (Specialised) (4.0%)
SA1 10301105903 (to the North-West)	2016	158	Managers (22.1%), Professionals (18.2%), Technicians and Trades Workers (16.2%), Labourers (11.0%), Clerical and Administrative Workers (9.7%), Sales Workers (8.4%), Community and Personal Service Workers (7.8%), Machinery Operators and Drivers (6.5%)	Road Freight Transport (8.0%), Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals) (8.0%), Vegetable Growing (Outdoors) (7.1%), Concreting Services (5.4%), Accommodation (4.5%)
	2021	158	Professionals (20.3%), Technicians and Trades Workers (18.9%), Managers (16.2%), Clerical and Administrative Workers (10.1%), Sales Workers (9.5%), Machinery Operators and Drivers (7.4%), Labourers (7.4%), Community and Personal Service Workers (6.1%)	Road Freight Transport (7.4%), Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals) (7.4%), Supermarket and Grocery Stores (6.1%), Primary Education (4.7%), Legal Services (4.1%)
Bathurst UCL112002	2016	15,647	Professionals (19.2%), Community and Personal Service Workers (14.5%), Technicians and Trades Workers (14.2%), Clerical and Administrative Workers (12.0%), Labourers (11.8%), Sales Workers (10.4%), Managers (10.0%), Machinery Operators and Drivers (6.4%)	Higher Education (3.6%), Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals) (3.5%), Supermarket and Grocery Stores (2.9%), Primary Education (2.7%), State Government Administration (2.7%)
	2021	17,573	Professionals (19.3%), Community and Personal Service Workers (16.2%), Technicians and Trades Workers (13.9%), Clerical and Administrative Workers (11.8%), Labourers (11.0%), Managers (10.4%), Sales Workers (9.1%), Machinery Operators and Drivers (6.6%)	Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals) (4.4%), Other Social Assistance Services (4.4%), State Government Administration (3.4%), Aged Care Residential Services (3.2%), Supermarket and Grocery Stores (3.0%)

Region	Year	Labour force	Top Occupations	Top Industries
Perthville (L) UCL122110	2016	214	Technicians and Trades Workers (19.1%), Professionals (17.6%), Community and Personal Service Workers (12.7%), Clerical and Administrative Workers (11.3%), Managers (10.8%), Labourers (10.8%), Sales Workers (9.3%), Machinery Operators and Drivers (8.3%)	Other Social Assistance Services (7.3%), Primary Education (5.1%), Sheep Farming (Specialised) (4.4%), Local Government Administration (4.4%), Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals) (3.6%)
	2021	188	Community and Personal Service Workers (17.1%), Professionals (16.0%), Technicians and Trades Workers (15.5%), Machinery Operators and Drivers (11.0%), Managers (9.9%), Clerical and Administrative Workers (8.8%), Sales Workers (8.3%), Labourers (6.1%)	Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals) (6.1%), Other Social Assistance Services (4.4%), Combined Primary and Secondary Education (3.9%), Aged Care Residential Services (3.9%), House Construction (3.3%)
Oberon UCL115114	2016	1,051	Machinery Operators and Drivers (20.0%), Technicians and Trades Workers (16.8%), Labourers (13.7%), Community and Personal Service Workers (11.0%), Managers (9.7%), Professionals (9.5%), Clerical and Administrative Workers (8.3%), Sales Workers (8.3%)	Log Sawmilling (8.6%), Local Government Administration (4.6%), Road Freight Transport (4.2%), Wooden Structural Fitting and Component Manufacturing (3.8%), Supermarket and Grocery Stores (3.8%)
	2021	1,072	Machinery Operators and Drivers (18.4%), Technicians and Trades Workers (16.3%), Labourers (15.7%), Community and Personal Service Workers (11.1%), Professionals (10.7%), Managers (9.5%), Clerical and Administrative Workers (8.4%), Sales Workers (7.0%)	Wooden Structural Fitting and Component Manufacturing (11.2%), Log Sawmilling (6.7%), Local Government Administration (3.8%), Aged Care Residential Services (3.5%), Supermarket and Grocery Stores (3.3%)
Blayney UCL115020	2016	1,295	Labourers (17.3%), Technicians and Trades Workers (16.2%), Machinery Operators and Drivers (13.9%), Community and Personal Service Workers (12.6%), Clerical and Administrative Workers (11.3%), Professionals (9.8%), Sales Workers (8.5%), Managers (8.1%)	Gold Ore Mining (6.4%), Supermarket and Grocery Stores (5.0%), Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals) (4.8%), Local Government Administration (3.6%), Road Freight Transport (2.8%)
	2021	1,388	Technicians and Trades Workers (16.2%), Labourers (15.7%), Community and Personal Service Workers (14.0%), Machinery Operators and Drivers (13.2%), Clerical and Administrative Workers (11.3%), Professionals (11.0%), Sales Workers (8.3%), Managers (8.1%)	Gold Ore Mining (6.0%), Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals) (4.4%), Local Government Administration (3.9%), Supermarket and Grocery Stores (3.7%), Aged Care Residential Services (3.7%)

Region	Year	Labour force	Top Occupations	Top Industries
Lithgow SUA1019	2016	4,947	Technicians and Trades Workers (17.6%), Clerical and Administrative Workers (13.7%), Community and Personal Service Workers (12.8%), Labourers (12.6%), Professionals (12.6%), Machinery Operators and Drivers (11.9%), Sales Workers (9.2%), Managers (7.8%)	Coal Mining (8.3%), Aged Care Residential Services (3.6%), Supermarket and Grocery Stores (3.0%), State Government Administration (2.8%), Takeaway Food Services (2.7%)
	2021	4,964	Technicians and Trades Workers (15.9%), Community and Personal Service Workers (14.3%), Professionals (13.7%), Clerical and Administrative Workers (13.3%), Labourers (11.5%), Machinery Operators and Drivers (11.2%), Managers (9.2%), Sales Workers (8.7%)	Coal Mining (7.3%), Aged Care Residential Services (3.8%), Supermarket and Grocery Stores (3.5%), State Government Administration (3.4%), Takeaway Food Services (3.3%)
Orange SUA1027	2016	18,115	Professionals (21.1%), Technicians and Trades Workers (14.7%), Clerical and Administrative Workers (13.1%), Community and Personal Service Workers (11.8%), Labourers (10.7%), Managers (10.6%), Sales Workers (9.8%), Machinery Operators and Drivers (6.9%)	Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals) (6.2%), Gold Ore Mining (4.1%), State Government Administration (3.4%), Other Social Assistance Services (3.1%), Supermarket and Grocery Stores (2.5%)
	2021	20,351	Professionals (22.7%), Technicians and Trades Workers (14.5%), Community and Personal Service Workers (13.2%), Clerical and Administrative Workers (12.5%), Managers (10.9%), Labourers (9.8%), Sales Workers (8.2%), Machinery Operators and Drivers (6.8%)	Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals) (7.1%), Gold Ore Mining (4.8%), Other Social Assistance Services (4.4%), State Government Administration (3.7%), Primary Education (2.6%)
NSW Area Code 1	2016	3,653,240	Professionals (23.6%), Technicians and Trades Workers (12.7%), Clerical and Administrative Workers (13.8%), Community and Personal Service Workers (10.4%), Managers (13.5%), Labourers (8.8%), Sales Workers (9.2%), Machinery Operators and Drivers (6.1%)	Coal Mining (8.3%), Aged Care Residential Services (3.6%), Supermarket and Grocery Stores (3.0%), State Government Administration (2.8%), Takeaway Food Services (2.7%)
	2021	3,921,040	Professionals (25.8%), Technicians and Trades Workers (11.9%), Community and Personal Service Workers (10.6%), Clerical and Administrative Workers (13.0%), Managers (14.6%), Labourers (8.2%), Sales Workers (8.0%), Machinery Operators and Drivers (6.0%)	Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals) (4.2%), Gold Ore Mining (4.8%), Other Social Assistance Services (4.4%), State Government Administration (3.7%), Primary Education (2.6%)

