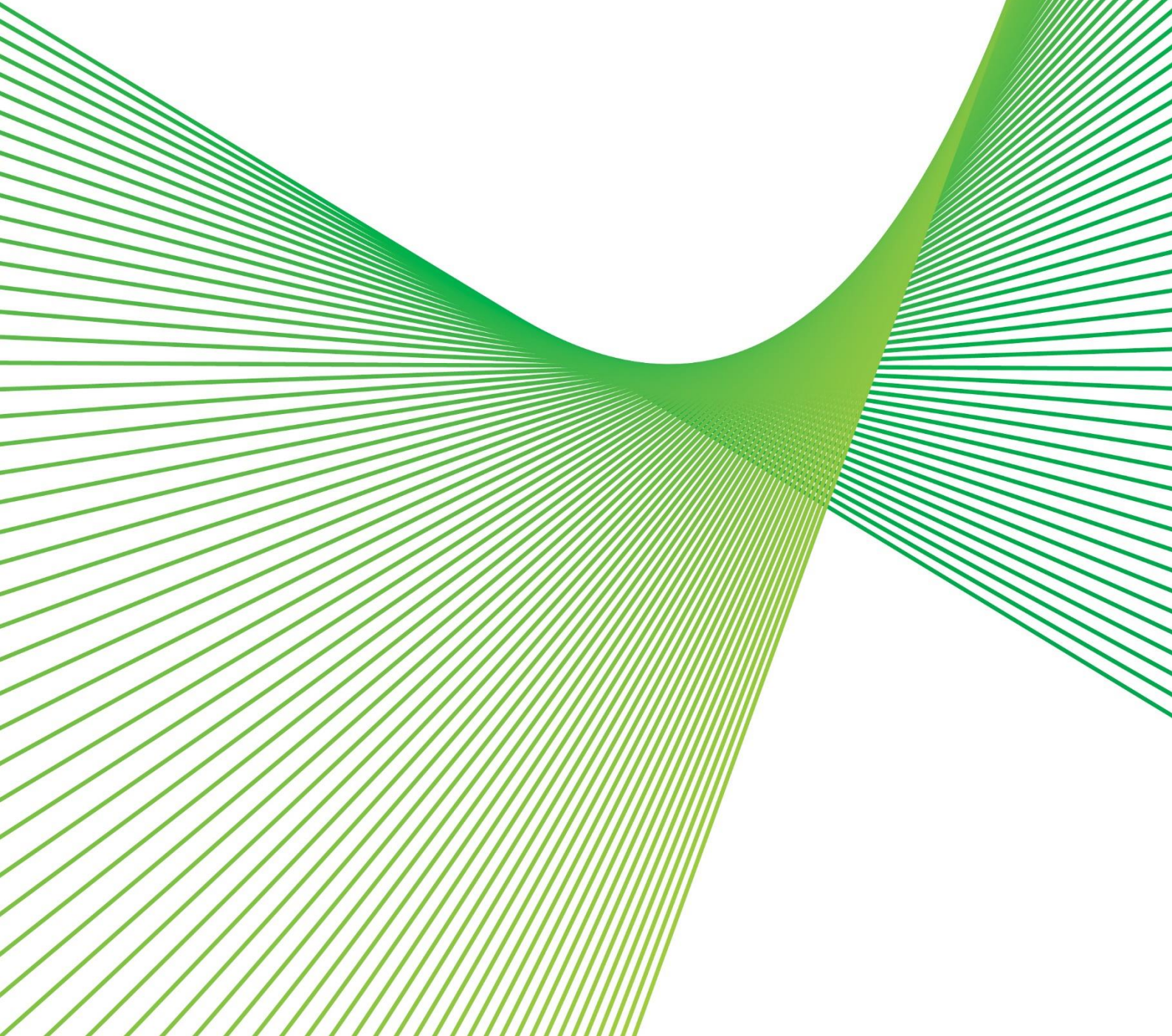


Environmental Impact Statement

EnergyConnect (NSW – Eastern Section)

Technical paper 6 – Social impact assessment



Transgrid

EnergyConnect (NSW – Eastern Section)

Technical Paper 6 – Social Impact Assessment

JANUARY 2022



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Glossary

PROPOSAL TERM	DEFINITION
brake/winch sites	<p>A brake and winch site is a temporarily cleared area where plant and equipment is located for the purposes of spooling and winching a conductor into place on erected transmission line structures along a transmission line corridor. Dependent upon the angle of line deviation, the location of the brake and winch site at that angle may or may not be within the nominated transmission line easement. The brake and winch site is only required for the construction phase of the proposal. It does not need to be maintained for ongoing operation and / or maintenance of the transmission line.</p>
construction impact area	<p>Refers to the area that would be directly impacted by construction of the proposal comprising the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — construction of all proposal infrastructure elements (including the proposed transmission line alignment, transmission line easement, substation site works (at both the proposed Dinawan 330kV and upgraded and expanded Wagga Wagga substations), optical repeater infrastructure, and other ancillary works) — locations for construction elements such as construction compounds and accommodation camps, access tracks (excluding public roads proposed to be used for access routes), site access points, water supply points, laydown and staging areas, concrete batching plants, brake/winch sites and site offices. <p>The area is identified based on realistic project component locations and areas however it is indicative at this stage. The area would be confirmed during finalisation of the design and construction methodology and would be developed as part of the consideration of avoidance and impact minimisation.</p> <p>This area includes the operational impact area (including areas required for maintenance) (refer definition below).</p> <p>For heritage and biodiversity assessments, the construction impact area has been divided into three subset disturbance areas. These subsets relate to the identified level of disturbance in each area to reflect construction and operational requirements – specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Disturbance area A, in which ground disturbance would be required — Disturbance area A (centreline) in which ground disturbance would be required — Disturbance area B, in which ground disturbance is not required except in limited circumstances. <p>Further detail of these areas is provided below.</p> <p>From time to time during construction and operation, high risk trees may be removed from within, or adjacent to, the easement but outside the disturbance area.</p>

PROPOSAL TERM	DEFINITION
disturbance area A	<p>Refers to an area at and around the transmission line towers, areas for brake and winch sites and for new/upgraded access tracks in which vegetation would be removed during construction. The area also includes the proposed Dinawan substation site, the existing Wagga Wagga substation site and each of the main construction compounds and accommodation camps at Balranald, the Cobb Highway, Dinawan (Kidman Way), Lockhart and Wagga Wagga.</p> <p>It would include vegetation (including tree) removal and potential sub-surface impacts through construction activities such as grading, excavation, and full tree removal (i.e. root ball removal). Except in areas where only temporary disturbance is required (i.e. temporary access tracks and brake and winch sites), this area would also be subject to ongoing maintenance during operation (i.e. removal to ground level) for operational and safety requirements (including bushfire).</p> <p>This zone is a subset to the construction impact area (see definition above).</p>
disturbance area A (centreline)	<p>Refers to a centreline area between the proposed transmission line towers in which all vegetation (including trees) would be removed during construction to ground level.</p> <p>In areas of known or potential heritage subsurface sensitivity (i.e. PADs) sub-surface impacts in these areas would be avoided. In these areas vegetation would be cut to ground level and rootballs would be retained as necessary to avoid subsurface impacts.</p> <p>This area would also be subject to ongoing maintenance during operation (i.e. removal to maintain vegetation clearance requirements) for operational and safety requirements (including bushfire).</p> <p>This zone is a subset to the construction impact area (see definition above).</p>
disturbance area B	<p>Refers to an area between transmission line towers in the easement in which removal of vegetation (including trees) would be undertaken where they have the potential to exceed vegetation clearance heights. This removal may result in temporary ground disturbance.</p> <p>Vegetation clearance heights are set by Transgrid for operational and safety requirements, including bushfire risk management.</p> <p>This area would also be subject to ongoing maintenance during operation.</p> <p>This zone is a subset to the construction impact area (see definition above).</p>
EnergyConnect	<p>An electrical interconnector of around 900 kilometres between the electricity grids of South Australia and New South Wales, with an added connection to north west Victoria. In NSW, EnergyConnect comprises two sections – Western Section (which has been the subject of a separate environmental assessment and approval) and the Eastern Section (the proposal the subject of this EIS).</p>
hazard/high risk tree	<p>Hazard/high risk trees are defined under Transgrid procedures and include any tree or part of a tree that if it were to fall would infringe on the vegetation clearance requirements at maximum conductor sag of the transmission lines. Hazard/high risk trees shall be identified during finalisation of the proposal design based on the transmission line conductor profile. All hazard/high risk trees posing a risk to the corridor shall be removed, subject to assessment by an arborist for health and risk of falling prior to removal.</p>
operational impact area	<p>Refers to the area that would be directly impacted by permanent components of the proposal, including all proposed infrastructure elements such as the proposed transmission line easement, transmission line and transmission towers, any new or upgraded substation infrastructure and permanent access tracks.</p>

PROPOSAL TERM	DEFINITION
preliminary alignment corridor	A 10 kilometre corridor identified during the initial assessment of transmission line corridor options which is generally based on desktop assessments only.
proponent, the	The proposal is proposed to be undertaken by NSW Electricity Networks Operations Pty Ltd as a trustee for NSW Electricity Operations Trust (referred to as Transgrid). Transgrid is the operator and manager of the main high voltage (HV) transmission network in NSW and the Australian Capital Territory (ACT), and is the Authorised Network Operator (ANO) for the purpose of an electricity transmission or distribution network under the provisions of the <i>Electricity Network Assets (Authorised Transactions) Act 2015</i> .
proposal, the	The proposal is known as 'EnergyConnect (NSW – Western Section)' as described in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 of this document.
proposal study area	<p>The study area for this EIS, which comprises a generally one kilometre wide corridor (500 metres either side of the proposal alignment) between the Buronga substation and the Wagga Wagga substation as well as additional proposal components located away from the transmission line easement (with the exception of the proposed water points which has had a 200 metre diameter applied around each site).</p> <p>The proposal study area has been applied to identify the constraints nearby to the proposal which may or may not be indirectly impacted by the proposal.</p> <p>It encompasses the components including the construction impact area, the optical repeater sites (and associated connections), construction water points and other ancillary construction facilities.</p> <p>Note: Where required, each specialist has also considered a specific specialist study area relevant to their discipline.</p>
transmission line easement	An area surrounding and including the transmission lines, which is a legal right allowing for construction of the transmission line, along with ongoing access and maintenance of the lines and will be acquired from landholders either by agreement or pursuant to compulsory acquisition process. The easement width would be 80 metres wide.

Abbreviations

TERM / ACRONYM	DESCRIPTION
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
AER	Australian Energy Regulator
AHO	NSW Aboriginal Housing Office
AQIA	Air Quality Impact Assessment
ARPANSA	Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency
CEMP	Construction Environmental Management Plan
CSMP	Community and Stakeholder Management Plan
CSSI	Critical State Significant Infrastructure
DIDO	Drive-in-drive-out
DPIE	New South Wales Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (formerly Department of Planning and Environment)
EIS	Environmental impact statement
EMFs	Electromagnetic fields
EPC	Engineering, Procurement and Construction Contractor
EP&A	Environment Planning and Assessment Act
ESR	Environmental Scoping Report
FIFO	Fly-in-fly-out
FWLHD	The Far West Local Health District
GP	General Practitioner
ILUA	Indigenous Land Use Agreement
km	Kilometre
kV	Kilovolt
LALC	Local Aboriginal Land Council
LGA	Local Government Area
MLHD	Murrumbidgee Local Health District
NEM	National Electricity Market
NSW	New South Wales
NVIA	Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment
RAP	Reconciliation Action Plan
RAPs	Registered Aboriginal Parties
RIT-T	Regulatory Investment Test for Transmission

TERM / ACRONYM	DESCRIPTION
RTO	Registered Training Organisation
RFS	Rural Fire Service
SEARs	Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements
SIA	Social Impact Assessment
SEIFA	Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas
SES	State Emergency Service
SA1	Statistical Area 1 unit
VLCIA	Visual Landscape and Character Impact Assessment

Executive summary

Transgrid (electricity transmission operator in New South Wales (NSW)) and ElectraNet (electricity transmission operator in South Australia (SA)) are seeking regulatory and environmental planning approval for the construction and operation of a new High Voltage (HV) interconnector between NSW and SA, with an added connection to north west Victoria. Collectively, the proposed interconnector is known as EnergyConnect.

EnergyConnect aims to reduce the cost of providing secure and reliable electricity transmission between NSW and SA in the near term, while facilitating the longer-term transition of the energy sector across the National Electricity Market (NEM) to low emission energy sources.

This Social Impact Assessment (SIA) is one of a number of technical papers that form part of the EIS for the proposal.

The purpose of this technical paper is to identify and assess the potential impacts of the proposal in relation to social impacts. It responds directly to the Secretary's environmental assessment requirements (SEARs) (refer to Section 1.4.1). It has been prepared in accordance with the DPIE *Social Impact Assessment Guideline – For State Significant Projects* (DPIE, 2021) (the SIA Guideline).

Social environment

A local and regional study area was adopted for this assessment. Several service communities identified within the regional study area are likely to experience a range of impacts due to their proximity to the proposal.

The regional study area encompasses nine local government areas (LGAs) across the Riverina-Murray and Far West Regions of NSW. The region, while vast, is typified by strong agricultural industries, significant landscapes and natural assets and highly active and connected communities. Regional study area population characteristics vary according to location. However, some commonalities include a generally ageing population, a comparatively large Aboriginal population and significant health and wellbeing issues.

The local study area comprised approximately 62,747 square kilometres, spanning nine LGAs and had a population of 5,354 people, living in 1,986 occupied dwellings at the 2016 Census (ABS, 2016). The population density of 0.08 people per square kilometre sits well below the NSW average (9.8) and the average for Australia (3.2), demonstrating a dispersed rural population. Land use across the local study area ranges from large scale grazing properties, interspaced with riparian corridors and seasonal lagoons in the west to intensive broadacre cropping and agricultural properties to the east.

Impact assessment

A range of potential social impacts, both positive and negative, were identified in the SIA. The following section summarises these potential impacts assessed as having a pre-mitigation social risk rating of medium or higher.

Way of life

Construction

- Construction related amenity impacts for residential properties which could affect the way residents use and enjoy private space; these impacts would be most likely to occur:
 - surrounding the Wagga Wagga substation upgrade and expansion site and the associated main construction compound
 - for residential properties located proximal to the transmission alignment and the Lockhart main construction compound and accommodation camp options.

- Regional road users and residents in service communities may experience slightly longer journeys and minor inconvenience due to increased construction traffic movements through towns and temporary road management measures during line stringing activities over roads.

Operation

- Some residents located proximal to the transmission line may experience operation related amenity impacts that affect the way they use and enjoy private space.

Community

Construction

- Access to employment and training opportunities could increase residents' capacity and willingness to engage at a community level and improve overall community cohesion and wellbeing.
- Some residents may develop an 'us versus them' mentality and anti-proposal sentiment if they are being passed over for employment opportunities affecting community cohesion and workforce integration and wellbeing.
- Perceived unfair distributions of impact and benefit have the potential to result in community division affecting residents' social networks, sense of community and wellbeing.

Operation

There were no community impacts in the operation phase.

Accessibility

Construction

- Proposal related demands for social infrastructure has the potential to reduce access for residents, primarily:
 - the provision of emergency services and health care
 - some leisure and recreation facilities, primarily the Balranald Pool, should workers be accommodated within the town and use this facility in larger numbers
 - telecommunications services in regional and remote areas.
- Proposal related demands for longer term private rental properties in Wagga Wagga has the potential to further constrain market supply and increases prices limiting access for residents, particularly those who may face economic disadvantage.
- Proposal related demands for short term accommodation in the Wagga Wagga region may limit access for broader community needs.

Construction and operation

- The Community Partnership Program aspect of the proposal has the potential to improve the financial viability of local community services and facilities, improving access to services and overall community wellbeing.

Culture

Construction and operation

- The proposals cultural heritage management practices are sufficient for Traditional Owner and Aboriginal Groups to have trust and confidence in Transgrid.
- Proposal related activities have the potential to result in changes to the environment and sites of cultural heritage significance that are not acceptable to Aboriginal people, affecting sense of place and cultural connection to Country.

Health and wellbeing

Construction

- Some landowners could experience decreased health (physical and mental) outcomes if there is a negative culmination of the acquisition process, adverse changes to their properties and the way they use and manage their land.
- Some proposal workers could be at risk of mental health impacts associated with feelings of isolation, long work hours and unhealthy lifestyles.
- Vulnerable members of the community in the Murrumbidgee LGA, where consultation feedback has identified prevalent health issues, who may experience decreased perceptions of safety in service communities associated with an influx of construction workers.

Operation

- Perceived health impacts associated with electric and magnetic fields may lead to stress and anxiety for some landholders and community members, affecting mental and physical health and wellbeing.
- The perceived risk of bushfires associated with electricity infrastructure posing a safety risk could result in increased stress and anxiety for some regional communities.

Surroundings

Construction

- Construction activities result in visual disturbances and impact valued landscapes affecting some residents' sense of place.
- Construction activity near roads has the potential to increase the risk of driver distraction, with potential safety implications.

Operation

- The presence of new transmission infrastructure in the Lockhart region has the potential to result in high or very high visual impacts for some residential properties, affecting residents' sense of place and the way they enjoy private space.

Livelihoods

Construction

- Affected landholders would receive economic benefit from easement compensation while still being able to utilise land, improving their economic standing and financial resilience to agricultural shocks such as drought.
- Regional employment opportunities would improve the livelihoods of those employed, improving mental health and wellbeing, the way they interact with their communities their ability to access goods and services.
- Targeted employment and training initiatives aimed at young people and local Aboriginal communities has the potential to improve the way of life, mental health and general sense of wellbeing for cohorts that generally experience higher levels of unemployment and barriers to employment.
- Proposal related procurement activities has the potential to improve regional economic outcomes and result in flow on employment for regional residents.
- Recreation and leisure spending by workers could improve regional economic outcomes for tourism businesses.

Construction and operation

- The easement and associated transmission line may restrict or alter how some landholders manage their property, potentially decreasing productivity on some portions of land which could have an effect on livelihoods.

Operation

- The proposal would result in increased development occurring across the region and associated employment potentially reversing the trend of population decline exhibited across several of the regional study area LGAs.

Decision making systems

- Traditional Owners and other Aboriginal Groups feel engaged, supportive of the proposal, and capable of interacting with the proposal and Transgrid to maximise the benefit for regional Aboriginal communities.
- Landholders may perceive negative impacts in relation to their property rights and individual livelihoods, regardless of the standards of procedural fairness being met and just compensation terms being in place.

Mitigation and enhancement

Recommended mitigation and enhancement measures have been developed to address social impacts rated medium or higher as identified above. Social impact measures were developed by refining recommendations and suggestions made by proposal stakeholders, a review of best practice social impact management strategies and plans, and other EIS mitigation and management measures. Key mitigation and enhancement measures proposed include:

- a Communication and Community Strategy will be implemented to outline ongoing communication and engagement with councils, landholders, Traditional Owner and Aboriginal groups, community groups in service communities, emergency services and the broader community
- an Aboriginal Employment and Participation Plan to support Aboriginal employment and industry opportunities
- Land and Property Access Officers will be appointed for affected landholders to provide direct avenues of enquiry for information and issues management
- a Local Industry Participation Plan will be implemented to guide local opportunities during construction, and where possible, align with existing plans and strategies of regional study area LGAs
- a Workforce Management Plan will be developed for each accommodation camp in consultation with relevant councils, social infrastructure managers and community service providers in nearby service communities.

Conclusions

The SIA has identified a range of social impacts, both positive and negative, which are anticipated if the proposal is constructed and operated. However, all negative impacts assessed in this SIA can be reasonably mitigated throughout planning and development to reduce the significance of all impacts to moderate or low. Residual impacts would be predominantly localised and temporal and pertain primarily to:

- amenity impacts impacting way of life for those landholders that live proximal to the proposal, particularly those around the Wagga Wagga substation upgrade and expansion
- changes to valued landscapes in the Lockhart LGA affecting residents' sense of place and mental wellbeing
- potential exacerbation of health and wellbeing issues facing identified vulnerable communities
- stress and anxiety amongst the community and landholder's wellbeing due to perceived impacts associated with electric and magnetic fields and the potential risk of bushfires
- cumulative impacts related to accommodation service provision and labour market constraints in the Wagga Wagga LGA.

Benefits associated with the proposal are primarily at the regional scale. They are related to employment, income and economic development opportunities during construction and operation, improving individual livelihoods, community self-sufficiency and collective wellbeing. Overall, while the proposal would result in a range of negative social impacts, it would result in a range of long term positive social benefits for regional study area residents. Implementation and ongoing monitoring of targeted mitigation measures and ongoing targeted consultation would reduce potential negative impacts on affected parties and ensure the proposal can realise predicted benefits for the region and NSW.

1 Introduction

Transgrid (electricity transmission operator in New South Wales (NSW)) and ElectraNet (electricity transmission operator in South Australia (SA)) are seeking regulatory and environmental planning approval for the construction and operation of a new High Voltage (HV) interconnector between NSW and SA, with an added connection to north west Victoria. Collectively, the proposed interconnector is known as EnergyConnect.

EnergyConnect aims to reduce the cost of providing secure and reliable electricity transmission between NSW and SA in the near term, while facilitating the longer-term transition of the energy sector across the National Electricity Market (NEM) to low emission energy sources.

EnergyConnect has been identified as a priority transmission project in the NSW Transmission Infrastructure Strategy (NSW Department of Planning and Environment (DPE), 2018), linking the SA and NSW energy markets and would assist in transporting energy from the South-West Renewable Energy Zone to major demand centres.

EnergyConnect comprises of several sections (shown on Figure 1-1) that would be subject to separate environmental planning approvals under the relevant jurisdictions. It includes:

- NSW sections including:
 - Western Section, which would extend from:
 - the SA/NSW border (near Chowilla in SA) to Transgrid's existing Buronga substation
 - Buronga substation to the NSW/Victoria border at Monak (near Red Cliffs in Victoria)
 - Eastern Section, which would extend from the Buronga substation to the existing Wagga Wagga substation
- a Victorian Section, which would extend from the NSW/Victoria border to Red Cliffs substation
- a SA Section, which would extend from Robertstown to the SA/NSW border.

Transgrid is currently seeking planning approval for the NSW – Eastern Section (the proposal), which is the subject of this EIS.

Transgrid has previously sought and received separate environmental planning approvals for the NSW – Western Section of EnergyConnect and Victorian Section. ElectraNet is responsible for obtaining environmental planning approval for the section of EnergyConnect located in SA.

1.1 Proposal objectives

The primary objective for EnergyConnect (including the proposal) is to reduce the cost of electricity by providing secure electricity transmission between NSW and SA in the near term and facilitate the longer-term transition of the energy sector across the NEM to low emission energy generation sources. More specifically, EnergyConnect (including the proposal) aims to:

- lower power prices
- improve energy security
- increase economic activity
- support the transition to a lower carbon emission energy system
- support a greater mix of renewable energy in the NEM.



Figure 1-1 Overview of EnergyConnect

1.2 The proposal

Transgrid is seeking approval under Division 5.2, Part 5 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (the EP&A Act) to construct and operate the proposal. The proposal has been declared as Critical State significant infrastructure under Section 5.13 of the EP&A Act.

The proposal was also declared a controlled action on 30 September 2020 and requires a separate approval under the (Commonwealth) *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*. The proposal is subject to the bilateral assessment process that has been established between the Australian and NSW governments.

1.3 Proposal overview

1.3.1 Proposal study area

The proposal study area comprises a generally one kilometre wide corridor between the Buronga substation and the Waggawagga substation as well as additional proposal components located away from the transmission line easement (with the exception of the proposed water points which has had a 200 metre diameter applied around each site). It traverses around 540 kilometres in total. It encompasses the indicative disturbance area and transmission line corridor, which has been applied to identify the constraints nearby to the proposal which may or may not be indirectly impacted by the proposal.

The proposal study area is located in regional western NSW across a number of Local Government Areas (LGAs) – Wentworth; Balranald; Murray River; Edward River; Hay; Murrumbidgee; Federation; Lockhart; and Waggawagga LGAs.

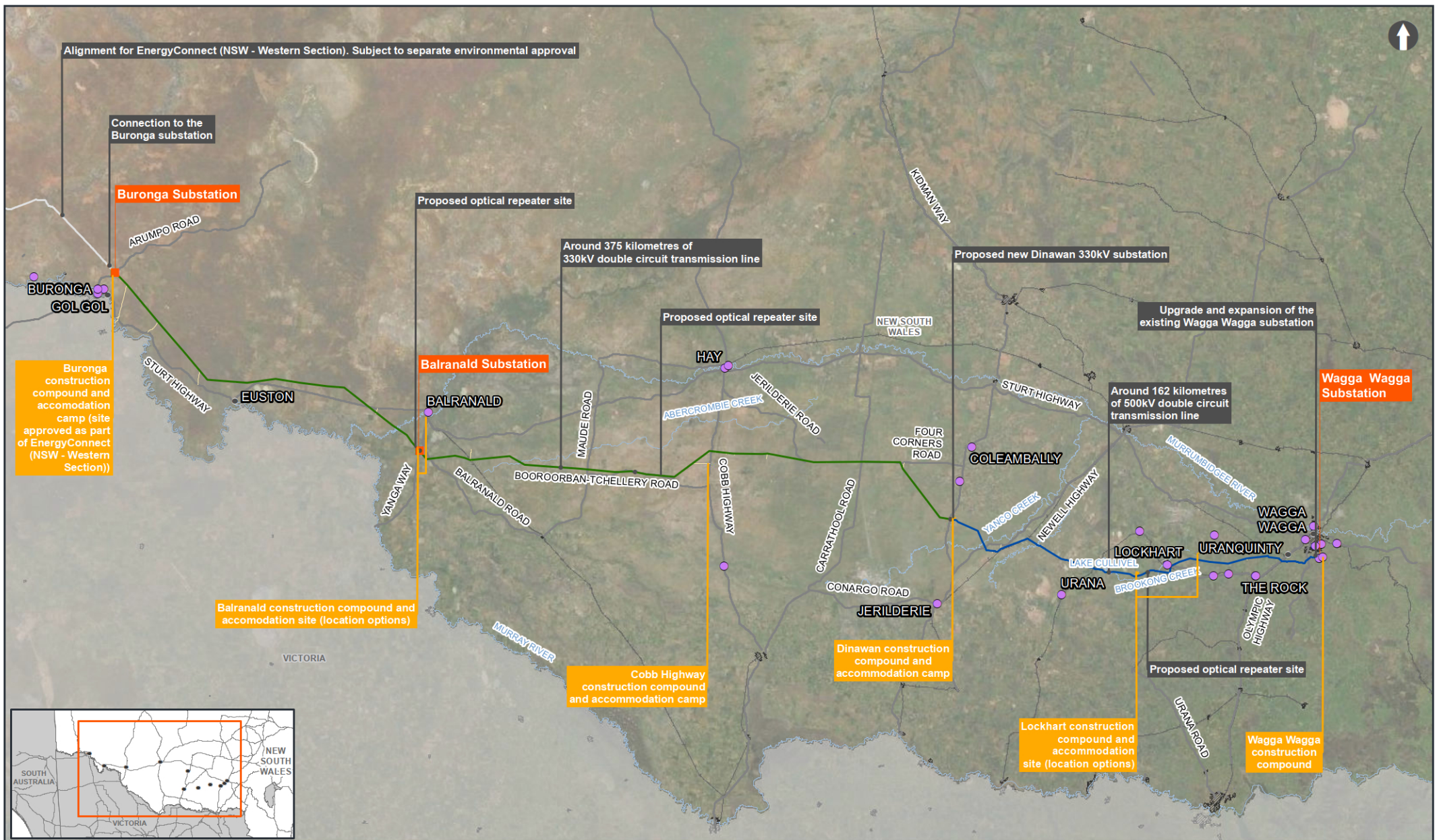


Figure 1-2

Proposal Overview - EnergyConnect
(NSW - Eastern section)

- EnergyConnect (NSW - Eastern Section) 330kV transmission line
- EnergyConnect (NSW - Eastern Section) 500kV transmission line
- EnergyConnect (NSW - Western Section)
- Main Construction Compounds and Accommodation Sites
- Access Tracks
- Water Fill Point
- Existing Substation
- Built Up Areas
- Waterbody

1.3.2 Key features of the proposal

The key components of the proposal include:

- about 375 kilometres of new 330 kilovolt (kV) double circuit transmission line and associated infrastructure between the Buronga substation and the proposed Dinawan 330kV substation
- connection of the proposed transmission lines to the existing Buronga 330kV substation
- construction of a new 330kV substation around 30 kilometres south of Coleambally, referred to as the proposed Dinawan 330kV substation
- connection of the proposed transmission lines to the proposed Dinawan substation
- about 162 kilometres of new 500kV double circuit transmission line and associated infrastructure between the proposed Dinawan 330kV substation and the existing Wagga Wagga substation at Wagga Wagga, NSW
- upgrade and expansion of the Wagga Wagga substation to accommodate the new transmission line connections including the installation of new line bays, relocation and upgrade of existing bays and associated electrical and civil works (road, kerb, gutter, drainage works and earthworks)
- provision of three optical repeater structures and associated connections to existing local electrical supplies
- new and/or upgrade of access tracks as required
- ancillary works required to facilitate the construction of the proposal (e.g. laydown and staging areas, concrete batching plants, brake/winch sites, site offices and accommodation camps).

An overview of the proposal is provided in Figure 1-2. Further detail on the key infrastructure components of the proposal and construction activities are provided in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 of the EIS respectively.

1.3.3 Construction

1.3.3.1 Key construction works

Key construction works for the proposal would typically include (but not be limited to):

- site establishment works, which may include (but not be limited to):
 - establishment of construction compound and accommodation sites, access tracks and service relocations
 - vegetation clearance
 - transportation of equipment such as steelwork, high voltage plant, switchgear, between dock and site as part of the construction works
- ancillary works to facilitate the construction of the proposal (e.g. intermediate laydown and staging areas, concrete batching plants, brake/winch sites, site offices and accommodation camps)
- construction of the proposed transmission lines, which would include (but not be limited to):
 - access tracks to accommodate safe access of construction machinery and materials to each transmission line structure site
 - earthworks (including establishment of construction pads) and the construction of footings and foundations for each transmission line structure
 - erection of the new transmission line structures using crane(s) and or helicopter(s)
 - stringing of the conductors and overhead earth wires and optical ground wire
 - installation of earthing conductors
 - testing and commissioning of the transmission lines
- construction of the proposed Dinawan 330kV substation, which would include (but not be limited to):
 - civil construction works including earthworks
 - slab construction at the new substation site
 - electrical fit out with new substation equipment
 - testing and commissioning of the new substation equipment

- upgrade and expansion of the existing Wagga Wagga substation to enable the proposed connection and operation of the new transmission lines which would include (but not be limited to):
 - civil construction works including earthworks and slab construction at the expanded substation site
 - electrical fit out with new substation equipment
 - testing and commissioning of the new substation equipment
- connection of the proposed transmission lines to the existing Buronga substation
- demobilisation and remediation of areas disturbed by construction activities.

A detailed description of construction works for the proposal is further described in Chapter 6 of the EIS.

1.3.3.2 Construction program

Construction of the proposal would commence in late-2022 (enabling works phase), subject to NSW Government and Commonwealth planning approvals.

The construction of the transmission lines and substation facilities would take around 18 months. The upgraded and expanded Wagga Wagga substation and the proposed Dinawan 330kV substation are expected to be operational by late-2024. Site decommissioning and remediation would extend around six months beyond the commissioning (operational) phase, with estimated completion in mid-2025.

The final program would be confirmed as part of finalisation of the proposal infrastructure following approval of the proposal.

1.3.3.3 Indicative duration of transmission line construction activities

Construction at each transmission line structure would be intermittent and construction activities would not occur for the full duration at any one location. Figure 1-3 presents an indicative duration of construction activities associated with the transmission line structures. These durations could vary and breaks between activities may be shorter which may lead to longer inactive periods in subsequent stages of construction at an individual transmission line structure. Durations of any particular construction activity, and respite periods, may vary for a number of reasons including (but not limited to), multiple work fronts, resource and engineering constraints, works sequencing and location.

These activities would also have multiple work fronts, therefore (for example) foundation works or tower erection would be occurring in several locations along the easement at the same time.

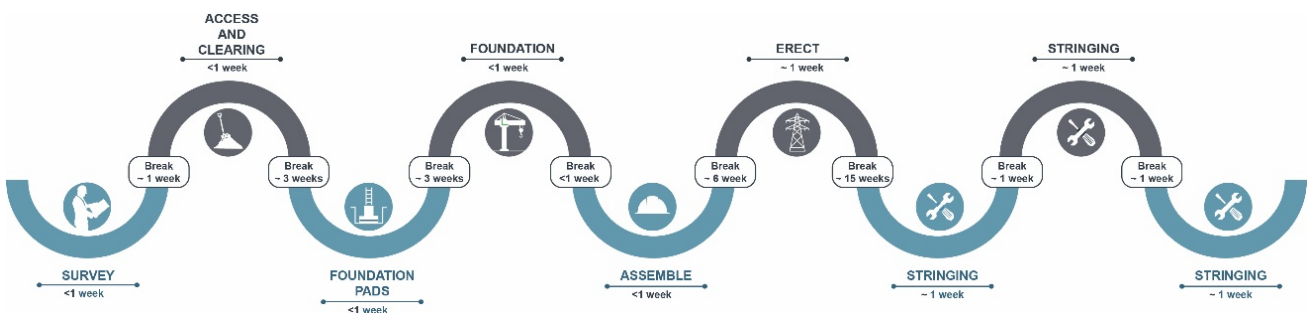


Figure 1-3 Indicative duration of construction activities at transmission line structures

1.4 Purpose of this technical report

This Social Impact Assessment (SIA) is one of a number of technical papers that form part of the EIS for the proposal.

The purpose of this technical paper is to identify and assess the potential impacts of the proposal in relation to social impacts. It responds directly to the Secretary's environmental assessment requirements (SEARs) (refer to Section 1.4.1). It has been prepared in accordance with the DPIE *Social Impact Assessment Guideline – For State Significant Projects* (DPIE, 2021) (the SIA Guideline).

1.4.1 Secretary's environmental assessment requirements

The NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) has provided the SEARs for the EIS.

The requirements specific to this assessment and where these aspects are addressed in this technical report are outlined in Table 1-1.

Table 1-1 Secretary's environmental assessment requirements – Social and economic

REF.	SECRETARY'S ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS	WHERE ADDRESSED IN THIS TECHNICAL PAPER
General requirements	Social & Economic – including an assessment of the social and economic impacts and benefits of the project (including the workers accommodation facility) for the region and the State as a whole, including consideration of any increase in demand for community infrastructure and services.	An assessment of potential social impacts and benefits is provided in Chapter 6. Mitigation and enhancement measures associated with potential impacts and benefits is provided in Chapter 7.

1.5 Structure of this report

The structure and content of this report is as follows:

- *Chapter 1 – Introduction:* Outlines the proposal details and context of this report.
- *Chapter 2 – Legislative and policy context:* Provides an overview of the federal, state and local policy context.
- *Chapter 3 – Methodology:* Details the methodology used for this assessment.
- *Chapter 4 – Consultation:* Outlines the consultation undertaken for the SIA.
- *Chapter 5 – Social baseline:* Details the existing social environment.
- *Chapter 6 – Impact assessment:* Provides an assessment of social impacts for the proposal.
- *Chapter 7 – Mitigation and enhancement:* Details proposed mitigation and management measures.
- *Chapter 8 – Residual impacts:* Provides an assessment of residual impacts post mitigation and management.
- *Chapter 9 – Conclusion:* Summaries the outcomes of the assessment.
- *Chapter 10 – Limitations:* Identifies the general limitations considered in the preparation of this report.
- *Chapter 11 – References:* Identifies the key reports and documents used to generate this report.

