

WORKFORCE ACCOMMODATION STRATEGY

Molong Battery Project



Version control

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Summary

This Workforce Accommodation Strategy for the Molong Battery Project outlines plans to manage accommodation for construction workers, prioritising local workforce engagement and local accommodation providers while addressing capacity constraints during peak periods.

- Project overview and workforce numbers:** The project anticipates a peak construction workforce of approximately 70 staff, with preference given to local workers with an assumption of 50% of the workforce sourced from nearby areas. Non-local specialised contractors will likely come from NSW and Victoria, using accommodation in Molong, Orange, and nearby areas.
- Local accommodation options and capacity:** Short-term accommodation in Molong and Orange includes motels, inns, onsite cabins, and caravan parks. Molong Motor Inn offers 8–10 rooms on most weeknights, with higher weekend occupancy. The Telegraph Hotel provides about 10 rooms, and the Molong Caravan Park has three cabins. Overflow accommodation is expected to rely on Orange’s more extensive options during peak times.
- Accommodation strategies:** The strategy avoids long-term housing uptake from Molong’s real estate market, prioritises Molong short-term providers for weekday needs, and sources whole-house stays via platforms like Airbnb when necessary. Overflow accommodation will utilise Orange’s facilities, and contractors will be contractually required to follow these provisions.
- Monitoring and review measures:** Ongoing engagement with local councils and appointment of a Liaison Officer will support community consultation and plan adjustments. Monitoring includes tracking local workforce percentages, accommodation impacts, complaint reviews, and incorporating findings into project reports and corrective actions.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background and Purpose

This Workforce Accommodation Strategy has been prepared by Stor-Energy for the applicant (Storenergy3 Pty Ltd / Molong Battery Project) as a response to feedback received for the EIS. The Cabonne Council submission requested:

"Accommodation for construction workers is an ongoing issue of concern for Council. A condition of consent is recommended requiring the Applicant to prepare a Workers Accommodation Strategy for the development in consultation with Council."

Stor-Energy and Cabonne Council met in Molong on 25 March to discuss the Council expectations for accommodation in detail. Following this, Stor-Energy engaged with short-term accommodation providers in Molong, to complement the earlier consultation with local accommodation providers, real estate agents and broad community stakeholders. This strategy is a result of those discussions.

1.2 Project overview

The Project will involve the development, construction, operation, and eventual decommissioning of a BESS with a capacity of 150 MW/730 MWh connecting via overhead transmission line directly to the existing Molong 132/66kV substation operated by Transgrid.

The BESS will comprise battery units, inverters, transformers, a substation and ancillary infrastructure all within the indicative BESS area. The battery units will be within individual containers (or enclosures), with each container measuring approximately 6 metres (m) or 20 feet (ft). Construction is planned to start early 2027 and will take approximately 12-14 months. Commissioning phase will take approximately 12 months and commence prior to completion of construction and will run concurrently for a time.

1.3 Site Location

Molong Battery project is located within the Cabonne LGA approximately 2 km east from Molong township along Back Saleyards Rd. Orange is about half an hour drive east from the Battery Project site.