APPENDIX B: SHORT-TERM ACCOMMODATION CAPACITY DATA

Accommodation Provider	Number of Rooms[31]
Bathurst	
The Victoria Bathurst	19
Family Hotel	10
Gold Panner Motor Inn	32
Best Western Coachman's Inn Motel	26
Panorama Motel Bathurst	70
Bathurst Motor Inn	52
Alloggio Bathurst	60
Knickerbocker Hotel	20
Heritage Inn Bathurst	48
The George Hotel	54
Country Lodge Motor Inn	32
Ben Chifley Motor Inn	31
Bathurst Explorers Motel	40
Mantra Bathurst	50
Bishop's Court Estate Boutique Hotel	6
Littomore Hotels & Suites	37
Sub-total	**~584**
Number of vacant rooms	**~**
Lithgow	
Black Gold Motel	72
Zig Zag Motel	51
Bowen Inn Motel	25
Lithgow Workies Club Motel	36
Lithgow Parkside Motor Inn	20
Lithgow Short Stay	3
Lake Lyell	1
Lithgow Tourist and Van Park	28
The Commercial Hotel Wallerawang	16

[31] Where data of number of rooms was not readily available from booking websites or company websites, estimates were based of the number of listed rooms.

Accommodation Provider	Number of Rooms[31]
The Lithgow & District Workmen's Club	6
Sub-total	**~258**
Number of vacant rooms	**~**
Orange	
Mercure Hotel	78
De Russie Boutique Hotel	25
The Remington	82
The Oriana	49
Byng Street Boutique Hotel	22
West End Motor Lodge	17
Hotel Canobolas	45
Borredell Estate	6
Central Caleula Motorlodge	63
Quest Orange	77
Duntryleague Guesthouse	14
Parkview Hotel	14
Best Western Plus Ambassador Orange	50
Silverdown Luxury	3
Kite Street Units	22
COTTAGE 79	2
Basalt Luxury Accommodation	3
Black Sheep Inn	9
Towac Valley Cabins	3
Metropolitan Hotel	16
Royal Hotel	26
Great Western Hotel	30
Canobolas Caravan Park	14
Sub-total	**~656**
Number of vacant rooms	**~**

Accommodation Provider	Number of Rooms[32]
Oberon	
123 On Curtis	1
Beaconsfield Cottage	2
Big Trout Motor Inn	33
Billabong Cottage Trout Fishing Farmstay	1
Bindo Creek Cabins	15
Book Regional	3
Duckmaloi Farm	2
Duckmaloi Park Lodge	7
Essington Park	5
Frogspark	5
Glen Eden	5
Glenburn House	3
Glenroy Cottages & Camping	8
Hampton Halfway Hotel Motel	9
Hickory Moon	2
High Country Farm stay	2
Highlands Motor Inn	15
Jenolan Cabins	6
Jenolan Caves Accommodation	*
Jenolan Holiday Park	22
Jenolan Street Chalet	1
Jenolan Valley View	5
Kenzell Farm	22
Kilbeggan Cottage	3
Lake Oberon View	4
Melaleuca Mountain Retreat	10
RedGround Australia Cottage	2
Royal Hotel Oberon	5
Stone Hedge	6
'The Grove' Farmstay at Oberon	4
Titania Motel	10
Tourist Hotel Oberon	6
Yerranderie Village	12

[32] Where data of number of rooms was not readily available from booking websites or company websites, estimates were based of the number of listed rooms.

Accommodation Provider	Number of Rooms[32]
Sub-total	**~236**
Number of vacant rooms	**~**

Blayney	
Blayney Central Motel	14
Blayney Tourist Park	12
Blayney Leumeah Motel	25
Exchange Hotel	10
Blayney Post Office Bed and Breakfast	3
Blayney Goldfields Motor Inn	21
Sub-total	**~85**
Number of vacant rooms	**~**
Total number of rooms	**~1819**
Total number of vacant rooms	**~**

APPENDIX C: DRAFT WORKFORCE ACCOMMODATION PLAN

Brewongle Solar Farm

Workforce Accommodation Plan

PREPARED FOR
Edify Energy Pty Ltd

DATE
31 January 2025

REFERENCE
0735137

DOCUMENT DETAILS

DOCUMENT TITLE	Brewongle Solar Farm
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CONTENTS

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1. INTRODUCTION

This Workforce Accommodation Plan ('WAP') has been prepared on behalf of Edify Energy Pty Ltd ('Edify' or the 'Applicant') for the proposed Brewongle Solar Farm ('the Project').

The Project is located at 315 Tarana Road, Brewongle, New South Wales (NSW), approximately 12 km from the Bathurst town centre. The Project Area is located within the Bathurst Regional Local Government Area (LGA) across three (3) separate lot parcels, which have been secured under an option agreement with Edify. The Project Area is located on land predominately used for agricultural activities.

1.1 PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this WAP is to assess the Project's accommodation options, and how those may potentially have an impact on its surrounding communities, in accordance with the SEARs requirements of the EIS.

The scale and nature of solar farm developments necessitate multi-year construction timeframes and typically require a construction workforce beyond what is available in the local area. As such, this WAP will consider the timeline of the Project, as well as the expected number of workers to be employed during the Construction and Operation Phases of the Project.

The WAP includes appropriate consideration of accommodation availability, focusing on any impacts to existing services or recreational facilities, and commuting distances to the Project. This assessment will be undertaken against the key matters included in the NSW Social Impact Assessment (SIA) Guideline guided by DPE (2023a).

Further, this WAP provides detail as to prior consultation and/or agreements with the local Councils, assessment of positive and negative implications of using and/or supplementing accommodation options in existing communities and will provide an overview as to how the use of existing short-term accommodation facilities could be considered.

It is intended that this WAP will form part of the supporting documentation considered for the SIA associated with the Project. As such, it is annexed to the SIA and the SIA will explore the potential socio-economic impacts relevant to the Project and provide suitable management and/or enhancement measures.

1.2 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

This WAP has been prepared using a combination of publicly available information and Project-related detail provided by Edify, including information retrieved from stakeholder engagement.

It is highlighted that the WAP seeks to identify and consider the impacts of accommodating workers in various ways and forecasting the potential implications for existing townships and communities only and therefore should not be taken as a comprehensive legal assessment of the ability to use these options.

It is also noted that ERM's findings are accurate and complete only to the extent that information sourced, and/or provided to ERM, was itself accurate and complete.