1.6 Limitations

The following limitations underlying the preparation of this SIA are outlined below:

- The SIA process was based on desktop methods only; the authors of this report did not undertake field work or physical observations in the study area.
- The baseline demographic data, the community profile and population forecast rely on data obtained via desktop research relying predominantly on the ABS Census (2016, 2011).
- The existing environment's social infrastructure audit predominantly considered government-provided social infrastructure, facilities and services. In some instances, it is possible that local communities access services such as child care and schools through private providers and that may not have been identified.
- Community input into this study, as summarised in this report, relies on the outcomes from engagement activities undertaken by KJA consultants and Transgrid over the years 2018-2021. No broader participatory research was undertaken with the public.
- COVID-19 restrictions on public movement and gathering resulted in several planned community engagement activities that would have informed this SIA being postponed or moved into a purely online format.
- The SIA relies on a number of assumptions regarding employment and procurement that will be refined by the construction contractor.

2 Legislative and policy context

2.1 Commonwealth legislation

The objective of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) is to protect and manage prescribed Matters of National Environmental Significance (MNES). Under the EPBC Act, proposed ‘actions’ that can significantly impact MNES, the environment of Commonwealth land, or carried out by a Federal Government agency must be referred to the Federal Minister for the Environment for assessment.

A referral under the EPBC Act was submitted on 25 August 2020. The Australian Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (DAWE) determined the proposal to be a controlled action on 30 September 2020 and was to be assessed using the bilateral assessment process. The SEARs issued on 2 October 2020 included the relevant Commonwealth requirements under the bilateral assessment process.

2.2 New South Wales legislation

The *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act) establishes the framework for assessing all types of development in New South Wales. In particular, the objects of the EP&A Act include the need to promote the social and economic welfare of the community and to include social considerations in decision-making about environmental planning and assessment.

The NSW Minister for Planning and Public Spaces, by Ministerial Order, declared the NSW portions of EnergyConnect to be State Significant Infrastructure and Critical State Significant Infrastructure (CSSI) under Schedule 5, clause 15 of the State Environmental Planning Policy (State and Regional Development) 2011 (SRD SEPP). As CSSI, the proposal requires approval from the NSW Minister for Planning and Public Spaces under Division 5.2, Part 5 of the EP&A Act.

2.3 Regional planning

2.3.1 Far West Region

The *Far West Regional Plan 2036* (DPIE, 2019) outlines strategies for the region over the next two decades. The plan highlights the need for investment in roads, rail networks and telecommunications to enhance opportunities for agribusiness, value-added manufacturing, mining, renewable energy and tourism sectors (DPIE, 2019). Emerging opportunities in the region are identified as opportunities for unique food processing, tourism, arts and cultural opportunities.

Challenges specifically for the southern far west region as identified in the *Far West Regional Plan 2036* include:

- sustainable management of water resources, including the Murray and Darling rivers
- community resilience building to support population and demographic change
- resolve skilled worker shortages
- improve public and community transport services to improve community connections to surrounding main township areas and connect the southern area to Mildura, Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide.

The *Far West Regional Plan 2036* also recognises the already high levels of drive-in-drive-out (DIDO) workers due to the nature of employment for the region’s mining industry. It highlights that the anticipated population profile changes will have different demands on services within the region over the coming two decades. This finding resonates with the significant past experiences of transient workforces in the Wentworth LGA primarily due to the seasonal horticultural workers (fruit pickers) and FIFO workforces in recent years for solar energy projects.

2.3.1.1 Far West Regional economic development strategies

The *Western Murray Regional Economic Development Strategy* (REDS) 2018–2022 outlines the economic vision and complementary strategies to achieve these visions for LGAs, including Wentworth and Balranald LGAs and Hay LGA (although part of the Riverina Murray Region, refer to Section 2.3.2). Similar to the *Far West Regional Plan 2036*, the REDS calls for investment in growth areas for:

- high-value agriculture and value-adding product manufacturing
- opportunities in tourism to diversify the economy
- mining and construction industries to capitalise on the region’s mineral and solar endowments, and the development of suitable and affordable accommodation for large-scale projects
- training for the local workforce and seek opportunities to attract skilled workers to the region
- regional infrastructure, including telecommunications (internet and NBN) for enhanced connectivity, road and rail infrastructure for freight and water efficiency infrastructure for water security for the region.

2.3.2 Riverina Murray Region

2.3.2.1 Riverina Murray Regional Plan

The *Riverina Murray Regional Plan 2036* (DPIE, 2019) is a 20-year blueprint for the future of the Riverina Murray. The Plan outlines four distinct goals for the region:

- a growing and diverse economy
- a healthy environment with pristine waterways
- efficient transport and infrastructure networks
- strong, connected and healthy communities.

The *Riverina Murray Regional Plan 2036* calls for investment in road networks for freight, health infrastructure, planning for growth in regional cities, agribusiness, advanced manufacturing, and the protection and sustainability of the Murray River waterfront. Priorities for each LGA as part of the plan include:

- Murray River LGA: work collaboratively with stakeholders to improve cross-border connections and provide community services and facilities (including health and aged care) to meet current and future community needs.
- Edward River LGA: develop Deniliquin into a local centre through industry development and job creation and ensure irrigated land is appropriately zoned and protected from inappropriate development.
- Hay LGA: provide sufficient road infrastructure to capitalise on Hay’s central location and improve connectivity.
- Murrumbidgee LGA: attract businesses and industry to the area to provide local employment opportunities and provide infrastructure to support business, industry growth and productivity, and respond to community needs.
- Federation LGA: protect water quality and aesthetic values of the Murray River and efficient delivery of infrastructure and services.
- Lockhart LGA: protect values (heritage, environment and biodiversity) that contribute to the lifestyle enjoyed by residents and visitors and provide sufficient community infrastructure.
- Wagga Wagga LGA: enable share of the national freight activity by improving and developing road, rail and air connections to major cities and sea ports.

2.3.2.2 Riverina Regional Economic Development Strategies

Four REDS cover the LGAs in the Riverina Region and comprise one or more LGAs that share strong economic links. These include:

- Eastern Riverina REDS 2018–2022 (Wagga Wagga LGA and Lockhart LGA)
- Murray REDS 2018–2022 (Edwards River LGA and Murray River LGA)
- Western Riverina REDS 2018–2022 (Murrumbidgee LGA)
- Albury – Wodonga REDS 2018–2022 (Federation LGA).

All of these REDS share common investment priorities and economic development strategies which include:

- investment in transport and logistics infrastructure to support manufacturing and agribusiness
- development of the healthcare and social assistance and tourism sectors to diversify economies
- focusing on skill and improving the capacity of local workforces
- enhancement of utility networks (water, energy and telecommunications) and associated infrastructure to remove growth constraints.

Additionally, the importance of water security for the Riverina Murray Region to ensure local industries can continue existing operations and support expansion is a key priority. The challenges of the demand for water between industry, agriculture and the increased population are critical to the region's economic future.

2.4 Local Government – Community Strategic Plans

Community Strategy Plan's (CSP) describes the community's vision and aspirations for a period of ten or more years. Each Council in NSW must prepare a CSP under the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) framework (2009), which the Office of Local Government administers. The creation of the CSP is led by the Mayor and Councillors and through engagement with the community. Council will have a custodial role in engaging, refining and preparing the plan on behalf of its community.

2.4.1 Wentworth Shire Council

The *2017–2027 Community Strategic Plan* (Wentworth Shire Council, 2017) sets out strategies, goals and the community's long-term vision over the next decade. With the vision of 'A thriving region, supported by a robust economic base, distinctive open spaces, and strong local governance and leadership', the CSP outlines four strategic goals to guide implementation:

- 1 Wentworth is a vibrant, growing and thriving Shire.
- 2 Wentworth is a desirable Shire to visit, live, work and invest.
- 3 Wentworth is a community that works to enhance and protect its physical and natural assets.
- 4 Wentworth is a caring, supportive and inclusive community that is informed and engaged in its future.

The plan also highlights key outcomes of community consultation and identifies issues facing the communities of the LGA, including:

- Changing communities – a population that is aging and declining, youth retention and development opportunities for housing.
- Social issues – youth, lack of educational opportunities.
- Economic – declining economic base, horticultural sector decline, water security and uncertainty, lack of jobs, opportunities and diverse employment, lack of industry.
- Infrastructure – deteriorating major roads and water assets, transport connectivity and access, and internet access.
- Environment – impact on irrigated agricultural land.
- Cross-border issues – the disparity between NSW and Victorian communities.

2.4.2 Balranald Shire Council

The *Balranald Community Strategic Plan 2017–2027* (Balranald Shire Council, 2017) highlights the Shire's commitments to community, liveability, a resilient economy, diversity and culture, infrastructure and the natural and built environment. Consultation outcomes with the community provided guiding principles for the following six pillars of wellbeing:

- 1 Our people: A community that is proactive, engaged, inclusive.
- 2 Our place: A liveable and thriving community that maintains lifestyle opportunities and addresses its disadvantages.
- 3 Our economy: A community that ensures a strong and resilient economy.
- 4 Our culture: A community that respects and celebrates its diverse cultures, heritage and arts.
- 5 Our infrastructure: A community that maintains and strengthens its natural and built environment.
- 6 Our leadership: A community that values and fosters leadership, lifelong learning, innovation and good governance.

Balranald Shire Council's 'Community conversations' consultation process identified the community's core values, which have been translated into the outcomes noted above. The Balranald community highly values community connection, lifestyle, liveability and diversity.

The protection of the environment, provision of local amenities and aesthetics of the region were also important for community members.

The Plan notes a desire to seek opportunities for partnerships and collaboration to improve liveability in the LGA.

2.4.3 Murray River Council

The *Murray River Council Community Strategic Plan, 2018-2028* (Murray River Council, 2018), provides directions over the next decade as developed following extensive community consultation for priority actions and investment. The plan highlights the key priority areas for Council outlined as vision statements, these are:

- We want our built and physical environment to be well planned, connected, safe and designed to support our communities, industries, and business.
- We value our natural environment and expect it to be accessible, sustainable, managed, and healthy.
- We want to have services and facilities that support an active, healthy and diverse rural lifestyle and help us celebrate and enjoy our rich cultural heritage and connected communities.
- We need economic growth so that we are vibrant, strong and able to support our local townships, regional industries and future employment.
- We expect effective, democratic, open, transparent leadership and governance that plans for, advocates for, and meets the changing needs of our diverse community.

Council identified a number of challenges facing the LGA through extensive consultation with the community, including:

- an ageing population and the provision of appropriate health and community support services to meet growing community demand
- an evolving economy with the anticipated growth in the tourism sector, employment in arts, recreation services, health care and social assistance countered with a decline in the agriculture and manufacturing sectors
- the provision of adequate telecommunication services to support isolated rural residents in the north of the LGA
- road infrastructure maintenance to maintain a safe road network and support a growing tourism industry.

2.4.4 Edward River Council

The *Edward River Council Community Strategic Plan 2018–2030* (Edward River Council, 2018) was developed through consultation with government, community, business and industry groups. The guiding vision of ‘We are the centre of the Southern Riverina. Home to a connected and engaged community, driven by a diverse economy. We work together to lead our community, achieve our potential and embrace our future’ is supported by a set of 2030 aspirational goals for the LGA, which are:

- a great place to live
- a prosperous and vibrant economy
- a valued and enhanced natural environment
- a region with quality and sustainable infrastructure
- a community working together to achieve its potential.

Consultation for the CSP was broadly grouped into three streams, the outcomes of which are noted below:

- 1 Community values: the protection of environmental assets and local amenity while ensuring residents have access to the infrastructure and services vital to supporting health and diverse communities.
- 2 Opportunities: leveraging the LGAs natural assets and strategic position within the Murray Riverina to develop a diverse economy while remaining an affordable place to live and raise a family.
- 3 Challenges: attracting industries and growth not constrained by seasonal conditions and water scarcity in the face of ageing infrastructure, slow population growth and an ageing population.

2.4.5 Hay Shire Council

The *Hay Shire Council Community Strategic Plan 2017-2027* (Hay Shire Council, 2017) combines the outcomes of a socio-economic study prepared for the LGA with the outcomes of community consultation to deliver a series of strategic priorities, a snapshot of which are:

- valuing the natural and built environments to support a sustainable environment
- creating a sustainable environment for future generations
- fostering a safe, healthy lifestyle in a community that cares for the welfare of each other
- welcoming new and innovative industries to support our future
- valuing history and tourism
- being connected and informed
- having well-maintained infrastructure that is responsive to service needs.

The socio-economic study prepared for the council investigated the effects of the drought on the LGA and the socio-economic implications of an overreliance on agriculture. Key challenges for Hay LGA include:

- diversifying the economy, including building on its strengths in agriculture and tourism
- maintaining and developing infrastructure to support agriculture and the diversification of the economy
- maintaining access to services that support the Shire’s population, including high quality health, education, cultural and recreational services
- developing the Shire’s workforce to meet the changing requirements of industry.

2.4.6 Murrumbidgee Council

The *Murrumbidgee Council Community Strategic Plan 2017–2027* (Murrumbidgee Council, 2017) highlights the community's vision, aspirations and objectives for the next decade based on community needs and input. With consideration of the LGAs demographic and economic profile, the plan makes commitments to:

- ensure residents feel safe and are actively and passionately involved in establishing and promoting a connected, respected Council Area by facilitating equitable access to community infrastructure
- undertake an environmental guardianship role to ensure and enhance long term sustainability through appropriate practices and management
- provide well-planned built, social, and community infrastructure developed and maintained according to community and public safety needs, priorities and partnerships
- investigate opportunities and work with new and existing businesses and industries to proactively provide regional economic opportunity, development and tourism, creating stability and future growth.

2.4.7 Federation Council

The *Federation Council Community Strategic Plan 2018–2028* (Federation Council, 2018) is a ten year plan for the long term visions and aspirations considering community values, demographic and economic context. The CSP, with the vision of 'Federation – Creating Opportunities, Celebrating Communities' outlines the following key outcomes for the LGA:

- Built Federation: Maintained and improved infrastructure that meets the needs of residents and industry.
- Economic Federation: Growing, progressive and prosperous communities that build on sustainable manufacturing, agriculture and tourism, close proximity to other centres on both sides of the Murray and affordability.
- Natural Federation: Sustainable rural landscapes and waterways offering tranquillity and attractive recreational spaces.
- Social Federation: Close-knit and welcoming communities where people come together and support each other.
- Well-Governed Federation: Strong civic leadership and governance supporting equity across communities and effective communication with residents.

Federation Council undertook a comprehensive consultation process with communities across the LGA, the key outcomes of which are summarised below:

- Aged care and healthcare were the leading priorities for social services, accounting for the aging population profile in the LGA. Youth service and schools to support families across the LGA were also priority issues for residents.
- The community identified employment (with emphasis on youth employment) and tourism as the highest economic priorities. These are followed by retail, business development and business attraction.
- Parks and gardens in towns (including playgrounds), water management (including supply and quality of water), and placemaking (including the improvement of public spaces and main streets) were the highest environmental priorities.

2.4.8 Lockhart Shire Council

The *Lockhart Shire Community Strategic Plan 2017–2027* (Lockhart Shire Council, 2017) sets out the ten year vision for the LGA community:

‘We are deeply connected to the land and proud of our independence; Dynamic, resilient, and have a strong sense of community; Passionate for innovation and diverse opportunities; and, Welcoming, vibrant, inclusive, accessible and value the rights of people equally.’

The Community Strategic Plan is presented in five key directions:

- 1 A connected and resilient community – maintaining connection and cohesion through the supply of community services and events that bring people together and support wellbeing.
- 2 A dynamic and prosperous economy – being welcoming to business. Industry and residents to develop, attract and retain skilled individuals in the community.
- 3 An environment that is respected and protected – open space and environment is protected for future generations through sustainable environmental practices and the protection of fauna and flora.
- 4 Infrastructure for the long term needs of the community – planning works to attract new residents and ensure assets and infrastructure meet the needs of the community now and in the future.
- 5 Strong leadership and governance – council is independent, active and responsive to community needs.

Some of the key challenges facing the Lockhart Shire as identified in the plan include:

- maintaining financial viability to decrease the risk of future amalgamations
- sustainably maintaining population growth that doesn't impact productive land
- long term maintenance of existing and future major infrastructure
- the threat of bushfires and natural disasters
- demographic changes include changes to age profiles, population decline, migration out of the Shire and youth retention.

2.4.9 City of Wagga Wagga

The *Wagga View – Community Strategic Plan* (City of Wagga Wagga Council, 2020) outlines the community and City of Wagga Wagga Council's vision for the future and the roadmap to get there. The overarching vision for the CSP is – ‘In 2040, Wagga will be a thriving, innovative, connected and inclusive community on the Murrumbidgee. Rich in opportunity, choice, learning and environment, Wagga is a place where paths cross, and people meet’.

The CSP outlines five strategic directions, each informed by community priorities, these are:

- 1 Community leadership and collaboration – ensuring the City of Wagga Wagga Council is accountable, engaged, transparent and supportive of the community.
- 2 Safety and health – creating safe and inclusive public spaces and providing the services and facilities essential to maintaining mental and physical health and wellbeing.
- 3 Growing economy – fostering and supporting local business, industry and entrepreneurs to enhance the economy.
- 4 Identity and sense of place – maintaining the connection between city and country by protecting the environment and providing spaces that encourage people to connect.
- 5 Environment – maintain and enhance the natural environment while supporting development for a growing city.

2.5 Strategic planning summary

Strong rural and agricultural values, environmental sustainability principles, and a desire to improve economic and social livelihoods are core themes across all regional and local strategic planning documents. While each LGA faces unique challenges and opportunities, the commonalities across the region are evident. For most LGAs, the core strategic planning directions include:

- supporting vibrant and inclusive communities in the face of population decline
- diversification of local and regional industries to counter an overreliance on agriculture
- sustainable water use and developing resilience against drought.

The Wagga Wagga LGA, as a growing regional centre of education and industry, sits uniquely in the region with rapid population growth. Core to the strategic planning outcomes in the LGA is balancing the challenges of being a regional service centre and supporting a growing population while protecting rural amenities.

3 Methodology

The methodology for this SIA aligns with the three-phase approach to SIA detailed in the SIA Guideline: SIA Scoping, SIA reporting and Social impact management.

3.1 Scoping

The SIA scoping phase was undertaken to:

- identify and understand potentially affected people and the proposals social locality
- identify social impacts needing investigation
- assign a proportionate level of assessment.

Scoping for the SIA involved completing the SIA scoping worksheet (DPIE, 2021), which allows for the preliminary analysis of the relationship between proposal activities and potential social impacts. Social impacts identified in the *Environmental Scoping Report* (May 2020) have been used to inform this SIA. The complete SIA scoping worksheet can be found in Appendix F. The *Environmental Scoping Report* (2020) identified the following key socio-economic issues to be considered in this SIA:

- people outside of major townships have limited access to existing infrastructure due to the remoteness of the proposal study area
- workforce accommodation strategy and implications on existing social infrastructure and services
- public safety risks or hazards on local roads during construction activities
- potential effect on agricultural land
- local and regional employment, procurement and spending opportunities during the construction phase
- economic benefits for the State-wide energy market and activation of further renewable energy generation.

Potential social impacts were grouped as per the social impact categories outlined in the SIA Guideline and shown in Table 3-1.

Table 3-1 Social impact categories

IMPACT AREA	EXPLANATION
Way of life	How people live, how they get around, how they work, how they play, and how they interact on a daily basis.
Community	Composition, character, cohesion, function, and sense of place.
Access	How people access and use infrastructure, services and facilities, whether provided by local, state, or federal governments, or by for-profit or not-for-profit organisations or groups.
Culture	Both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal culture, including shared beliefs, customs, values, and stories, and connections to country, land, waterways, places, and buildings.
Health and wellbeing	Physical and mental health, especially for those who are highly vulnerable to social exclusion or substantial change, plus wellbeing of individuals and communities.
Surroundings	Access to, and use of, services that ecosystems provide, public safety and security, access to and use of the natural and built environment, and its aesthetic value and amenity.
Livelihoods	People's capacity to sustain themselves, whether they experience personal breach or disadvantage, and the distributive equity of impacts and benefits.
Decision-making systems	Whether people experience procedural fairness; can make informed decisions; have power to influence decisions; and can access complaint, remedy and grievance mechanisms.

3.1.1 Determining the social locality

Social impacts have multiple dimensions but broadly relate to people, their livelihoods and their wellbeing. People may experience social impacts differently depending on their location and proximity to the potential trigger. For this SIA, this means that defining an area of social influence (or ‘social locality’) required going beyond the proposal’s direct infrastructure footprint.

The social locality was determined by identifying the principal towns and regions close to the proposal where people live, work, and visit and the existing travel networks. Likewise, consideration of the following proposal related features and activities informed the identification of the social locality:

- transmission line corridor, substations and other ancillary infrastructure (such as optical repeater infrastructure)
- main construction compounds and accommodation camp locations, as well as other ancillary components (such as water supply points)
- major connecting roads and haulage routes.

The social locality, or SIA study area, encompasses the people, communities and spaces likely to experience potential changes resulting from the proposal. This SIA has adopted two levels of study area within the social locality to assess potential impacts – the local study area and the regional study area. A visual representation of the social locality is provided in Figure 3-1.

3.1.1.1 Local study area

The local study area is comprised of the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Statistical Area 1 (SA1) units that intersect with the proposal study area, including the transmission line, substations, construction compounds and accommodation camps. These being:

- | | | | |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| — 1117904 | — 1117711 | — 1125915 | — 1127113 |
| — 1117901 | — 1118311 | — 1118111 | — 1127118 |
| — 1117907 | — 1125742 | — 1127108 | — 1127137 |
| — 1118310 | — 1118529 | — 1127116 | — 1127136 |

SA1 units are the smallest geographical unit of collation for comprehensive Census data. SA1s units are population-based, with each unit representing populations in the range of 200 to 800 persons. SA1s vary in geographical size, with denser urban areas resulting in geographically smaller SA1s and sparsely populated rural areas resulting in geographically large SA1s.

Local study area residents are most likely to experience a range of direct impacts, such as changes to amenity and movement, resulting from the proposal.

3.1.1.2 Regional study area

The regional study area encompasses the nine LGAs within which the proposal is located within, as noted in Section 1.3.1. Regional study area residents may experience a range of indirect impacts, both positive and negative, related to the proposal, including increased competition for resources and services and economic and employment opportunities.

3.1.1.3 Service communities

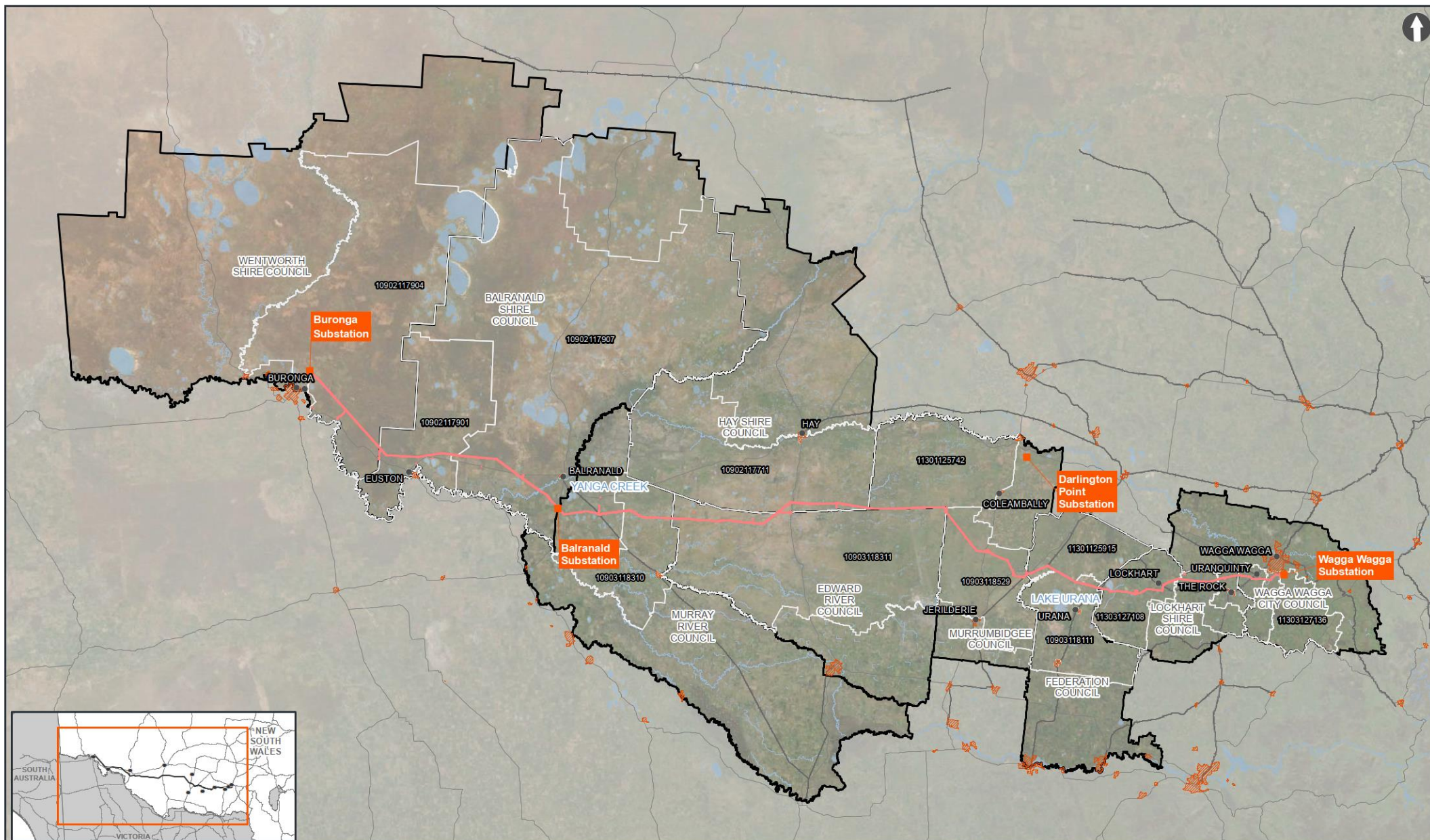
The regional study area also incorporates several service communities closest to or adjacent to main construction compounds, accommodation camps and accommodation locations. Table 3-2 lists the main construction compound, accommodation camps (including options) and associated service communities. These communities have been identified explicitly for further analysis. They are likely to experience temporary increases in population and/or demand for services associated with the proposal workforce during construction.

Table 3-2 Service communities

CONSTRUCTION COMPOUNDS /ACCOMMODATION OPTION	SERVICE COMMUNITY
Balranald accommodation camp – Option 1	Balranald – located within the town
Balranald main construction compound and accommodation camp – Option 2	Balranald – approximately 14 kilometres
Cobb Highway main construction compound and accommodation camp	Hay – approximately 37 kilometres
Dinawan main construction compound and accommodation camp	Coleambally – approximately 30 kilometres Jerilderie – approximately 35 kilometres
Urana-Lockhart Road construction compound and accommodation camp	Lockhart – approximately 10 kilometres
County-Boundary Road construction compound and accommodation camp	Lockhart – approximately 10 kilometres
Wagga Wagga main construction compound	Wagga Wagga – approximately five kilometres

3.1.2 Interaction with the EnergyConnect (NSW-West)

The proposal would use the main construction compound and accommodation camp established under the approved EnergyConnect (NSW – West) project. The use of the facility would not increase the intensity of operations, duration of occupation or the total accommodation capacity as assessed for that project. As such, impacts associated with the Buronga construction compound and accommodation camp and the service communities of Buronga-Gol Gol and Mildura have been excluded from this SIA as no new impacts from the use of it from the proposal are predicted.



0 50 100 KM

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction Impact Area Existing Substation Existing Railway Watercourse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statistical Area 1 Local Government Areas Urban Centres and Localities Waterbody
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Social - Figure 3-1

Social Impact Statement -

Locality

3.1.3 Social baseline preparation

The social baseline was compiled to understand the social characteristics of the social locality. Table 3-3 outlines the steps taken to develop the social baseline for the social locality.

Table 3-3 Social baseline process

ACTIVITY	TASK
Set indicators	— Identify indicators as relevant to the social impact categories shown in Table 3-1.
Data gathering and compilation	— Review of the proposal's Environmental Scoping Report. — Demographic and socio-economic datasets from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Census, 2016. — Desktop review of existing social infrastructure. — Identification of key projects or developments relevant to the proposal and the SEIA.
Literature and strategic planning review	— Review of publicly available research on comparable large-scale infrastructure projects and their socio-economic impacts. — Review of relevant public policy, plans and strategies.

3.2 Community engagement

KJA Consultants led the community and stakeholder engagement process for the proposal on behalf of Transgrid. To align with best practice, in addition to the *Draft Environmental Impact Assessment Guidance Series* (DPIE, 2017a), a range of Transgrid and industry standards and guidelines for community and stakeholder engagement were considered, including:

- *Transgrid Stakeholder Engagement Charter* (2015)
- *Transgrid Landholder Easement and Compensation Guide* (2019)
- *International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Quality Assurance Standard* (IAP2, 2015)
- *Clean Energy Council Community Engagement Guidelines* (CEC, 2018).

Based on these foundations, Transgrid and KJA have made use of the following engagement and consultation methods:

- stakeholder briefings
- one-on-one meetings with landholders
- community drop-in sessions
- webinars
- online survey and feedback forms and an online interactive map using Social Pinpoint
- information distribution and public feedback mechanism through an E-newsletter, community hotline, website and email service
- advertising material in local media, social media and fact sheets through the Transgrid website.

Community and stakeholder engagement activities continued throughout the COVID-19 restrictions that affected the majority of NSW during 2021, with the majority of engagement occurring via webinars, video calls and by phone.

3.3 Impact assessment

Social impacts, positive and negative, identified in the scoping phase were validated and re-assessed through data triangulation – the application of multiple data sources to understand the dimensions of the impact.

The dimensions of each social impact were investigated by:

- understanding the key components and activities of the proposal that contributed to the impact
- contextualising the proposal in its strategic and regulatory setting
- considering the characteristics of communities in the social locality likely to be affected
- identifying links to outcomes of various other technical studies prepared for the EIS
- understanding the outcomes of stakeholder and community engagement.

The outcomes of the investigation were used to revisit the preliminary scoping outcomes to confirm the dimensions of each impact, including:

- the extent of the impact, or who is expected to be impacted both directly and indirectly
- the duration of the impact, and when it is anticipated to occur
- the severity of the impact or scale of change likely to occur
- the intensity or importance of the impacts, taking into account social vulnerability and identity
- the level of concern or interest noted by potentially affected communities.

3.3.1 Evaluation of significance

Once the dimensions of the social impact were better understood, an assessment of likelihood (Table 3-4) and magnitude (Table 3-5) was undertaken to assign an overall significance rating using the social risk assessment framework provided in the SIA Guideline (Table 3-6). Social impacts significance, or the level of social risk, identifies the risk to people or groups of people. Applying significance ratings to social impacts assists in developing appropriate responses to each social impact, either through refining the proposal or through the development of appropriate social impact management and mitigation measures.

Table 3-4 Social impact likelihood scale

LIKELIHOOD LEVEL	DEFINITION
Almost certain	Definite or almost definitely expected (e.g. has happened on similar projects)
Likely	High probability
Possible	Medium probability
Unlikely	Low probability
Very unlikely	Improbable or remote probability

Table 3-5 Social impact magnitude scale

MAGNITUDE LEVEL	DEFINITION
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.
Minimal	Little noticeable change experienced by people in the locality.

Table 3-6 Social impact significance matrix

LIKELIHOOD LEVEL	MAGNITUDE LEVEL				
	1 Minimal	2 Minor	3 Moderate	4 Major	5 Transformational
A Almost certain	Low	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
SOCIAL RISK RATING					
Low		Medium	High	Very High	

Source: SIA Guideline Technical Supplement (DPIE, 2021)

3.3.2 Cumulative impacts

Broadly, cumulative impacts are understood by identifying and assessing impacts from other projects across the social locality or broader region. Cumulative impacts refer to the interactions between the proposal and other approved or yet-to-start projects or reasonably foreseeable future development in the area that is likely to be affected by the proposal. They relate to how impacts identified in this assessment can build up and, when considered together and create a much more significant impact that potentially leads to behaviour change.

Cumulative impacts can indicate that the combination of effects, either positive or negative, created by multiple projects or developments may be greater than that of the impact of one project or proposed development. The analysis considers the recent history of project development in the social locality and other large-scale infrastructure projects.

The cumulative socio-economic assessment considers the communities' experiences of past projects and other historical events, ensuring that consideration of local values, priorities, and issues is critical in understanding likely community reactions to new developments and planning mitigation and enhancement measures.

3.3.3 *Development of mitigation and enhancement measures*

Recommended mitigation and enhancement measures have been developed to address social impacts rated medium or higher. Social impact measures were developed through the refinement of recommendations and suggestions made by project stakeholders, a review of best practice social impact management strategies and plans and a review of other EIS mitigation and management measures.

3.4 Quality statement

This report was prepared by Roland Short (Bachelor of Urban and Regional Planning – Honours), Associate Consultant – Social Impact at WSP Australia Pty Ltd. Roland has over 11 years' experience in community development, stakeholder and community engagement and impact assessment.

The assessment was prepared between June 2021 and November 2021 and to his knowledge does not contain information that is false or misleading. The report was based on all relevant proposal information available at the time of writing and does not exclude any detail or element that may materially alter the outcomes of the assessment.

4 Consultation

Transgrid and consultants KJA have delivered an ongoing stakeholder and community engagement program for EnergyConnect since 2018, the outcomes of which have informed the preparation of the SIA. To date, the engagement program has encompassed:

- 301 briefings, meetings and presentations with relevant local councils, Local Aboriginal Land Councils (LALCs), key industry stakeholders and government agencies
- workshops with local councils and government agencies to secure their feedback into the route selection process and the specific factors relevant to that stakeholder, including:
 - Department of Primary Industry – Agriculture for matters related to agricultural land
 - DPIE for matters related to the NSW planning approvals process, biodiversity, Aboriginal heritage, property easements, Crown Lands and National Parks
 - DAWE for matters related to the Commonwealth planning approvals process
 - Department of Regional NSW for matters relating to regional engagement (Local Land Services), State Forests (Forestry Corporation NSW) and project spatial data (Regional NSW)
 - Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment for matters relating to skills and employment
 - Fire and Rescue NSW for matters relating to safety, traffic and transport
 - NSW Ambulance Service, for matters relating to emergency medical care and service capacity
 - Murrumbidgee Local Health District for matters relating to health care capacity
- 539 face to face meetings occurred with 278 potentially affected landholders within the proposal study area from Buronga to Wagga Wagga
- provision of an online interactive map to allow for community comment - there have been 6,773 visits to the map, with 298 comments
- 17 community information sessions were held in local towns near the transmission line corridor. The locations of these sessions included: Wentworth – NSW, Buronga – NSW, Euston/Robinvale – NSW/Vic border, Moulamein – NSW, Balranald – NSW, Booroorban – NSW, Hay – NSW, Urana – NSW, Coleambally – NSW, Lockhart – NSW, Uranquinty – NSW, The Rock – NSW and Wagga Wagga – NSW. The sessions lasted for between three and five hours and were focused on providing general proposal information, information regarding route selection and enabling stakeholder feedback
- facilitated Q&A meetings with landholders to provide access to a panel of technical specialists (both independent and within Transgrid) and EnergyConnect team members. These sessions were designed to provide detailed information about the proposal overall and on specific topics.