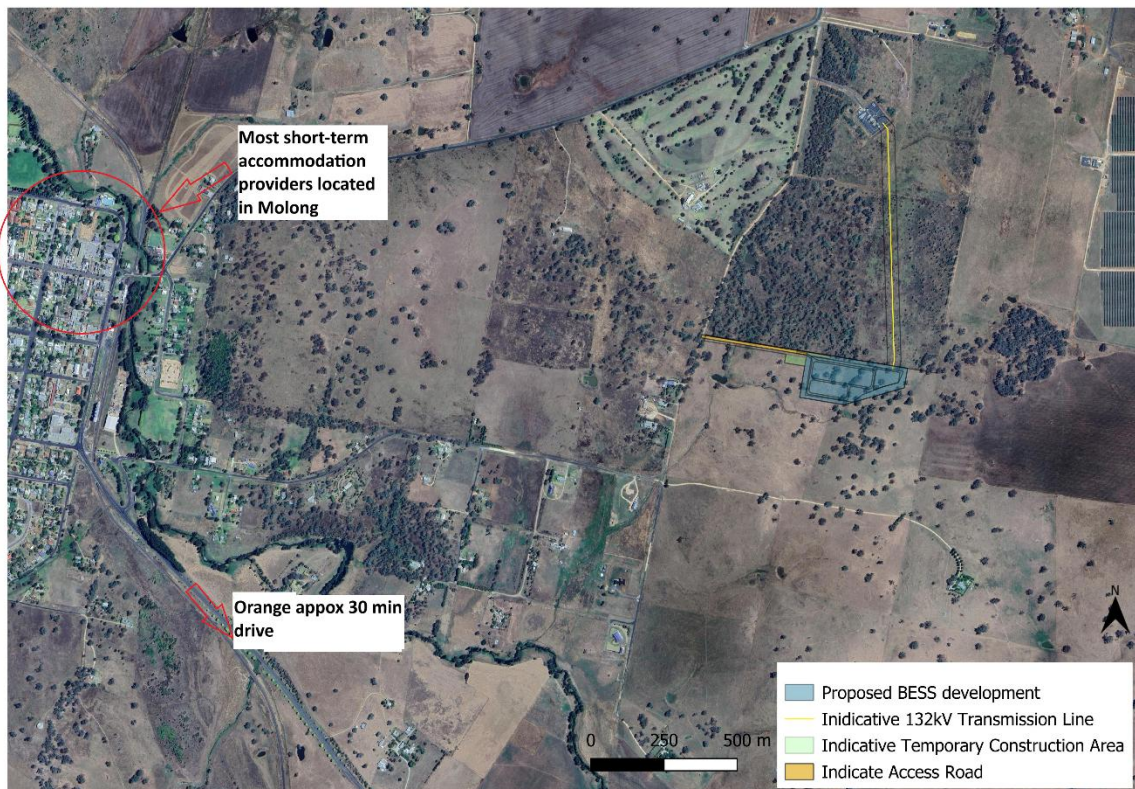


Figure 1: Molong Battery Project site location

1.4. Estimated construction workforce numbers

Construction of the Project is anticipated to take approximately 22 months from start of construction to the end of commissioning. During construction, it is anticipated that approximately 70 full time equivalent (FTE) jobs will be required during the approximately 2-month peak of site activity. At construction commencement, employment numbers will fluctuate starting with about 23 workers on site for one to two months. During off peak work periods, staff numbers will reduce to around 29 FTE average. Approximately 20 staff are required for commissioning periods and two FTE staff frequenting site during ongoing operations.

The workforce will be sourced from the local area where possible, however procurement from the wider region, intrastate and interstate is expected subject to skillset availability. It is expected that preference will be given to workers from the local area where possible. Stor-Energy has established an ICN Gateway page for the project and started to compile local providers register, and will be organising “Meet-the-Buyer” type of event(s) to make introductions and canvas any barriers of local business participation.

The following standard construction hours are proposed for the Project:

- Monday to Friday – 7 am to 6 pm.
- Saturday – 8 am to 1 pm.
- Sunday and Public Holidays – No works to be undertaken.

Any non-local specialised contractors are likely to come from across other areas of NSW and Victoria and would utilise accommodation in Molong, Orange and surrounding areas. As per construction hours, the main short-term accommodation need will be Monday to Saturday.

2. Community Profile

A detailed analysis of Project’s social impacts and the community profile is presented in Social Impact Assessment (Appendix O of the project Environmental Impact Statement). Some key ABS statistics and observations are presented also in this document.

Molong lies within the Cabonne Local Government Area (LGA), a predominantly agricultural region characterised by dispersed rural settlements, farmland, and small townships. Situated in the Central West region of New South Wales, Cabonne is a predominantly rural area with a population of approximately 13,766 residents as of the 2021 Census. The shire encompasses a mix of vibrant towns, including Molong, Canowindra, and Cudal, each offering and contributing to the region's rich cultural identity. The area is known for its scenic landscapes and historic buildings.

Demographically, Cabonne reflects a mature population with a median age of 44 years, slightly older than the state average. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

peoples account for 5% of residents, a higher proportion than the state average, reflecting the area's First Nation's heritage and cultural significance.

Molong is home to 2,595 people, with 7.1% identifying as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander—a proportion higher than both the regional and state averages. The median age in Molong is 43, reflecting a slightly older population compared to urban centres. While the median weekly household income sits at \$1,376, which is below regional and state levels, the area benefits from a low unemployment rate of just 1.9%, suggesting a strong local job market.

The town is well known for its heritage, with notable buildings such as the former Molong Railway Station, which dates back to 1886, and the Cobb & Co Coach House, built in 1870, which operates as a craft gallery. Molong serves as a service centre for the surrounding rural communities, providing essential services such as retail, education, and healthcare. The local economy is closely tied to agriculture, particularly livestock and cropping, which remain major industries in the area.

Recent years have seen steady residential growth in Molong, driven by its proximity to Orange and its appeal as a lifestyle destination. This has created new housing developments and the expansion of rural residential properties. The town is also a growing tourism destination, attracting visitors with the Molong Village Markets, Yarn Market Craft Cottage and a variety of local events.

3. Accommodation

3.1 Background

There are several short-term accommodation options available in surrounding areas of Molong including motels, motor inns and onsite cabins situated in Molong and Orange.

Stor-Energy and subcontractors will directly engage with property owners to book short term accommodation. Stor Energy will continue to consult with various local business owners as project schedule and construction staffing needs continue to be developed.

3.2 Project needs

On average, it is assumed that about 50 % of workforce will be via local subcontracting supply chains and is expected not to need short-term accommodation. Some of the more specialised workforce, for example in commissioning phase, is assumed to be mostly travelling from NSW or out of state. The typical site personnel numbers of 20-30 is therefore expected to require on average 10-20 beds / rooms short-term accommodation with fluctuations depending on phase of construction.