Finally, ERM's findings reflect the current Project status. It is noted that several key decisions that may influence workforce accommodation requirements have not yet been made, such as the selection of contractors or suppliers. Once such decisions have been made the predicted impacts should be reviewed and updated accordingly.

Engagement with local councils revealed variations in the availability and quality of occupancy data. For example, councils such as Bathurst, where tourism is a key economic activity supported by events like races, provided detailed accommodation data. In contrast, some other councils had limited visibility on short term accommodation (STA) occupancy rates. However, the combination of council engagement and desktop information is considered sufficient to support the proposed approach and ensure alignment with local economic priorities.

Specific stakeholder engagement directed at workforce accommodation options has been undertaken with local councils. It was noted during stakeholder engagement undertaken for the EIS that worker influx impacts were not a major concern for the community.

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This section provides an overview of the Social Locality and workforce generation estimates by project stages and duration, which have informed the workforce accommodation recommendations (refer to **Section 6**). First, the Social Locality outlines the regional centres that have potential to accommodation non-local workforces, notably the Construction workforce. The Operational workforce is expected to comprise of 100% local workers and therefore does not form a major part of the draft WAP. Next, workforce generation estimates are critical in understanding the scale of worker influx during the Construction phase of the Project. Critical, if local employment is increased then the amount of worker influx and pressure on accommodation and other services is reduced.

2.1 NEARBY TOWNS CONSIDERED FOR ACCOMMODATING NON-LOCAL WORKERS

The SIA provides a full description of the Social Locality, comprising of the Project Area and immediate surroundings, transportation and haulage routes, and surrounding towns and regional centres.

The **surrounding towns and regional centres** that may provide labour, goods and services to support the Construction Phase of the Project, and which are therefore relevant to this WAP, include the following statistical areas:

- Bathurst UCL;
- Perthville (L) UCL;
- Oberon UCL;
- Blayney UCL;
- Lithgow SUA; and
- Orange SUA.

These towns form part of the Social Locality. Indicative travel distances (by car, per road) to the Project Area are provided in **Table 2-1**, which shows that all towns and regional centres are within a safe commutable distance from the Project.

TABLE 2-1 TOWNS TO THE PROJECT AREA INDICATIVE TRAVEL DISTANCES

Town/Regional Centre	Travel Distance	Approximate Travel Time
Bathurst	14.8 km	16 minutes
Perthville (L)	22.9 km	19 minutes
Oberon	38.9 km	30 minutes
Blayney	52.2 km	42 minutes
Lithgow	55.3 km	45 minutes
Orange	72.9 km	64 minutes

Blayney Council did not respond during the engagement for the development of the draft WAP and a desktop search revealed limited capacity and pressure from mining workers. Therefore, Blayney is included within the Social Locality for its potential role in providing

goods and services for the Project but has not been considered as an option for accommodating non-local workers during the Construction phase of the Project. For consistency, Blayney has been included in baseline data of the WAP but has not been analysed or informed the recommendations. Due to the small scale of Perthville (L) has been excluded from the WAP.

2.2 WORKFORCE GENERATION ESTIMATES

Edify is committed to prioritising the use of regional NSW labour, goods and services throughout the development, construction and operation of the Project. As outlined in **Table 2-2**, construction of the project is expected to be completed over 12-18 months and requires a workforce of 200 full-time employees (FTE) during peak construction. The predicted average personnel during various construction phases are as follows:

- General across the Construction Phase – 30 FTE (11 months);
- Site Mobilisation – 60 FTE (2 months);
- Site Setup – 150 FTE (5 months);
- Solar Panel and Battery Construction – 250 FTE (3 months); and
- Substation Construction – 60 FTE (6 months).

During the proposed 30-year lifespan of the project, there will be an approximate operational workforce of 5 FTE.

TABLE 2-2 PROJECT STAGES AND WORKFORCE REQUIREMENTS

Project Staging	
Construction	• Construction period: 12-18 months (completed in two stages). • Peak construction workforce: 200 full-time employees (FTE).
Commissioning and Operation	• Operation period: 30 years before components will be retired or reenergized. • Operational workforce: 5 FTE (excluding maintenance contractors).
Decommissioning and Rehabilitation	• Decommissioning and rehabilitation plan (DRP): to be developed 5 years prior to the end of Project component lifetime. • DRP will outline the timeline of the decommissioning and the expected workforce requirements.

2.2.1 ESTIMATED WORKFORCE REQUIREMENT AND LOCAL EMPLOYMENT

The workforce employed during the Construction Phase of the Project is to be engaged in construction activities that can be generally divided into civil, piling, mechanical and electrical scopes of work. The various roles (scopes) and a likely labour count for each role based on similar Solar Farm projects is outlined in **Table 2-3**.

The local employment target set by the Project is based on assumptions set within both the Economic Impact Assessment (EIA) (Gillespie Economics, 2025) and EIS regarding what a realistic and reasonable for the region. The target has considered local employment targets set by surrounding SSD project currently in the approvals phase.

It should be noted that these estimates are a 'worst case scenario' based on a hypothetical scenario that has been tested based on a conservative view of the Project requirements. It is likely that the actual use of local employment may be higher than these estimates.

The assumptions for each skill requirement of the Project underpinning the 20% local employment target are detailed in **Table 2-3**. Local resources are expected to comprise 100% of those involved in Landscaping, Perimeter Fencing and Security.

TABLE 2-3 ESTIMATE OF LOCAL EMPLOYMENT DURING CONSTRUCTION PHASE BY SKILL REQUIREMENTS

Skills	**Estimated Total Employment**	**Local Employment** (%)	**Estimated Local Employees**
Surveying	5	20	1
Site Works - Clearing and Grubbing	5	20	1
Site Works - Excavation, Grading, & Access Roads	13	31	4
Electrical Earthworks (Trenching)	13	15	2
Landscaping	3	100	3
Perimeter Fencing	5	100	5
Piling	13	38	5
Tracker Installation	33	21	7
PV Module Installation	26	8	2
DC Electrical Installation	26	8	2
AC Electrical Installation	16	13	2
PCU/BESS Foundation installation	5	20	1
PCU/BESS Installation	5	0	0
SCADA & Controls Installation	3	0	0
HV - Substation Works	10	10	1
Machinery Operators and Drivers	3	0	0

Skills	Estimated Total Employment	Local Employment (%)	Estimated Local Employees
Operations & Maintenance Building Installation	5	20	1
Management - Construction Manager, Engineering, Foreman, Leading Hands	6	0	0
HSC and QA/QC Personnel	2	0	0
Security	3	100	3
Total Employment (Peak)	**200**	**20**	**40**

2.2.2 WORKFORCE DEMOGRAPHICS

If approval is granted, a Workforce Accommodation Management Plan (WAMP) will be developed and provide demographic information on the age, gender and nationality of the local and non-local workforce. This WAP will inform the WAMP.

3. ENGAGEMENT FINDINGS

Edify engaged with local councils, STA providers, tourist businesses and housing organisations. Housing organisations refers to any organisation related to real estate sales, property management services (Airbnb and private rental), public housing providers and homelessness services.

Table 3-1 outlines specific comments provided on each of the areas of interest by various stakeholder groups in relation to accommodation and housing in the Social Locality.