In addition to the broader engagement program, targeted SIA consultation was undertaken with regional study area councils to inform the preparation of this SIA to understand LGA specific issues and opportunities.

A comprehensive summary of consultation outcomes is provided in the EnergyConnect NSW Eastern Section Consultation outcomes report (Transgrid 2021). A summary of stakeholders engaged during the consultation program is provided in Appendix D. Table 4-1 provides a summary of proposal consultation outcomes and the outcomes of SIA specific consultation with councils outcomes as relevant to the SIA.

Table 4-1 Summary on consultation themes and where these themes are addressed in the SIA

THEME	INTEREST / ISSUES	STAKEHOLDERS	WHERE ADDRESSED
Aboriginal heritage	Engagement with Aboriginal groups; noting key focus areas of Aboriginal cultural heritage sites and areas of significance, and participation opportunities	Traditional Owners and other Aboriginal Groups Government departments and agencies	Section 6.4, 6.7.1.4 and 6.8.1
Biosecurity	Weed hygiene and biosecurity procedures, particularly when accessing agricultural farming land	Landholders Councils	Section 6.7.1.1
Consultation	Landholder consultation process	Landholders Councils Government departments and agencies	Sections 6.7.1.1, 6.7.1.2, 6.7.2.1 and 6.8.2
	Timing of and ability to participate in engagement process	Landholders Community members Traditional Owners and other Aboriginal Groups Councils	Sections 6.8.1 and 6.8.2
Dust management	Dust management and impact on property operations	Landholders Councils	Sections 6.1.1.1 and 6.7.2.1
Easement compensation	Land valuations and offers of compensation	Landholders	Section 6.7.1.2
Electro-magnetic fields (EMF)	People, agriculture and environment	Landholders Community members Interest groups	Section 6.5.2.1
	GPS enabled equipment, communications devices and drone technology	Landholders	Section 6.7.1.1
Employment	Expression of interest to work on EnergyConnect. Local employment and industry participation	Councils Traditional Owners and other Aboriginal Groups Community members Industry and interest groups	Sections 6.7.1.4 and 6.7.1.5

THEME	INTEREST / ISSUES	STAKEHOLDERS	WHERE ADDRESSED
Land use (current and proposed)	Proximity to farm infrastructure and associated equipment	Landholders	Sections 6.7.1.1, 6.7.1.5, 6.7.2.1 and 6.7.2.2
	Future land use	Councils Landholders	
	Co-existence between transmission line and farming operations	Landholders	
	Local airstrips	Landholders Councils Government departments and agencies	
Maintenance and remediation	Maintenance of roads and other shared infrastructure	Landholders Councils	Sections 6.1.1.2 and 6.7.1.1
	Remediation of proposal sites	Landholders Councils	
Property access	Access	Landholders	Section 6.1.1.2
	Access notification process	Landholders	
	Security	Landholders	
Property value	Proximity of transmission line infrastructure	Landholders	Sections 6.7.1.2 and 6.6.2.1
	Duplication of transmission line and easement	Landholders	
Route alignment considerations	Existing tracks, fence lines and disturbed areas	Landholders	Sections 6.1.2, 6.6.1.1, 6.7.1.1, 6.7.2.1 and 6.6.2.1
	Farm infrastructure, agricultural equipment, communications equipment and access gates	Landholders	
	Dwellings	Landholders	
	Current and future land use	Landholders Council	
	Lockhart Township	Lockhart Council Community members	
Tourism and recreation areas	Local recreation areas	Councils Community members	Sections 6.6.2.1 6.7.1.6
	Tourism	Councils Industry and industry groups	

THEME	INTEREST / ISSUES	STAKEHOLDERS	WHERE ADDRESSED
Visual amenity	Tourism and recreation areas	Councils Industry and interest groups	Sections 6.6.2.1 and 6.6.1.1
	Local towns	Councils Community members	
	Dwellings and horizon outlooks	Landholders	
Water	Water supply and management	Councils Landholders	Section 6.6.1.3
Workforce impacts	Accommodation demand	Councils	Sections 6.2.1.2 and 6.3.1.1
	Workforce behaviour		
	Impacts on services and facilities		

5 Social baseline

The social baseline has been prepared to understand the existing social environment and characteristics in the social locality. The social baseline has been targeted to ensure the data provided is relevant to proposal activities and scoped potential impacts.

Community profiles for the local and regional study areas used to compile the social baseline can be found in Appendix A.

A complete social infrastructure assessment can be found in Appendix B.

5.1 Regional setting

The regional study area comprises nine local government areas spanning the Far West and Riverina Murray regions in southern NSW. The following section provides a summary of each region and the LGAs which they encompass.

5.1.1 *Far West Region summary*

The proposal would traverse through the LGAs of Wentworth and Balranald, both located in the southern area of the Far West Region of NSW. The region covers 40 per cent of the state of NSW, from the Queensland border through to the Victorian border (DPIE, 2017). The region includes communities such as Lightning Ridge, Walgett, Cobar to the north, Broken Hill near the South Australian border and the Murray River townships of Wentworth and Balranald. Though the region is vast, it has a relatively small population. The region has the highest percentage of Aboriginal people compared to other regions in NSW.

The Far West Region's economy is centred primarily around the agricultural sector, with secondary contributions from mining in Broken Hill, Cobar, Wentworth and Balranald regions (NSW Government, 2020). The mining sector in these areas is a crucial employer of local people with residual benefits for the broader communities.

It is estimated that by 2036, the population profile of people aged over 65 years will increase by more than a third to approximately 11,950 people (or 34 per cent). The general health of the region's population is anticipated to decline due to chronic illness. This is especially the case for Aboriginal communities, where those conditions are more prevalent. The *Far West Regional Plan 2036* (DPIE, 2017) highlights the need to improve health care access, aged care and senior housing to meet future demands.

The majority of the population live in the region's only city of Broken Hill and the other townships of Bourke, Brewarrina, Cobar, Ivanhoe and Wentworth. Both Wentworth and Balranald LGAs are located in the southern area of the region known for their diverse agriculture (including grape, citrus and nuts) and connections to the Murray River and Victoria. Approximately 19 per cent of the region's population reside in the far south.

Both the townships of Wentworth and Balranald act as local centres for each LGA for business, retail, some health care and recreation for the surrounding smaller settlement and villages (DPIE, 2019). The southern area also has strong cross-border connections with Victoria, and people from the area can access higher-order health, education, retail, commercial and transport services in Mildura.

The southern far west provides a critical inland transport connection between Sydney, Melbourne, and Adelaide, supporting transport and freight links via the Silver City and Sturt highways. Regular passenger air services to Sydney, Melbourne, Broken Hill and Adelaide are available from Mildura.

5.1.1.1 Wentworth LGA

The Wentworth LGA is located in the far south west of NSW, with the Murray River and Victoria forming the southern border. Table 5-1 shows the population and dwelling counts over the previous decade in Wentworth LGA. Wentworth LGA has an estimated 2021 population of 6,900 people spread across approximately 26,269 square kilometres. The Darling and Murray rivers intersect the arid and semi-arid landscape, running north to south and east to west (Wentworth Shire Council, 2020). The Wentworth LGA has the highest proportion of Indigenous residents in the regional study area, accounting for 9.6 per cent of the population.

Table 5-1 Wentworth LGA population and dwelling counts

POPULATION			DWELLINGS		
Year	People	+/-	Year	Dwellings	+/-
2011	6,609		2011	3,039	
2016	6,794	+2.7%	2016	3,407	+10.8%
2021 (est.)	6,900	+1.5%	2021 (est)	3,452	+1.3%

Source: ABS (2011), ABS (2016) DPIE (2019)

The population of the Wentworth LGA has been increasing and is projected to continue to do so. However, like many regional LGAs, the population is ageing. With relatively limited local GP services, many residents rely on health and social services in Mildura, located on the other side of the Murray River. The LGA is experiencing overflow development from the city of Mildura, particularly the settlements of Buronga and Gol Gol (Wentworth Shire Council, 2020).

Wentworth is a highly agricultural LGA heavily reliant on water resources supplied by the Murray and Darling Rivers – irrigated horticulture accounts for over 80 per cent of agricultural output (Wentworth Shire Council, 2020). However, the LGA also hosts one of three major mineral sands resources in NSW. It has significant environmental and cultural assets such as Mungo National Park and the Willandra Lakes that are drawcards for tourism.

The proposal spans across the southern section of the LGA, in predominantly rural semi-arid landscapes.

Settlements within fifty kilometres of the proposal study area

Wentworth

Wentworth is a small border town of 1,221 people (ABS, 2016) and the administrative centre for the LGA of the same name. It lies at the confluence of Australia's two most important rivers, the Darling and the Murray, the latter forming the border with the state of Victoria to the south. The border with the state of South Australia lies approximately 100 kilometres to the west.

Buronga-Gol Gol

Buronga and Gol Gol are two towns located on the Murray River across from Mildura that form part of the Mildura-Buronga urban area. With 2,154 people in 2016 (ABS, 2016), the area is characterised by a relatively loose arrangement of urban and rural land uses, with some commercial activity at the junctions of the Sturt Highway and the Silver City Highway. The George Chaffey Bridge connects Buronga with Mildura, Victoria. While different towns, Buronga and Gol Gol collectively operate largely as a satellite suburb of the regional centre of Mildura.

5.1.1.2 Balranald LGA

The Balranald LGA covers 21,346 square kilometres and has an estimated 2021 population of 2,437 people. Table 5-2 shows the population and dwelling counts over the previous decade in Balranald LGA. With a population density of just 0.1 people per square kilometre, the LGA is the smallest in terms of population and least dense of all regional study area LGAs. The Balranald LGA is home to the second highest proportion of Indigenous residents of regional study area LGAs, accounting for 8.8 per cent of the population (ABS, 2016).

The Balranald LGA is located on the Murray, Murrumbidgee, Lachlan, Wakool and Edward Rivers, with water resources drawn from the Murray and Murrumbidgee Rivers supporting significant agricultural activities. Agricultural activities in the LGA are diversifying into new areas such as horticulture, viticulture, organic agriculture, and fruit and nut trees (Balranald Shire Council, 2020).

Located 850 kilometres south west of Sydney and 450 kilometres north of Melbourne, the Balranald LGA benefits from strong connections into South Australia via the Sturt Highway and into Victoria with the Murray Valley and Calder Highways linking the LGA to services in the Victorian city of Swan Hill and Mildura. The ‘Wool Track’ route from Balranald to Cobar, while not sealed, provides a direct connection from the LGA across the Far West region of NSW (Balranald Shire Council, 2020).

The proposal traverses across the southern extent of the LGA across rural and natural arid landscapes.

Table 5-2 Balranald LGA population and dwelling counts

POPULATION			DWELLINGS		
Year	People	+/-	Year	Dwellings	+/-
2011	2,283		2011	1,080	
2016	2,287	+0.2%	2016	1,221	+11.5%
2021 (est.)	2,437	+6.2%	2021 (est)	1,286	+5.1%

Source: ABS (2011), ABS (2016) DPIE (2019)

The Balranald LGA features few defined towns and is sparsely populated. The two townships within the LGA are Balranald and Euston, both located within 50 kilometres of the proposal site.

Settlements within fifty kilometres of the proposal study area

Euston

Situated between Mildura and Swan Hill on the Murray River, Euston sits on the NSW banks of the river and is closely interlinked with the Victorian town of Robinvale. With 510 people at the 2016 Census (ABS, 2016), Euston has developed a strong tourism industry based around recreation and environmental pursuits along the Murray River. Today one of the main industries in Euston is tourism, and the town experiences significant numbers of travellers moving through the area.

Balranald

Balranald is the main town and administrative centre within the LGA, and with a population of 1,159 at the 2016 Census (ABS, 2016), it accounted for nearly half of the LGA population. Balranald is located on the Murrumbidgee River, at the Stuart Highway crossing. Balranald is a regional transportation hub and service centre for interstate and regional freight and vehicle movements. The town has been experiencing increased Fly in-Fly out workforces and associated accommodation and service challenges due to the developing mineral sands projects occurring across the LGA.

Balranald is the location of a workforce accommodation camp and an identified service community for the SIA.

5.1.2 Riverina Murray Region

The Riverina Murray region encompasses the seven LGAs of Murray River, Edward River, Hay, Murrumbidgee, Federation, Lockhart and Wagga Wagga, all of which the proposal would traverse. It is located along the Victoria and Australian Capital Territory (ACT) borders and comprises the regional cities of Wagga Wagga, Albury and Griffith, and the regional centres of Deniliquin, Leeton and Tumut, which all provide services to the surrounding smaller townships and their communities (DPIE, 2017).

The Murrumbidgee and Murray Rivers traverse the region and provide a range of ecosystem, biodiversity and agricultural support services. The two rivers support productive agricultural lands, resulting in the region being one of Australia’s main food-producing regions.

Local people are largely employed across the manufacturing, health care and social assistance, and agricultural industries providing a diverse and multi-faceted primary production and service-based economy. Anticipated growth areas for the economy have been identified in freight and logistics, food and beverage manufacturing, agricultural products, education and health. This anticipated growth will be driven by advances in agricultural technology and productivity, new planned freight and transport connections, water trading and regulation impacts, and national and global economic conditions (Regional Development Australia, 2018).

The Riverina Murray is well connected to national and international markets via both the highway and heavy rail network. The development of Inland Rail, from Melbourne to Brisbane, will further enhance regional connectivity for freight and logistics, particularly to the Port of Melbourne, enhancing access to international markets for regional producers.

Wagga Wagga is the largest inland city in NSW and the largest in the regional study area. Wagga Wagga is anticipated to experience significant growth in the coming years. However, most LGAs across the Riverina and within the regional study area are expected to experience relatively constrained growth. This may change, though, due to the current Covid-19 induced boom in regional migration occurring across Australia due to increased digitization of work environments and people seeking improved lifestyle outcomes (Centre for Population, 2021).

Approximately 27 per cent of the region's population is expected to be aged 65 years and over by 2036. The change in population age profiles will put pressure on housing, jobs, and service and support needs of the region, particularly the demand for aged-related services and supporting health infrastructure and public transport needs (NSW Government, 2020).

5.1.2.1 Murray River LGA

The Murray River LGA was formed in 2016 out of the merger of Murray LGA with Wakool LGA, and today comprises 11,865 square kilometres spanning the Murray River, Victorian Border and significant hinterlands. Table 5-3 shows the population and dwelling counts over the previous ten years in Murray River LGA. The population was 11,680 people at the 2016 Census, with a significant aged population of over 25 per cent and growing due in part to the region's attractiveness for retirees (Murray River Council, 2020).

Table 5-3 Murray River LGA population and dwelling counts

POPULATION			DWELLINGS		
Year	People	+/-	Year	Dwellings	+/-
2011	10,919		2011	5,555	
2016	11,680	+6.5%	2016	6,113	+9.1%
2021 (est.)	12,018	+2.8%	2021 (est)	6,210	+1.6%

Source: ABS (2011), ABS (2016) DPIE (2019)

The Murray River LGA has well-established food and agricultural sectors associated with rich alluvial soils and many irrigation opportunities along the Murray River. However, the significant aged population has resulted in an expanding healthcare and social assistance sector, and the LGAs natural assets are well known tourism drawcards. The LGAs largest town and administrative centre, Moama, forms part of the Moama-Echuca urban area, a sizeable regional tourism and recreation centre for water sports and historical tourism (Murray River Council, 2020).

The population of the LGA is heavily concentrated in settlements and towns along the Murray River, and the LGA shares strong ties with adjunct Victorian towns and cities. Cross border communities, including Murray Downs (Swan Hill), Barham (Koondrook) and Moama (Echuca), operate together, with services, commerce, infrastructure, and employment provided on either side.

The proposal traverses across the northern reach of the LGA across sparsely populated grazing and farming land.

Major towns within Murray River LGA include the administrative centre of Moama, located on the Victorian border and the smaller towns of Barham, Mathoura and Moulmein. The nearest town to the proposal in the LGA is Moulamein (330 people), approximately 60 kilometres south.

5.1.2.2 Hay LGA

The Hay LGA comprises 11,326 square kilometres of what is generally regarded as one of Australia's best wool growing merino regions. Table 5-4 shows the populations and dwelling counts over the previous ten years in Hay LGA. With an estimated 2021 population of 2,863 people, the LGA is experiencing a declining and ageing population. Current population trends pose a range of service issues for the LGA, with an ageing population, high life expectancy, and a high number of people wanting to stay in the region not being met with sufficient health and service infrastructure (Hay Shire Council, 2020).

Table 5-4 Hay LGA population and dwelling counts

POPULATION			DWELLINGS		
Year	People	+/-	Year	Dwellings	+/-
2011	2,956		2011	1,552	
2016	2,945	-0.4%	2016	1,647	5.8%
2021 (est.)	2,863	-2.9%	2021 (est)	1,618	-1.8%

Source: ABS (2011), ABS (2016) DPIE (2019)

The LGA has a robust and diverse agricultural sector, including cattle and irrigated crops supported by the Murrumbidgee River. A wide variety of fruit and vegetables are grown, picked and packaged in Hay, with the LGA leading the Riverina region in safflower, lettuce and broccoli production. Hay has become a significant rice producer in recent years, with the crop often responsible for a significant portion of the LGA's rural income.

Serviced by the Sturt, Mid-Western and Cobb Highways, Hay Shire is well connected to regional and national markets for primary producers. However, these connections have also increased domestic tourist numbers in recent years, which has supported economic diversification in the hospitality and retail sectors. This diversification has created a range of employment and business opportunities in the private and government sector.

The proposal traverses through rural and productive agricultural lands nearby to the southern boundary of the LGA.

The main townships in the LGA include Hay's largest town and administrative centre and the villages of Booligal and Maude. Hay is located within 50 kilometres of the proposal.

Settlements within fifty kilometres of the proposal study area

Hay

As the administrative centre of the LGA, Hay is the centre of the region's agricultural and service industries. Built on the banks of the Murrumbidgee River, Hay was home to 2,316 people at the 2016 Census, which accounts for over three-quarters of the LGA population.

Located approximately midway between Sydney and Adelaide at the junction of the Sturt, Cobb and Mid-Western Highways, Hay is an important regional and national transport node.

Hay is located approximately 40 kilometres north of the Cobb Highway workforce accommodation camp and is an identified service community for this SIA.

5.1.2.3 Edward River LGA

The Edward River LGA was formed in 2016 out of the merger of the Deniliquin LGA with the Conargo LGA. Table 5-5 shows the population and dwelling counts for Edward River LGA over the previous ten years. The estimated 2021 population of 8,844 people reside across the administrative centre of Deniliquin, six rural villages of Blighty, Booroorban, Conargo, Mayrung, Pretty Pine and Wanganella and surrounding pastoral and cropping areas.

Table 5-5 Edward River LGA population and dwelling counts

POPULATION			DWELLINGS		
Year	People	+/-	Year	Dwellings	+/-
2011	2,956		2011	1,552	
2016	2,945	-0.4%	2016	1,647	5.8%
2021 (est.)	2,863	-2.9%	2021 (est)	1,618	-1.8%

Source: ABS (2011), ABS (2016) DPIE (2019)

The population is heavily concentrated in the south of the LGA, supported by flows from the Edward River. The 8,881 square kilometre area covers one of the most productive irrigation areas in NSW, with both dryland and irrigated agricultural activities occurring across Edward River LGA.

Deniliquin is economically and socially important to the broader region beyond the town boundaries. The town acts as a regional service centre drawing people from surrounding villages, the Berrigan LGA and Murray River LGA. Deniliquin is located approximately 80 kilometres from the proposal.

Local and regional railway freight networks operate from Deniliquin, linking with Tocumwal (Vic), Wakool, Moulamein (Murray River Council) and Swan Hill (Vic). Grain haulage, bulk and interstate haulage and general freight are available to the major ports of Melbourne and Geelong.

The proposal traverses through semi-arid landscapes in the north of the LGA.

There are no designated towns within 50 kilometres of the proposal in the Edward River LGA. However, the village of Booroorban is located approximately 15 kilometres south of the proposal along the Cobb Highway. The village had a population of 33 people at the 2016 Census and features a RFS brigade, community hall and the historical Royal Mail Hotel, operating since 1868.

5.1.2.4 Murrumbidgee LGA

Formed in 2016 out of the merger of Murrumbidgee LGA and Jerilderie LGA, the Murrumbidgee LGA today comprises 6,880 square kilometres of productive agricultural lands. Table 5-6 shows the population and dwelling counts for Murrumbidgee LGA over the previous ten years. The LGA has an estimated 2021 population of 3,882, of which approximately 93 per cent are based in the towns of Coleambally, Darlington Point and Jerilderie.

Table 5-6 Murrumbidgee LGA population and dwelling counts

POPULATION			DWELLINGS		
Year	People	+/-	Year	Dwellings	+/-
2011	3,757		2011	1,876	
2016	3,836	+2.1%	2016	1,999	+6.2%
2021 (est.)	3,882	+1.2%	2021 (est)	2,038	+1.9%

Source: ABS (2011), ABS (2016) DPIE (2019)

Like many regional study area LGAs, the Murrumbidgee LGA hosts a thriving primary production sector including sheep, cattle, wheat, corn, winter cereal, rice, horticulture, poultry and egg production, and timber milling and food processing, with a growing interest in solar farm and biomass projects.

The LGA also features over 100 kilometres of natural river frontage to the Murrumbidgee River, which supports a growing tourism sector.

The Murrumbidgee LGA also exhibits a relatively high indigenous population (7.5 per cent). Several Aboriginal-owned or led organisations have established themselves in the LGA, including Tirkandi Innaburra Cultural Development Centre NSW in Coleambally and Waddi Housing and Advancement Corporation in Darlington Point. These organisations seek to increase Aboriginal outcomes through a range of culturally appropriate social support services.

As noted above, the three main towns in the Murrumbidgee LGA are Coleambally, Jerilderie and Darlington Point. Of these, Jerilderie and Coleambally are located within 50 kilometres of the proposal.

Settlements within fifty kilometres of the proposal study area

Jerilderie

Jerilderie is a town of 881 people at the 2016 Census, located on the Newell Highway approximately 45 kilometres from the Victorian border in the south of the Murrumbidgee LGA.

The town is a rural service centre and highway town and offers health and social services for surrounding rural residents. The town experiences a constant flow of traffic and visitors due to the Newell Highway, which is the primary inland road linking Victoria, NSW and Queensland.

Jerilderie is located approximately 35 kilometres from the Dinawan Camp and is an identified service community for this SIA.

Coleambally

Coleambally, located off Kidman Way, is a fully planned community established in 1968 to service the Coleambally Irrigation Area. The town had a population of 660 people and features a range of community facilities and services to support surrounding populations and a range of agricultural support services.

Coleambally is located approximately 30 kilometres from the Dinawan construction compound and accommodation camp and is an identified service community for this SIA.

5.1.2.5 Federation LGA

The Federation LGA was formed in 2016 out of the merger of Corowa LGA with Urana LGA. Today the LGA comprises 5,685 square kilometres bounded by the Murray River and Victoria to the south. It includes the urban areas of Corowa and Mulwala and the surrounding cropping and pastoral region to the north.

Table 5-7 shows the population and dwelling counts for Federation LGA over the previous ten years. The LGA has an estimated 2021 population of 12,006, most of whom reside in Corowa, Mulwala and Howlong in the southern section of the LGA near the Murray River. The Federation LGA is experiencing an aging population and a declining population, with DPIE projecting an almost 2,000-person reduction in population over the next 25 years. The Federation LGA also has the lowest proportion of Aboriginal residents in the regional study area, at 1.7 per cent.

Table 5-7 Federation LGA population and dwelling counts

POPULATION			DWELLINGS		
Year	People	+/-	Year	Dwellings	+/-
2011	12,159		2011	6,282	
2016	12,277	+1.0%	2016	6,573	+4.4%
2021 (est.)	12,006	-2.3%	2021 (est)	6,422	-2.4%

Source: ABS (2011), ABS (2016) DPIE (2019)

The Federation LGA is primarily a rural shire with established Murray River-based tourism and extensive agriculture industry. Major industries include agricultural machinery sales and services, munitions production, military facilities, cropping, food processing and tourism. The LGA benefits from strong freight and highway links to major cities, with journey times averaging three hours from Melbourne, four hours from Canberra, and six hours from Sydney.

The proposal traverses productive agricultural land in the mid-north section of the LGA.

There are no proposed accommodation camps for the proposal in the Federation LGA, however, there are two small towns located within 50 kilometres of the proposal.

Settlements within fifty kilometres of the proposal study area

Urana

Urana is a small town and rural service centre of 298 people at the 2016 Census, located between Lockhart and Jerilderie. Urana was the administrative centre of the former Urana LGA and features several services and community facilities, including health service and the Urana Aquatic Centre. The town sits nearby Lake Urana.

Oaklands

Oaklands is a town of 227 people in the central Federation LGA area supporting surrounding primary producers. The town is a small rural community with limited services and facilities.

5.1.2.6 Lockhart LGA

The Lockhart LGA is an agricultural shire located nearby to some of NSW's largest regional centres. At 2,895 square kilometres, the LGA is one of the region's most productive agricultural and pastoral areas, with 90 per cent of Lockhart LGA being designated as important agricultural land.

Table 5-8 shows the population and dwelling counts for Lockhart LGA over the previous ten years. Home to an estimated 2021 population of 3,200 people, the Lockhart LGA is heavily influenced by nearby Wagga Wagga through employment and access to higher-level goods and services. There is a growing number of residents who work in Wagga Wagga yet reside in Lockhart or The Rock for its affordable rural residential and community lifestyles.

Table 5-8 Lockhart LGA population and dwelling counts

POPULATION			DWELLINGS		
Year	People	+/-	Year	Dwellings	+/-
2011	2,998		2011	1,334	
2016	3,113	+3.7%	2016	1,498	+10.9%
2021 (est.)	3,200	+2.7%	2021 (est)	1,542	+2.9%

Source: ABS (2011), ABS (2016) DPIE (2019)

Over 40 per cent of the workforce is employed in agriculture, and the economy is highly reliant on primary industries supported by several secondary and service industries.

The proposal traverses highly productive agricultural land across the centre of Lockhart LGA, with much of the alignment nearby to or adjacent existing high voltage transmission lines.

There are two towns in the LGA within 50 kilometres of the proposal, Lockhart, the administrative centre for the LGA, and The Rock.

Settlements within fifty kilometres of the proposal study area

Lockhart

Lockhart is a historical agricultural town of 818 people at the 2016 Census. The town centre is listed by the National Trust as an intact example of a typical turn of the century architecture and is a tourism drawcard. The town offers several local-level community services and retail. However, relative proximity to Wagga Wagga means many residents travel to the city for higher-level needs.

Lockhart is located approximately 10 kilometres from the proposed Lockhart main construction compound and accommodation camp and is identified as a service community for this SIA. Lockhart is also the closest town to the proposal at approximately 1.6 kilometres to the nearest residential zoned land located on the outskirts of the town, and approximately 2.1 kilometres from the historic town centre.

The Rock

The Rock is located on the Olympic Highway between Wagga Wagga and Albury and the Main South Line connecting Melbourne and Sydney via freight and passenger rail. The town had 887 people in 2016. It serves as a freight gateway for the LGA. Like Lockhart, The Rock features a number of local level services; however, the relative proximity to Wagga Wagga means that most residents would travel to the city for higher-level needs.

5.1.2.7 Wagga Wagga LGA

The Wagga Wagga LGA covers 4,825 square kilometres. Table 5-9 shows the population and dwelling counts for Wagga Wagga LGA over the previous ten years. With an estimated 2021 population of 66,135, the LGA features significant rural and agricultural areas outside of the main urban area. The LGA has a relatively high proportion of Aboriginal residents (5.6 per cent) and is experiencing significant population growth that is forecast to continue.

Table 5-9 Wagga Wagga LGA population and dwelling counts

POPULATION			DWELLINGS		
Year	People	+/-	Year	Dwellings	+/-
2011	59,458		2011	24,682	
2016	62,385	+4.7%	2016	26,096	+5.4%
2021 (est.)	66,135	+5.7%	2021 (est)	29,050	10.2%

Source: ABS (2011), ABS (2016) DPIE (2019)

The Wagga Wagga LGA has the most diverse economy of all regional study area communities, requisite of its role as a regional service hub. The LGA hosts a range of services and facilities to support surrounding regional populations, including all levels of health and education services, commercial and retail developments, and regional scale recreation and sporting facilities.

The LGA is located midway between Sydney and Melbourne and is strategically connected to the interstate freight and passenger rail and state highway networks. Freight connections for the LGA will be further enhanced in coming years with the completion of Inland Rail, linking Wagga Wagga with Brisbane and regional Queensland.

The main town and LGA namesake is Wagga Wagga, of which the central business district is located ten kilometres north of the proposal. The satellite town of Uranquinty is also located proximal to the proposal.

Settlements within fifty kilometres of the proposal study area

Wagga Wagga

Wagga Wagga is the administrative centre of the LGA. Located on the banks of the Murrumbidgee River, with an urban population of 48,263 people in 2016, Wagga Wagga is NSW's largest inland city, and is an important education, health, commerce and logistics hub for the wider Riverina region.

The city is host to a large retail and entertainment sector, and as the host of a university and several Defence facilities, experiences significant transient and temporary populations.

Wagga Wagga would host some of the proposal workforce in existing accommodation options and is identified as a service community for this SIA.

Uranquinty

Uranquinty is a small town of 770 people located 15 kilometres from Wagga Wagga. The town is located on the Olympic Highway and acts as a satellite settlement of Wagga Wagga. The town features lower-level services such as a school and some retail options; however, most residents travel to Wagga Wagga for general retail and community services.

5.2 Local study area

The local study area comprises several SA1 units that intersect with the proposal study area. As SA1's are geographically scaled according to population, and the local study area is sparsely populated, the SA1s in the local study area cover a vast geographical area. As such, local study area population characteristics noted in the social baseline do not provide an exact picture of those most likely to be affected by the proposal. However, the data does provide a more refined overview of the rural population along the alignment, nearby to substations, construction compounds and most accommodation camps by excluding those that reside in towns.

The local study area comprises approximately 62,747 square kilometres, spanning nine LGAs and had a population of 5,354 people, living in 1,986 occupied dwellings at the 2016 Census (ABS, 2016). The population density of 0.08 people per square kilometre sits well below NSW (9.8) and Australia (3.2), demonstrating a heavily dispersed rural population.

Land use across the local study area ranges from large scale grazing properties, interspaced with riparian corridors and seasonal lagoons in the west to intensive broadacre cropping and agricultural properties to the east. The intensification of agricultural activities from west to east corresponds with smaller, more fragmented properties and slightly increasing population density.

5.3 Key findings by indicator

The following section describes the key findings of the social baseline aligned with each of the social impact categories for communities across the area of social influence. Compiling and analysing socio-economic and demographic characteristics under the social impact categories offers an understanding of critical social trends at each level of the social locality to assess the community's strengths and vulnerabilities.

5.3.1 Way of life

5.3.1.1 Household composition

Household composition across the social locality is relatively consistent, with household types generally in line with regional study area averages. Figure 5-1 shows the household profile for the social locality. Key variations of interest include:

- The local study area exhibits a significantly higher proportion of Other household types (14.1 per cent, Regional Study area: 9.3 per cent, NSW: 6 per cent) and a lower proportion of Lone Person households (18 per cent, Regional Study Area: 30.1 per cent, NSW: 22.4 per cent). This is likely attributed to the highly dispersed agricultural nature of the local study area, with households more likely to be multi-generational or include additional workers to support agricultural activities.
- The Wagga Wagga LGA had a relatively high proportion of Group Households (4.2 per cent) compared to the regional study area (3.2 per cent). Likely due to the presence of the Charles Sturt University Campus in the LGA, with students seeking share type accommodation.
- All regional study area LGAs exhibit comparatively higher proportions of lone person households than the state average (regional study area 27.7 per cent, NSW: 23.8 per cent), with Hay LGA the highest at 34.9 per cent. This aligns with commentary from strategic planning documents and consultation with councils noting the trend of an aging population across the region.

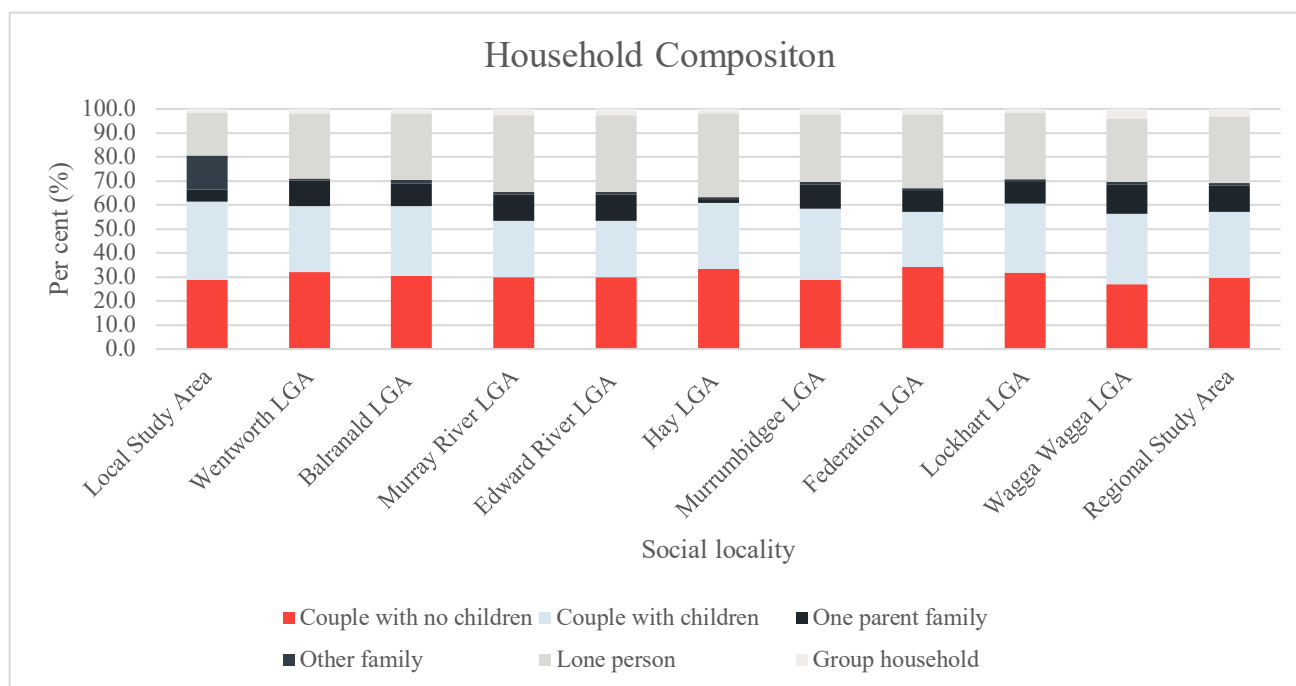


Figure 5-1 Household composition

5.3.1.2 Regional transport networks

The proposal traverses primarily rural/agricultural land use across a sparsely populated region. As such, local unsealed private and public access roads would serve most access requirements during construction and operational maintenance phases.

This section provides an overview of transportation networks relevant to the proposal from a social impact perspective, i.e. those that provide vital regional connections for people and goods.

Key roads

The social locality is serviced by an extensive network of state, regional and local roads that support the movement of people and freight. Requisite of rural areas, residents would rely on the road network to access essential services in towns across the region. Primary producers would also be highly reliant on the road network for access to markets and operational supplies.