3.3 Local capacity mapping and consultation

Provider	Address	Contact	Facilities
Molong Motor Inn	12 Gidley St, Molong NSW 2866	(02) 6366 8099	16 rooms in total. 8-10 rooms can be made available most weeknights for the project (excluding Saturday-Sunday).
The Telegraph Hotel	53 Bank St, Molong NSW 2866	(02) 6366 8095	10 rooms upstairs, sporadically busy but a portion likely to be available for weeknight stays
Molong Caravan Park	5 Watson St, Molong NSW 2866	(02) 6392 3200	3 cabins (1 x 3 bedrooms, 2 x 2 bedrooms)
Freemasons Hotel	1 Bank St, Molong NSW 2866	(02) 6366 8534	Potentially new rooms coming, to be checked at start of construction
Airbnb:	Molong has currently 5 Airbnbs Orange has approximately 300 houses registered for AirBnb		If accommodation is required for slightly longer durations during specific phases of construction, Stor will look at Airbnb and similar providers in the local area.

Table 1: Local short-term accommodation providers consulted (Molong)

Molong Motor Inn has a new owner from mid-2025, but the capacity has remained the same since the original mapping in early 2025. In March 2026, Molong Motor Inn confirmed 16 suites on site of which two are family rooms with two bedrooms. In general, mid-week availability is good and weekends tend to be much busier with out-of-town visitors and overflow accommodation needs for various family events.

Approximately 8-10 rooms could be made available for most weeks excluding Saturday nights. The Owner indicated that with pre-notice, several months availability can be organised for on-going weeknight needs.

The Telegraph Hotel has also changed owners in 2025. Initial mapping was done in April 2025 when approximately 10 "pub upstairs" type of rooms were available. Based on a discussion with the new owner in April 2026, the capacity was expected to be same in 2027 when the construction is expected to start. Availability in general tends to be better mid-week and there is no set particularly busy period or event which occurs seasonally. Similar to the Motor Inn, the owner reported sporadically the capacity is booked by family etc events, but they are commonly on weekends. Dinner is available Wednesday to Sunday evenings at The Telegraph.

Freemasons Hotel's new owner since mid-2025 had plans to refurbish some of the upstairs for short-term accommodation. They had not opened up by April 2026, but another check will be done at the start of construction. Currently meals area available Wednesday – Sunday at Freemasons.

Molong Caravan park in town is a Council run facility with 3 cabins: 1 x 3 bedroom cabin and 2 x 2 bedroom cabins (with 1 bathroom per cabin). It has an online booking system and in general has some availability especially mid-week and outside holiday summer period. The Golf course / Molong Showground also has a camping ground, which would be very close to the construction site, but it is caravan / tent only and doesn't have cabins or rooms.

Villa Ash, which used to host self-contained apartments on Gidley St, is no longer operating (last checked over the phone in April 2026).

Other towns in Cabonne Council also provide accommodation (e.g. the Royal Hotel in Yeoval, The Platypus in Cudal), but given the proximity to Orange, it is likely that short-term accommodation overflow would utilise the +100 short-term accommodation options available in Orange. The preference is to utilise Molong options as much as possible, but it is forecasted that for a fairly short peak construction time (approx. 2 months) with 70 staff on site, Molong capacity is not sufficient. Orange City Council has been contacted in June and September 2025 to understand any specific events or low availability seasons, but given the relatively low number of construction workers even during the peak compared to the 100+ accommodation providers in Orange, the City Council does not see an issue of Orange hosting some of the overflow demand. Typically Orange has food and music

festivals, events, harvest season and holiday periods spread across the year and weekends are busier than mid-week for short-term accommodation providers.

3.4 Strategies

Overall construction and support staff both long term and short term will work with local business owners to endeavour to not impact on the tourism visitors to the Cabonne Shire and Orange area nor the long-term tight rental market. To ensure maximum positive impact of short-term accommodation in the area Stor-Energy propose the following:

- No long-term housing taken for construction personnel from Molong real estate market.
- Preference is given to Molong short-term accommodation providers for mid-week needs
- If there is a week or longer period during construction where a whole house is required, it is sourced from AirBnB / Stayz providers in Molong, or if not possible, in Orange. This will be passed on to main contractors as a contractual requirement
- Overflow likely to utilise the ample Orange short-term accommodation options

4. Monitoring and Review

Following monitoring activities are planned to understand how effective this plan is and to adapt to any new information which arise during the Project procurement process and construction:

- Continued engagement with Cabonne Council to discuss community and business concerns and expectations
- Review of this plan prior of commencement of construction and quarterly review during construction (incl. overall numbers of personnel on site and realised short-term accommodation needs in Molong and Orange)
- Continued record keeping of consultation activities and any specific request and feedback relating to accommodation in OpenPoint / Consultation Manager software

As required, the Workforce Accommodation Strategy will be updated to reflect the assigned corrective actions.