TABLE 3-1 ACCOMMODATION ENGAGEMENT FINDINGS

Workforce Accommodation	Local Council	Findings
Annual occupancy rates	Bathurst	Council reported an annual occupancy rate of 40.8% in 2023.
	Orange	Council indicated that occupancy rates range from 75-90%, with workers occupying Monday to Thursday and tourists from Friday to Sunday.
	Lithgow	Council noted inconsistencies in data collection but stated that Lithgow frequently experiences 75-80% occupancy due to high worker demand in local industries.
	Oberon	Council observed peak occupancy levels of 110% in summer and over 150% in winter.
Existing accommodation camps	Bathurst	No short-term accommodation is currently available.
	Orange	Council indicated that no worker camps exist in the Orange area, but suggested land may be available for development while retaining infrastructure.
	Lithgow	Council confirmed no dedicated worker camps but noted three large camping sites: Lithgow Tourism and Van Park (paid), Lake Lyell Recreation Area (paid), and Lake Wallace (free, 48-hour limit).
	Oberon	No information on additional worker accommodation availability.
Availability of short-term and long-term accommodation options.	Bathurst	Council was unable to confirm additional accommodation options.
	Orange	Council reported a long-term rental availability rate of just 0.5%.
	Lithgow	Council noted that while rental availability is currently manageable, upcoming projects, including Lake Lyell pumped hydro and Gardens of Stone Conservation Area construction, may strain medium- to long-term options.
	Oberon	Council stated that accommodation is currently at 100% capacity.

Workforce Accommodation	Local Council	Findings
Rental housing affordability and stock	Bathurst	Council reported a median rent in Bathurst of $499 per week as of August 2024.
	Orange	Council noted that house rents average $540 per week, while unit rents are $445 per week.
	Lithgow	Council confirmed that rental availability is not zero but remains competitive, with affordability still a selling point for the LGA despite supply constraints affecting prices.
	Oberon	No affordable rental housing is currently available, though occasional opportunities arise.
Affordable housing stock (percentage of overall housing and any upcoming developments).	Bathurst	Council stated that while 91 new land blocks have been released, demand remains slow.
	Orange	Council indicated low land availability but did not provide specific percentages.
	Lithgow	Council identified Wallerawang as a focal point for housing development, with a proposal for 1,200 new homes under consideration.
	Oberon	No additional housing stock is available at present.
Key vulnerable groups supported by social and community housing providers.	Bathurst	Council noted that some local organizations, including Glenray and Vivability, operate shared housing options.
	Orange	Council confirmed that social and community housing providers support key vulnerable groups, including Traditional Owners, single female parents, and domestic violence survivors.
	Lithgow	Council was unable to provide additional information on social housing availability.
	Oberon	Council was unable to confirm further housing options.
Cumulative pressure on short-term accommodation from other renewable projects.	Bathurst	Council indicated that the hold on the Regis Gold Mine project at Kings Plains has reduced potential demand, with no start date announced for the Glanmire Solar Project.
	Orange	Council reported that one Iberdrola project recently finished, while another at Mt Conobalos appears on hold, with the KCWF project yet to commence.
	Lithgow	Council noted that battery storage and wind farm projects are expected to increase pressure on housing during construction phases.
	Oberon	Council highlighted high accommodation demand from mining, Jenolan Caves works, and renewable energy projects.
Infrastructure for new worker accommodation camps (e.g., water, sewage).	Bathurst	Council confirmed that it owns and manages Bathurst's sewerage and water supply but noted that further discussions are needed.

Workforce Accommodation	Local Council	Findings
	Orange	Council reported that some land is connected to external sewer and water services and could be utilized if necessary.
	Lithgow	No additional serviced land is currently available.
	Oberon	Council stated that no land is currently available for development but noted that this may change within five years.
Planned short-term accommodation developments.	Bathurst	No large-scale residential developments are currently planned.
	Orange	Council indicated that a 100-room Accor motel is set for exhibition soon, with five additional motels approved but not yet constructed.
	Lithgow	Council was unable to confirm further short-term accommodation developments.
	Oberon	No additional short-term accommodation is currently available.
Infill development and land availability.	Bathurst	Council reported that most CBD-adjacent blocks have undergone infill development, with two proposals for medium-density housing at 50 and 34 Busby Street, though these are several years away.
	Orange	Council noted that new residential land is constrained, with blocks priced at $360,000 per 600 m² and tightly held by developers.
	Lithgow	Council was unable to provide further details on land availability.
	Oberon	Council stated that no additional land is currently available for housing.
Council's preferred accommodation options for workers.	Bathurst	Council indicated that assets with post-construction uses would be favourably considered in negotiations.
	Orange	The tourism sector prefers motels and Airbnb's to remain available for visitors. Council remains neutral on worker accommodation but noted occasional issues with FIFO/DIDO workers, particularly regarding behaviour on weekends.
	Lithgow	Council was unable to confirm additional information on workforce accommodation.
	Oberon	Council reported that Oberon currently has no availability but is open to reviewing options during the construction phase.
Short-term accommodation providers in the region.	Bathurst	Council provided a shared document listing key short-term accommodation options in the Bathurst region, including motels, hotels, and caravan parks.
	Orange	Council reported 273 non-hosted and 90 hosted Airbnb properties in the region.

Workforce Accommodation	Local Council	Findings
	Lithgow	Council estimated approximately 1,650 short-term accommodation options are available in Lithgow LGA.
	Oberon	Council stated that no additional accommodation is currently available.

4. ACCOMMODATION BASELINE DATA

This section provides an overview of the current accommodation landscape, beginning with privately owned housing, followed by private rental housing, and concluding with STA. The towns and regional centres of the Social Locality are within approximately one-hour commute to the Project. This section explains how these regional centres may offer limited accommodation options, but that the overall capacity remains constrained. The baseline highlights the need for strategic planning to ensure adequate accommodation for the workforce, considering the limited availability across all housing types and cumulative worker influx.

4.1 PRIVATELY OWNED HOUSING

This section provides a desktop analysis of the private housing market in relation to the influx and accommodation of non-local construction workers. Two primary components of the housing market that can indicate both existing pressures and socio-economic vulnerability are considered: housing availability and affordability. If the Project were to accommodate non-local construction workers in privately owned housing, it may exacerbate these existing pressures and result in further socio-economic impacts.

4.1.1 HOUSING AVAILABILITY

An overview of the dwelling tenures in the towns and regional centres of the Social Locality are provided in **Table 4-1.**

TABLE 4-1 DWELLING TENURE, 2021

Locality	Owned Outright or with a Mortgage (no.)	Rented (no.)			
		Privately rented	Social Housing[1]	Other Rental Types[2]	Total Rented
Bathurst UCL	8,484	3,227	770	762	4,592
Oberon UCL	637	218	67	66	322
Blayney UCL	760	257	83	75	397
Lithgow SUA	3,349	917	363	252	1,534
Orange SUA	9,956	3,492	828	787	5,201
NSW Code 1 (STE)	1,857,341	652,863	120,787	221,663	944,585

Table 4-2 shows the occupancy rate of private dwellings in the towns and regional centres of the Social Locality.