State roads

State Roads are all managed by the NSW Government and are built to a higher standard with sealed pavement to cater for a high number of passenger and heavy vehicle movements. The speed limit of State Road is generally 100 or 110 km/h, then drops down to 80 km/h when approaching towns and further reduces to 50 or 60 km/h within towns.

State Roads are primarily for the high-speed movement of people and freight across regions and cycling and pedestrian activity is limited and discouraged.

Table 5-10 details State Roads in the social locality likely to be utilised and/or affected by the proposal.

Table 5-10 State Roads in the social locality relevant to the proposal

ROAD	TRANSECTS PROPOSAL	REGIONAL STUDY AREA LGA'S	DETAILS
Sturt Highway (A20), including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">— Edward Street (Wagga Wagga)— Hammond Avenue (Wagga Wagga)— Market Street (Balranald)— Moama Street (Hay)	Yes	Wentworth, Balranald	The Sturt Highway in NSW is a major east-west road through the Murray-Riverina region catering for passenger vehicles and heavy vehicles. The highway connects Sydney to Adelaide and is part of the national highway network. Sturt Highway is a sealed highway with one lane in each direction in a generally east-west alignment.
Cobb Highway (B75) including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">— Hay Road (Deniliquin)— Davidson Street (Deniliquin)— Charlotte Street (Deniliquin)— Ochertyre Street (Deniliquin)— Hardinge Street (Deniliquin)	Yes	Hay, Edward River	The Cobb Highway is 571 km long and extends from Moama on the Victorian border to the Barrier Highway near Wilcannia in North-Western NSW.
Newell Highway (A39) including <ul style="list-style-type: none">— Jerilderie Street (Jerilderie)— Southey Street (Jerilderie)	Yes	Murrumbidgee, Federation	The Newell Highway is a State Highway and is the longest highway in NSW, stretching over 1,060 km from the Victorian border at Tocumwal to the Queensland border at Goondiwindi.

ROAD	TRANSECTS PROPOSAL	REGIONAL STUDY AREA LGA'S	DETAILS
Olympic Highway (A41), including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Colin Knott Drive (Wagga Wagga) — Moorong Street (Wagga Wagga) — Railway Street (The Rock) 	Yes	Wagga Wagga	The Olympic Highway is a north-south route from Albury on the Victorian Border to Wagga Wagga. The highway also continues from Wagga through Cowra and Bathurst to Sydney. It is an alternate highway connection between Sydney and Albury in the event of disruptions on the Hume Freeway.
Riverina Highway (B58), including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Finley Road (Deniliquin) — Honour Avenue (Federation) 	No	Federation, Edward River	Riverina Highway is a 220 km long state road which connects Hume highway to the east and Cobb Highway to the west in an east-west alignment. It runs through some major towns such as Deniliquin, Finley, Berrigan, Corowa, and Albury.
Yanga Way	Yes	Balranald, Edward River	The connection between Balranald and the Victorian border.
Kidman Way	Yes	Murrumbidgee	The 644 km route starts in Jerilderie and aligns north-south through to the Murrumbidgee River alongside Darlington Point, then onward to Griffith and Hillston.

Regional roads

Regional Roads support State Roads by connecting smaller towns to the State Road network. These roads serve a vital economic and social role for sometimes isolated regional communities by being the primary connection for people and goods to larger service centres. Speed limits on regional roads in the social locality vary widely, from 50 kilometres an hour through towns and settlements to 100 kilometres an hour in rural areas.

There are 40 Regional Roads (listed in Appendix C) that would be used to service proposal related requirements including haulage. A detailed list of these roads is provided in the EnergyConnect (NSW – Eastern Section) Traffic and Transport Impact Assessment (WSP, 2021).

All forty Regional Roads are sealed, except for Maude Road in the Hay LGA, which is partially unsealed. However, the quality of roads varies with twenty of the roads having unsealed shoulders which are not uniformed and can have debris and drop offs causing hazards for drivers.

Local roads

Local roads traditionally carry relatively low volumes of traffic and have varied speed limits depending on the surrounding land use and road condition. There are 125 local roads that would be utilised by the proposal (listed in Appendix C). Fifty of these roads are unsealed.

Public transport

Coach services are available for the towns near the proposal, including the service communities of Buronga, Balranald, Hay, Jerilderie and Lockhart. Rail services are available to Wagga Wagga and the larger regional centre of Narrandera to the north of the regional study area.

These form part of Transport for NSW's Regional Train and Coaches Network, which generally runs an infrequent return trip once daily or several times a week only. The network map is shown in Figure 5-2 and the route services and frequencies are detailed in Table 5-11.

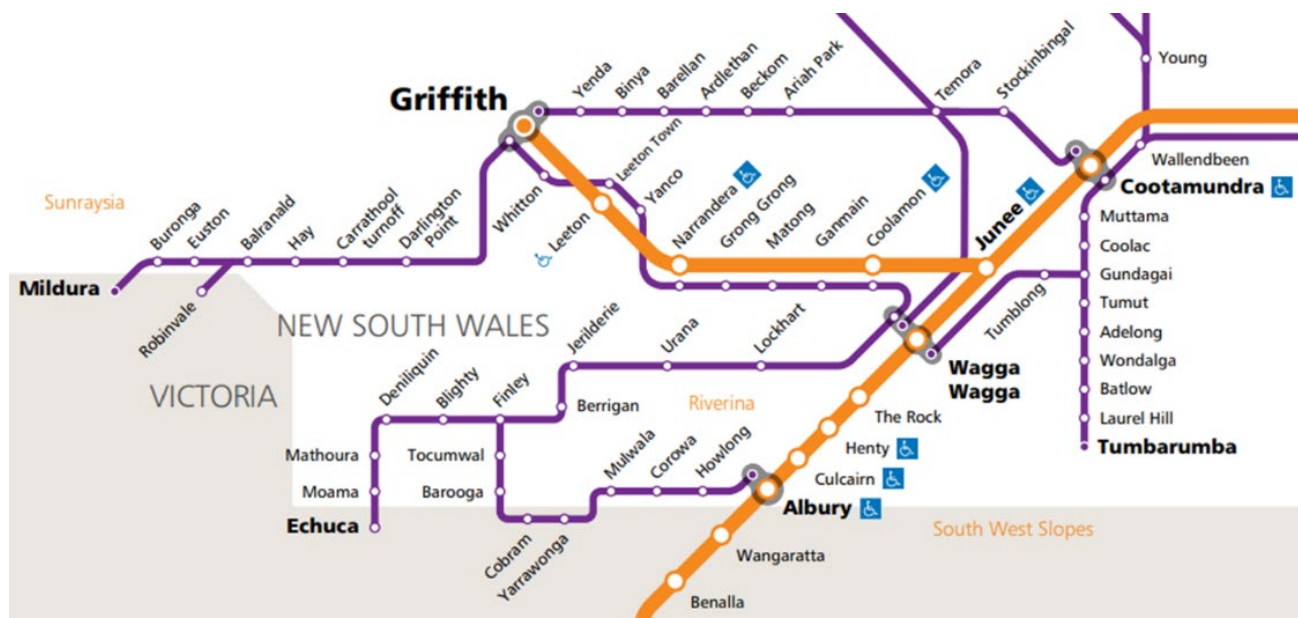


Figure 5-2 Transport for NSW Regional Train and Coaches Network

Table 5-11 Bus services within the vicinity of the proposal

NUMBER	ROUTE	SERVICE COMMUNITY AFFECTED	NETWORK AND OPERATOR	SERVICE FREQUENCY
725	Cootamundra to Mildura	Balranald, Hay	Regional Coaches Network	Once daily
726	Mildura to Cootamundra	Balranald, Hay	Regional Coaches Network	Once daily
733	Wagga Wagga to Echuca	Lockhart, Jerilderie, Wagga Wagga	Regional Coaches Network	Once daily on Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Sunday
734	Echuca to Wagga Wagga	Lockhart, Jerilderie, Wagga Wagga	Regional Coaches Network	Once daily on Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Sunday

Source: Transport for NSW (2021)

Air connections

Across the regional study area, there are four private aerodromes and two small airports. These include:

- Wentworth Aerodrome and Pooncarie Aerodrome in Wentworth LGA
- Balranald Aerodrome in Balranald LGA
- Deniliquin Airport in Edward River LGA
- Hay Aerodrome in Hay LGA
- Corowa Airport in Federation LGA.

The largest and closest regional airport in the regional study area is Wagga Wagga Airport. The airport is one of the busiest regional airports in the state (Wagga Wagga Airport, 2019). Prior to Covid-19, the airport provided up to 11 flights per week to and from Wagga Wagga; to Sydney, Melbourne and Albury, with most flights scheduled Monday through Friday via commercial airlines of REX and Qantas.

The Wentworth and Balranald LGAs are located proximal to Mildura Airport, located in Mildura, Victoria. The Airport is the second busiest airport in Victoria behind Melbourne International. It is serviced by Rex, Qantas and Virgin Australia providing connections to Adelaide, Broken Hill, Sydney, and Melbourne.

The Murrumbidgee LGA is serviced by the nearby Griffith City Airport, a small regional airport close to the Darlington Point township. REX services the airport with daily flights to and from Sydney and by Sharp Airlines with daily flights (excluding Saturday) to Melbourne (Essendon Fields), Victoria (Griffith City Airport, 2020).

The Lockhart LGA and Federation LGAs are also serviced by Albury Airport which offers approximately 60 services per week to and from Sydney and Melbourne.

5.3.1.3 Journey to work

Journey to work patterns align with the heavily agricultural land use and dispersed development patterns across the social locality. Overall, the data shows a heavy reliance on motor vehicles across the regional study area to access employment. Key highlights include:

- In the local study area, 53.8 per cent of employed residents travelled to work by car or truck, and 31.1 per cent of residents worked from home (Regional study area: 9.5 per cent, NSW: 4.87 per cent). The high rate of working from home aligns with the agricultural land uses common across the local study area.
- Across the regional study area, 69.6 per cent of employed people travelled to work by car compared to 62.1 per cent for NSW.
- The regional study area had nearly double the rate of people who walked to work (6.6 per cent) compared to NSW (3.9 per cent)—likely attributed to the relatively small size of towns across the region, making walking a viable option for residents to get to work.

5.3.2 Community

This section looks to understand the values, identity, diversity and gendered relations within a community. The following data looks at the core demographic characteristics of social locality populations and the way they interact.

5.3.2.1 Gender

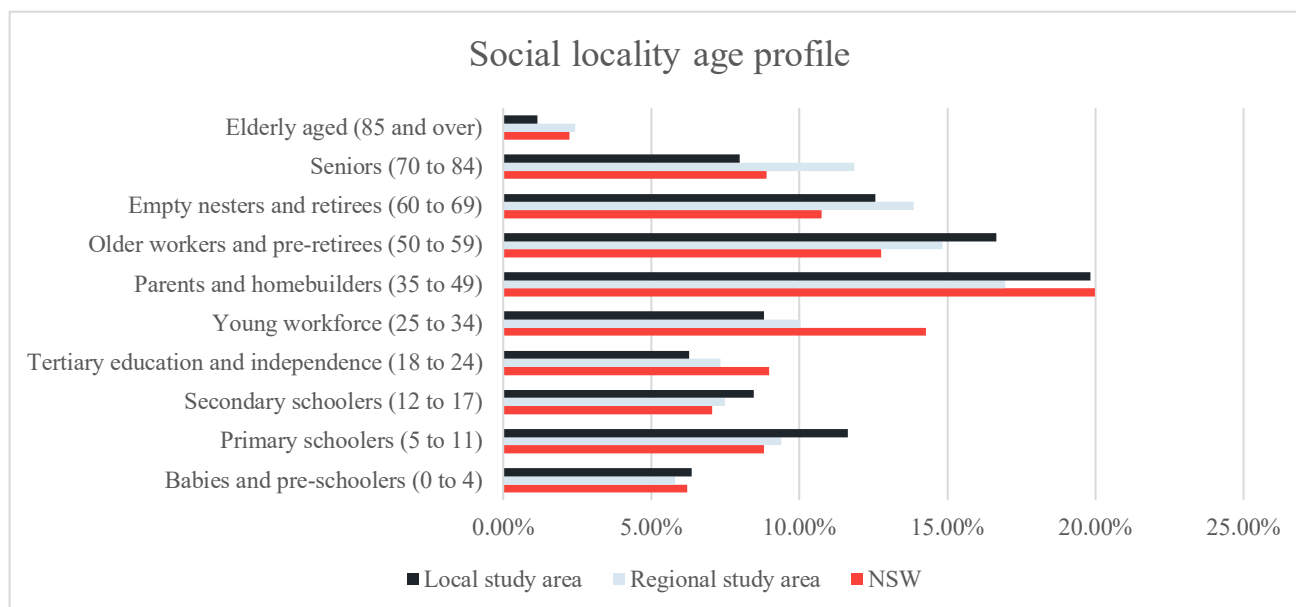
There are no significant variations in sex across the social locality, including service communities. The local study area has a slightly higher proportion of males (52.7 per cent) above the NSW rate (49.3 per cent). It can likely be attributed to the agricultural workforces across the area, which are more commonly male.

Within identified service communities, there is a relatively even balance of males and females, with Lockhart exhibiting the highest imbalance at 52.3 per cent female/47.7 per cent male.

5.3.2.2 Age profile

As noted in Section 5.1, all regional study area LGAs, except for Wagga Wagga LGA, are experiencing an aging population. This is reflected by high median ages, large proportions of older residents and a low proportion of younger residents. The local study area median age of 42 and the regional study area median age of 44 are higher than the NSW median age of 38.

Figure 5-3 compares the age profile for local and regional study areas with that of NSW.



Source: ABS 2016 Census of People and Households, Profile.id – the population experts Service Age Groups

Figure 5-3 Age profile of the social locality

Key age characteristic of note includes:

- The local and regional study areas exhibit significantly higher proportions of persons aged over 50 years when compared to NSW. However, the proportion of those aged over 70 years in the local study area decreases significantly, suggesting elderly residents leave their rural properties to relocate closer to health and social services in towns.
- There is a notable decrease in the tertiary education and independence and young workforce categories in the local and regional study area. This suggests that young people leave the region seeking education and employment opportunities in larger towns and urban areas.
- The local study area has relatively high rates of primary and secondary school-aged people, suggesting residents would be highly reliant on the road network to access education facilities in towns across the region. Balranald and Murrumbidgee LGAs have the highest proportion of children 5–11.

5.3.2.3 Population growth

Population change across the regional study is anticipated to be experienced differently by each LGA. Table 5-12 shows population projections for regional study area LGAs through to 2041. All LGAs except for Balranald LGA (+855 people), Murray River LGA (+890 people) and Wagga Wagga LGA (+7,365) are anticipated to decrease in population through a mixture of natural change and migration.

Edward River LGA (-908 people) and Federation LGA (-2,170 people) area anticipated to experience the most significant decrease in population, primarily due to migration.

Decreasing and aging populations will pose challenges for many regional study area councils, as increased demand for social and community aged support services is being met with a shrinking rate base.

Table 5-12 Population projections for the regional study area

LGA	2016 POPULATION	NATURAL CHANGE	NET MIGRATION (ALL SOURCES)	GROWTH 2016-2041	2041 POPULATION
Wentworth	6,932	129	-582	-453	6,479
Balranald	2,330	467	388	855	3,185
Murray River	11,872	-529	1,419	890	12,762
Hay	2,984	-11	-570	-581	2,403
Edward River	8,991	-167	-741	-908	8,083
Murrumbidgee	3,929	104	-257	-153	3,776
Federation	12,445	-838	-1,332	-2,170	10,275
Lockhart	3,173	-83	20	-63	3,110
Wagga Wagga	63,906	7,155	210	7,365	71,271
Regional Study Area:	116,562	6,227	-1445	4,782	121,344

Source: Population, Household and Implied Dwelling Projections by LGA, DPIE (2020)

5.3.2.4 Volunteering

Regional study area communities all have a high proportion of residents participating in voluntary work, reflecting a commitment to the local community, an important factor in building community cohesion. The local study area (26.9 per cent) and the regional study area (27 per cent) both exhibited higher proportions of the population that undertake volunteer work than the NSW average (18.1 per cent). This indicates that residents likely seek out volunteer opportunities with organisations located in towns across the region as a way of maintaining social connection and overcoming potential social isolation that can occur when living in rural areas.

Of the regional study area LGAs, Lockhart LGA (34.7 per cent), Balranald LGA (30.7 per cent), and Murrumbidgee LGA (28.7 per cent) had the highest volunteer rates.

5.3.2.5 Household mobility

The social locality communities are well established and stable, with household mobility rates across the local and regional study area significantly lower than NSW. 57.6 per cent of the local study area and 58 per cent of regional study area households had no residents aged five years and over that had changed address over the last five years (NSW: 38.8 per cent).

Wagga Wagga LGA shows the highest rate of those residents with a different usual address five years ago (43.25 per cent), which suggests that the LGA has the most transient population across the regional study area. This could be due to residents moving to the area for work (Defence and Health facilities) and higher education (Charles Sturt University).

The eight other LGAs show a high proportion of households within one to two per cent of the regional study area average where no resident changed address in the last five years, reflecting relatively low community change.

5.3.3 Accessibility

Given the highly dispersed nature of development across the region, most social infrastructure is in larger towns and villages that act as hubs for rural residents. A complete social infrastructure assessment is provided in Appendix B, which details the provision of all community infrastructure and services located across the regional study area.

This section has been tailored to focus on social infrastructure that may be required to successfully deliver the proposal or may experience potential user impacts during the construction program. These being:

- Healthcare – to support workforce and community health during construction.
- Emergency services – in the event of a major event or to manage workforce behaviour.
- Short term accommodation – to house workers before the development of workforce accommodation camps.
- Mobile phone coverage – for social connectivity and essential communications.
- Community infrastructure – to support workforce leisure pursuits.

5.3.3.1 Health care

On average, Australians living in rural and remote areas have shorter lives, higher levels of disease and injury and poorer access to and use of health services compared with people living in metropolitan areas. (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2019). Generally, local and regional study area residents living outside of larger towns would have to travel long distances to access health care.

Table 5-13 shows the capacity of hospitals in the regional study area. Each LGA has access to a local hospital of varying sizes and in line with the LGA population. While there are smaller hospitals in the Wentworth, Murray River and Murrumbidgee LGAs, residents likely utilise larger regional hospitals in Mildura (Wentworth), Echuca (Murray River) and Griffith (Murrumbidgee) that provide higher-level health care needs. Wagga Wagga is a regional health care hub and provides all levels of health care services for residents across the Riverina-Murray region.

Table 5-13 Hospitals in the regional study area

LGA	SERVICE NAME	CAPACITY (BEDS)	SERVICE TYPE
Wentworth LGA	Wentworth Health Service	15	Hospital
Balranald LGA	Balranald Health Service	27	Multi-purpose Service Hospital
Murray River LGA	Barham Multipurpose Service	6	Hospital
Edward River LGA	Deniliquin Health Service	41	Hospital
Hay LGA	Hay Health Service	28	Hospital
Murrumbidgee LGA	Jerilderie Multipurpose Service	15	Hospital
Federation LGA	Corowa Health Service	53	Hospital
Lockhart LGA	Lockhart Multipurpose Service	20	Hospital
Wagga Wagga LGA	Wagga Wagga Health Service	325	Hospital

Source: *Our Facilities (MLHD, 2021)*, *Our Facilities (FWLHD, 2021)*

The social infrastructure assessment in Appendix B also details a range of primary care options, such as GPs located across the regional study area. Key highlights include:

- There are three Aboriginal Health Clinics located across the regional study area in Dareton, Balranald and Hay.
- Edward River LGA has the Deniliquin Specialist Community Mental Health Drug and Alcohol Service.
- Hay LGA has only one GP service, but this reflects a smaller population of under 3,000 people.
- The Oaklands Medical Centre is an upcoming project for General Practitioner services between Urana and Oaklands.
- The Wagga Wagga city is considered a health hub that services regional study area communities. There are approximately 47 specialists' centres and 17 GP services in the area. Wagga Wagga also has one private hospital and private day surgery which services the area and surrounds.

5.3.3.2 Emergency services

Core to the provision of emergency services is response time. The social infrastructure assessment in Appendix B details all emergency services located in the regional study area.

Table 5-14 summarises the list of emergency services located within 50 kilometres of the proposal. Generally, there is adequate provision of emergency services within proximity to the proposal, capable of responding to issues within approximately half an hour.

There are, however, no emergency services located within 50 kilometres of the proposal in the Murray River and Edward River LGAs, which may result in longer response times in the event of an emergency. However, the proposal area within these LGAs is within 50 kilometres of the towns of Balranald and Hay, which may mitigate any delayed response times.

Table 5-14 Emergency services located within 50 kilometres of the proposal

SERVICE	ADDRESS
Wentworth LGA	
Wentworth Police Station	74 Darling St, Wentworth
Buronga Police Station	2/4 Chapman St, Buronga
Dareton Police Station	52 Sturt Pl, Dareton
NSW Wentworth Fire Station	82 Adams St, Wentworth
Wentworth Ambulance Station	41-45 Armstrong Ave, Wentworth
NSW Rural Fire Service Wentworth	58-60 Mitchell Ave, Dareton
Balranald LGA	
Balranald Police Station	Market St, Balranald NSW
Fire and Rescue NSW Balranald Fire Station	123 Market St, Balranald
Balranald Ambulance Station	47 Court Street, Balranald
NSW RFS Balranald Fire Station	45 Market St, Balranald
Murray River LGA	
No emergency services within 50 kilometres	
Edward River LGA	
No emergency services within 50 kilometres	

SERVICE	ADDRESS
Hay LGA	
Hay Police Station	412 Moppet Street, Moppett St, Hay
Fire and Rescue NSW Hay Fire Station	380 Macauley St, Hay
Hay Ambulance Station	351 Murray St, Hay
Murrumbidgee LGA	
Coleambally Police Station	Corner of Brolga Pl and Kookaburra Ave, Coleambally
Coleambally Ambulance Station	48-50 Kingfisher St, Coleambally
Jerilderie Ambulance Station	31 Southey St, Jerilderie
Coleambally Rural Fire Brigade	Coleambally
Federation LGA	
Urana Police Station	9/11 William St, Urana
Lockhart LGA	
Lockhart Police Station	59 Green St, Lockhart
The Rock Police Station Corner Emily Street	Emily St and, Nicholas St, The Rock
Lockhart Ambulance Station	2-4 Green St (Cnr East St), Lockhart
Lockhart Fire Station	84 Ferrier Street, Lockhart
Wagga Wagga LGA	
Wagga Wagga Police Station	Wagga Wagga Police Station 217-219 Tarcutta St, Wagga Wagga
Wagga Wagga Ambulance Station	117 Fernleigh Road, Wagga Wagga
Wagga Wagga Fire Station	36-38 The Esplanade, Wagga Wagga
Turvey Park Fire Station	75 Fernleigh Road, Turvey Park

5.3.3.3 Accommodation

Table 5-15 shows the provision of short-term accommodation options across the regional study area. Overall, there is a broad range of short term accommodation options across the region to service business travel and tourism.

- Across the regional study area, Wagga Wagga has the most short-term accommodation options available by overall numbers.
- Both Murray River and Hay LGAs have the most accommodation options available following Wagga Wagga LGA.
- The highest number of caravan parks can be found in Murray River, Edward River and Wentworth LGAs.
- Wentworth and Murray River LGAs also have access to a broad range of cross border accommodation options in Victorian border towns and cities.

Table 5-15 Short term accommodation options

LGA	HOTEL / MOTEL / INN	CARAVAN PARK	OTHER
Wentworth LGA	11	6	4
Balranald LGA	10	4	1
Murray River LGA	17	8	10
Edward River LGA	3	8	3
Hay LGA	11	5	10
Murrumbidgee LGA	9	3	6
Federation LGA	15	4	2
Lockhart LGA	2	1	3
Wagga Wagga LGA	26	5	17

The majority of accommodation demand resulting from the proposal would be satisfied by several accommodation camps located along the alignment. However, the workforce in Wagga Wagga would utilise existing accommodation stock.

Wagga Wagga short term accommodation

Analysis of the Wagga Wagga short term accommodation market shows there are approximately 767 hotel, motel and cabin style rooms counted in as part of the accommodation stock, primarily in the Wagga Wagga urban area. Table 5-16 shows the breakdown of rooms in Wagga Wagga LGA. A room is defined as a single bookable unit containing a minimum of one single bed. However, it could contain several different bedding configurations.

The NSW Tourist Accommodation Snapshot March Quarter 2021 (Destination NSW, 2021) shows that the Riverina region has an average occupancy rate of 63.8 per cent during the March quarter. Occupancy data was not available at the LGA level however consultation with Wagga Wagga City Council and local Chambers of Commerce noted higher levels of demand during weekdays from business travellers, accounting for the city's role as a major regional service centre.

Table 5-16 Rooms available in Wagga Wagga LGA

ACCOMMODATION TYPE	NUMBER OF ROOMS
Hotel	386
Motel	320
Caravan Park	39
Total Wagga Wagga	767

Wagga Wagga housing market

Wagga Wagga is currently experiencing a constrained rental market, with a rental vacancy rate of 0.5 per cent at September 2021 (SQM Research, 2021). There were 66 houses and units listed for rent, with an average asking price of \$436.0 per week for a house and \$323.0 per week for a unit.

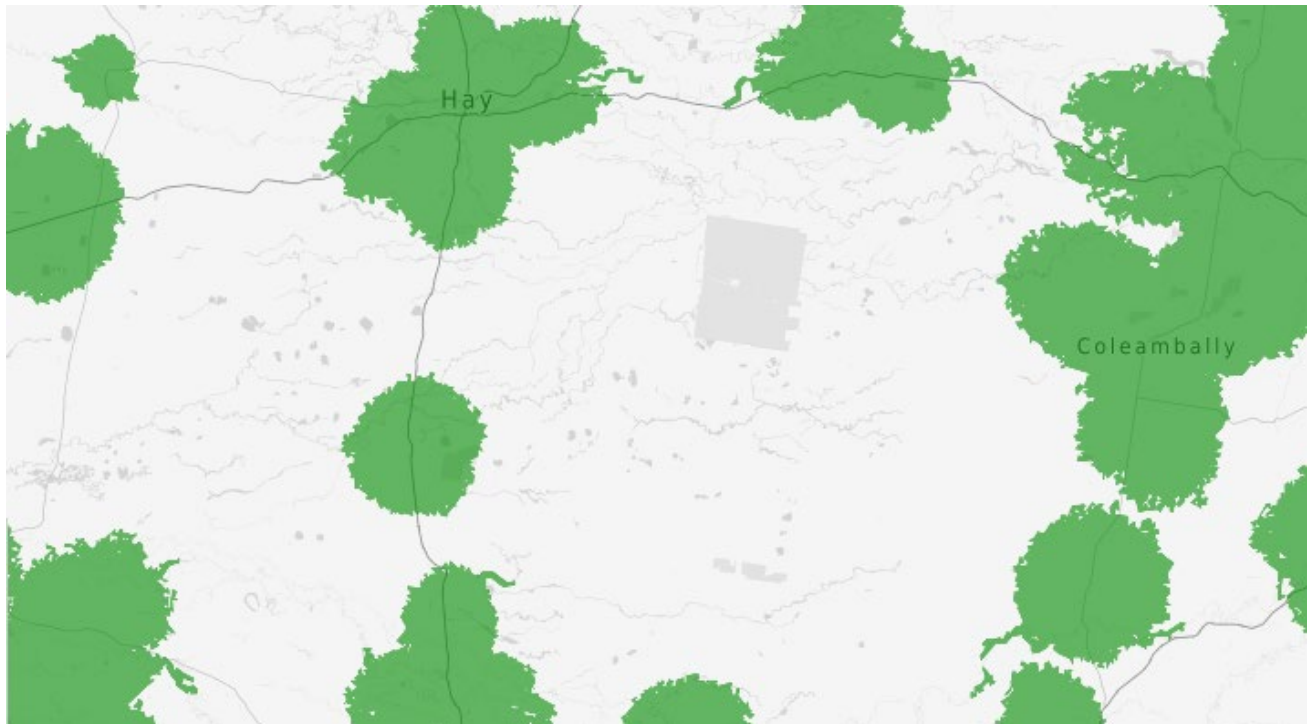
The property market has experienced a significant increase in demand over the previous 12 months, with rental prices increasing 17.7 per cent for houses and 16.5 per cent for units.

5.3.3.4 Mobile phone coverage

Mobile phone coverage is fragmented across the regional study area, with large coverage gaps along much of the proposal. The majority of areas in the Wagga Wagga and Lockhart LGAs receives coverage, however, network gaps become larger and more pronounced as the alignment travels west.

Consultation with councils and landholders identified telecommunications services as a significant issue across the region. The limited services constrain economic development and pose safety risks for road users travelling in isolated areas.

Figure 5-4 shows mobile phone coverage in sections of the Hay, Edward River, Murray River and Murrumbidgee LGAs with vast gaps in coverage across the proposal.



Source: Telstra (2021)

Figure 5-4 Mobile phone coverage between Hay and Coleambally

5.3.4 Culture

The regional study area exhibits high levels of cultural homogeneity, with all LGAs having over 80 per cent of the population born in Australia. This is significantly higher than the NSW average (65.5 per cent). Of those residents born overseas, two of the top three countries of birth in each area are Anglo Saxon and English speaking, further reducing cultural diversity within the communities.

Aboriginal people represent the most significant minority cultural and linguistic group in each area, except for Federation LGA.

5.3.4.1 Aboriginal culture

The Murray Darling Depression, aligned with the Murray River and the south western portion of the regional study area is home to the Barkinji language group (Barkinji, Barinji, Danggali, Maraura, and Wilyakali) to the north of the Murray and the lower Darling River, and the Kulin language group (Mathi Mathi, Wathi Wathi, Nari Nari and Wemba Wemba) to the east (Navin Officer Heritage Consultants, 2021).

Within the Riverine Plains region across the northern expanse of the regional study area are three major language groups, the Kulin language group (Mathi Mathi, Wathi Wathi, Nari Nari and Wemba Wemba) which cover the western side of the region, the Wiradjuri language groups which covers the northern portion of the region, and the Murray River language group (Yita Yita, Yota Yota and Pangerang) covering the southern portion of the region (Pardoe and Martin, 2011 as cited by Navin Officer Heritage Consultants, 2021).

The NSW South Western Slopes surrounding incorporating the eastern section of the regional study area are home to the Wiradjuri people. The Wiradjuri people are the largest Aboriginal group in NSW, known as ‘the people of three rivers’, for the Wambool (the Macquarie River), the Kalari (the Lachlan River) and the Murrumbidjeri (the Murrumbidgee River) which border their country (Navin Officer Heritage Consultants, 2021).

Within the local study area, 2.7 per cent of residents identify as Aboriginal, which is lower than the NSW average of 2.9 per cent. However, within the regional study area, 5.5 per cent of residents identify as Aboriginal, which is nearly double that of NSW.

Aboriginal settlement differs greatly across regional study area LGAs, with Wentworth (9.6 per cent), Balranald (8.8 per cent) and Murrumbidgee (7.5 per cent) all having large Aboriginal populations. The population of Aboriginal people residing in service communities is also significant – with all service communities exhibiting Aboriginal populations higher than the regional study area average and NSW average.

Balranald had the highest Aboriginal population of all service communities (13.3 per cent), with Hay (6.4 per cent), Coleambally (5.8 per cent), Jerilderie (4.6 per cent), Lockhart (5.5 per cent) and Wagga Wagga (6.6 per cent) all featuring populations close to double that of the NSW average.

There is an active and vibrant network of LALCs operating across the regional study area, supporting various private and public sector projects to improve Aboriginal outcomes and working towards improving cultural understating. No active native title claims affect the proposal. However, the Barkandji Traditional Owners have an approved native title claim over large sections of western New South Wales, including land and waterbodies around Buronga-Gol Gol.

There are also two discrete Aboriginal communities close to the proposal site, New Mirnee near Buronga-Gol Gol and Balranald Reserve near Balranald. A discrete community is a geographic location, bounded by physical or legal boundaries, which is inhabited or intended to be inhabited predominantly (i.e. greater than 50 per cent of usual residents) by Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander peoples, with housing or infrastructure (power, water, sewerage) that is managed on a community basis (ABS, 2016).

5.3.5 *Health and wellbeing*

The social locality spans two Local Health Districts. These comprise of:

- Far West Local Health District (FWLHD), which includes Wentworth and Balranald LGAs
- Murrumbidgee Local Health District (MLHD) which includes Murray River, Edward River, Hay, Murrumbidgee, Federation, Lockhart and Wagga Wagga LGAs.

Several mental health and general wellbeing indicators for the two relevant Local Health Districts reflect health risks associated with suicide, alcoholism, and lifestyle-related illness or disease. Together these indicators contribute to lower life expectancy and lower quality of life for many residents across the regional study area.

Health outcomes are related to access to healthcare facilities and reduced access. If services become overcrowded, these risks will increase, leading to fewer resources for care, support or critical response.

The following provides a summary of core health issues facing each of the local health districts.

5.3.5.1 Far West Local Health District

Bordering three states, FWLHD covers 194,949 square kilometres in remote NSW. The health district is sparsely populated, with 62 per cent of its approximately 30,000 inhabitants living in Broken Hill. The following section summarises key population health characteristics for the FWLHD noted in the *Updated Strategic Plan 2016-2021* (FWLHD, 2017).

The FWLHD faces a number of challenges associated with servicing an isolated and sparsely populated region; these include a declining and ageing population, small remote communities, limited infrastructure, significant social disadvantage in some areas and the overall burden of health needs driven by relatively poor health status.

The communities of Far Western NSW have relatively poor health compared to the rest of NSW. Moreover, Aboriginal people experience significantly poorer health and health outcomes than other Australians. This is specifically evident in Far Western NSW, where Aboriginal people make up a much larger population (and the highest proportion of any NSW LHD) (FWLHD, 2017).

Health-related transport and accommodation are significant issues for the communities needing to access healthcare services in the larger centres, particularly for Balranald and Wentworth LGAs. These communities often face cross border journeys to access higher-level health care in Victoria or need to travel to Broken Hill to access the largest FWLHD hospital.

Concerning the challenges which face the local communities within the social area of influence/study areas, these include:

- Wentworth community: access to allied health services, youth health services and continence services
- Balranald community: health service gaps in the LGA include coordination of care for chronic disease patients, child and youth services, and social work (access to and support services).

5.3.5.2 Murrumbidgee Local Health District

The MLHD is located in southern NSW across 125,242 square kilometres. The health district covers a wide variety of rural and regional communities, including the large regional centres of Wagga Wagga, Griffith and Albury. The health district faces significant regional disparities, including fast-growing regional centres countered with regional areas experiencing ageing and declining populations. The following section summarises key population health characteristics for the MLHD noted in *Our Communities, Our Health* (MLHD, 2019).

Rural and isolated communities within the MLHD are often socioeconomically disadvantaged, have poorer health and residents have difficulty accessing health and social services. As such, the prevalence of mental health, drug and alcohol issues increasing in rural communities.

Population growth focused in regional centres is also increasing the prevalence of multicultural communities in larger regional areas; Wagga Wagga, Griffith and Young who often have difficulty accessing services. As is the case with the FWLHD, Aboriginal health outcomes remain poorer across the MLHD than the wider community.

The health of the Aboriginal population in MLHD is improving. However, Aboriginal people continue to have a lower life expectancy, higher rates of chronic and preventable illnesses, poorer self-reported health and a higher likelihood of being hospitalised than non-Aboriginal Australians' (MLHD, 2019).

Consultation with the Griffith and Cummeragunja LALCs elaborated on the significant health issues facing local Aboriginal people.