[1] Includes state housing authority and community housing
[2] Includes Government and other employers

TABLE 4-2 PRIVATE DWELLING OCCUPANCY, 2021

Locality	**Occupied Private Dwellings** (no. (%))[3]	**Unoccupied Private Dwellings** (no. (%))
Bathurst UCL	13,419 (92.1)	1141 (7.8)
Oberon UCL	994 (89.3)	116 (10.4)
Blayney UCL	1185 (91.4)	112 (8.6)
Orange SUA	15,616 (91.5)	1443 (8.5)
Lithgow SUA	5149 (89.1)	631 (10.9)
Total	**36,363**	**3443**
NSW Code 1 (STE)	2,900,468 (90.6)	299,524 (9.4)
Australia	9,275,217 (89.9)	1,043,776 (10.1)

Domain website (Domain, 2024) showed that, as of December 2024, there were:

- 101 properties listed for sale in postcode 2795 (Bathurst);
- 293 properties listed for sale in postcode 2800 (Orange);
- 25 properties listed for sale in postcode 2787 (Oberon);
- 63 properties listed for sale in postcode 2790 (Lithgow); and
- 41 properties listed for sale in postcode 2799 (Blayney).

Based on average number of bedrooms for each area it is estimated that approximately 1688 beds are available within private sale listings.

4.1.2 HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

The establishment of the Project has potential to influence local property values, potentially elevating them due to worker influx and improvements in local infrastructure or decreasing them if the development is viewed unfavourably. This literature suggests there will be limited impact to property values as the surrounding properties are predominantly agricultural plots, whereby land values are linked to the productivity of land.

Table 4-3 provides an overview of the median house and unit prices and change in sale prices between 2021 and 2024 for the towns and regional centres across the Social Locality. The percentage of owners with mortgage households where mortgage repayments are less than or equal to 30% of household income are provided below:

- Bathurst: 10.6%;
- Orange: 9.7%;
- Oberon: 13.7%;
- Lithgow: 12.1%; and
- Blayney: 9.7%.

[3] Percentages do not necessarily equal 100% as lower population datasets are purposely distorted to preserve anonymity.

Across the Social Locality, mortgage stress varies, reflecting differences in local housing markets and income levels. Oberon has the highest proportion at 13.7%, suggesting relatively greater affordability compared to the other LGAs. Lithgow also sits above 10%, while Bathurst, Orange, and Blayney report lower figures, all under 10.7%. These figures indicate that a significant proportion of mortgage holders in these areas may be experiencing housing stress, particularly in Orange and Blayney, where affordability appears most constrained.

TABLE 4-3 MEDIAN HOUSE AND UNIT PRICES

Location	Median House Price	Median Sale Price Change 2021 to 2024 (%)	Median Unit Price	Median Sale Price Change 2021 to 2024 (%)
Bathurst	650,000	540,000 to 650,000 (+20.4%)	482,500	345,000 to 482,500 (+39.8%)
Oberon	560,000	415,000 to 560,000 (+34.9%)	-	-
Blayney	510,000	400,000 to 510,000 (+27.5%)	-	-
Lithgow	495,000	390,000 to 495,000 (+26.9%)	-	-
Orange	685,000	572,000 to 685,000 (+19.8)	459,000	370,000 to 459,000 (+24.1%)
NSW	818,000	-	705,000	-

Source: Your Investment Property Magazine, https://www.propertyvalue.com.au/explore/new-south-wales

4.2 PRIVATE RENTAL HOUSING

This section provides a desktop analysis of the private rental housing market. Two primary components of the rental housing market that can indicate both existing pressures and socio-economic vulnerability associated with the private rental market are considered: rental availability and affordability. If the Project were to accommodate non-local construction workers in private rental housing, it may exacerbate any existing pressures (i.e., low vacancy rates) and result in further socio-economic impacts.

4.2.1 RENTAL AVAILABILITY

Rental housing availability is used as an indicator of the demand for housing, supply of rental properties, and overall health of the housing market (SQM Research, 2024).

According to the Domain website, as of November 2024 (Domain, 2024), the number of rental listings within the towns and regional centres of the Social Locality were:

- 57 properties listed for rent in postcode 2795 (Bathurst);
- 97 properties listed for rent in postcode 2800 (Orange);
- 9 properties listed for rent in postcode 2787 (Oberon);

- 18 properties listed for rent in postcode 2790 (Lithgow); and
- 6 properties listed for rent in postcode 2799 (Blayney).

Table 4-4 shows the number of rental properties in Oberon and Blayney was limited, Lithgow contained a moderate amount and Bathurst and Orange had the most capacity in rental accommodation.

TABLE 4-4 LONG-TERM RENTAL HOUSING AVAILABILITY

Location	House and Unit Size				Rental Properties (Approx.)
	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4+ Bed	
Bathurst	8	17	30	2	**57**
Oberon	0	1	4	4	**9**
Blayney	0	3	2	1	**6**
Lithgow	0	5	10	3	**18**
Orange	7	21	66	3	**97**
Total	**15**	**47**	**112**	**13**	**187**

Vacancy rate data by SQM Research (SQM Research, 2024) provides an indication of rental housing availability and shortages through providing percentages relative to the overall private rental housing market. High vacancy rates can indicate oversupply, lack of demand, or declining economic conditions, while low vacancy rates can suggest strong demand, tight supply, and a thriving housing market (SQM Research, 2024). High vacancy rates can be an indicator of housing market conditions typical of rental shortfall, whereby rental income drops below property expenses. SQM Research has tracked residential vacancy rates from 2006 through to 2024, on a postcode basis. The postcodes of relevance to the Social Locality for the Project area include:

- Postcode 2800 (Orange): Vacancy rate of 1.5%;
- Postcode 2795 (Bathurst): Vacancy rate of 1.0%;
- Postcode 2787 (Oberon): Vacancy rate of 2.0%;
- Postcode 2790 (Lithgow): Vacancy rate of 0.7%; and
- Postcode 2799 (Blayney): Vacancy rate of 1.2%.

The vacancy rate data from SQM (2024) indicates that Orange (1.5%) and Oberon (2.0%) have some rental availability, while Bathurst (1.0%), Lithgow (0.7%), and Blayney (1.2%) have very limited vacancies.

This suggests a tight rental market across most of the towns and regional centres of the Social Locality, with strong demand and constrained supply. For the Project, these conditions highlight the need to consider potential impacts on rental availability, particularly in areas with already limited rental options.

4.2.2 RENTAL AFFORDABILITY

With respect to the affordability of any rental properties that are on the market, SGS in partnership with National Shelter, Beyond Bank, and Brotherhood of St Laurence have published the Rental Affordability Index (RAI) since 2015 (SGS, 2024).

Ratings are as follows:

- Critically Unaffordable: >75% share of income spent on rent, RAI score <40;
- Extremely Unaffordable: >60% share of income spent on rent, RAI score <50;
- Severely Unaffordable: 38-60% share of income spent on rent, RAI score 51-80;
- Unaffordable: 30-38% share of income spent on rent, RAI score 81-100;
- Moderately Unaffordable: 25-30% share of income spent on rent, RAI score 101-120;
- Acceptable: 20-25% share of income spent on rent, RAI score 121-150;
- Affordable: <15% share of income spent on rent, RAI score 151-200; and
- Very Affordable: RAI score >200.