Key challenges facing the population include smoking rates, poor nutrition and lack of physical activity, childhood obesity, and the challenge to supporting people with mental health conditions.

5.3.5.3 Need for assistance with core activities

The local study area exhibits a relatively lower proportion of people who require assistance with core activities (three per cent) when compared to the regional study area (5.4 per cent) and NSW (5.4 per cent). The aligns with the population age profile noted in section 5.3.2.2, and the likely trend of elderly residents leaving their rural homes to relocate closer to health and social services in towns.

Of the regional study area LGAs:

- Balranald LGA reported the lowest proportion of the population requiring assistance with core activities at 4.3 per cent. This is likely attributed to the isolated nature of the LGA and the limited health services available to support those with higher level needs in the area.
- Edward River and Lockhart LGAs reported a higher population that require assistance with core activities at 6.2 per cent each, which is slightly higher than the state average.

5.3.5.4 Crime and public safety

There were differences in community safety across the regional study area, with Wentworth, Edward River and Wagga Wagga LGAs having significantly higher rates of assault than Balranald and Hay LGAs. This suggests that within the regional study area, community cohesion and safety vary. Table 5-17 shows the incidents of assault and alcohol related assault across the regional study area.

In summary:

- Both Balranald and Hay LGA have considerably low numbers of reported assault and alcohol-related assault. Therefore, the crime rate per 100,000 people is not calculated (as over the last 12-month period had less than 20 incidents in each LGA).
- Across the nine LGAs, rates of assault and alcohol-related assault varied. The LGAs of Wentworth, Edward River and Wagga Wagga were the only three LGAs that reported higher assault and alcohol-related assault rates than NSW.
- Wentworth LGAs incidents of non-alcohol relative assault are slightly higher than the NSW average. Although, the LGA reported an incident rate of alcohol related assault that is almost double the NSW average.
- Wagga Wagga LGA reported the highest crime rate in both categories. However, this is due to the LGA having the biggest population of all LGAs in the regional study area.

Table 5-17 Incidents of assault and alcohol related assault, year to June 2020

LGA	INCIDENTS OF ASSAULT	ALCOHOL RELATED ASSAULT
Wentworth LGA	284	184.6
Balranald LGA	*nc (4 incidents only)	*nc (3 incidents only)
Murray River LGA	66	107.3
Edward River LGA	322.4	144.5
Hay LGA	*nc (11 incidents only)	*nc (6 incidents only)
Murrumbidgee LGA	227.2	176.7
Federation LGA	184.6	104.3
Lockhart LGA	30.3	30.3
Wagga Wagga LGA	445.9	179
NSW	279.5	97.1

Top five crimes

Data from the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research notes that within the regional study area:

- The top crime across all nine LGAs was malicious damage to property. Across the nine LGAs, Edward River and Wagga Wagga report an incident rate per 100,000 higher than the NSW average. The Wagga Wagga LGA has a rate double that of NSW.
- Rates of domestic violence ranged from 280.6 to 1,022.4 incidents per 100,000 people, with rates of domestic violence highest in Wentworth and Wagga Wagga LGAs. The Federation LGA was the only regional study area LGA with domestic violence not in the top five most frequent crimes.
- Rates of non-domestic violence are highest in Wentworth LGA (667.4 per 100,000 people, higher than NSW (403.2). The Hay, Murrumbidgee and Federation LGAs are the only LGAs with non-domestic violence-related assault in their top five.

5.3.6 Surroundings

5.3.6.1 Landscape values

Analysis of strategic planning policies and consultation outcomes has shown that regional study area communities place significant value in the natural environment, rural amenity and landscapes.

While the region is heavily managed and agricultural land uses abound, the broad open plains, intermittent farming infrastructure, and visual presence of farming activity define these communities and are core to many peoples value systems and identity.

The connection between agricultural activity and the natural environment is frequently acknowledged. Nearly all strategic planning policies note the importance of effectively managing scarce water resources and protecting natural assets.

Generally, in areas surrounding the Buronga substation the landform is gently undulating and there is scattered tree cover. The landform that the proposal would traverse over much of the western LGAs from Wentworth through to Murrumbidgee is typically flat with low level of tree cover. There are, few private dwellings in this area and large distances between intersecting roads.

The area from Murrumbidgee LGA, near the Dinawan Substation site through to the Lockhart LGA becomes more undulating, with increased vegetation cover and a number of permanent and seasonal water bodies such as Lake Cullivel. Again, this area includes scattered private dwellings and a fairly dispersed road network.

Near Lockhart and east to Wagga Wagga, the landform becomes more varied with undulating plains, valleys and hill formations and increased tree cover along much of the proposal alignment through this area. Land use intensification occurs across this area with more intensive agricultural activities and substantially more potential receivers such a residential dwelling in this area.

Despite the heavily managed landscapes common across the region, it is rich in culturally significant landscapes, including numerous permanent and seasonal lakes, lagoons and wetlands such as Lake Urana, and national parks such as the internationally important Mungo National Park.

Key points of interest with regard to surroundings include:

- The regional study area is drought-prone, particularly to the west, where water allocations and access to water are critical issues for landholders, councils and communities alike.
- The suitability of the region for large scale renewable energy developments is becoming increasingly apparent and sought after, which risks the region losing highly productive agricultural land.
- The Riverina Murray and Far West regions are significant agricultural assets for NSW and Australia, generating significant revenue and agricultural products for domestic and international markets.

5.3.6.2 Road safety

As noted in Section 5.3.1.2, the regional study area incorporates several major national and state highways and regional roads that provide vital connections for the movement of people and freight. This section shows road cash data pertaining specifically to the roads identified in Section 5.3.1.2 likely to be affected by the proposal construction program.

These roads often transect isolated and sparsely populated areas, with long journeys to access essential services standard for many residents. The Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development (2015) notes that:

- regional and remote areas account for 65 per cent of deaths and 40 per cent of hospitalised injuries from road trauma
- annual hospitalised injuries per 100,000 persons are approximately 50 per cent higher in regional areas and 200 per cent higher in remote areas
- in major cities, more than half the road deaths occur where the speed limit is 50 to 60 kilometres per hour, while in regional areas, the majority of road deaths occur where the speed limit is 100 kilometres per hour.

Table 5-18 details road crash data for proposal-affected roads in the regional study area.

Lockhart LGA (51.3 per cent), Hay LGA (40.0 per cent) and Federation LGA (37.5 per cent) all experienced the highest proportion of accidents resulting in deaths and serious injuries over the years 2015–2019.

Table 5-18 Road crash data for proposal affected roads in the regional study area 2015-2019

LGA	CRASH CHARACTERISTIC						
	Fatal	Serious injury	Moderate injury	Minor injury	No casualty	Total	% fatal or serious
Wentworth	7	1	5	71	44	128	6.3%
Balranald	4	2	6	11	13	36	16.7%
Murray River	4	10	11	7	18	50	28.0%
Hay	8	14	12	3	18	55	40.0%
Edward River	3	6	12	11	18	50	18.0%
Murrumbidgee	1	15	11	4	23	54	29.6%
Federation	0	6	6	1	3	16	37.5%
Lockhart	1	19	6	5	8	39	51.3%
Wagga Wagga	7	96	108	41	129	381	27.0%
Total	28	168	172	83	230	681	25.2%

Source: Crash and casualty statistics – LGA view (Centre for Road Safety, 2021)

5.3.7 Livelihoods

Livelihoods are directly linked to a person's access to economic resources, including income, assets, employment, and industry within a community. Across the social locality, there is a lack of industry diversification and limited employment opportunities. Together these factors contribute to low economic capital, which can increase community vulnerability.

5.3.7.1 Employment

The primary source of economic capital on an individual level is income sourced from employment, which is linked to the active or dominant industries within the area of social influence. Table 5-19 notes the size of the active labour force across the regional study area in June 2021 and the associated unemployment rate for each LGA.

Overall, the regional study area exhibited an unemployment rate of 4.8 per cent and a labour force of 62,308 people, lower than both the national (6.7 per cent) and NSW (6.4 per cent) rates. The Wentworth LGA (8.0 per cent) exhibited the highest unemployment rate, likely due to a range of geographical and social constraints facing the region. Conversely, the Lockhart LGA had the lowest unemployment rate (2.0 per cent), likely attributed to the highly agricultural nature of the LGA and its popularity as a rural living destination for Wagga Wagga professionals.

Table 5-19 Regional study area labour market data for March 2021

LGA	LABOUR FORCE (MAR-21)	UNEMPLOYMENT RATE (MAR-21)
Wentworth	3,426	8.0
Balranald	1,259	3.6
Murray River	6,151	4.1
Edward River	4,559	7.0
Hay	1,587	5.0
Federation	5,986	6.1
Murrumbidgee	2,116	3.0
Lockhart	1,793	2.0
Wagga Wagga	35,431	3.1
Regional study area	62,308	4.7

Source: Small Area Labour Markets (SALM), June quarter 2021, The National Skills Commission (2021)

Youth unemployment

Youth (15–24 years old) unemployment data is provided at the Statistical Area 4 (SA4) level and does not align with LGA boundaries. The Murray SA4, which incorporates parts of Wentworth, Hay, Edward River, Murray River, Murrumbidgee and Federation LGAs had a youth unemployment rate of 16.5 per cent in September 2021, and the Riverina SA4, which incorporates the northern half of Murrumbidgee LGA, and the Lockhart, Wagga Wagga, Griffin and Narrandera LGAs had a youth unemployment rate of 8.4 per cent.

Aboriginal unemployment

No up to date Aboriginal employment data is available at the LGA or regional level. However, the 2018–19 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey found that the unemployment rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders was 3.8 times the rate for non-Aboriginal Australians (19 per cent compared with 5 per cent, respectively).

Industry of employment

Agricultural activities dominate the regional study area employment profile, with six of the regional study area LGAs having various agricultural industries as the top industry of employment.

The data also shows the changing land use and environmental conditions evident across the regional study area. Grapes, citrus and sheep grazing are the most common industries in Wentworth and Balranald LGAs. In contrast, pig, grain and grain raised sheep and cattle farming are Lockhart and Federation LGAs' most common agricultural activities.

Social and community services also feature frequently across all LGAs, with hospitals, primary education and local government administration in the top five industries of employment across most LGAs.

Wagga Wagga LGA's biggest industry of employment is Defence which corresponds with the area being a Defence hub (with the Army Recruit Training Centre Kapooka and Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) Base Wagga).

5.3.7.2 Income

The regional study area generally exhibits lower levels of income than the NSW average. Table 5-20 shows the income profile for the regional study area. All LGAs have lower median household incomes than NSW, with Wentworth LGA being the lowest (\$1,052 per week) and Wagga Wagga LGA being the highest (\$1,354 per week).

The regional study area also exhibits higher rates of low income households than the NSW average (19.7 per cent), with Hay LGA having the highest proportion of low income households (28.3 per cent) and Wagga Wagga Having the lowest (20.1 per cent).

These patterns align with rates of unemployment noted in Section 5.3.7.1 and consultation feedback noting the need for improved employment opportunities across the region to support economic diversification.

Table 5-20 Regional study area household income profile

LGA	HOUSEHOLD WEEKLY INCOME (\$)	LESS THAN \$650 GROSS WEEKLY INCOME (%)	MORE THAN \$3000 GROSS WEEKLY INCOME (%)
Wentworth	\$1,052	26.9	8.6
Balranald	\$1,174	24.9	6.1
Murray River	\$1,061	27.4	6.8
Edward River	\$1,080	27.6	8.2
Hay	\$1,075	28.3	7.4
Murrumbidgee	\$1,197	22.3	6.8
Federation	\$1,017	27.2	5.9
Lockhart	\$1,114	26.8	8.4
Wagga Wagga	\$1,354	20.1	11.7
Regional Study Area	\$1,125	25.7	7.8
NSW	\$1,438	19.7	18.7

Source: 2016 Census (ABS, 2016)

5.3.7.3 Socio economic disadvantage

The Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage (IRSD) measures the relative socio-economic disadvantage of an area based on a range of Census characteristics. This index assesses a range of disadvantage indicators (e.g. unemployment, low incomes or education levels, lack of internet access) to determine the level of overall disadvantage experienced compared to other analysis areas. A higher score on the index means a lower level of disadvantage. A lower score on the index means a higher level of disadvantage.

The Index has a base of 1000 for Australia: scores above 1000 indicate relative lack of disadvantage, and those below indicate relatively greater disadvantage. Table 5-12 shows the IRSD scores for regional study area LGAs. All regional study areas LGA exhibit scores below 1000, indicating varying levels of relative disadvantage across the region.

The Hay LGA has the lowest score (937), indicating high levels of relative disadvantage and is also the 30th most disadvantaged LGA within NSW. Wagga Wagga (995) and Murray River (991) LGAs have similar scores to each other, which indicates a relative lack of disadvantage and closely aligns with the national average.

Table 5-21 IRSD Scores for the regional study area

LGA	SCORE	RANKING WITHIN NSW	AREA DECILE WITHIN NSW
Wentworth	957	50	4
Balranald	942	34	5
Murray River	991	88	7
Edward River	957	49	4
Hay	937	30	3
Murrumbidgee	961	54	5
Federation	963	57	5
Lockhart	986	83	7
Wagga Wagga	995	90	7

Source: *Census of Population and Housing: Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA), Australia, 2016 (ABS, 2018)*

6 Impact assessment

This section identifies and discusses the potential social impacts associated with the construction and operations of the proposal. Social impacts, both positive and negative, are discussed according to the social factors described in the methodology.

Social and environmental matters associated with the proposal identified in the scoping exercise and through stakeholder and community engagement activities are shown in Table 6-1. The social impacts listed will be further analysed in the following sections.

Table 6-1 Scoped social impacts for further analysis

IMPACT CATEGORY	ACTIVITY / ACTION	PHASE	SOCIAL IMPACT	NATURE OF IMPACT
Way of life	Construction activities including earthworks, machinery and vehicle movements near dwellings.	Construction	Amenity impacts temporarily alter the way people use and enjoy space.	Negative
	Increased vehicle movements and temporary disruptions to the road network associated with construction activities and accommodation camps.	Construction	Changes to the way people move around and access their properties, the local and regional road network.	Negative
	Noise emissions from the completed transmission line and associated electrical infrastructure and ongoing maintenance activities.	Operation	Amenity impacts changing the way people use and enjoy space.	Negative
Community	Housing workers in accommodation camps nearby or within existing communities.	Construction	An influx of non-resident workers alters residents' sense of place and perceptions of safety.	Negative
	Utilising non-local workers during construction.	Construction	Residents perceive a divide between proposal workers and the broader community, affecting community identity, social cohesion and wellbeing.	Negative
	Final route selection and the landholder compensation.	Construction and operation	Perceived unfair distribution of local benefit/impact may result in resentment and cause fragmentation between members of a community.	Negative
Accessibility	Housing workers in accommodation camps nearby or within existing communities.	Construction	Increased demand for essential services such as healthcare, community and leisure services inhibiting resident populations' access.	Negative

IMPACT CATEGORY	ACTIVITY / ACTION	PHASE	SOCIAL IMPACT	NATURE OF IMPACT
	Accommodating construction workforces in Wagga Wagga.	Construction	Increased competition of local short-term accommodation options that inhibits access by the resident population.	Negative
	Implementation of Transgrid's Community Partnerships Program.	Construction and operation	Improved financial outcomes for community services can assist these communities to more successfully meet social challenges and improve quality of life.	Positive
Culture	The proposal has the potential to impact known and previously unrecorded Aboriginal items and culturally significant landscapes.		Impacts to sites of Aboriginal cultural value may affect connection to Country and customs for Aboriginal communities.	Negative
Health and wellbeing	Construction activities including earthworks, machinery and vehicle movements near dwellings.	Construction	The culmination of years of engagement, coupled with uncertainty about elements of the proposal, may result in increased stress and anxiety once the construction program commences.	Negative
		Construction	Changes to the local environment may further increase stress which could exacerbate prevalent physical and mental health issues in identified vulnerable communities.	Negative
	Housing workers in accommodation camps nearby or within existing communities.	Construction	Mental health issues in the proposal workforce due to feelings of isolation.	Negative
			Potential decline in local safety associated with the presence of proposal workforce.	Negative
	Bushfire risk associated with electrical infrastructure.	Operation	The threat of bushfire increases concern amongst landholders and community members and may result in significant stress and anxiety.	Negative

IMPACT CATEGORY	ACTIVITY / ACTION	PHASE	SOCIAL IMPACT	NATURE OF IMPACT
	Perceived impacts associated with Electric and Magnetic Fields.	Operation	Residents react negatively to perceived health effects of EMFs, resulting in stress and anxiety and affecting personal wellbeing.	Negative
Surroundings	Construction of transmission towers and associated infrastructure across an open rural landscape.	Construction	Visual impacts to the landscape may affect rural values and people's sense of place.	Negative
		Construction	Visual changes during construction may lead to distractions for road users.	Negative
	Use of water.	Construction	Constrained supply and access for existing users.	Negative
Livelihoods	Temporary and permanent changes to agricultural properties.	Construction and operation	Changes to the way affected landholders manage their properties, property values and their ability to sustain themselves affecting individual livelihoods and wellbeing.	Negative
	Easement compensation	Construction	Improved economic outcomes for landholders reducing uncertainty and stress during low output agricultural seasons.	Positive
	Employment, training and broader economic development opportunities.	Construction and operation	Improved regional and individual economic outcomes leading to improved livelihoods, mental health outcomes and community wellbeing.	Positive
	Workforce leisure and recreation.	Construction	Workforce spend on leisure and recreation could have broader economic effects leading to improved livelihoods, mental health outcomes and community wellbeing.	Positive
Decision-making systems	Proposal development and consultation program.	Construction	Traditional Owner and Aboriginal Groups are involved in the development process and feel engaged and supportive of the proposal.	Positive
		Construction	Landholders may perceive negative impacts in relation to their property rights and individual livelihoods.	Negative

6.1 Way of life

6.1.1 Construction

6.1.1.1 Use and enjoyment of private space

Construction of the proposal would involve access to and temporary repurposing of land to facilitate construction activities along the proposal study area. Construction activities can result in an increase in both people and activity on private property and potential temporary changes in localised amenity from increased dust, noise and vibration. The proposal includes a number of different construction elements, such as transmission lines, substations and construction compounds that would result in differing levels of amenity impact.

Table 6-2 outlines potential amenity impacts during construction based on the outcomes of the Air Quality Impact Assessment (AQIA) (WSP, 2021a) and the Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment (NVIA) (WSP, 2021b).

Table 6-2 Potential amenity impacts based on technical assessment outcomes

PROPOSAL	
Transmission Line Works	<p>Construction works are planned to occur intermittently at each transmission line tower site for a duration of approximately one week, with breaks of between one and 15 weeks throughout the construction program. Noise impacts at discrete sensitive receivers would be of short-term nature and transitory (WSP, 2021b). At worst, approximately 166 sensitive receivers located along the corridor are anticipated to experience noise above noise management levels (NML), during the access and clearing stage of the proposal. However, as noted above, these works are short term and transitory.</p> <p>Between 747 and 1635 residential properties along the corridor are predicted to exceed the day and evening/ night out of hours NMLs. However, out of hours would be infrequent and would primarily occur during extended daylight hours during the summer months.</p> <p>The AQIA (WSP, 2021a) found that transmission line work was determined to be a negligible to low risk of dust impacts at surrounding sensitive receivers.</p>
Dinawan Substation, Construction Compound and Accommodation Camp	<p>No noise or vibration impacts are anticipated due to the construction of the proposed Dinawan substation during either standard hours or out of hours works. Likewise, the AQIA (WSP, 2021a) found that no sensitive receivers would experience air quality impacts associated with the proposal.</p>
Construction Compounds and Accommodation Camps:	<p>Except for the Wagga Wagga main construction compound and the Lockhart main construction compound and accommodation camp (both options), all other proposed construction compounds and accommodation camps would have a negligible impact on the amenity of surrounding sensitive receivers during operation. Some exceedances would occur during site establishment and rehabilitation.</p> <p>At Wagga Wagga, the main construction compound would exceed noise management levels at 20 to 174 properties (depending on the time of day) during site establishment and decommissioning works. During the operation of the construction compound, these exceedances would occur at five properties during day time, and up to 11 properties during the OOH evening/night time periods.</p>

PROPOSAL	
	<p>Exceedances of construction NMLs have been predicted at the Lockhart (County-Boundary Road site) main construction compound and accommodation site. Up to nine residential receivers are predicted to exceed the NMLs during the construction phase of the facility, and eight during the decommissioning of the facility. During the operation of the facility, only one residential receiver is predicted to exceed the NML during the evening and night OOH works.</p> <p>Likewise, during the construction and decommissioning phases of the main construction compound at the Lockhart (Urana-Lockhart Road site) up to five residential receivers are predicted to exceed NML in the standard and OOH (day) periods. Up to seven residential properties are predicted to exceed NMLs in the OOH (evening, night) periods. During operation exceedances of the NMLs would occur at three receivers in the OOH (evening, night) period, and at one receiver during standard and OOH (day) periods.</p> <p>Noise impacts during the construction program would be temporary and would be experienced intermittently by affected receivers.</p> <p>The AQIA (WSP, 2021a) found that odour impacts from the wastewater treatment plants at the proposed construction compound and accommodation camp sites are expected to be minimal.</p>
Wagga Wagga Substation Upgrade and Expansion	<p>Based on the outcomes of the NVIA (WSP, 2021), the most significant amenity impacts for the proposal would be experienced nearby to the Wagga Wagga substation upgrade and expansion.</p> <p>Up to 26 properties are likely to exceed the standard hours NMLs at worst during the earthworks stage, and six properties would be affected during all other stages. Likewise, between 95 and 350 residential properties are predicted to exceed the day and evening/night out of hours NMLs, respectively, if out of hours works are required at the Wagga Wagga substation during the earthworks stage. However, these works extending into evenings would be rare, and the impact is not likely to materialise frequently.</p> <p>Noise impacts would be temporary and would be experienced intermittently over the course of the construction program.</p> <p>The AQIA (WSP, 2021a) found that works related to the Wagga Wagga substation upgrade and expansion were determined to be to be a negligible to low risk of dust impacts at surrounding sensitive receivers.</p>
Construction traffic	<p>The NVIA (WSP, 2021b) notes that a substantial number of properties (up to 12,670) would experience noise increases. However, almost all of these increases are predicted to remain below 10dB (which is generally perceived to be a doubling in the noise level).</p> <p>Construction traffic associated with the proposal on public roads may exceed the road traffic noise goals at 16 residences along the identified 230 traffic routes.</p> <p>The following roads and receivers are predicted to potentially exceed NSW Government Road Noise Policy triggers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Elizabeth Avenue: 10 receivers — Hendersons Road: 1 receiver — Moulamein Road: 1 receiver — Pearson Street: 3 receivers — Rowan Road: 1 receiver.

PROPOSAL	
	<p>The AQIA (WSP, 2021a) noted that dust generated from construction vehicles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — on paved roads would be of short duration and intermittent in nature, and the impact on the receiving environment is anticipated to be low — on unpaved roads has the potential to be high, particularly under certain conditions (dry surface roads and high winds). However, the impacts would be intermittent, of short duration and would likely only impact a small number of receivers at any given time. <p>Gaseous emissions generated from vehicles and fugitive sources would be minimised with the implementation of Air Quality management measures, and air quality impacts would not be of significance.</p>

The severity of these impacts is tied to proximity to the source. For most affected landholders, there would be a minimal noticeable change to amenity during construction. While there is a relatively high number of residential properties along the alignment predicted to experience amenity impacts (166), the mobile nature of the construction program and short time at each tower site (up to one week at a time) means residents would likely tolerate short term impacts without altering their daily routines.

Overall, when considering the scale and size of the proposal, potential amenity impacts are considered relatively minor and with the most significant impacts concentrated around the Wagga Wagga substation upgrade and expansion site and the associated main construction compound. For affected residents around these sites, amenity impacts would be more prolonged, with the earthworks and civil construction phase forecast to take up to eight months – although they would be temporary, and impacts would be experienced intermittently during this time. These predictions are also conservative and assumes all plant and equipment is operational at any one time, and as such, noise impacts could be expected to be generally below the predicted noise levels.

A substantial number of receivers would experience relatively minor amenity impacts resulting from construction vehicle movements. The intermittent nature of vehicle movements would reduce the exposure time and, therefore, the severity of the impacts. There are, however, 16 residential properties, the majority of which are located along Elizabeth Avenue in Wagga Wagga LGA, that would potentially experience periods when the noise would exceed the NSW Government Road Noise Policy.

If not managed, noise can cause stress and annoyance, interfere with daily activities (including talking, hearing and studying) and disturb sleep (NSW EPA, 2020). Depending on the severity of impact experienced by these residents, they may simply close windows or use different spaces on their properties for rest and recreation to avoid the impacts. However, during prolonged periods of reduced amenity, they may experience stress and annoyance and seek alternate places to escape the impact.

6.1.1.2 Movement patterns

Road network

The proposal is unlikely to result in material changes to local and regional study area residents' movement patterns. The Traffic and Transport Impact Assessment (TTIA) (WSP, 2021c) found that while many regional and local roads would experience significant increases in light and heavy vehicle movements, the impact would be minor from a road capacity perspective. This is due primarily to the rural setting of the road network that would be utilised for proposal-related activities, typified by low existing traffic volumes.

The TTIA (WSP, 2021c) notes that the highest construction traffic volume would typically occur close to the main construction compounds and accommodation camp sites, where activities at these locations are consistent throughout the construction program. However, the camps and compounds have been located to minimise impacts on the existing road network.

Within towns, increased construction traffic movements may attribute to temporarily reduced road capacities at some locations and cause temporary delays during the construction peak on highways or state roads where traffic demand is already high and operating speed is low (WSP, 2021c). This may result in slightly longer journeys and minor annoyance for residents and road users travelling through the affected town used to comparatively low traffic volumes. However, the impact would likely be short term in nature and minor when considering the relatively small size of the towns affected.

The proposal would transect several highways and regional roads, including the Sturt Highway and Newell Highway. Temporary delays are anticipated at these locations during stringing of transmission lines across roads due to road/lane capacity or speed restrictions or where detours may be required (WSP, 2021c). However, these works would likely take no longer than one week at each crossing, and while delays would likely cause slightly longer journeys, the short term nature of the delay would likely result in nothing more than a minor annoyance for road users.

6.1.2 Operation

Operational amenity impacts associated with the proposal would be relatively minor given its extent. The NVIA (WSP, 2021b) found the only operational noise and vibration impacts associated with the proposal would be associated with noise emissions from the transmission line, where between 14 and 23 residential properties may experience increased noise. However, the majority of these would be negligible or marginal, with up to eleven residential properties likely to experience noise impacts rated moderate or significant. Likewise, the AQIA (WSP, 2021a) noted that the primary form of air quality or dust impacts occurring once operational would result from maintenance and service vehicles travelling along unsealed rural roads. These journeys would be relatively infrequent and short term in nature and would not result in any material impacts to nearby residential dwellings.

Given the considerably limited number of dwellings likely to be affected by permanent amenity impacts, it is considered unlikely that the proposal would have any material impact on residents' way of life once operational.

6.1.3 Summary of way of life impacts

Table 6-3 provides a summary of way of life impacts prior to mitigation.

Table 6-3 Summary of way of life impacts (prior to mitigation)

IMPACT	NATURE & PHASE	STAKEHOLDER AFFECTED	LIKELIHOOD	MAGNITUDE	SIGNIFICANCE
Construction related amenity impacts for residential properties surrounding the Wagga Wagga substation upgrade and expansion site and the main construction compound affect the way residents use and enjoy private space. Noise impacts would be temporary and would be experienced intermittently over the course of the construction program.	Negative, construction	Landholders nearby the Wagga Wagga substation upgrade and expansion site and the main construction compound.	Almost Certain	Moderate	High

IMPACT	NATURE & PHASE	STAKEHOLDER AFFECTED	LIKELIHOOD	MAGNITUDE	SIGNIFICANCE
Construction related amenity impacts for residential properties located proximal to the transmission alignment and Lockhart main construction compound and accommodation camp options affect the way residents use and enjoy private space. Noise impacts would be temporary and would be experienced intermittently over the course of the construction program.	Negative, construction	Landholders located along the transmission alignment and nearby Lockhart main construction compound and accommodation camp (both options)	Almost Certain	Minor	Medium
Within towns, increased construction traffic movements may contribute to temporarily reduced road capacities at some locations. This may cause temporary delays during the construction peak on highways or state roads, resulting in slightly longer journeys, decreased perceptions of safety and minor annoyance for residents and road users.	Negative, construction	Regional communities Local study area residents Road users	Possible	Minor	Medium
Regional road users experience temporary delays and longer journey times due to reduced speeds and traffic management measures during line stringing activities over roads.	Negative, construction	Regional communities Local study area residents Road users	Possible	Minor	Medium
Operation related amenity impacts for residential properties located proximal to the transmission alignment and associated infrastructure affect the way residents use and enjoy private space.	Negative, operation	Local study area residents	Likely	Minor	Medium

6.2 Community

Social impacts to community refer to population composition, cohesion, character, function and sense of place. It is recognised that this category of impact involves a level of uncertainty because socio-economic environments and the processes that affect them are constantly changing and can vary from place to place and over time.

6.2.1 Construction

6.2.1.1 Community composition and character

The proposal is anticipated to employ up to 500 full time equivalent construction workers during the construction lifecycle over several work packages. The transmission part of the proposal's linear nature and significant length mean that even locally engaged workers working on the transmission line would often have to travel as the construction program progresses along the alignment. Likewise, the relatively isolated location of the Dinawan substation away from major population centres means that workers engaged in the construction program there would likely have to stay in the provided accommodation camp.

Regional towns are often homogenous with relatively stable populations. FIFO and DIDO practices change community demographics, typically injecting a large number of young men living in temporary accommodation and with no community connection and little to do when off shift. These changes can heighten community concerns about declining safety (The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, 2013). In all cases, except for the Balranald accommodation camp and Wagga Wagga, construction workers would be housed outside towns in self-contained camps.

The Balranald accommodation camp – Option 1 is an existing 300-bed accommodation camp that the proposal could utilise to house workers. The peak workforce for the transmission line works is approximately 180 workers. The addition of up to 180 relatively young workers into a town of 3,000 would alter community composition and may raise concerns about behaviour.

The presence of additional workers in Wagga Wagga is not anticipated to materially alter community composition, given the city's size and role as a regional economic and services hub.

Workers located in the Cobb Highway, Dinawan and Lockhart accommodation camps would likely travel to service communities intermittently to access services and commercial facilities and for leisure pursuits. This intermittent nature of visitation is unlikely to be particularly noticeable for service community residents, even in smaller towns such as Coleambally, which regularly experience transient seasonal agricultural workers and highway traffic.

Engagement with councils affected by the workforce accommodation camps found that:

- Murrumbidgee Council noted that northern LGA communities, such as Coleambally, have experience in recent years with large project workforces resulting from two solar farms constructed in the region. The community was broadly accepting and sought to maximise potential flow-on economic benefits.
- The Lockhart LGA has limited experience with housing large construction workforces, and Lockhart Shire Council raised concerns about the impacts on the small, close-knit rural community.
- While not having any experience dealing with large construction workforces in the area, Hay Shire Council was broadly positive about the benefits and considered the level of planning going into the solutions sufficient to minimise any impacts on the community.
- Balranald Shire Council noted that the recent experience managing the non-resident workforce for the Limondale and Sunraysia solar farm projects in the region has been broadly positive. While there had been some teething problems accommodating the large influx of workers, including some minor behavioural issues, overwhelmingly, the town has been supportive due to the associated economic and employment opportunities.

6.2.1.2 Community cohesion

Rural communities generally report higher levels of many indicators of social connectedness than urban communities, including better access to networks of emotional and social support (Mickelson & Kubzansky, 2003). Local and regional study area residents generally exhibit a high level of volunteering (Section 5.3.2.4) and low levels of household mobility (Section 5.3.2.5), with strong community values noted throughout most LGA CSPs (Section 2.4) and consultation outcomes. Residents in host communities for non-resident workforces have found the transient population challenging because many of the newcomers do not value the town and community the same way as the long-term residents (McKenzie, 2011).

The highest prevalence of persistent and deep social and economic disadvantage is recorded by Australians living in outer regional areas (McLachlan et al, 2013), with poverty in rural communities often much more ‘hidden’ (National Rural Health Alliance, 2014). The relatively high rates of low-income households, unequal patterns of employment across the regional study area and low IRSD scores (Section 5.3.7.3) across LGAs indicate that economic and social disadvantage may be common.

Potential employment has been a core issue to emerge during consultation with LALC’s, councils and the broader community. Transgrid has made commitments to utilise local resources where possible and provide training and skills improvement programs to maximise local participation. Access to employment and training opportunities could increase residents’ capacity and willingness to engage at a community level and improve overall community cohesion and wellbeing. Recruitment and training initiatives targeted at communities that experience higher levels of unemployment and barriers to employment, such as young people and Aboriginal people, would further enhance community outcomes.

The highly technical requirements of the proposal and the current national skills shortage affecting most of the relevant trades required for construction (National Skills Commission, 2021) would also result in the need to source resources from out of the region. Some residents may develop an ‘us versus them’ mentality and anti-proposal sentiment due to being passed over for employment opportunities. This can, in some circumstances leading directly to social disorder and affect community cohesion and safety (The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, 2013). The presence of well-paid construction workers may result in negative sentiment towards construction workers could affect their capacity to integrate into host communities, affecting workforce wellbeing.

The presence of construction workers may alter community members perceptions of safety, particularly females. Relative isolation, coupled with a younger male workforce and potential distance from intimate partners at homes, may also result in workers seeking out social and intimate connections in nearby towns (The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, 2013). While interactions in social settings may be perceived as harmless in the vast majority of cases, a higher than usual presence of male workers in communities and social settings may increase perceived safety concerns and have well-being impacts for local female residents. However, with the exception of the Balranald Accommodation Camp Option 1, proposal workers would be located outside of towns and settlements and would likely only visit regional towns and service communities intermittently for leisure or to access services. As such, it is considered unlikely that they would be present in such numbers at once as to have a material impact on the community.

Restrictions on alcohol supply on-site may also result in workers overindulging at hotels and clubs in service communities on off days. This could increase the risk of and further add to the high rates of alcohol-fuelled violence exhibited across the region. While there is no way of predicting the behaviour of every worker, this kind of behaviour, while possible, is considered unlikely due to Transgrid workplace policies which would likely result in the loss of employment should interactions with the law occur. Balranald Shire Council further noted that broadly the experience of hosting non-resident workforces and the behaviour of said workers has markedly increased in recent years.

While host landholders would bear the most impacts resulting from the proposal, they would also receive economic benefits in the form of payment for easements. Neighbours and the broader community may also experience impacts associated with the proposal, such as reduced visual amenity; however, they receive no direct benefit. This can lead to divisions in a community, negatively impacting community cohesion (Clean Energy Council, 2021). Transgrid has worked closely with landholders, councils and the wider community to understand key social, economic and environmental concerns that have heavily informed route selection. While there is some level of dissatisfaction still

evident in the community with some aspects of the proposal, such as proximity to dwellings, broadly consultation outcomes show a high level of support and acknowledgement of the proposal's potential benefits.

6.2.2 Operation

There are no community impacts anticipated during operation.

6.2.3 Summary of community impacts

Table 6-4 provides a summary of community impacts prior to mitigation.