The following postcodes and their RAI ratings are relevant to the Project:

- Orange: RAI 111: RAI rating 'Moderately Unaffordable';
- Bathurst: RAI 115: RAI rating 'Moderately Unaffordable';
- Oberon: RAI 187: RAI rating 'Affordable';
- Lithgow: RAI 127: RAI rating 'Acceptable'; and
- Blayney: RAI 115: RAI rating 'Moderately Unaffordable'.

4.3 SHORT-TERM ACCOMMODATION

STA such as hotels, motels, cabins and caravan parks are important in regional areas to provide accommodation for visitors and to support regional tourism and economic activity (Gurran, Zhang, Shrestha, & Gilbert, 2018). Short-term homestay providers, like Airbnb, are considered to have a negative impact on the rental housing market. While these providers can be financially beneficial for landlords, using residential dwellings to host tourists leads to a decrease in housing supply and increased rental prices for the population (Wachsmuth & Weisler, 2018).

High annual occupancy rates in STA can indicate a thriving tourism industry, high visitation rates, barriers to urban development or cumulative non-local workforce pressures. High annual occupancy rates in STA resulting from non-local construction workforces can impact tourism industries (Aitchison, 2012). Low annual occupancy rates can indicate limited tourism, low visitation rates, overdevelopment, or the absence of large-scale industries reliant on non-local workers (Aitchison, 2012).

4.3.1 CAPACITY AND OCCUPANCY RATES

Annex B of the SIA provides a detailed overview of the number of rooms per UCL in the Social Locality, which is summarized in **Table 4-5**. Occupancy rate estimates for each UCL were provided by local councils during engagement activities, as presented in **Table 3-1**.

Table 4-5 shows there are enough rooms expected to be available within the towns and regional centres of the Social Locality (430).

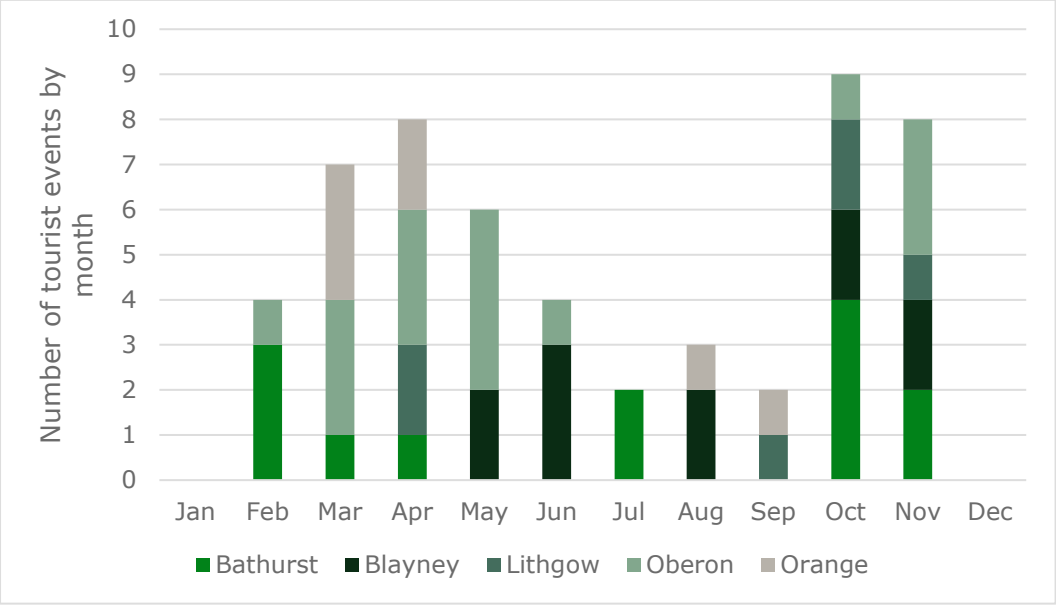
TABLE 4-5 CAPACITY IN SHORT-TERM ACCOMMODATION

Urban Centre	Number of Rooms[4]	Occupancy rates	Approximate number of available rooms
Bathurst	584	55%	**263**
Oberon	236	100%	**0**
Lithgow	258	80%	**52**
Orange	656	82.5%	**115**
Blayney	85	100%	**0**
Total	**1819**	**-**	**430**

4.3.1.1 PEAK OCCUPANCY PERIODS

Table 5-10 of the SIA shows the peak occupancy period across the Social Locality is October with ten (10) events and November with four (4). There are a limited number of events in the months of November, January, February and May. If making use of STA, the Applicant should consider these peak periods and relocate workers as required to avoid impacts to these events. **Figure 4-1** provides an overview of peak periods due to events, noting that the number of tourism events does not represent scale (i.e., there are approximately 200,000 visitors for Bathurst 1000).

FIGURE 4-1 NUMBER OF TOURISM EVENTS BY URBAN CENTRE AND MONTH



[4] Where data of number of rooms was not readily available from booking websites or company websites, estimates were based of the number of listed rooms.

4.4 CUMULATIVE WORKER INFLUX

This section describes potential worker influx pressure from the 6 surrounding SSD projects in the Social Locality which have a potential overlap with the Project's Construction phase (refer to **Section 6.17** of the EIS). **Table 4-6** presents the relevant projects and their expected construction workforces. Based on available information, at least 950 construction workers would be needed for the construction of these projects. This information is further used in the assessment based on the scenario where these projects also have a local employment target of 20% ('worst-case scenario'), requiring 760 non-local workers. The Project requires an estimated 160 people as peak non-local workforce, which would be 17.4% of the total peak non-local workforce expected for all proximate SSDs with potential overlapping Construction Phases.

TABLE 4-6 PROXIMATE SSDS WITH POTENTIAL FOR OVERLAPPING CONSTRUCTION

Project	Developer	Scale	Status	Distance (km)	Expected construction workforce
Glanmire Solar Farm (SSD-21208499)	Elgin Energy Pty Ltd	60 MW	Approved, with construction anticipated to commence in Q1 2026	3 km	150 workers Source: applicant-presentation.pdf
Central West Pumped Hydro (SSD-32286107)	ATCO Australia Pty Ltd	325MW / 2600 Wh	Prepare EIS	8 km	200 workers Source: Central West Pumped Hydro Project | ATCO Australia
Panorama Battery Energy Storage System (SSD-50587460)	Panorama BESS SubCo Pty Ltd	100 MW / 200 MWh	Response to Submissions	15 km	20 workers Source: Social Impact Assessment
McPhillamys Gold Project		Development of an open cut mine and water supply pipeline.	Approved	34 km	480 workers Source: Community-Information-Sheet-14-May-2021_1.pdf
Great Western Battery Energy Storage System (SSD-12346552)	Neoen Australia Pty Ltd	500 MW / 1000 MWh	Approved	36 km	N/A

Project	Developer	Scale	Status	Distance (km)	Expected construction workforce
Wallerawang Battery Energy Storage System (SSD-14540514 and SSD-14540514-Mod-1)	Greenspot Wallerawang Pty Ltd	500 MW / 1000 MWh (noting a Modification is currently under assessment to increase the project capacity to 600MW)	Approved	50 km	100 workers Source: Wallerawang 9 BESS project | Shell Energy

5. ASSESSMENT OF ACCOMMODATION OPTIONS

This section provides a priority assessment of the various accommodation options to house non-local workforce during the construction phase, which is based on key findings outlined in **Section 3** and **Section 4**.