Table 6-4 Summary of community impacts (prior to mitigation)

IMPACT	NATURE & PHASE	STAKEHOLDER AFFECTED	LIKELIHOOD	MAGNITUDE	SIGNIFICANCE
The presence of up to 180 proposal workers in Balranald town materially alters community composition and affects residents' perceptions of safety and sense of place.	Negative, construction	Community members, particularly in service communities	Unlikely	Minor	Low
Access to employment and training opportunities could increase residents' capacity and willingness to engage at a community level and improve overall community cohesion and wellbeing.	Positive, construction	Community members, particularly in-service communities	Possible	Moderate	High
The increased presence of male workers in service communities affects local perceptions of safety and wellbeing, particularly for female residents.	Negative, construction	Community members, particularly females in service communities	Unlikely	Minor	Low
Some residents may develop an 'us versus them' mentality and anti-proposal sentiment due to being passed over for employment opportunities affecting community cohesion and workforce integration and wellbeing.	Negative, construction	Community members, particularly in service communities Proposal workers	Possible	Minor	Medium
The perceived unfair distribution of impact and benefit results in community division affecting residents' social networks, sense of community and wellbeing.	Negative, construction	Landholders Community members	Unlikely	Moderate	Medium

6.3 Accessibility

This category of social impact covers a broad array of infrastructure, services and facilities that communities in the regional study area use to maintain physical, social and economic wellbeing.

6.3.1 Construction

6.3.1.1 Increased demand for social infrastructure

Residents across the regional study area rely on a sparse network of social infrastructure scattered across regional towns, with limited user choice. At the same time, the isolated and dispersed nature of settlement across the region means that rural and town-based residents are also more reliant on available social infrastructure for social connection and wellbeing.

Planning for temporary fluctuation in the population that results from infrastructure delivery can be challenging for both the proponent and local service providers. Key to this challenge is ensuring the non-local workforce has access to various goods and services required to maintain wellbeing while not inhibiting resident populations' access.

To adequately assess impacts to social infrastructure delivery associated with the proposal, it is necessary to assess likely demand patterns, the types of services likely to be in demand and the current capacity of community services in the area.

The following proposal considerations informed the assessment of accessibility as a result of proposal induced population change:

- the mobile nature of construction
- the duration of construction
- limited operation employment opportunities.

Given the above factors, it is considered unlikely that workers would relocate their families to the region. As such, it is unlikely that there would be any additional demands for housing or early childhood, primary and secondary education services.

The proposal workforce would primarily be housed in accommodation camps interspaced along the alignment. The significant distance covered by the alignment also means that the workforce would primarily access services in towns close to accommodation options. These being – Balranald, Hay, Coleambally, Jerilderie, Lockhart and Wagga Wagga.

As such, this section focuses on assessing social infrastructure and services in the above-mentioned service communities likely to be in demand from short term workforces. These being:

- health care
- emergency services
- leisure and recreation services
- telecommunications services.

Health care

Health services in rural and remote areas are very different to their city counterparts. Facilities are generally smaller but play a vital role in providing community-wide integrated health services, including mental health services, oral health, community and aged care, and social services (Australian Government, 2016).

Health care requirements for workers would be general health care with GPs or emergency or critical care at hospitals. As noted in Section 5.3.3.1, a network of hospitals and health services is located in larger towns, including identified service communities. The hospitals operate as part of the FWLHD and MLHD, which allows for the movement of people and additional capacity to meet demand across the broader network.

Outside of Wagga Wagga, the majority of the hospitals and health services across the regional study area are relatively small, ranging from six beds in Barham (Murray River LGA) through to 53 beds in Corowa (Federation LGA). While small, all hospitals can respond to urgent care requirements. Those with more severe care needs would likely be evacuated to larger regional hospitals in Wagga Wagga, Mildura or Griffith for continued care.

Consultation with Local Health Districts noted that there are no concerns about impacts to service provision resulting from the proposal or proposal workforces. There is considered to be sufficient capacity across the broader network to accommodate any potential increase in demand should it occur.

In terms of GP care, the social infrastructure assessment identified a number of services across the regional study area. However, there is an identified shortage of GPs in regional and rural Australia (National Skills Commission, 2021), and services may be strained at times.

The COVID-19 Pandemic has significantly altered how health care is delivered in Australia, including the significant uptake of telehealth services. Given the relatively short-term and mobile nature of the construction program, it is considered that most of the non-local workforce would continue to seek general health advice from their existing GPs via telehealth. This would minimise impacts to local general health services.

Emergency services

Emergency services encompass police, ambulance, fire and disaster response teams. Emergency services are primarily required in the event of significant harm or threat to property and life. Primary concerns raised during community consultation include bushfire and flooding risk and interaction between people and electricity infrastructure. However, Fire and Rescue NSW and NSW RFS have indicated they have minimal concerns about the proposal's impact.

Ambulance service may be required in the event of worker injury, and police services may be required to manage worker behaviour. However, the presence of workers across the region is considered unlikely to affect emergency service providers in the area significantly.

Consultation with emergency services providers across the region indicated minimal concerns about service capacity or disruptions associated with the proposal. The TTIA (WSP, 2021c) further noted that there would not be any predicted impacts to the road network that would inhibit emergency services or result in reduced delays.

Excessive drinking and alcohol related assaults, whether being common in a town already or not, are typically associated in their problematic forms with FIFO workers (McKenzie, 2011). Likewise, narratives about violence, anti-social behaviour and high alcohol and drug use associated with FIFO workforces are common across Australia (Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, 2013). All workers would be bound by contractual behaviour standards and agreements and are deemed unlikely to place additional demands on police services. Potential behavioural issues may occur in service communities during leisure time, where alcohol is involved, further contributing to the high rates of alcohol-related assault across the regional study area (Section 5.3.5.4).

The Australian Parliamentary Inquiry into Fly-in, fly-out and drive-in, drive-out workforce practices in Regional Australia found that in regions where drive-in, drive-out (DIDO) workforces were prevalent, road safety is of serious concern and accident and death tolls were often higher (Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, 2013). An influx of worker motor vehicles may increase the risk of road offences, particularly given the length of regional roads and high speed limits along with the majority of the affected roads. However, given the traffic volume travelling along these highways and regional roads daily, these events would be minimal.

Health and safety protocols on worksites would be in place to minimise the potential for injury and demand for ambulance services. The contractor would have a focus on health and safety and risk management with the goal of zero injuries, which would apply to the workforce. The need for an ambulance and emergency services may also result from injuries while workers undertake leisure activities and non-work-related road accidents. However, this is also considered to be unlikely.

Leisure and recreation

All workforce accommodation camps would include food and catering facilities and fitness and recreational facilities (indoor and outdoor recreational spaces and gymnasium areas). During the main construction program, workers housed in Balranald accommodation camp – Option 1 and short term accommodation in Wagga Wagga would be located near local facilities services. In contrast, Cobb, Dinawan and Lockhart camp residents would be required to drive between 15 and 30 minutes to access recreation facilities in towns.

Given the relatively long workdays, the intensity of construction labour demands and potentially long travel times between site and accommodation, it is considered that workers would be unlikely to leave camp on workdays. Demand for leisure and recreation services would likely occur on off days. Some workers may return to their homes while others may stay in the region and seek activities for rest and recreation away from the accommodation camp.

Within service communities, the most likely services that workers would seek to access are swimming pools, libraries and sporting complexes. All service communities have these facilities, and they are geared towards servicing the demands of a regional population. Increased demand from intermittent use by proposal workers would be unlikely to create access issues for residents.

The only issue to emerge during engagement with councils about impacts to leisure and recreation facilities was in the Balranald LGA, where the council operates a free pool for residents and visitors. Increased patronage resulting from previous non-resident workforces resulted in the requirement for the council to employ another lifeguard to meet safety standards – an additional cost for the council with no way to recoup the cost as it is a free pool.

Many LGAs in the regional study area are experiencing population decline. Increased patronage from workers may result in income for many facilities and provide a short term boost to funding. Likewise, local sporting teams may see increased participation as workers seek out sporting pursuits for socialisation and health reasons, particularly in Balranald and Wagga Wagga, supporting community cohesion and worker well-being and providing participation fees for clubs and facilities.

Telecommunications

Consultation with councils and landholders has indicated the telecommunications services across the regional study area are patchy and often non-existent. Service maps (Section 5.3.3.4) show that large sections of the region have no coverage at all. Where coverage is present, usually around towns, demands from existing populations would likely be significant given the isolated nature of these communities. Additional workers within service areas may place strain on communications towers and decrease access for residents.

Likewise, internet services, of increasing importance to regional communities due to the digitization of personal and business services, use different technology than urban communities. The NBN network has expanded to cover all the regional study area through fixed wireless satellite technology. Increased demand through the rapid addition of proposal workforce may pressure the network and slow network speeds.

Accommodation camps would include the provision of telecommunications equipment to assist with the increased demand associated with the proposal and workforce. As such, the impacts on the network would be minimal.

6.3.1.2 Increased demand for accommodation

Several councils in the regional study area have raised concerns about the potential impact of the proposal workforce on accommodation and housing markets.

The proposal includes providing workforce accommodation camps along the alignment to house workers during the construction program. The mobile nature of the construction program means that even local workers may be required to reside in accommodation camps as the proposal progresses. The development of the accommodation camps would likely mitigate any impacts on regional housing markets.

Workers for the Wagga Wagga Substation upgrade and expansion would be housed in existing accommodation options in Wagga Wagga. Wagga Wagga has approximately 767 rooms and cabins spread across a range of hotels, motels and caravan parks. With an average occupancy rate of 63.8 per cent, approximately 283 rooms would be available for proposal needs. However, consultation identified that there is increased demand on business days which would further reduce supply. At peak, the Wagga Wagga substation upgrade and expansion works would require up to 180 workers.

The proposal has identified a target local workforce of approximately 20 per cent, which, if met, would reduce the total number of rooms required to approximately 144 at peak. If increased demand during the week resulted in an occupancy rate of approximately 80 per cent, there would still be sufficient capacity to satisfy workforce accommodation needs. However, the market would experience periods of limited to no residual accommodation availability, limiting access for other users such as tourists and business travellers.

As noted in Section 5.3.3.3, Wagga Wagga LGA is experiencing a constrained private rental market, with low availability and increasing rents for both houses and units. Should the proposal seek to utilise the private rental market and the short-term accommodation market to house workers, it would likely further limit supply for existing residents and further increase prices in an already competitive market. Further, low-income households may find it difficult to compete with higher-income households in the private rental market. These households would be more likely to experience rental stress and/or be unable to access the private rental market and may be at risk of homelessness (AIHW, 2020).

Some utilisation of short-term accommodation may be required during enabling works before several of the camps are constructed. However, this would be for a small number of workers totalling approximately 30 at peak. They would be housed in major regional centres such as Mildura, Hay, Wagga Wagga, Griffith and Narrandera, communities that act as regional service hubs with a range of accommodation stock available.

6.3.2 Operation

6.3.2.1 Community benefit

Transgrid's Community Partnerships Program (CPP) operates in all areas where Transgrid assets are located or under development. The CPP works by providing grant funding of up to \$5000 per project to not-for-profit groups or organisations 'to help deliver initiatives that would have a tangible and lasting impact on local communities.

While in place already, the CPP would be an ongoing program for communities to utilise once the proposal is operational. The CPP would provide much-needed income and support for regional community services and social infrastructure, particularly in the face of population decline and ageing populations.

Thirty-nine organisations supporting community activity in the southwest of NSW received a grant from Transgrid's Community Partnerships Program in 2019 and 2020, with some organisations receiving multiple grants.

Improved infrastructure access can assist these communities to more successfully meet social challenges and improve their quality of life. Initiatives that focus on identified regional issues such as Indigenous inequality, environmental sustainability, training and aged services would further enhance likely benefits associated with the program.

6.3.3 Summary of accessibility impacts

Table 6-5 provides a summary of accessibility impacts prior to mitigation.

Table 6-5 Summary of accessibility impacts (prior to mitigation)

IMPACT	NATURE & PHASE	STAKEHOLDER AFFECTED	LIKELIHOOD	MAGNITUDE	SIGNIFICANCE
Proposal related demands for healthcare constrain local services limiting access for residents.	Negative, construction	Regional residents, particularly those in service communities MLHD, FWLHD	Unlikely	Moderate	Medium
Proposal related demands for emergency services constrain local services limiting access for residents	Negative, construction	Regional residents, particularly those in service communities Emergency services providers	Unlikely	Major	Medium
Proposal related demands for leisure and recreation facilities constrains local services limiting access for residents.	Negative, construction	Regional residents, particularly those in service communities Councils	Unlikely	Minor	Low
Increased utilisation of the Balranald Pool by proposal workers results in council having to employ a new lifeguard resulting in increased operational cost.	Negative, construction	Balranald Council	Possible	Minor	Medium
Proposal related demands for telecommunications constrain local services limiting access for residents.	Negative, construction	Regional residents, particularly those in service communities Landholders	Unlikely	Moderate	Medium
Proposal related demands for private rental properties in Wagga Wagga further constrains market supply and increases prices limiting access for residents, particularly those who may face economic disadvantage.	Negative, construction	Wagga Wagga residents	Possible	Moderate	Medium
Proposal related demands for short term accommodation limit access for broader community needs.	Negative, construction	Tourists Local business and industry	Possible	Moderate	Medium

IMPACT	NATURE & PHASE	STAKEHOLDER AFFECTED	LIKELIHOOD	MAGNITUDE	SIGNIFICANCE
The CPP improves the financial viability of local community services and facilities, improving community outcomes.	Positive, operation	Regional study area residents Community groups Councils	Likely	Minor	Medium (benefit)

6.4 Culture

The proposal has the potential to impact both positively and negatively on:

- the ability of Aboriginal people to maintain and develop culture
- the sense of trust that Aboriginal people have in the management of matters of cultural heritage.

The proposal would be developed in a region of complex and diverse Aboriginal culture, with valued natural assets, sacred sites and objects of cultural heritage significance. Transgrid is committed to understanding and recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning. Building and strengthening relationships with Local Area Land Councils is an organisational commitment to ensure open, and mutually beneficial working relationships inform the planning and building of major infrastructure projects.

As noted in Chapter 4, Transgrid has undertaken in excess of 138 proposal related engagements with approximately 20 Traditional Owners and other Aboriginal Groups, including briefings and site walkovers. Likewise, the EnergyConnect (NSW – Eastern Section) Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report (Navin Officer Heritage Consultants, 2021) (ACHA) was prepared through fieldwork and input from:

- Balranald Local Aboriginal Land Council
- Dareton Local Aboriginal Land Council
- Deniliquin Local Aboriginal Land Council
- Griffith Local Aboriginal Land Council
- Hay Local Aboriginal Land Council
- Ngumbaay Indigenous Corp
- Wagga Wagga Local Aboriginal Land Council.

Forty seven Aboriginal people, organisations and groups also registered their interest to participate in the development of the ACHA and were able to provide input through a broader consultation process.

Infrastructure developments by their nature pose a risk to the surrounding environment and potential sites of cultural heritage significance. Traditional Owners and other Aboriginal Groups broadly shared concerns about cultural heritage impacts throughout the consultation process, and consultation identified a strong desire to participate and be heavily involved wherever possible to mitigate and manage potential impacts. As a result, Transgrid has made several refinements to parts of the proposal to avoid valued landscapes and sites of significance as much as possible.

The EnergyConnect (NSW – Eastern Section) Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report (Navin Officer Heritage Consultants, 2021) found that the proposal may have a range of direct impacts on a total of 97 sites, which consist of sites of low to moderate to high significance. Also, independent of archaeological sites and objects within the heritage survey area, there are anticipated to be a range of impacts on the landscape, native flora, and fauna of high cultural significance.

While many of these impacts are unavoidable, the impacts have, for the most part, been identified collaboratively with a high level of input from Traditional Owners and other Aboriginal Groups, and revisions to the proposal have resulted in the most significant impacts being avoided and minimised. It would be unlikely that proposal related changes to the environment and sites of cultural heritage significance are not accepted by the majority of Traditional Owners and other Aboriginal Groups. As such, said changes or impacts would be unlikely to have broad implications for Aboriginal peoples sense of place and cultural connection to Country.

Transgrid's proactive and collaborative approach to engagement with Traditional Owners and other Aboriginal Groups from the outset has been well received, with the feedback overwhelmingly positive about the process and the proposal in general. Because of this process, plus involvement in the assessment and planning process, it is likely that Traditional Owners and other Aboriginal Groups would have trust that the proposals cultural heritage management practices are sufficient and would have ongoing trust and confidence in Transgrid as the proponent.

6.4.1 Summary of culture impacts

Table 6-6 provides a summary of culture impacts prior to mitigation.

Table 6-6 Summary of culture impacts (prior to mitigation)

IMPACT	NATURE & PHASE	STAKEHOLDER AFFECTED	LIKELIHOOD	MAGNITUDE	SIGNIFICANCE
The proposals cultural heritage management practices are sufficient for Traditional Owner and Aboriginal Groups to have trust and confidence in Transgrid.	Positive, construction and operation	Traditional Owners and Aboriginal Groups	Likely	Moderate	High
Proposal related activities result in changes to the environment and sites of cultural heritage significance that are not acceptable to Aboriginal people, affecting sense of place and cultural connection to Country.	Negative, construction	Traditional Owners and Aboriginal Groups	Unlikely	Moderate	Medium

6.5 Health and wellbeing

Health is defined as a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing. Social impacts have the potential to result in poor health outcomes if stress or anxiety is caused.

Physical health status affects the ongoing mental health and wellbeing of people with mental illness (Kisley & Goldberg 1997). Furthermore, mental illness has been shown to affect physical health status profoundly.

6.5.1 Construction

6.5.1.1 Landholder health and wellbeing

Consultation with landholders, while being for the most part positive, has uncovered a range of long- and short-term concerns and issues, such as the acquisition and compensation process, noise and property management impacts that may escalate as the proposal progresses. The culmination of years of engagement, coupled with uncertainty about elements of the proposal, may result in increased stress and anxiety once the construction program commences.

For some who accept and support the proposal, the realities of construction and the presence of transmission towers spanning their property may be far more significant than what they envisioned. For others, years of planning, project revisions, consultation and uncertainty may culminate in adverse reactions to the eventual outcome. The heightened stress could manifest in mental and physical health issues.

Landholders experiencing mental health issues may seek support or treatment through local services. However, isolation and limited access to mental health services in regional communities may impede adequate treatment.

6.5.1.2 Workforce health and wellbeing

A 2014 report on mental health in the workplace concluded that 25.1 per cent of workers in the construction industry had had a mental health condition (PriceWaterhouseCoopers, 2014). Males account for 88 per cent of the full time construction workforce, and the industry is known to be highly masculinised and to have work practices that detrimentally affect employee wellbeing (Powell et al, 2018).

While local workers would be utilised as much as possible, a significant proportion of the proposal workforce would be from outside the region. There has been extensive research and commentary in Australia about the effects of Fly in – Fly out (FIFO) workforces on both regional communities and workers wellbeing.

Mental and physical risks for FIFO workers, some of which are directly related to the social isolation of the FIFO experience, include:

- the use of alcohol and other drugs
- poor diet and physical inactivity
- increased sexually transmitted and blood borne infections
- mental health issues
- fatigue related injury
- an increase in injury related to high-risk behaviour (Parliament of Australia, 2013).

The Transgrid Code of Ethics and Conduct (Transgrid, 2020) prohibits drugs or alcohol on-site at all times. The inclusion of telecommunication systems, gym and recreation spaces and food services into accommodation camps would go some way to managing many of the above-mentioned health and wellbeing risks for workers.

6.5.1.3 Aboriginal health and wellbeing

There are continuing health inequalities between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians, compounded by broader social inequalities in areas that can affect health, including housing, education, employment, income, and access to adequate health care (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2020). As noted in Section 5.3.4, Aboriginal people comprise the largest cultural and linguistic minority across the regional study area. While collectively Aboriginal people represent a significant proportion of the population, the group comprises multiple tribes, cultures and dialects.

Consultation with LALCs has indicated general acceptance of the proposal and a willingness and desire to promote Aboriginal employment and training across the region. Traditional Owners and Aboriginal groups have been working closely with Transgrid throughout the proposal planning process to minimise potential impacts. However, as noted in it was also acknowledged that there are many social and health issues affecting regional Aboriginal communities.

Likewise, Aboriginal residents in service communities may also experience decreased perceptions of safety and increased isolation with subsequent mental health implications due to an increased presence of construction workers in towns. Discrimination against Aboriginal Australians is considered one of the most prevalent forms of discrimination in Australia. Fifty-two per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have experienced at least one form of racial prejudice in the past six months (Reconciliation Australia, 2020). Consultation with the Griffith and Cummeragunja LALCs indicated that the Aboriginal community in this area experiences higher than average issues with mental health and addiction (Section 5.3.5.2), and at-risk members of these communities would be most at risk should they experience any form of intentional or unintentional discrimination.

6.5.2 Operation

6.5.2.1 ElectroMagnetic Fields

Broad concerns have been raised from landholders and community members regarding potential health impacts associated with increased exposure to electric and magnetic fields. The scientific evidence does not establish that exposure to the electromagnetic fields found around the home, the office, or near powerlines cause adverse health effects (Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency, 2021). Regardless, the issue is widely contested in modern society, with multiple narratives circulating openly through social and modern media, and many people hold concerns about potential health impacts.

Transgrid adopts a precautionary approach to the management of electric and magnetic fields by:

- taking electric and magnetic fields into account in the design and location of new facilities
- closely monitoring ongoing research and reviews by scientific panels and international policy developments
- regularly reviewing policies and practices in light of the latest scientific information
- measuring field strengths in and around our installations and other places where appropriate
- providing up-to-date information to interested people on request. (Transgrid, 2021)

The EnergyConnect Electric and Magnetic Field Study (Beca, 2021) found that the magnetic field levels directly under the proposed lines would be well below the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) general public exposure reference limit in all cases. The risk to human health associated with the proposal would be minimal.

The 2021 midyear trust index (Edelman, 2021) shows that trust in Australian business and government amongst the mass population is near an all-time low and is falling. Public trust is the public or society's willingness to be vulnerable toward institutions (Pirson et al., 2016) and is a crucial aspect of residents and community members accepting research and messaging. Residents and community members who lack trust are less likely to believe in health research. They would be more likely to react negatively to perceived health effects of electric and magnetic fields, resulting in stress and anxiety and affecting personal wellbeing.

The Edelman study also found that trust in business and government amongst the highly informed population is increasing. Information is key to building trust, and ongoing and proactive consultation with concerned landholders and community members will be essential to mitigating concerns about perceived impacts. Transgrid has made a comprehensive electric and magnetic fields fact sheet available on its website, including links to numerous Australian and international studies as a starting point for all concerned community members to undertake informed self-research.

6.5.2.2 Bushfire concerns

Transgrid, through the route selection process, has sought to avoid population centres and areas of high community value and significance. As such, broader community impacts associated with the proposal would likely pertain to a perceived risk of bushfires associated with electricity infrastructure.

The Technical Report Bushfire (Australian Bushfire Protection Planners Pty Limited, 2021) notes a risk of bushfire occurring during both construction and operation. The risks are linked to drought conditions, the presence of fuel and a range of other factors. The report proposes a range of mitigation and management measures to minimize bushfire risk. Transgrid has also undertaken a Formal Safety Assessment specifically focused on bush fire risk as part of their Electricity Safety Management System. This assessment identified foreseeable threats posed by electrical assets and activities that could cause a bush fire, as well as the risk assets from bush fire. The assessment also identified specific controls to ensure bush fire risk to Transgrid and the community is as low as practicably possible.

Nonetheless, the threat of bushfire is a genuine concern amongst landholders and community members and may result in significant stress and anxiety, particularly during the summer months.

6.5.3 Summary of health and wellbeing impacts

Table 6-7 provides a summary of health and wellbeing impacts (prior to mitigation).

Table 6-7 Summary of health and wellbeing impacts (prior to mitigation)

IMPACT	NATURE & PHASE	STAKEHOLDER AFFECTED	LIKELIHOOD	MAGNITUDE	SIGNIFICANCE
Landowners could experience decreased physical and mental health outcomes due to the culmination of the acquisition process, changes to their properties and way they use and manage their land.	Negative, construction	Landholders	Possible	Minor	Medium
Proposal workers suffer from mental health impacts associated with feelings of isolation, long work hours and unhealthy lifestyles	Negative, construction	Workforce	Possible	Minor	Medium
Vulnerable members of the community in the Murrumbidgee LGA, where certain health issues are more prevalent, who may experience decreased perceptions of safety in service communities associated with an influx of construction workers.	Negative, construction	Aboriginal people	Possible	Moderate	High
Perceived health impacts associated with electric and magnetic fields creates stress and anxiety affecting landholders and community members mental and physical health and wellbeing.	Negative, operation	Landholders	Possible	Minor	Medium
The perceived risk of bushfires associated with electricity infrastructure poses a safety risk and results in increased stress and anxiety for regional communities.	Negative, construction and operation	Landholders Community members	Possible	Moderate	Medium

6.6 Surroundings

Surroundings refer to access to and use of ecosystem services, public safety and security, access to and use of the natural and built environment, and aesthetic value or amenity. Natural capital or environmentally produced assets such as land, waterways, forests, or minerals are important to consider in understanding potential impacts on people's surroundings.

6.6.1 Construction

6.6.1.1 Visual impacts

There would be visual disturbance during the construction due to construction works and the establishment of construction compounds and accommodation camps. These disturbances would be primarily experienced close to the construction sites and compounds and vary in duration and intensity depending on the location.

The Visual Landscape and Character Impact Assessment (Iris, 2021) found that:

- during construction, the proposal would have a low to moderate visual impact along most of the alignment and around the Wagga Wagga substation upgrade, and expansion works
- there would be a moderate visual impact associated with the Dinawan substation works due to the large scale and extent of the construction works and the high magnitude of change to the existing landscape
- the highest visual impacts during construction are anticipated in the Lockhart LGA along Urana-Lockhart Road due to the removal of a large area of vegetation near the road and the scale of the construction activity.

Visual impacts can affect the way a person interacts with their surroundings and sense of place. Visual changes are often exacerbated by the cumulative impacts of noise, dust and vibration, and the severity of response may be more severe for those that are also experiencing direct amenity impacts.

For the most part, visual impacts during construction would be short-term and experienced by road users travelling on nearby roads. Transgrid has worked closely with landholders, councils and LALCs throughout the route selection process and during the planning phase of the proposal to minimise where possible interactions between the proposal and sensitive receptors such as private residences during construction.

6.6.1.2 Road safety

Visual changes during construction may also pose a risk to road users. Driver distraction is, increasingly, one of the major causes of road crashes, with activity or scenery outside of the car being one of the leading causes of driver distraction (Road Safety Education, 2021). Nine per cent of all fatal accidents in NSW between 2008 and 2016 involved an identified distraction factor, with outside activity being the leading distraction (Centre for Road Safety, 2017), resulting in approximately 56 deaths.

As noted in Section 5.3.1.2, the proposal would traverse or come near several major state and regional roads. These roads predominantly run in long straight alignments through broad open plains with minimal visual stimuli. Given the relatively uniform terrain and long journeys, construction activity associated with the proposal, including machinery, large steel structures, and helicopters close to the ground, may distract drivers.

The incidence of motor vehicle accidents across the regional study area is notably higher in sparsely populated areas (Section 5.3.6.2). Increased visual activity in these areas may further increase the risk of accidents occurring. The isolated nature of these areas and distance for emergency services would significantly contribute to the outcomes for victims. The implementation of traffic management measures identified in the TTIA (WSP, 2021c) during the line stringing exercise would go some way to mitigating much of the potential impact with the primary risk occurring when activity is proximal to the road corridor.

6.6.1.3 Supply of water

Water supply and management was an important issue raised during consultation with landholders, councils and government agencies. Water, particularly in the western LGAs is a scarce resource, and access is highly regulated and essential for the longevity of agricultural and mining operations.

Water would be supplied for the proposal from existing regulated sources. Water would be purchased from the existing water market within the region or from local council facilities. Access to these sources would occur through the use of existing, licensed water extraction infrastructure only. No new extraction infrastructure from existing watercourses is proposed as part of the water supply points proposed.

While the proposal would result in the use of water across the region, the use of the existing regulated water market would likely minimise supply and pricing impacts for regional communities and primary producers.

6.6.2 Operation

6.6.2.1 Visual impacts

Local character is what makes an area distinctive. It is the translation of land use and built form, the local economy, public realm and private spaces and the tradition and history of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultures, intrinsically linked to particular places (Department of Planning and Environment, 2019). Rural amenity, landscape and environmental values feature heavily throughout regional and local planning policies (Section 2.3) and consultation outcomes.

The VLCIA (Iris, 2021) found that once operational, without mitigation being applied, the proposal would potentially:

- have a relatively low-moderate impact on existing landscapes, with the most pronounced landscape impacts occurring in the Great Dividing Range foothills, located within the Lockhart LGA, with the impact being moderate
- have a low to low-moderate visual impact across most viewpoints, except for the Lockhart rural area, near Urana-Lockhart Road. This was also the area considered to experience the highest visual impact during construction
- result in a high (36 properties) or very high (1 property) visual impact ratings for private residences, most of which are located across the Lockhart LGA.

The assessment findings strongly correlate with the outcomes of consultation, which showed high levels of concern about visual impacts and amenity from Lockhart Shire Council, landholders and community members in that region. Primary concerns to emerge included a desire to protect the landscape and environmental features, particularly around Lake Cullivel and Lockhart township, and the proximity of the transmission line to residential dwellings. Feedback from this area was at times highly emotive, with several landholders and community members noting strong intergenerational attachments to the land and landscape.

Transgrid has and continues to work with stakeholders and landowners to best understand the community's social, environmental, and cultural values about the local area. In response to community feedback regarding the proposed transmission line near Lockhart, Transgrid refined the corridor to lessen the impact on future land use planning within the township while delivering on proposal outcomes.

Changes to valued landscapes can materially affect people's sense of place and connection to public and private spaces. For the majority of households anticipated to experience high or very high visual impact, some may experience a sense of loss of valued rural landscapes, which may affect sense of place and the way they enjoy their property. Depending on the scale of change and the adoption of appropriate screening mitigation measures, most people would likely accept the new structures as part of the landscape.

6.6.3 Summary of surroundings impacts

Table 6-8 provides a summary of surroundings impacts (prior to mitigation).

Table 6-8 Summary of surroundings impacts (prior to mitigation)

IMPACT	NATURE & PHASE	STAKEHOLDER AFFECTED	LIKELIHOOD	MAGNITUDE	SIGNIFICANCE
Construction activities result in visual disturbances and impact valued landscapes affecting residents' sense of place.	Negative, construction and operation	Landholders Regional residents Tourists	Possible	Minor	Medium
Construction activity near roads may distract drivers, affecting road safety	Negative, construction	Road users	Unlikely	Moderate	Medium
Proposal related use of water limits the supply of and access for agricultural and community users.	Negative, construction	Landholders Regional businesses Councils Regional communities	Unlikely	Minor	Low
The presence of new transmission infrastructure in the Lockhart region results in significant visual impacts for residential properties, affecting residents' sense of place and the way they enjoy private space.	Negative, operation	Landholders	Likely	Moderate	High
The presence of new transmission lines and associated infrastructure across the local study area results in visual impacts for residents affecting valued rural landscapes and people's sense of place.	Negative, operation	Local study area residents	Unlikely	Minor	Low

6.7 Livelihoods

6.7.1 Construction

6.7.1.1 Land use and agricultural impacts

Affected landholders would experience varying changes on their properties during construction activities. Agricultural land uses, including livestock, cropping, and horticultural enterprises, comprise around 93 per cent of the land of the proposal alignment (Tremain Ivey Advisory, 2021). Any changes to agricultural properties resulting from the proposal may affect how landholders manage and operate their properties and their capacity to sustain themselves economically.

The Agricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) (Tremain Ivey Advisory, 2021) notes that the construction and operation phases of the proposal would have similar agricultural impacts. However, the potential and expected impacts are greater in the construction phase due to higher activity and a larger impact footprint.

Consultation with affected landholders has identified a range of concerns and varying degrees of sentiment regarding perceived impacts from the construction program. Table 6-9 compares landholder concerns raised during consultation and the predicted actual impact resulting from the AIA (Tremain Ivey Advisory, 2021).

Table 6-9 Landholder perceived and predicted impacts

LANDHOLDER CONCERN / ISSUE	OUTCOME OF AGRICULTURAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT
Minimising land requirements for construction, including the utilisation of existing internal roads and tracks as much as possible to minimise impacts to productive land.	<p>Transgrid worked closely with affected landholders to determine appropriate locations for temporary ancillary infrastructure. The design utilises existing roads and minimises the construction of new access roads as far as possible.</p> <p>An additional area for temporary works would be required for tracks and other ancillary construction activities. These areas are expected to total approximately 140 to 210 hectares. However, this represents approximately 0.00002 % of total agricultural holdings across the region.</p>
Potential impacts to existing agricultural infrastructure vital to farm operations such as irrigation channels, stockyards and corrals and communications equipment.	<p>Transgrid has worked closely with landholders to minimise impacts and disruption. Irrigated cropping or horticulture enterprises may be subject to other impacts during the construction phase. Construction activities and erection of new tower structures may require some irrigation infrastructure to be modified or moved.</p> <p>Considerable disruption could occur to livestock enterprises if stock water pipelines or fences were damaged and not promptly repaired during construction or if gates were left open.</p>
Biosecurity risks such as weeds and pests associated with the movement of people and machinery across multiple properties and regions.	<p>The risk of weed spread associated with the proposal would be high. The maximum potential impact would occur during the construction phase due to earthworks, the frequency of vehicle and personnel movements, and increased weed growth due to disturbance of ground cover and soil.</p> <p>The Wentworth Shire Council biosecurity officer advised that weeds had been introduced into the shire during previous construction projects. However, few other similar instances were reported during consultations.</p>
Thorough remediation and reinstatement practices, including land to a useable state free of contaminants, replacement of fences and gates and any other ancillary infrastructure that may have been altered during construction.	<p>Areas not required for operational purposes (some roads, tracks and other ancillary works) would be rehabilitated and returned to its former land use after construction has been completed. Agricultural production would only be lost on this area during construction and for a limited time afterwards.</p>

While landholders have raised varied and valid concerns about potential impacts to their properties, with the exception of landholdings hosting compounds, laydowns and accommodation camps, these impacts would be relatively minimal and short term for each affected landholder. Landowners have worked with Transgrid to develop comprehensive Property Management Plans that would minimise and mitigate as much as possible potential issues arising during construction.

Concerns about impacts to productive land were more common in the eastern LGAs, where agricultural activities intensify, and allotments became smaller. Transgrid continues to engage with affected landholders to refine the proposal and develop strategies to minimise potential impacts during construction.

Overall, it is considered that the implementation of comprehensive Property Management Plans along with the relatively small area of land take required for each property would minimise impacts to landholders' land management practices and would have little effect on their individual livelihoods.

6.7.1.2 Property values and compensation

Transgrid requires appropriately managed spaces for substations and transmission lines to ensure the longevity, protection and safety of the network and people near to it. To achieve this, Transgrid acquires the property rights for land affected by its network and infrastructure. This would usually be a freehold title for a substation and the creation of an easement for a transmission line.

The Transgrid Landholder Easement and Compensation Guide provides landholders with information regarding the property acquisition process and is publicly available and provided to all affected landholders. The majority of property acquisition for the proposal would be for easements for the transmission line. An easement is a property right used to protect both the public and Transgrid's transmission line infrastructure and provide access along the route of a transmission line.

Transgrid is continuing to work with relevant landholders to create the new transmission line easements. Once an agreement is reached, Transgrid works with the landholders' solicitors to formalise the easement acquisition and would pay compensation after the easement is registered. Compensation for transmission lines and easements situated on private property is valued per the *Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991* (the Just Terms Act).