The assessment is based on the scenario where local employment target of 20% ('worst-case scenario', refer to **Table 2-3**) is met resulting in a peak non-local workforce of 160 people.

The scenario where the target is not met has not been assessed in the WAP because there is sufficient capacity across the various accommodation options. Notably, the number of workers accommodated in short-term accommodation in Orange and private rental in Bathurst has potential to increase in the scenario that local employment targets are not met. Additionally, there is capacity in rental and private accommodation in the scenario where pressure in short-term accommodation is identified through the monitoring framework outlined in Section 7 of the SIA.

Table 6-1 summarises the recommended prioritization of workforce accommodation for the Project based on key findings outlined in **Section 3** and **Section 4**. It is important to note that the recommendation provided is not an 'all-in-one' solution, but rather a prioritisation. Whilst the main priority is for the Applicant to make use of STA, the utilisation of other accommodation options should not be ruled out and may comprehend to allow for economic benefits to be experienced by local communities whilst providing flexibility for the Applicant.

5.1 PRIVATELY OWNED

The towns and regional centres of the Social Locality have approximately 523 houses (Section 4.1.1), townhouses or apartments listed for sale, offering potential long-term accommodation options for workers during the Construction phase.

Additionally, there are approximately 3443 unoccupied dwellings identified within the towns and regional centres of the Social Locality. However, estimates on the condition of this private housing stock is unavailable at the time of publication. Based on the large number of dwellings there is potential for the Project to develop a housing registry to provide local economic benefits to the owners of these dwellings, which would suit the needs of the peak construction workforce (200 people).

Despite, this, the use of private housing to accommodate the construction workforce is a **Low Priority** for the Project to avoid generating **Negative** social impacts to the privately owned housing market (i.e. housing availability or affordability).

5.2 PRIVATE RENTAL

There are a limited number of dwellings being listed for rent with a total of 187 (refer to **Table 4-4**) and vacancy rates have been low (SQM Research, 2024). The volume of housing stock listed for sale can also serve as an indicator of a responsive rental market, reflecting adjustments in supply to meet changing demand conditions.

The vacancy rates across the social locality are consistently low, however, there is potential for the Project to use rental housing in areas, such as Oberon and Lithgow, where rental affordability indicators, respectively, are Affordable and Acceptable.

Despite the presence of positive rental affordability indicators, the use of rental housing is considered a **Low Priority** for the Project to avoid **Negative** social impacts to the private rental market (i.e. rental availability and affordability).

5.3 SHORT-TERM ACCOMMODATION

Short-term rental housing is limited in supply, with 512 rooms available within the towns and regional centres of the Social Locality, based on the annual occupancy rates provided by local councils in **Table 3-1**. Based on the occupancy rates outlined in **Section 4.3.1**, the capacity in short-term accommodation is expected to be sufficient to meet the demands of the Construction phase. The additional pressure from the 6 surrounding State Significant Development (SSD) projects in the Social Locality, which have potential to overlap with the Construction phase of this Project have been considered. However, accommodating workers in STA stands to increase occupancy rates and brings real economic benefits (i.e. increase revenue and demand for employees) to both local providers and the wider community. The Project may use STA to accommodate a large portion of the construction workforce, whilst avoiding the October-November peak tourism period to avoid negative impacts to tourism businesses in the Social Locality.

Under these baseline conditions, the use of short-term accommodation is considered a **High Priority** with potential **Positive** social impacts (i.e., increased revenue, diversification of income, and job opportunities).

5.4 TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION

It is anticipated that the use of a temporary workers accommodation camp (or similar) will likely not be required, assuming that the availability in STA, rental and private housing remains similar. To account for the scenario where a temporary workers accommodation camp becomes required, and to minimise negative social and economic impacts, the Applicant will continue explore opportunities to collaborate with surrounding SSD projects on shared use of temporary worker camps.

Given the limited accommodation options within a one-hour commute the use of a workforce accommodation camp is a **Low Priority** to avoid and enhance **Positive** social impacts by allowing existing accommodation providers to benefit from worker influx.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Table 6-2 provides an overview of the recommendations to accommodation non-local workers into a combination of short-term (95.8%) and long-term term (4.2%).

Of the total 512 available rooms in short-term and rental accommodation across the locality, 153 rooms (approximately 29.9%) have been allocated for consideration to accommodate non-local workers. This allocation accounts for managing cumulative pressure on housing stock while reserving the remaining 359 rooms for other essential uses, such as tourism and local demand.

STA allocations Bathurst, Orange, and Lithgow are selected for their occupancy rates and capacity to accommodate additional demand, while Oberon and Blayney were excluded due to their lower capacity and occupancy levels. By intentionally avoiding peak tourism periods, this approach ensures that local economic activities tied to tourism are not disrupted while effectively addressing workforce housing needs.

For rental housing allocation, Oberon and Lithgow were considered based on their affordability and despite limited availability the urban centres have a large private housing stock, which is likely versatile enough to cater for additional rental demand. Nevertheless, the Project will prioritise STA and only draw on rental accommodation where there are availabilities.

Private housing is being considered a potential option to accommodation a small number of long-term workers who are expected to be on-site for large periods of the construction phase (i.e., site managers).

Table 6-1 summarises the recommended prioritization of workforce accommodation for the Project based on key findings outlined in **Section 3** and **Section 4**. Considering the outcomes of the assessment, temporary accommodation (an accommodation facility/workers camp, as further explained in **Section 5.4**) is not expected to be required and therefore excluded from this list.

Table 6-2 provides estimates to provide further insight on these recommendations, which are based on the peak construction period of the Project.

TABLE 6-1 PRIORITISATION OF ACCOMMODATION OPTIONS

Priority	Accommodation Option	Priority	Social Impact	Details
1	Usage of STA, avoiding peak tourism periods	High	Positive	Section 5.3
2	Usage of private rental	Low	Negative	Section 5.1
3	Usage of privately owned housing through a housing registry	Low	Negative	Section 5.2

TABLE 6-2 ACCOMMODATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Accommodation Type	**Location** (justification for inclusion)	**Estimated Available Rooms** (No.)	**Cumulative SSD Projects**[5] (No.)	**Estimated Suitable Rooms** (No.)	**Estimated percentage of peak non-local workforce** (No. of workers (%))
Short-term					
Short term local temporary accommodation (rooms) such as motels, hotels, bed and breakfasts, and caravan parks.[6]	Bathurst (55% occupancy)	263	4	47	47 (28.1)
	Orange (82.5% occupancy)	115	0	104	73 (43.7)
	Lithgow (80% occupancy)	52	2	16	16 (9.6)
Rental accommodation (dwellings) including houses, townhouses and units.[7]	Oberon (Affordable)	9 x 3.1 = 28	4	6	6 (3.6)
	Lithgow (Acceptable)	18 x 3 = 54	2	18	18 (10.8)
Total	-	**512**	**12**	**191**	**153 (95.8)**
Long-term					
Available private housing stock (dwellings) refers to houses, townhouses and units listed for sale.	Bathurst (10.6% mortgage stress)	101 x 3.2 = 323	4	65	7 (4.2)
	Oberon (13.7% mortgage stress)	25 x 3.1 = 77.5	4	16	0
	Orange (9.7% mortgage stress)	293 x 3.3 = 967	0	967	0
	Lithgow (12.1% mortgage stress)	63 x 3.0 = 189	2	63	0
	Blayney (9.7% mortgage stress)	41 x 3.2 = 131	0	131	0
Total	-	**1688**	**12**	**1241**	**4.2**

[5] SSD projects that are in a similar phase of the EIS process have been included as they have potential to overlap with the Project. Projects with minimal worker influx have been excluded and operational projects are assumed to be factored into existing occupancy rate estimates provided by local councils. There is a possibility that Project in earlier or later stages of the EIS process may overlap, however, these have not been considered as it is expected that Projects in a similar phase may also be prolonged and not overlap. Refer to Section 6.17 of the EIS for a summary of surrounding SSD/SSI projects.
[6] Estimated suitable rooms = Number of available rooms x 0.9 (to allow for spare rooms) / estimated number of cumulative projects with potential to overlap with construction peak period.
[7] Estimated suitable rooms = Number of rental listings x average number of bedrooms per dwelling / estimated number of cumulative projects with potential to overlap with construction peak period.

The key recommendations of the draft WAP are outlined below:

- The Project will consider the use of STA in Bathurst, Orange and Lithgow to increase occupancy rates and bring real economic benefits to short-term accommodation providers, whilst avoiding October peak tourism periods to avoid negative impacts to tourism businesses in the Social Locality;
- The existing STA can meet most of the expected demand when factoring in potential overlap with surrounding SSD Projects and allowing for additional spare rooms; however, it should be supplemented with additional options and supported by robust contingency measures, such as relocating workers during major events;
- The Project will utilise the rental supply in areas free of rental affordability issues, while continuously monitoring the rental market. This will further ensure readiness for potential increases in occupancy rates during the construction phase;
- The Project will explore opportunities to collaborate with surrounding SSD projects on shared use or co-location of a temporary workers accommodation camp (or similar) for the Construction workforce. However, it is important to prioritise the use of STA before establishing temporary camps to maximize economic benefits and to assist in sustaining occupancy rates at an optimal 90-95%, whilst monitoring tourism inflows and adjusting to peak tourism periods where necessary;
- The Project will monitor occupancy rates in STA during the Construction Phase and the Applicant will continue to engage with Local Councils. Occupancy rates over 90-95% are considered to present risks of generating negative social impacts to tourism businesses in the Social Locality. In the scenario that occupancy rates increase over 90-95% the non-local workforce should be relocated to rental housing, privately owned housing or a temporary workers accommodation camp (or similar) to avoid negative social impacts;
- Further investigation into the suitability and availability of the large number of unoccupied dwellings is recommended as a potential contingency measure if STA and private housing availability changes; and
- Additionally, if there are pressures on any of the outlined recommendations there is an option to shift some of the workforce into rental accommodation in Bathurst and Orange, given that more housing and rental options become available. Due to the large size of the UCLs and opportunity for land release and housing development, this scenario is considered to be possible.

7. MANAGEMENT MEASURES

Table 7-1 outlines the proposed management measures to ensure that local employment is enhanced by the Project to reduce worker influx and increase economic benefits. **Table 7-2** outlines the proposed management measures for the management of accommodation, based on the recommendations provided in this report.

TABLE 7-1 MANAGEMENT MEASURES LOCAL EMPLOYMENT

No.	Management Measure	Timeline
1.	Host information sessions to engage with the community and local businesses who can provide inputs or services and other prospective contractors/subcontractors, regarding construction timing, workforce estimates and accommodation requirements.	Prior to construction
2.	Engage local media including radio, newspaper, and social media to advertise expressions of interest for employment or provision of services or materials.	Prior to construction
3	Engage with the local employment agencies to identify access pathways for local workers. Assess the candidate pool to determine suitable labour, trade, or other employment on the Project.	Prior to construction
4	Set up a dedicated employment opportunity platform on the Project's website in consultation and coordination with the Engineering, Procurement, and Construction (EPC) contractor. Relevant worker details will then be shared with the main subcontractor(s) for direct engagement through their own employment processes.	Prior to construction and during construction
5	Consult with Bathurst Regional Council and Hay Shire Council, as well as any Business Chambers to provide their members with relevant details such as Project construction timing, workforce estimates and accommodation requirements.	Prior to construction
6	In case of short-term and long-term accommodation, implement shuttle bus services where practical to enable local workforce in the respective locations to easily commute to the Project Area, avoid causing congestion on the road network, as well as providing a safe option for workers to commute from and to the Project site. These services may discontinue depending on demand.	Prior to construction and during construction
7	Provide opportunities for local businesses to submit proposals and tenders and prioritise the use of goods and services that can be sourced locally and are competitive for price and quality.	Prior to and during construction
8	Encourage subcontractors to employ local workers wherever possible and reasonable.	Prior to and during construction
9	Identify positions where training would allow additional local workers to join the workforce and encourage local workers and businesses to undertake training to provide for specialist works.	Prior to and during construction

No.	Management Measure	Timeline
10	Collaborate with local trade/training organisations (such as TAFE) to promote job opportunities with the Project, with enough time to give local community members with enough notice to receive training in Project related skill sets, if desired.	Prior to construction
11	Inform non-local workers about shops, cafes, recreational facilities, etc. and make access easy.	During construction

TABLE 7-2 MANAGEMENT MEASURES ACCOMMODATION

No.	Management Measure	Timeline
1	Continue tracking of available accommodation options in the towns and regional centres of the Social Locality.	Prior to construction
2	Host information sessions to engage with the community and local businesses, in order to determine who can provide inputs or services and other prospective contractors or subcontractors, regarding construction timing, workforce estimates and accommodation requirements.	Prior to construction
3	Investigate local and regional community social media options to disseminate information to local accommodation operators and rental property owners, such as construction timing, workforce estimates and accommodation requirements.	Prior to construction
4	Preparation and implementation of the WAMP, including planning on workforce housing and accommodation.	Prior to construction
5	Preparation and implementation of a Code of Conduct applicable to all Project workers during the Construction Phase.	Prior to construction
6	Continue to engage with the Local Councils to minimise pressure on local resources, and to address worker influx concerns during the Construction Phase.	Prior to and during construction
7	Contact the local STA operators to provide Project information such as construction timing, workforce estimates and accommodation requirements.	Prior to and during construction
8	Provide a register of local STA options and contact details to contractors and subcontractors.	Prior to and during construction
9	Maintain a register of local property owners who have expressed interest in offering dwellings for rent (if this occurs in the future). Provide this register to contractors and subcontractors (considering privacy).	Prior to and during construction
10	Review workforce predictions every six months during construction to ensure that accommodation requirements are met in accordance with the objectives of this WAP.	Prior to and during construction
11	Regularly consult with local property owners and STA providers to manage occupancy to maximise use of local accommodation,	Prior to and during construction

No.	Management Measure	Timeline
	without preventing its use for major event and holiday purposes and review overlaps with peak demand periods.	
12	Maintain a register of local, regional and national workforce breakdown by company on site.	Prior to and during construction
13	Engage with other Project developers to mitigate potential cumulative impacts which may put additional pressure on the area.	Prior to and during construction
14	Engage with local health care, social and emergency service providers to monitor the Project's use of these facilities.	Prior to and during construction

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