The majority of landholders within the potential easement have worked pragmatically with Transgrid through the route selection and easement creation process. It must be noted that some landholders have made representations seeking amendments to the Just Terms Act to alter the nature of the compensation considered under the act, representing a high level of concern on this issue. Transgrid may pursue a compulsory acquisition pathway under the Just Terms Act if an agreement cannot be made with the affected landholder.

6.7.1.3 Income

Landowners expressed a range of sentiments towards the proposal and potential impact on their properties. Overwhelmingly, landholders displayed a willingness to engage Transgrid to develop the best possible outcome for the proposed transmission line design in coexistence with existing operations and land use.

In many instances, the acquisition and compensation process may provide an alternate source of income for landholders, improving economic livelihoods and supporting economic well-being. Landholders would receive monetary compensation for land, which in most cases, they can still use for agricultural activities once the proposal is operational. Several stakeholders have proactively offered their properties for the alignment.

6.7.1.4 Work and employment

As noted in Section 6.7.1.4, around construction worker 500 jobs would be created during the construction of the proposal. The Economic Impact Assessment (Gillespie Economics, 2021) indicates that during year one of construction, the proposal would create 100 direct jobs for residents in the region, 17 jobs from wage expenditures resulting from the direct jobs and 571 jobs from non-labour expenditure, including proposal procurement activities. Approximately 2,900 people were identified as being unemployed in the regional study area in June 2021. Forecast regional direct employment opportunities represent potential employment of over ten per cent of the unemployed population.

Unemployment and long-term reliance on income support increase the risks of poor health, low self-esteem and social isolation (Department of Social Services, 2014). Regional employment opportunities would improve the way of life for those employed, improve mental wellbeing, the way they interact with their communities their ability to access goods and services.

As noted in Section 5.3.7.1, unemployment patterns across the regional study area vary greatly. Balranald LGA, Murrumbidgee LGA and Lockhart LGA all exhibit unemployment rates below four per cent, indicating constrained labour markets. Conversely, Wentworth LGA, Hay LGA and Federation LGA all exhibit unemployment rates over six per cent, indicating higher levels of local disadvantage. Consultation with these councils has indicated a strong desire to promote and implement targeted local training and employment initiatives.

Transgrid estimates the proposal to provide 500 construction worker jobs in the region for the 18-month construction period. Twenty per cent of the jobs are estimated to be sourced from the region, with the remainder sourced from the rest of Australia and overseas. Proposal employment and procurement activities would result in a broad range of social and economic benefits for the regional study area, particularly during the 18-month construction phase.

Targeted employment initiatives in LGAs with higher unemployment would enhance the benefits of employment by focusing jobs in areas of most need while not further constraining labour markets and subsequently increasing competition in LGAs with low unemployment. Initiatives aimed at increasing youth employment would increase economic opportunity for a group that experiences much higher levels of unemployment, particularly in the Murray Region and may address the issues raised by multiple councils of young people leaving the regions in search of work and education.

Likewise, targeted Aboriginal employment initiatives such as the Aboriginal Employment and Participation Plan would enhance the overall benefit of employment for a community that experiences higher levels of unemployment across the regional study area and more barriers to labour force participation.

6.7.1.5 Economic development

The use of regional businesses for proposal procurement would improve regional economic productivity and improve livelihoods for owners, operators and employees. Consultation with councils indicated a strong desire to maximise the use of regional businesses to boost local benefits.

Murrumbidgee Council noted that previous solar projects delivered in the LGA had not delivered the local benefit that community members and businesses had hoped as they went to larger regional centres for workforce and project procurement. Further, Balranald Council noted that accommodation providers in the town of Balranald raised a significant issue when previous projects diverted all accommodation needs to accommodation camps without any use of their services at all. This issue was exacerbated as the industry was struggling due to the decline in tourism and drought affecting the region.

In response to this historical experience, Transgrid has developed the Local Industry Participation Plan to maximise local procurement and broader economic benefit. The proposal will also utilise existing accommodation providers across the regional study area during the early works phase of the proposal and intermittently during construction for short stays throughout construction.

6.7.1.6 Tourism and leisure spending

Workforce spending on leisure and lifestyle businesses in the region could go some way to supporting the regional tourism sector, supporting jobs and businesses in an industry that has struggled with the COVID-19 Pandemic. The majority of workers would source from outside of the regional study area and would likely have to travel significant distances at a personal cost to travel home regularly.

The regional study features a range of historical, cultural and environmental tourism locations and iconic tourist routes popular for driving holidays, including:

- the world heritage listed Mungo National Park in Wentworth and Balranald LGAs
- the Classic Australian Drive following the Sturt Highway between Wentworth LGA and Wagga Wagga LGA
- water sport and tourist towns along the Murray River, including Euston in Balranald LGA and Echuca-Moama in Murray River LGA.

Engagement with councils and local communities has indicated the region is well placed in terms of existing infrastructure and service to support increased tourism. Initiatives that incentivise workers to stay in the region on their days off would go some way to enhancing regional economic benefits and building a positive regional legacy.

6.7.2 Operation

6.7.2.1 Land use and agricultural impacts

The expected transmission line easement (80 metres wide, approximately 430 hectares) would cover a small fraction (0.005 per cent) of the total area of agricultural holdings in the nine impacted LGAs (Tremain Ivey Advisory, 2021). Once the transmission line is operational, for the most part, agricultural activities can continue within the easement, subject to safety and access requirements which would minimise the loss of productive land for most landholders.

Landholders raised a range of perceived issues related to the land management once the proposal is operational, including impeded access and movement of machinery around the base of transmission towers, the effects of the transmission towers on radiocommunications and GPS systems and potential biosecurity risks associated with ongoing maintenance access requirements.

Safety requirements would limit the types of machinery and plant equipment that can be used in the new easement or near transmission lines. This particularly pertains mainly to large grain harvesters, planes and drones and would primarily affect landholders in the east of the regional study area.

Several landholders have noted small airstrips on their properties and use small planes and helicopters to undertake property management activities. The use of aircraft near transmission lines would be prohibited for safety reasons. Landholders would need to find alternative methods of undertaking these property management activities proximal to the easement that would likely take longer.

The operation of residential, commercial or industrial devices on properties should not be impacted by the RFI emissions from the transmission line, as the devices and the transmission line would generally operate at different frequencies.

Overall, while some landholders and agricultural enterprises would likely experience some form of change to daily operations, these changes would not likely result in material impacts to the operational viability of the landholding or the landholders' ability to sustain themselves from their land.

6.7.2.2 Broader economic development and transformation

The proposal would result in a range of broader economic and flow on social benefits for both the regional study area and NSW as a whole. The proposal is anticipated to reduce power bills for NSW residents by between \$58–64 annually (Transgrid, 2021), easing cost of living pressures and associated stress that many households face.

The proposal may also result in a broader social benefit across the regional study area by enabling the development of new renewable projects at connection points and facilitating the growth of associated industries. Nearly all Councils indicated they have energy self-sufficiency or net zero targets in place and are looking to leverage the opportunities presented by the proposal to increase renewable development in the region. Wentworth, Balranald, Murray River, Lockhart and Wagga Wagga City councils indicated they all had been approached with enquiries about potential renewable projects.

Increased development resulting from the proposal could result in further employment opportunities across the region, boosting economic livelihoods and residents' capacity to sustain themselves. Preliminary estimates show that approximately 700 ongoing jobs would be created in NSW from new energy generation projects enabled by the proposal (Transgrid, 2021). Employment and economic development opportunities associated with the proposal may also reverse the trend of population decline exhibited across several of the regional study area LGAs.

6.7.3 Summary of livelihood impacts

Table 6-10 provides a summary of livelihood impacts (prior to mitigation).

Table 6-10 Summary of livelihood impacts (prior to mitigation)

IMPACT	NATURE & PHASE	STAKEHOLDER AFFECTED	LIKELIHOOD	MAGNITUDE	SIGNIFICANCE
Construction activities result in impacts to agricultural landholdings, reducing productivity and landholders ability to sustain themselves.	Negative, construction	Landholders	Unlikely	Minor	Low
The easement and associated transmission line restrict or alter how landholders manage their property, decreasing productivity affecting livelihoods.	Negative, operation	Landholders	Possible	Moderate	Medium
Landholders receive economic benefit from easement compensation while still being able to utilise land, improving their economic standing and financial resilience to agricultural shocks such as drought.	Positive, construction	Landholders	Almost certain	Moderate	High
Regional employment opportunities would improve the livelihoods of those employed, improve mental wellbeing, the way they interact with their communities their ability to access goods and services.	Positive, construction	Regional communities Unemployed people Aboriginal communities	Almost certain	Moderate	High
Targeted employment and training initiatives aimed at young people and local Aboriginal communities improves the way of life, mental health and general sense of wellbeing for groups of people that generally experience higher levels of unemployment and barriers to employment.	Positive, construction	Aboriginal communities	Likely	Moderate	High
Proposal related procurement activities improve regional economic outcomes and result in flow on employment for regional residents.	Positive, construction	Regional communities Regional businesses	Almost certain	Moderate	High

IMPACT	NATURE & PHASE	STAKEHOLDER AFFECTED	LIKELIHOOD	MAGNITUDE	SIGNIFICANCE
Recreation and leisure spending by workers improve regional economic outcomes for tourism businesses.	Positive, construction	Regional communities Regional businesses	Likely	Minor	Medium
The proposal encourages investment in renewable projects and associated industries, and improves employment opportunities for local communities in the regional study area.	Positive, operation	Regional communities Regional businesses	Possible	Major	High

6.8 Decision making systems

Decision making systems refers to the extent to which people believe they can have their say in decisions that affect their lives and are aware of and have access to complaint, remedy and grievance mechanisms.

6.8.1 *Aboriginal communities*

The Transgrid Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement and Participation Policy details the organisations' commitment to working closely with Aboriginal people and communities across all aspects of their business. Transgrid has proactively sought to involve regional Traditional Owners and other Aboriginal Groups in the assessment program and provide input to the preparation of a cultural heritage assessment report.

To date, in excess of 138 briefings and proposal updates have occurred with Traditional Owners and other Aboriginal Groups, and a variety of elders and LALC representatives have collaborated with Transgrid to refine the proposal alignment and undertake the ACHAR. Aboriginal stakeholders engaged by Transgrid have generally been supportive of the proposal, most often due to the potential for socioeconomic benefit for local communities both in terms of employment and service provision.

Representatives also noted a willingness to continue participating and speaking for Country across aspects of project development (site walkthrough) and construction activity (such as excavation). There was also a desire for Transgrid to promote Aboriginal finds and facilitate visits to cultural places on private land to explore shared values and enhance cultural heritage.

Overall, it is considered that regional Aboriginal communities are receptive to the proposal and feel included and involved in the process. Transgrid will continue working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities during the development, delivery maintenance and operation of EnergyConnect.

6.8.2 *Landholders*

Proposal affected landholders may perceive negative impacts in relation to their property rights and individual livelihoods, regardless of the standards of procedural fairness being met and just compensation terms being in place.

As noted throughout the previous sections, landholders have expressed a range of sentiments towards potential property impacts they may experience. Consultation outcomes note particular issues around the Lake Cullivel and Lockhart regions, where several landholders hold significant emotional and sentimental attachments to their land and the surrounding environment, further adding to feelings of loss and unfairness. Some landholders have also made representations seeking amendments to the Just Terms Act to alter the nature of the compensation considered under the Act, suggesting that for a minority of landholders, there is some level of dissatisfaction with the acquisition process.

Since initial contact with landholders, Transgrid has undertaken more than 3,200 engagement contacts, including face to face meetings, emails, phone calls and text messages. At present, Transgrid has commenced property negotiations with all easement-affected landholders and is continuing to work closely with others to manage perceived and actual issues, and deliver sound outcomes for both parties.

6.8.3 Summary of decision making systems impacts

Table 6-11 provides a summary of decision making systems impacts (prior to mitigation).

Table 6-11 Summary of decision making systems impacts (prior to mitigation)

IMPACT	NATURE & PHASE	STAKEHOLDER AFFECTED	LIKELIHOOD	MAGNITUDE	SIGNIFICANCE
Traditional Owners and other Aboriginal Groups feel engaged, supportive of the proposal, and capable of interacting with the proposal and Transgrid to maximise the benefit for regional Aboriginal communities.	Construction and operation, positive	Local Aboriginal communities	Likely	Moderate	High
Landholders may perceive negative impacts in relation to their property rights and individual livelihoods, regardless of the standards of procedural fairness being met and just compensation terms being in place.	Construction, negative	Landholders	Possible	Moderate	Medium

6.9 Cumulative impacts

Cumulative impact assessment means the consideration of other nearby development projects along with the proposal. Projects with the potential for cumulative impacts with the proposal were identified through a review of publicly available information and environmental impact assessments from the following databases:

- NSW Major Projects website (NSW Government, searched October 2021)
- Relevant council websites (searched October 2021)
- Australian Government – Department of Environment and Energy, EPBC Public notices list (Australian Government, searched October 2021).

A number of proposed developments have been identified, and these include:

- EnergyConnect – Western Section
- Buronga Solar Farm
- Buronga Landfill Expansion
- Buronga – Gol Gol residential expansion
- Inland Rail – Albury to Illabo
- Uranquinty Solar Farm
- Gregadoo Solar Farm.

6.9.1 Cumulative project descriptions

6.9.1.1 EnergyConnect – Western Section

The approved EnergyConnect (NSW – Western Section) would comprise around 135 kilometres of new 330kV double circuit transmission line and associated infrastructure between the SA/NSW border and the existing Buronga substation, upgrade of the Buronga substation and upgrade of the existing 22 kilometre 220kV single circuit transmission line between the Buronga substation and the NSW/Victoria border at Monak.

The EnergyConnect (NSW – Western Section) was approved in September 2021. Construction of the proposal is scheduled to commence in early-2022 (enabling phase). The construction of the transmission lines would take approximately 18 months, while the Buronga substation upgrade and expansion would be delivered in two components and be operational by mid-2023.

6.9.1.2 Buronga Solar Farm

The Buronga Solar Farm development included a 400 MW solar farm with energy storage and associated infrastructure located adjacent to the proposal Buronga substation. The construction schedule for the proposal is identified as being about approximately 18 to 24 months from site establishment to completion (noting commencement subject to approval from DPIE).

6.9.1.3 Buronga landfill expansion

The proposal includes the expansion to the existing Buronga landfill to allow for an increase in the total quantity of waste that can be accommodated from 30,000 tonnes to 100,000 tonnes of general waste per annum. The proposal would consist of the construction of multiple additional landfill cells over the next 30 years comprising a volume of approximately 4.8 million cubic metres over an area of approximately 395,000 square metres (including the current active landfill cell).

6.9.1.4 Buronga – Gol Gol residential expansion

Wentworth Shire Council are planning new subdivisions to provide approximately 500 new large residential housing allotments in the Buronga – Gol Gol growth area, approximately 10 kilometres to the west of the proposal.

No timeframe on proposed development of the urban release areas has been identified at this time.

6.9.1.5 Inland Rail – Albury to Illabo

ARTC is proposing to upgrade the Albury to Illabo section, along the 185 kilometres of existing operational narrow-gauge railway from the Victorian/New South Wales border to Illabo in regional NSW. The Proposal would provide clearance of the existing 'Main South' corridor to operate 1,800 metres long, 6.5 metres high, double stacked trains and includes the provision of dual track in areas for train passing. The project is made up of discrete sections of proposed upgrade, including upgrades within the existing rail corridor at The Rock, Uranquinty and within the centre of Wagga Wagga.

Subject to planning approval, construction is planned to commence in mid-2023 and complete by late 2024. Operations to commence in 2025.

6.9.1.6 Uranquinty Solar Farm

Origin Energy is proposing to develop a commercial scale solar photovoltaic site and associated battery storage at Uranquinty. The proposal would have a capacity of up to 200 megawatts (MW) of renewable energy production for the local electricity supply. The site is located north-west of Uranquinty village along Uranquinty Cross Road, around 15 kilometres south-west of Wagga Wagga. Given current timing for the proposed solar farm, there is the potential for the proposal and the solar farm construction periods to overlap.

6.9.1.7 Gregadoo Solar Farm

The Gregadoo Solar Farm will be located about 13 kilometres south-east of Wagga Wagga. The project is proposed to comprise construction, operation and decommissioning of a maximum 47 MW solar farm and associated infrastructure. Construction is expected to commence mid-2021.

6.9.2 Cumulative social considerations

Table 6-12 Projects for cumulative assessment

PROJECT	SOCIAL CONSIDERATIONS
EnergyConnect (NSW – Western Section)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — large project workforce would be present in the same local area for an extended period of time — concurrent use of the Buronga accommodation camp and compounds for proposal requirements — potential continuation of employment for workforce — traffic demands on the regional road network for a prolonged period of time.
Buronga Solar Farm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — competition for local resources and labour — increased demand for local service in Wentworth LGA — increased traffic and movement of people along important highways and regional roads in Wentworth LGA — cumulative impacts to agricultural properties affecting regional outputs
Buronga Landfill Expansion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — competition for local resources and labour — competition for natural resources.
Buronga – Gol Gol residential expansion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — competition for local resources and labour — competition for natural resources.
Inland Rail – Albury to Illabo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — competition for local resources and labour — competition for natural resources — increased demand on the road network in Wagga Wagga and Lockhart LGAs — demand for accommodation and social infrastructure Wagga Wagga LGA.
Uranquinty Solar Farm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — competition for local resources and labour — competition for natural resources — increased demand on the road network — demand for accommodation and social infrastructure.
Gregadoo Solar Farm.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — competition for local resources and labour — competition for natural resources — increased demand on the road network — demand for accommodation and social infrastructure.

6.9.3 Social implications

Based on the above project details and social considerations, the following cumulative social impacts are possible:

- Overlapping construction schedules could strain local labour markets, increase competition for resources, and potentially increase wages and poaching. These impacts would most likely affect local employers who rely on manual labour, construction workers and machinery operators in Balranald, Lockhart and Wagga Wagga LGAs, which exhibit low unemployment rates.
- Increased traffic associated with multiple large construction projects would result in an increased number of heavy vehicles moving across the region and through towns which may impact the efficiency of the road network resulting in longer journeys for residents and affect road users' perceptions of safety. This would be most prevalent in Wagga Wagga LGA and through the towns and settlements of Wentworth LGA, where multiple large scale projects would be active in close succession or concurrently.
- Concurrent large construction workforces located proximal to each other may increase demand for local social infrastructure, limiting access for locals.
- Concurrent large construction workforces located proximal to each other may, without adequate management, constrain local housing and short-term accommodation markets resulting in price rises and limited supply for locals. This is particularly relevant for the Wagga Wagga LGA, with several large worker intensive projects likely to come online within close succession of each other.

The significant scale of the regional study area and dispersed nature of land use and development means that potential cumulative impacts would primarily be indirect. It is unlikely that landholders directly impacted by the proposal would also experience direct impacts from the above projects.

6.9.4 Summary of cumulative impacts

Table 6-13 provides a summary of cumulative impacts (prior to mitigation).

Table 6-13 Summary of cumulative impacts (prior to mitigation)

IMPACT	NATURE & PHASE	STAKEHOLDER AFFECTED	LIKELIHOOD	MAGNITUDE	SIGNIFICANCE
Overlapping construction schedules could strain local labour markets, increase competition for resources and unfairly disadvantage local businesses.	Negative, construction	Regional study area businesses	Possible	Moderate	High
Increased traffic associated with multiple large construction projects would result in an increased number of heavy vehicles moving across the region and through towns which may impact the efficiency of the road network resulting in longer journeys for residents and affect road users' perceptions of safety.	Negative, construction	Regional study area communities, particularly those in the Wentworth and Wagga Wagga LGAs	Possible	Minor	Medium

IMPACT	NATURE & PHASE	STAKEHOLDER AFFECTED	LIKELIHOOD	MAGNITUDE	SIGNIFICANCE
Concurrent large construction workforces located proximal to each other may increase demand for local social infrastructure, limiting access for locals.	Negative, construction	Regional study area communities, particularly those in the Wentworth and Wagga Wagga LGAs	Possible	Moderate	High
Concurrent large construction workforces located proximal to each other may, without adequate management, constrain local housing and short-term accommodation markets resulting in price rises and limited supply for locals.	Negative, construction	Wagga Wagga LGA	Possible	Moderate	High

7 Mitigation and enhancement

All negative impacts assessed in this SIA can be reasonably mitigated throughout planning and development to reduce the significance of all impacts to moderate or low. All positive impacts identified can be enhanced through a collaborative approach to proposal development to realise the proposal's opportunities.

7.1 Commitments

Transgrid maintains the following commitments that will address a variety of potential social impacts underpin the development and implementation of proposal mitigation measures:

- management of proposal works and potential environmental impacts in accordance with the projects development consent and implementation of the *Transgrid Environment Policy*
- ongoing consultation with and involvement of Traditional Owners and Aboriginal groups in line with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander *Engagement and Participation Policy*, including commitments to support Aboriginal employment and procurement through the *Aboriginal Employment Participation Plan*
- a strong local employment commitment, including a target of 20 per cent local employment across the proposal
- a focus on employee, delivery partner and public safety through the *Transgrid Health and Safety Policy*
- community investment through the Community Partnerships Program
- a commitment to maintaining positive relationships with landholders and the community through the establishment of the Office of the Landowner and Community Advocate
- implementation of the *Transgrid Complaints Handling Policy* to ensure the timely and effective response to stakeholder and community issues.

A copy of the above policies and strategies is provided in Appendix E.

7.2 Social mitigation and enhancement measures

Many of the impacts anticipated during the construction phase can be feasibly mitigated through a comprehensive and informed Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), incorporating mitigation measures identified throughout various other technical assessments. Table 7-1 shows key mitigation measures to be incorporated into the CEMP.

Table 7-1 Mitigation measures

REFERENCE	MITIGATION MEASURE	TIMING	APPLICABLE LOCATION(S)
SE1	A Communication and Stakeholder Management Plan (CSMP) would be implemented. This is to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">— appropriate communication and engagement tools and approaches to engage with councils, landholders, community groups in service communities, emergency services and the broader community— complaint handling processes in line with the Transgrid Complaints Handling Policy.	Pre-construction, construction	All locations
SE2	Land and Property Access Officers would be appointed for affected landholder to provide direct avenues of enquiry for information and issues management.	Construction	Landholders along the alignment

REFERENCE	MITIGATION MEASURE	TIMING	APPLICABLE LOCATION(S)
SE3	<p>A Local Industry Participation Plan would be implemented to guide local opportunities during construction, and where possible, align with existing plans and strategies of regional study area LGAs, and Transgrid's Reconciliation Plan.</p> <p>The strategy would be developed in consultation with regional study area councils and would take into account current unemployment trends across the region.</p> <p>The strategy would include initiatives for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — local supplier and labour procurement targets — Aboriginal workforce and business participation — training and upskilling programs for local labour force — transitioning the local workforce following the completion of construction. 	Pre-construction and construction	All locations
SE4	<p>A Workforce Management Plan would be developed for each accommodation camp in consultation with relevant councils, social infrastructure managers and community service providers in nearby service communities.</p> <p>The plan would identify potential constraints in local service provision and mechanisms to promote workforce health and wellbeing and integration into the affected service community without affecting access for residents. It would include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — a list of recreation facilities, sports teams and organisations that workers could utilise — social service providers, including medical and allied health providers — local initiatives that facilitate non-resident workforce and community interactions at local venues, events and community projects. <p>The plan would be reviewed every six months in collaboration with councils to identify and manage any emergent issues.</p>	Pre-construction	Service communities – likely Balranald, Hay, Jerilderie/Coleambally, Lockhart and Wagga Wagga
SE6	If proposal construction coincides with the construction of other projects around Wagga Wagga, a workforce accommodation strategy for the proposal would be implemented and would be informed by an additional review of existing housing and accommodation capacity relative to the proposal workforce needs.	Pre-construction	Wagga Wagga LGA
SE7	The long-term rental market in Wagga Wagga would not be used to satisfy short term (less than six months) accommodation needs for the construction workforce in Wagga Wagga.	Construction	Wagga Wagga LGA
SE8	Cultural Heritage and awareness training will be provided to all construction workers during the onboarding process.	Construction	Whole project

7.3 Desired outcomes

Successful implementation of the proposed mitigation and enhancement measures will support the following desired outcomes:

- Stakeholders and community members are engaged in a transparent, consistent and inclusive process and have and access to current and sufficient information about the proposal, its activities, workforce and schedule to support impact management and monitoring.
- Landholders have direct access to a proposal representative who can answer their questions, address issues and allay concerns in a timely manner.
- Issues and complaints are identified, evaluated, addressed, recorded and reported so that Transgrid can demonstrate how the proposal is responding to stakeholder feedback.
- The proposal has implemented mechanisms that support communication, information sharing and feedback to assist with local employment and industry participation.
- Workforce demands for accommodation, local services, and facilities has not constrained supply or affected access for residents.
- The proposal supports local initiatives that contribute positively to workforce and community health and wellbeing.
- The proposal monitors community infrastructure impacts in the region arising from cumulative developments in the area.
- The proposal maximises local employment in LGAs with high unemployment (Wentworth, Edward River, Hay and Federation LGAs) and amongst communities that exhibit higher than average unemployment rates including young people and Aboriginal people.

7.4 Monitoring framework

Effective social impact management relies on regular monitoring to allow adopted measures to meet their desired outcomes. Table 7-2 provides an implementation and monitoring framework to ensure the effective management of negative impacts and enhancement of benefits.

Table 7-2 Implementation and monitoring framework

DESIRED OUTCOME	SUPPORTING ACTIONS	INDICATOR	MONITORING METHOD	FREQUENCY
Stakeholders and community members are engaged in a transparent, consistent and inclusive process and have access to current and sufficient information about the proposal, its activities, workforce and schedule to support impact management and monitoring.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Maintain transparent and ongoing dialogue with concerned landholders the community through implementation of the CCS. — Use appropriate platforms and tools to distribute proposal information and demonstrate how community feedback has been considered. — Regularly update the broader community through the proposal website and local media. — Conduct proposal site visits for Councils, LALCs and other interested parties. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Works notices distributed to landholders — Number of complaints received about project activities — Number of communications pieces distributed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Assessment of consultation manager data 	Quarterly
Landholders have direct access to a project representative who can answer their questions, address issues and allay concerns in a timely manner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Maintain proactive liaison with landholders at three-monthly intervals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Number of landholder contacts — Number of landholder complaints 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Assessment of consultation manager data 	Quarterly
Issues and complaints are identified, evaluated, addressed, recorded and reported so that Transgrid can demonstrate how the proposal responds to stakeholder feedback.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Adhere to the Transgrid Complaint Management Policy to facilitate the resolution of community complaints relating to proposal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Number of complaints lodged 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Assessment of consultation manager data — Number of contacts to Transgrid's complaint contact points 	Quarterly

DESIRED OUTCOME	SUPPORTING ACTIONS	INDICATOR	MONITORING METHOD	FREQUENCY
The proposal has implemented mechanisms that support communication, information sharing and feedback to assist with local employment and industry participation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Leverage existing local government/industry initiatives related to employment and business development. — Provide a 6–12 month forward activity schedule for the proposal, including (as best known) workforce ramp-up, proposal requirements, and accommodation arrangements to relevant stakeholders. — Regular consultation with the local chambers of commerce to identify opportunities to strengthen local businesses' participation in the proposal supply chain. — Promote business and employment opportunities through Aboriginal community leaders, existing Aboriginal employment agencies and organisations. — Promote the supplier portal through regional media, councils and business associations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Engagement with councils and industry and training bodies — Forward activity schedule every 6–12 months — Number of local businesses goods and services have been procured from and associated expenditure per annum — Number of enquiries to the supplier portal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Assessment of consultation manager data — Assessment of procurement data 	Six monthly
Workforce demands for accommodation, local services, and facilitates has not constrained supply of affected access for residents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Implementation of the workforce management plan. — Development of cumulative impact monitoring framework with councils and local providers as part of the Workforce Management Plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Engagement with councils and local service providers — Number of grants allocated to regional study area organisations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Assessment of consultation manager data — Grant outcomes 	Quarterly

DESIRED OUTCOME	SUPPORTING ACTIONS	INDICATOR	MONITORING METHOD	FREQUENCY
The proposal supports local initiatives that contribute positively to workforce and community wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Engage with Police and emergency services in service communities to develop strategies to enable pro-active responses to any proposal-related community safety issues (e.g. traffic behaviour or behaviour in towns). — Seek to regularly consult with local Aboriginal representative to monitor potential social issues relating to the proposal workforce. — Support local initiatives that facilitate non-resident workforce and community interactions at local venues, events and community projects. — Implement cultural heritage and awareness training. — Implement a workforce health and safety program that includes a focus on fatigue management, promotion of healthy lifestyles and mental health. — Promote healthy lifestyle tips directly linked to activities and services available in relevant service communities and LGAs, published in the proposal's internal electronic newsletters. — Create a culture that supports wellbeing, including programs to improve knowledge and understanding of mental health and peer support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Evidence of consultation with Police, emergency services and relevant Aboriginal groups — Review of sponsorships and donations program — Workforce participation in workforce health and safety initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Assessment of consultation manager data — Grant outcomes — Human Resources data 	Six monthly

DESIRED OUTCOME	SUPPORTING ACTIONS	INDICATOR	MONITORING METHOD	FREQUENCY
The proposal monitors community infrastructure impacts in the proposal region arising from cumulative developments in the area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Consult with councils and other service providers relevant to cumulative impact management in the region. — Provide a 6 – 12-month forward activity schedule for the Project, including (as best known) workforce and accommodation arrangements to relevant stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Evidence of engagement and collaboration with relevant parties for monitoring and responding to cumulative impacts on community services and infrastructure — Forward activity schedule every 6-12 months 	— Assessment of consultation manager data	Quarterly
The proposal maximises local employment in LGAs that have high unemployment (Wentworth, Edward River, Hay and Federation LGAs) and for young people and the Aboriginal community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Promote the availability of proposal employment and application arrangements in regional media outlets. — Promote the supplier portal through regional media, councils and business associations. — Maintain regular engagement with local employment agencies to advise of opportunities for training and employment. — Advertise local employment opportunities with TAFE's across the regional study area. — Focus recruitment on hiring residents of the Wentworth, Edward River, Hay and Federation LGAs. — Focus Aboriginal employment and training initiatives on LGAs with high Aboriginal populations and corresponding high Aboriginal unemployment rates (Wentworth, Balranald and Murrumbidgee LGA). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Number of recruitment efforts to obtain local supply and participation — Number of engagement with employment and recruitment services — Number of website and media promotions — Provision of training opportunities supported 	— Human Resources data	Six monthly

8 Residual impacts

This section summarises the social impacts identified and analysed and includes the residual significance assessment of each impact post-mitigation or enhancement. Table 8-1 shows the residual social risk for each identified social impact post mitigation.

Table 8-1 Residual social risk assessment

IMPACT CATEGORY	IMPACT	NATURE	SOCIAL RISK PRE-MITIGATION	MITIGATION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES	IMPACT POST-MITIGATION		
					Likelihood	Magnitude	Residual social risk rating
Way of life	Construction related amenity impacts for residential properties surrounding the Wagga Wagga substation upgrade and expansion and main construction compound affect the way residents use and enjoy private space.	Construction, negative	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Implementation of the CMP incorporating appropriate management and mitigation measures outlined in the NVIA and AQIA — Implementaiton of the CCS — Adherence to Transgrids Complaints Management Process. 	Likely	Minor	Medium
Way of life	Construction related amenity impacts for residential properties located proximal to the transmission alignment and Lockhart main construction compound and accommodation camp options affect the way residents use and enjoy private space.	Construction, negative	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Implementation of the CMP incorporating appropriate management and mitigation measures outlined in the NVIA and AQIA — Implementaiton of the CCS — Adherence to Transgrids Complaints Management Process — Ongoing engagmeent with affected landholders via the Land and Property Access officers. 	Likely	Minimal	Low

IMPACT CATEGORY	IMPACT	NATURE	SOCIAL RISK PRE-MITIGATION	MITIGATION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES	IMPACT POST-MITIGATION		
					Likelihood	Magnitude	Residual social risk rating
Way of life	Within towns, increased construction traffic movements may contribute to temporarily reduced road capacities at some locations. This may cause temporary delays during the construction peak on highways or state roads, resulting in slightly longer journeys, decreased perceptions of safety and minor annoyance for residents and road users.	Negative, construction	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Implementation of the CCS, including regular community updates to prepare residents for changes to the local environment — Implementation of appropriate traffic management measures as outlined in the TTIA. 	Possible	Minor	Medium
Way of life	Regional road users experience temporary delays and longer journey times due to reduced speeds and traffic management measures during line stringing activities over roads.	Negative, construction	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Implementation of the CCS, including regular community updates to prepare residents for changes to the local environment — Implementation of appropriate traffic management measures as outlined in the TTIA. 	Almost certain	Minimal	Low
Way of Life	Operation related amenity impacts for residential properties located proximal to the transmission alignment and associated infrastructure affect the way residents use and enjoy private space.	Negative, operation	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Implementation of the CMP incorporating appropriate management and mitigation measures outlined in the NVIA and AQIA. 	Possible	Minor	Medium

IMPACT CATEGORY	IMPACT	NATURE	SOCIAL RISK PRE-MITIGATION	MITIGATION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES	IMPACT POST-MITIGATION		
					Likelihood	Magnitude	Residual social risk rating
Community	The presence of up to 180 proposal workers in Balranald town materially alters community composition and affects residents' perceptions of safety and sense of place.	Negative, construction	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Implementation of the Workforce Management Plan — Implementaiton of the CCS — Adherence to Transgrids Complaints Management Process. 	Unlikely	Minor	Low
Community	The increased presence of male workers in service communities affects local perceptions of safety and wellbeing, particularly for female residents.	Negative, construction	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Implementation of the Workforce Management Plan — Implementaiton of the CCS — Adherence to Transgrids Complaints Management Process. 	Unlikely	Minor	Low
Community	Some residents may develop an 'us versus them' mentality and anti-project sentiment due to being passed over for employment opportunities affecting community cohesion and workforce integration and wellbeing.	Negative, construction	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Implementation of the Local Industry Participation Plan to maximise local employment and training opportunities — Implementation of the Aboriginal Employment and Participation Plan to boost employment and training opportunities for Aboriginal residents. 	Unlikely	Minor	Low
Accessibility	Proposal related demands for healthcare constrain local services limiting access for residents.	Negative, construction	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Implementaiton of the CCS — Adherence to Transgrids Complaints Management Process — Implementation of the Workforce Management Plan. 	Very unlikely	Minor	Low

IMPACT CATEGORY	IMPACT	NATURE	SOCIAL RISK PRE-MITIGATION	MITIGATION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES	IMPACT POST-MITIGATION		
					Likelihood	Magnitude	Residual social risk rating
Accessibility	Proposal related demands for emergency services constrain local services limiting access for residents.	Negative, construction	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Implementaiton of the CCS — Adherence to Transgrids Complaints Management Process — Implementation of the Workforce Management Plan. 	Unlikely	Minor	Low
Accessibility	Proposal related demands for leisure and recreation facilities constrains local services limiting access for residents.	Negative, construction	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Implementaiton of the CCS — Adherence to Transgrids Complaints Management Process — Implementation of the Workforce Management Plan. 	Unlikely	Minor	Low
Accessibility	Increased utilisation of the Balranald Pool by proposal workers results in the council having to employ a new lifeguard resulting in increased operational cost.	Negative, construction	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Implementaiton of the CCS — Adherence to Transgrids Complaints Management Process — Implementation of the Workforce Management Plan. 	Unlikely	Minor	Low
Accessibility	Proposal related demands for telecommunications constrain local services limiting access for residents.	Negative, construction	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Use of telecommunications facilities installed as part of the accommodation camps and compounds — Implementaiton of the CCS — Adherence to Transgrids Complaints Management Process. 	Unlikely	Minor	Low

IMPACT CATEGORY	IMPACT	NATURE	SOCIAL RISK PRE-MITIGATION	MITIGATION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES	IMPACT POST-MITIGATION		
					Likelihood	Magnitude	Residual social risk rating
Accessibility	Proposal related demands for private rental properties in Wagga Wagga further constrains market supply and increases prices limiting access for residents, particularly those who may face economic disadvantage.	Negative, construction	Medium	— The long-term rental market will not be used to satisfy short term accommodation needs for the construction workforce in Wagga Wagga.	Very unlikely	Moderate	Low
Accessibility	Proposal related demands for short term accommodation limit access for broader community needs.	Negative, construction	Medium	— Implementaiton of the CCS — Implementation of the Workforce Management Plan — Implementation of the Accommodation Strategy.	Unlikely	Minor	Low
Accessibility	The CPP improves the financial viability of local community services and facilities, improving community outcomes.	Positive, operation	Medium (benefit)		Likely	Moderate	High
Culture	The proposals cultural heritage management practices are sufficient for Traditional Owner and Aboriginal Groups to have trust and confidence in Transgrid.	Positive, construction and operation	High (benefit)	— Implementaiton of the CCS — Ongoing engagement with Traditional Owners and Aboriginal Groups — Implementation of Cultural Heritage training for construction workers as part of the onboarding process — Implementation of the CMP incorporating appropriate measures identified in the ACHA.	Likely	Moderate	High

IMPACT CATEGORY	IMPACT	NATURE	SOCIAL RISK PRE-MITIGATION	MITIGATION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES	IMPACT POST-MITIGATION		
					Likelihood	Magnitude	Residual social risk rating
Culture	Proposal related activities result in changes to the environment and sites of cultural heritage significance that are not acceptable to Aboriginal people, affecting sense of place and cultural connection to Country.	Negative, construction and operation	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Implementaiton of the CCS — Ongoing engagement with Traditional Owners and Aboriginal Groups — Implementation of Cultural Heritage training for construction workers as part of the onboarding process — Implementation of the CMP incorporating appropriate measures identified in the ACHA. 	Unlikely	Minor	Low
Health and wellbeing	Landowners could experience decreased physical and mental health outcomes due to the culmination of the acquisition process, changes to their properties and way they use and manage their land.	Negative, construction	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Implementation of the CMP incorporating appropriate management and mitigation measures outlined in the NVIA and AQIA — Implementaiton of the CCS — Adherence to Transgrids Complaints Management Process — Ongoing engagement with affected landholders via the Land and Property Access Officers. 	Unlikely	Minor	Low
Health and wellbeing	Proposal workers suffer from mental health impacts associated with feelings of isolation, long work hours and unhealthy lifestyles.	Negative, construction	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Implementation of the Workforce Management Plan. 	Unlikely	Minor	Low

IMPACT CATEGORY	IMPACT	NATURE	SOCIAL RISK PRE-MITIGATION	MITIGATION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES	IMPACT POST-MITIGATION		
					Likelihood	Magnitude	Residual social risk rating
Health and wellbeing	Vulnerable members of the community in the Murrumbidgee LGA, where certain health issues are more prevalent, who may experience decreased perceptions of safety in service communities associated with an influx of construction workers.	Negative, construction	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Implementaiton of the CCS — Ongoing engagement with Traditional Owners and Aboriginal Groups — Implementation of Cultural Heritage training for construction workers as part of the onboarding process. 	Unlikely	Moderate	Medium
Health and wellbeing	Perceived health impacts associated with EMFs creates stress and anxiety, affecting landholders mental and physical health and wellbeing.	Negative, operation	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Implementaiton of the CCS — Communication of Trandgrids precautionary approach to the management of electric and magnetic fields. 	Unlikely	Minor	Low
Health and wellbeing	The perceived risk of bushfires associated with electricity infrastructure results in increased stress and anxiety for regional communities.	Negative, construction and operation	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Implementation of the CMP incorporating appropriate management and mitigation measures outlined in Bushfire Risk Assessment. 	Possible	Minor	Medium
Surroundings	Construction activities result in visual disturbances and impact valued landscapes affecting residents' sense of place.	Construction and operation, negative	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Implementation of the CMP incorporating appropriate management and mitigation measures outlined in the LVIA — Implementation of the CCS, including regular community updates to prepare residents for changes to the local environment 	Possible	Minor	Medium

IMPACT CATEGORY	IMPACT	NATURE	SOCIAL RISK PRE-MITIGATION	MITIGATION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES	IMPACT POST-MITIGATION		
					Likelihood	Magnitude	Residual social risk rating
Surroundings	Construction activity near roads may distract drivers, affecting road user safety.	Construction, negative	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Implementation of the CCS, including regular community updates to prepare residents for changes to the local environment — Implementation of appropriate traffic management measures as outlined in the TTIA. 	Very unlikely	Moderate	Low
Surroundings	Proposal related use of water limits the supply of and access for agricultural and community users.	Construction, negative	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Implementation of the CMP — Implementaiton of the CCS — Ongoing engagement with landholders, councils and suppliers. 	Unlikely	Minor	Low
Surroundings	The presence of new transmission infrastructure in the Lockhart region results in significant visual impacts for residential properties, affecting residents' sense of place and the way they enjoy private space.	Operation, negative	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Implementation of the CMP incorporating appropriate management and mitigation measures outlined in the LVIA — Implementation of the CCS, including regular community updates to prepare residents for changes to the local environment. 	Possible	Moderate	Medium

IMPACT CATEGORY	IMPACT	NATURE	SOCIAL RISK PRE-MITIGATION	MITIGATION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES	IMPACT POST-MITIGATION		
					Likelihood	Magnitude	Residual social risk rating
Surroundings	The presence of new transmission lines and associated infrastructure across the local study area results in visual impacts for residents affecting valued rural landscapes and people's sense of place.	Operation, negative	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Implementation of the CMP incorporating appropriate management and mitigation measures outlined in the LVIA — Implementation of the CCS, including regular community updates to prepare residents for changes to the local environment. 	Unlikely	Minor	Low
Livelihood	Construction activities result in impacts to agricultural landholdings, reducing productivity and landholder's ability to sustain themselves.	Construction, negative	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Implementation of appropriate measures as identified in the Agricultural Impact Assessment — Implementaiton of the CCS — Adherence to Transgrids Complaints Management Process — Ongoing engagement with affected landholders via the Land and Property Access Officers and promotion of the Office of the Landowner and Community Advocate. 	Unlikely	Minor	Low

IMPACT CATEGORY	IMPACT	NATURE	SOCIAL RISK PRE-MITIGATION	MITIGATION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES	IMPACT POST-MITIGATION		
					Likelihood	Magnitude	Residual social risk rating
Livelihood	The easement and associated transmission line restrict or alter how landholders manage their property, decreasing productivity affecting livelihoods.	Operation, negative	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Implementation of appropriate measures as identified in the Agricultural Impact Assessment — Implementaiton of the CCS — Adherence to Transgrids Complaints Management Process — Ongoing engagement with affected landholders via the Land and Property Access Officers and promotion of the Office of the Landowner and Community Advocate. 	Unlikely	Minor	Low
Livelihood	Regional employment opportunities would improve the livelihoods of those employed, improve mental wellbeing, the way they interact with their communities their ability to access goods and services.	Construction, positive	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Implementation of the Local Industry Participation Plan to maximise local employment and training opportunities — Implementation of the Aboriginal Employment and Participation Plan to boost employment and training opportunities for Aboriginal residents..... 	Almost certain	Moderate	High

IMPACT CATEGORY	IMPACT	NATURE	SOCIAL RISK PRE-MITIGATION	MITIGATION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES	IMPACT POST-MITIGATION		
					Likelihood	Magnitude	Residual social risk rating
Livelihood	Targeted employment and training initiatives aimed at young people and local Aboriginal communities improves the way of life, mental health and general sense of wellbeing for groups of people that generally experience higher levels of unemployment and barriers to employment.	Construction, positive	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Implementation of the Local Industry Participation Plan to maximise local employment and training opportunities — Implementation of the Aboriginal Employment and Participation Plan to boost employment and training opportunities for Aboriginal residents. 	Likely	Moderate	High
Livelihood	Landholders receive economic benefit from easement compensation while still being able to utilise land, improving their economic standing and financial resilience to agricultural shocks such as drought.	Construction, positive	High		Likely	Moderate	High
Livelihood	Proposal related procurement activities improve regional economic outcomes and results in flow on employment for regional residents.	Construction, positive	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Implementation of the Local Industry Participation Plan to maximise local employment and training opportunities. 	Likely	Moderate	High
Livelihood	Recreation and leisure spending by workers improve regional economic outcomes for tourism businesses.	Construction, positive	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Implementation of the Workforce Management Plan. 	Likely	Moderate	High

IMPACT CATEGORY	IMPACT	NATURE	SOCIAL RISK PRE-MITIGATION	MITIGATION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES	IMPACT POST-MITIGATION		
					Likelihood	Magnitude	Residual social risk rating
Livelihood	The proposal results in increased development occurring across the region and associated employment reversing the trend of population decline exhibited across several of the regional study area LGAs.	Operation, positive	High		Likely	Moderate	High
Decision making systems	Traditional Owners and other Aboriginal Groups feel engaged, supportive of the proposal, and capable of interacting with the proposal and Transgrid to maximise benefit for regional Aboriginal communities.	Construction and operation, positive	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Implementaiton of the CCS — Ongoing engagement with Traditional Owners and Aboriginal Groups — Implementation of Cultural Heritage training for construction workers as part of the onboarding process — Implementation of the CMP incorporating appropriate measures identified in the ACHA. 	Likely	Moderate	High

IMPACT CATEGORY	IMPACT	NATURE	SOCIAL RISK PRE-MITIGATION	MITIGATION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES	IMPACT POST-MITIGATION		
					Likelihood	Magnitude	Residual social risk rating
Decision making systems	landholders may perceive negative impacts in relation to their property rights and individual livelihoods, regardless of the standards of procedural fairness being met and just compensation terms being in place.	Construction, negative	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Implementation of appropriate measures as identified in the Agricultural Impact Assessment — Implementaiton of the CCS — Adherence to Transgrids Complaints Management Process — Ongoing engagement with affected landholders via the Land and Property Access Officers and promotion of the Office of the Landowner and Community Advocate. 	Possible	Moderate	Medium
Cumulative impacts	Overlapping construction schedules could strain local labour markets, increase competition for resources and unfairly disadvantage local businesses.	Construction, negative	High		Unlikely	Moderate	Medium
Cumulative impacts	Increased traffic associated with multiple large construction projects would result in an increased number of heavy vehicles moving across the region and through towns which may impact the efficiency of the road network resulting in longer journeys for residents and affect road users' perceptions of safety.	Construction, negative	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Implementation of the CMP incorporating appropriate management measures identified in the TTIA. 	Possible	Minor	Medium

IMPACT CATEGORY	IMPACT	NATURE	SOCIAL RISK PRE-MITIGATION	MITIGATION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES	IMPACT POST-MITIGATION		
					Likelihood	Magnitude	Residual social risk rating
Cumulative impacts	Concurrent large construction workforces located proximal to each other may increase demand for local social infrastructure, limiting access for locals.	Construction, negative	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Implementation of the Workforce Management Plan — Quarterly engagement with councils to identify constraints and potential issues. 	Unlikely	Minor	Low
Cumulative impacts	Concurrent large construction workforces located proximal to each other may, without adequate management, constrain local housing and short-term accommodation markets resulting in price rises and limited supply for locals.	Construction, negative	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — The long-term rental market will not be used to satisfy short term accommodation needs for the construction workforce in Wagga Wagga — Quarterly engagement with councils to identify constraints and potential issues — Implementation of the Accommodation Strategy. 	Unlikely	Moderate	Medium

9 Conclusion

EnergyConnect aims to reduce the cost of providing secure and reliable electricity transmission between NSW and SA in the near term, while facilitating the longer-term transition of the energy sector across the National Electricity Market (NEM) to low emission energy sources.

The proposal traverses some 540 kilometres across nine LGAs and has the potential to affect a diverse range of landholders and communities. Transgrid has undertaken a comprehensive process of stakeholder and community engagement throughout the route refinement process, resulting in a proposal that largely avoids valued landscapes, cultural heritage sites, and areas of human settlement.

The SIA identified a range of social impacts, both positive and negative, which are anticipated if the proposal is constructed and operated. However, all negative impacts assessed in this SIA can be reasonably mitigated throughout planning and development to reduce the significance of all impacts to moderate or low significance levels.

Residual impacts would be predominantly localised and temporal and pertain primarily to:

- amenity impacts impacting way of life for those landholders that live proximal to the proposal, particularly those around the Wagga Wagga substation upgrade and expansion
- changes to valued landscapes in the Lockhart LGA affecting residents' sense of place and mental wellbeing
- potential exacerbation of health and wellbeing issues facing identified vulnerable communities
- stress and anxiety amongst the community and landholder's wellbeing due to perceived impacts associated with electric and magnetic fields and the potential risk of bushfires
- cumulative impacts related to accommodation service provision and labour market constraints in the Wagga Wagga LGA.

Benefits associated with the proposal are primarily at the regional scale. They are related to employment, income and economic development opportunities during construction and operation, improving individual livelihoods, community self-sufficiency and collective wellbeing.

Overall, while the proposal would result in a range of negative social impacts, it would result in a range of long term positive social benefits for regional study area residents. Implementation and ongoing monitoring of targeted mitigation measures and ongoing targeted consultation would go some way to reducing the overall magnitude of impact on affected parties and ensure the proposal can realise predicted benefits for the region and NSW.

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Appendix A

Community profiles



A1 Local study area profile

Comprised of the following SA1 units:

— 1117904	— 1117711	— 1125915	— 1127113
— 1117901	— 1118311	— 1118111	— 1127118
— 1117907	— 1125742	— 1127108	— 1127137
— 1118310	— 1118529	— 1127116	— 1127136

Table A-1 Local study area community profile

SA1 (UR)	TOTAL	TOTAL (%)
Population	5354	
Male	2820	52.7%
Female	2533	47.3%
Age Groups		
Babies and pre-schoolers (0 to 4)	341	6.4%
Primary schoolers (5 to 11)	623	11.6%
Secondary schoolers (12 to 17)	453	8.5%
Tertiary education and independence (18 to 24)	336	6.3%
Young workforce (25 to 34)	471	8.8%
Parents and homebuilders (35 to 49)	1062	19.8%
Older workers and pre-retirees (50 to 59)	892	16.7%
Empty nesters and retirees (60 to 69)	673	12.6%
Seniors (70 to 84)	428	8.0%
Elderly aged (85 and over)	62	1.2%
Non-Indigenous	4648	86.8%
Aboriginal	137	2.6%
Torres Strait Islander	0	0.0%
Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	4	0.1%
Not stated	565	10.6%
Born in Australia (includes External Territories)	4441	82.9%
Born overseas	219	4.1%
Not stated	694	13.0%
Speaks other language and speaks English: Not well or Not at all	21	0.4%
Has need for assistance with core activities	163	3.0%
Volunteer	1438	26.9%

SA1 (UR)	TOTAL	TOTAL (%)
Employed, worked full-time	1754	65.0%
Employed, worked part-time	727	19.6%
Employed, away from work	144	10.3%
Employed	2625	94.9%
Unemployed, looking for full-time work	47	4.1%
Unemployed, looking for part-time work	30	0.8%
Unemployed	77	4.9%
Not in the labour force	1004	18.8%
Not stated	430	8.0%
Not applicable	1220	22.8%
Not applicable	2732	
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	1285	49.0%
Health Care and Social Assistance	190	7.2%
Education and Training	183	7.0%
Construction	141	5.4%
Public Administration and Safety	101	3.8%
Retail Trade	98	3.7%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	76	2.9%
Accommodation and Food Services	73	2.8%
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	68	2.6%
Manufacturing	66	2.5%
Other Services	64	2.4%
Inadequately described	52	2.0%
Administrative and Support Services	44	1.7%
Wholesale Trade	43	1.6%
Not stated	33	1.3%
Financial and Insurance Services	28	1.1%
Arts and Recreation Services	23	0.9%
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	17	0.6%
Information Media and Telecommunications	15	0.6%
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	10	0.4%
Mining	7	0.3%
Public Transport	10	0.4%
Vehicle	1531	58.3%

SA1 (UR)	TOTAL	TOTAL (%)
Active Transport	168	6.4%
Other Mode	52	2.0%
Worked at home or Did not go to work	816	31.1%
Mode not stated	47	1.8%
Not applicable	2732	
Nil distance	630	24.0%
Over 0 km to less than 2.5 km	51	1.9%
2.5 km to less than 10 km	171	6.5%
10 km to less than 30 km	531	20.2%
30 km to less than 50 km	495	18.9%
50 km to less than 250 km	591	22.5%
250 km and over	75	2.9%
Not applicable	2811	
Preschool	96	1.8%
Infants/Primary – Government	321	6.0%
Infants/Primary – Catholic	176	3.3%
Infants/Primary – Other Non Government	45	0.8%
Secondary – Government	179	3.3%
Secondary – Catholic	102	1.9%
Secondary – Other Non Government	77	1.4%
Technical or Further Educational Institution (including TAFE Colleges)	62	1.2%
University or other Tertiary Institution	79	1.5%
Other	14	0.3%
Not stated	595	11.1%
Not applicable	3610	

SA1	TOTAL	
Dwellings	2592	
Occupied private dwellings	1986	76.6%
Unoccupied private dwellings	579	22.3%
Non-private dwellings	24	0.9%

SA1	TOTAL	
Separate house	2448	94.4%
One person	357	18.0%
Two persons	636	32.0%
Three persons	212	10.7%
Four persons	260	13.1%
Five persons	184	9.3%
Six persons	67	3.4%
Seven persons	9	0.5%
Eight or more persons	6	0.3%
One family household: Couple family with no children	575	29.0%
One family household: Couple family with children	643	32.4%
One family household: One parent family	100	5.0%
Lone person household	357	18.0%
Group household	30	1.5%
Owned outright	843	42.4%
Owned with a mortgage	460	23.2%
Rented	209	10.5%
Other tenure type	50	2.5%
Less than \$650	264	13.3%
More than \$2500	303	15.3%
One year		
All residents in the household aged one year and over had a different address one year ago	139	7.0%
Some residents in the household aged one year & over had a different address one year ago	65	3.3%
No residents in the household aged one year and over had a different address one year ago	1456	73.3%
Five year		
All residents aged five years and over changed address during the last five years	440	22.2%
Some residents aged five years & over changed address over last five years but all stated address five years ago	87	4.4%
No residents aged five years and over changed address over the last five years	1143	57.6%
Internet not accessed from dwelling	353	17.8%

A2 Regional study area profiles

Age

Table A-2 Age profiles

POPULATION	WENTWORTH LGA	BALRANALD LGA	MURRAY RIVER LGA	EDWARD RIVER	HAY LGA	MURRUMBIDGEE LGA	FEDERATION LGA	LOCKHART LGA	WAGGA WAGGA LGA	REGIONAL STUDY AREA
<i>0-4 years</i>	422	149	634	493	140	216	626	199	4,205	7,084
<i>5-11 years</i>	624	251	958	785	265	410	1,042	301	6,010	10,646
<i>12-17 years</i>	481	174	767	624	217	333	848	261	4,987	8,692
<i>18-24 years</i>	477	176	666	668	223	267	781	196	6,822	10,276
<i>25-34 years</i>	682	232	1,088	863	293	432	989	258	8,609	13,446
<i>35-49 years</i>	1,198	417	1,853	1,512	465	700	1,915	509	11,351	19,920
<i>50-59 years</i>	1,038	353	1,652	1,274	505	586	1,766	487	7,533	15,194
<i>60-69 years</i>	1,031	329	1,869	1,240	376	462	2,013	441	6,336	14,097
<i>70-84 years</i>	733	188	1,840	1,109	389	371	1,913	398	5,185	12,126
<i>85+ years</i>	136	34	340	293	53	73	410	93	1,374	2,806
<i>Total Population</i>	6,822	2,303	11,667	8,861	2,926	3,850	12,303	3,143	62,412	114,287

POPULATION	WENTWORTH LGA	BALRANALD LGA	MURRAY RIVER LGA	EDWARD RIVER	HAY LGA	MURRUMBIDGEE LGA	FEDERATION LGA	LOCKHART LGA	WAGGA WAGGA LGA	REGIONAL STUDY AREA
Per cent (%)										
<i>0-4 years</i>	6.2	6.5	5.4	5.6	4.8	5.6	5.1	6.3	6.7	5.8
<i>5-11 years</i>	9.1	10.9	8.2	8.9	9.1	10.6	8.5	9.6	9.6	9.4
<i>12-17 years</i>	7.1	7.6	6.6	7.0	7.4	8.6	6.9	8.3	8.0	7.5
<i>18-24 years</i>	7.0	7.6	5.7	7.5	7.6	6.9	6.3	6.2	10.9	7.3
<i>25-34 years</i>	10.0	10.1	9.3	9.7	10.0	11.2	8.0	8.2	13.8	10.0
<i>35-49 years</i>	17.6	18.1	15.9	17.1	15.9	18.2	15.6	16.2	18.2	17.0
<i>50-59 years</i>	15.2	15.3	14.2	14.4	17.3	15.2	14.4	15.5	12.1	14.8
<i>60-69 years</i>	15.1	14.3	16.0	14.0	12.9	12.0	16.4	14.0	10.2	13.9
<i>70-84 years</i>	10.7	8.2	15.8	12.5	13.3	9.6	15.5	12.7	8.3	11.8
<i>85+ years</i>	2.0	1.5	2.9	3.3	1.8	1.9	3.3	3.0	2.2	2.4

Source: ABS, (2016)

Settlement populations

Table A-3 Settlement populations

NAME	TYPE	POPULATION
Wentworth LGA		
Wentworth	Main township	1437
Buronga	Township	1212
Dareton	Township	501
Gol Gol	Township	1523
Pooncarie	Township	166
Balranald LGA		
Balranald	Main township	1343
Euston	Township	839
Murray River LGA		
Moama	Main township	6162
Barham	Township	1158
Mathoura	Township	938
Moulamein	Township	484

NAME	TYPE	POPULATION
Edward River LGA		
Deniliquin	Main township	7862
Congaro	Township	123
Hay LGA		
Hay	Main township	2406
Booigal	Township	95
Maude	Township	82
Murrumbidgee LGA		
Jerilderie	Main township	1029
Coleambally	Township	1334
Darlington Point	Township	1162
Federation LGA		
Corowa	Main township	5482
Urana	Township	384
Mulwala	Township	2161
Morundah	Township	69
Lockhart LGA		
Lockhart	Main township	1061
The Rock	Township	1236

NAME	TYPE	POPULATION
Wagga Wagga LGA		
Wagga Wagga	Main township	7104
Ashmont	Suburb	3828
Estella	Suburb	2269
Koorinal	Suburb	7227
Lake Albert	Suburb	6192
Turvey Park	Suburb	3329
Uranquinty	Suburb	909
Forest Hill	Suburb	2274

Source: ABS, 2016

Households

Table A-4 Household composition

	WENTWORTH LGA	BALRANALD LGA	MURRAY RIVER LGA	EDWARD RIVER	HAY LGA	MURRUMBIDGEE LGA	FEDERATION LGA	LOCKHART LGA	WAGGA WAGGA LGA	REGIONAL STUDY AREA
Couple with no children	790	248	1631	1013	330	394	1661	356	6094	12517
Couple with children	676	236	1119	797	273	401	1110	323	6648	11583
One parent family	259	77	332	369	17.5	140	448	107	2783	4533
Other family	19	13	34	31	8	14	36	7	250	412
Lone person	662	224	1292	1083	346	381	1492	313	5880	11673
Group household	51	16	88	88	17	31	109	16	945	1361
Total Households	2457	814	4496	3381	992	1361	4856	1122	22600	42079
Per cent (%)										
Couple with no children	32.15	30.47	36.28	29.96	33.28	28.95	34.21	31.73	26.96	29.75
Couple with children	27.51	28.99	24.89	23.57	27.53	29.46	22.86	28.79	29.42	27.53
One parent family	10.54	9.46	7.38	10.91	1.77	10.29	9.23	9.54	12.31	10.77
Other family	0.77	1.60	0.76	0.92	0.81	1.03	0.74	0.62	1.11	0.98
Lone person	26.94	27.52	28.74	32.03	34.90	27.99	30.72	27.90	26.02	27.74
Group household	2.08	1.97	1.96	2.60	1.71	2.28	2.24	1.43	4.18	3.23

Source: ABS, 2016

Tenure type

Table A-5 Tenure type

	WENTWORTH LGA	BALRANALD LGA	MURRAY RIVER LGA	EDWARD RIVER	HAY LGA	MURRUMBIDGEE LGA	FEDERATION LGA	LOCKHART LGA	WAGGA WAGGA LGA	REGIONAL STUDY AREA	NSW
Owned outright	38.3	41.3	44.5	38.7	41.1	36.3	43.8	47.4	29.2	40.1	31
Owned with a mortgage	31.4	24.6	28	28.8	21.7	24.9	29.1	30.5	33.4	28.04	34.5
Rented	25.00	29.7	22.2	28.4	30.3	34.4	22.5	18.2	33.5	27.13	30.9

Source: ABS, 2016

Aboriginal population

Table A-6 Aboriginal population

	WENTWORTH LGA	BALRANALD LGA	MURRAY RIVER LGA	EDWARD RIVER	HAY LGA	MURRUMBIDGEE LGA	FEDERATION LGA	LOCKHART LGA	WAGGA WAGGA LGA	REST OF STATE	NSW
Proportion of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander residents (%)	9.6	8.8	3.2	4	6	7.5	1.7	3.4	5.6	5.5	2.9
Number of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander residents	650	202	373	357	178	289	214	107	3508	5878	216176

Source: ABS, 2016

Education

Table A-7 Educational attainment

	PER CENT (%)								
	WENTWORTH LGA	BALRANALD LGA	MURRAY RIVER LGA	EDWARD RIVER	HAY LGA	MURRUMBIDGEE LGA	FEDERATION LGA	LOCKHART LGA	WAGGA WAGGA LGA
Not stated	17.3	17.6	14.4	17.4	17.3	16	15.2	14.4	9.7
No education attainment	0.4	0.8	0.3	0.6	0.3	0.3	0.3	0	0.4
Year 9 or below	14.3	17.3	13.8	12.5	15.8	14.9	12.7	12.4	9.7
Certificate level I	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Certificate level II	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1
Year 10	13.4	15.9	13.6	15	17.1	18.4	15.8	17.8	14.3
Year 11	7.8	7.4	9	5.8	5	4.8	7.2	4.5	3.9
Year 12	9.7	13.5	11.1	10.9	13.1	10.5	11.2	10.4	14.1
Certificate level III	16.1	12.4	15.7	15.4	14.1	14.6	17.2	16.9	16.3
Certificate level IV	2.7	1.8	2.5	2.9	1.7	2.2	2.7	3.6	4
Advanced Diploma and Diploma level	6.6	4.4	7.3	6.9	6.3	6.3	6.7	7.2	7.7
Bachelor Degree level and above	9.2	7.1	10.1	10.1	7.3	9.2	8.5	9.9	16.7

Source: ABS, 2016

Country of birth

Table A-8 Country of birth

COUNTRY OF BIRTH	WENTWORTH LGA	BALRANALD LGA	MURRAY RIVER LGA	EDWARD RIVER	HAY LGA	MURRUMBIDGEE LGA	FEDERATION LGA	LOCKHART LGA	WAGGA WAGGA LGA
Top response	Australia 83.2%	Australia 81.7%	Australia 83.9%	Australia 82.4%	Australia 80.3%	Australia 81.4%	Australia 83.3%	Australia 85%	Australia 84.1%
Second response	England 1.4%	Italy 1%	England 2%	England 1.3%	New Zealand (1.3%)	England 1%	England 2.4%	England 1.5%	England 1.3%
Third response	New Zealand 1%	England .8%	New Zealand .8%	New Zealand .8%	England (0.9%)	New Zealand .8%	New Zealand .9%	New Zealand .9%	India 1%
Fourth response	Italy .7%	Fiji and New Zealand .6% each	Scotland and Philippines .5% each	Taiwan .6%	Italy (0.6%)	India, Philippines and South Africa .4% each	Scotland, Philippines and Germany .4% each	Scotland and Netherlands .3% each	New Zealand and Philippines .7% each
Aboriginal Australians	9.60%	8.80%	3.20%	4.00%	India (0.25%)	7.50%	1.70%	3.40%	5.60%

Source: ABS, 2016

Industry of employment

Table A-9 Industry of employment

	WENTWORTH LGA	BALRANALD LGA	MURRAY RIVER LGA	EDWARD RIVER	HAY LGA	MURRUMBIDGEE LGA	FEDERATION LGA	LOCKHART LGA	WAGGA WAGGA LGA
1	Grape Growing (142, 5.3%)	Grape Growing (61, 6.4%)	Accommodation (191, 3.9%)	Other Social Assistance Services (132, 3.5%)	Sheep Farming (Specialised) (77, 6.2%)	Other Grain Growing (184, 11.1%)	Pig Farming (205, 4.2%)	Grain-Sheep or Grain-Beef Cattle Farming (131, 11.1%)	Defence (1,368, 4.6%)
2	Citrus Fruit Growing (101, 3.8%)	Sheep Farming (Specialised)(60, 6.3%)	Other Grain Growing (164, 3.4%)	Supermarket and Grocery Stores (112, 3.0%)	Supermarket and Grocery Stores (59, 4.7%)	Poultry Processing (68, 4.1%)	Supermarket and Grocery Stores (181, 3.7%)	Other Grain Growing (102, 8.6%)	Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals) (1,353, 4.5%)
3	Sheep Farming (Specialised)(86, 3.2%)	Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals) (41, 4.3%)	Local Government Administration (161, 3.3%)	Primary Education (107, 2.9%)	Local Government Administration (57, 4.6%)	Grain-Sheep or Grain-Beef Cattle Farming (64, 3.9%)	Other Grain Growing (149, 3.1%)	Sheep Farming (Specialised)(65, 5.5%)	Higher Education (910, 3.1%)
4	Primary Education (80, 3.0%)	Local Government Administration (39, 4.1%)	Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals) (155, 3.2%)	Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals) (99, 2.6%)	Accommodation (45, 3.6%)	Local Government Administration (61, 3.7%)	Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals) (147, 3.0%)	Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals) (53, 4.5%)	Other Social Assistance Services (729, 2.4%)
5	Supermarket and Grocery Stores (68, 2.5%)	Grain-Sheep or Grain-Beef Cattle Farming (34, 3.6%)	Primary Education (136, 2.8%)	Other Grain Growing (98, 2.6%)	Primary Education (45, 3.6%)	Sheep Farming (Specialised) (47, 2.8%)	Aged Care Residential Services (146, 3.0%)	Aged Care Residential Services (52, 4.4%)	Secondary Education (706, 2.4%)

Source: ABS, 2016

Median income

Table A-10 Median income

	WENTWORTH LGA	BALRANALD LGA	MURRAY RIVER LGA	EDWARD RIVER	HAY LGA	MURRUMBIDGEE LGA	FEDERATION LGA	LOCKHART LGA	WAGGA WAGGA LGA	REGIONAL STUDY AREA	NSW
Personal (\$)	\$555	\$624	\$558	\$595	\$587	\$659	\$559	\$585	\$696	\$602	\$664
Family (\$)	\$1,308	\$1,438	\$1,333	\$1,399	\$1,344	\$1,461	\$1,299	\$1,408	\$1,682	\$1,408	\$1,734
Household (\$)	\$1,052	\$1,174	\$1,061	\$1,080	\$1,075	\$1,197	\$1,017	\$1,114	\$1,354	\$1,125	\$1,438

Source: ABS, 2016

Appendix B

Social infrastructure assessment



B1 Social infrastructure assessments

Community infrastructure and services

Table B-1 Community infrastructure and services

LGA	LIBRARY	COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL CENTRES (CENTRES AND HALLS)	ABORIGINAL ORGANISATIONS (INCLUDING) ABORIGINAL LAND COUNCILS	TOTAL (APPROX.)
Wentworth	4	8	2	14
Balranald	1	2	2	4
Murray River	4 (also serviced by Swan Hill Regional Library service)	4	2	10
Edward River	1	9	2	12
Hay	1	5	2	8
Murrumbidgee	1 (also serviced by Western Riverina Library Service's mobile service)	9	1	11
Federation	3 (also serviced by Riverina Regional Library mobile service)	5	1	9
Lockhart	0 (serviced by Riverina Regional Library mobile service only)	5	0	5
Wagga Wagga	1 (also serviced by Riverina Regional Library mobile service)	14	4	19

Education facilities

Table B-2 Schools and enrolment numbers, 2020

SCHOOL	TYPE*	ENROLMENT (2020)
Wentworth LGA		
Buronga Public School, Chapman St, Buronga	Primary School	107
Dareton Public School, Matong St, Dareton	Primary School	55
Gol Gol Public School, William St, Gol Gol	Primary School	188
Pomona Public School, Pomona Rd, Pomona	Primary School	25
Pooncarie Public School, Tarcoola Rd, Pooncarie	Primary School	5
Wentworth Public School, Darling Street, Wentworth	Primary School	109
Palinyewah Public School, Ellerslie Road, Ellerslie	Primary School	12
Coomealla High School, Silver City Hwy, Dareton	High School	252
Balranald LGA		
Balranald Central School, We Street, Balranald	Central/Community School (local primary and secondary students as well some secondary distance education students from across the Riverina)	147.8
Euston Public School, Sturt Hwy, Euston	Primary School	85
Clare Public School, Booligal Road, Clare	Primary School	2
Murray River LGA		
Barham Public School, Wakool St, Barham	Primary School	122
Bunnaloo Public School, Fitzroy St, Bunnaloo	Primary School	41
Mathoura Public School, Frome Street, Mathoura	Primary School	64
Moama Public School, Simms St, Moama	Primary School	161
Moulamein Public School, Brougham St, Moulamein	Primary School	59
Tooleybuc Central School, Murray St, Tooleybuc	Central/Community School	112
Wakool Burraboi Public School, Flinders St, Wakool	Primary School	9
Barham High School, Gonn St, Barham	Secondary School	155.7
Edward River LGA		
Blighty Public School, Blighty School Rd, Blighty	Primary School	37
Conargo Public School, Deniliquin-Wagga Wagga Rd, Conargo	Primary School	6
Mayrung Public School, Mayrung Rd, Deniliquin	Primary School	27
Deniliquin South Public School, Sloane St, Deniliquin	Primary School	263

SCHOOL	TYPE*	ENROLMENT (2020)
Deniliquin North Public School, Victoria St, Deniliquin	Primary School	172
Edward Public School, Butler St, Deniliquin	Primary School	134
Deniliquin High School, Harfleur St, Deniliquin	Secondary School	490
Hay LGA		
Booligal Public School, Harvey St, Booligal	Primary School	6
Hay Public School, Lachlan Street, Hay	Primary School	178
Hay War Memorial High School, Pine St, Hay	Secondary School	148.4
Murrumbidgee LGA		
Darlington Point Public School, Hay Rd, Darlington Point	Primary School	59
Jerilderie Public School, Bolton St, Jerilderie	Primary School	32
Coleambally Central School, Kingfisher Ave, Coleambally	Central/Community School	187
Federation LGA		
Boree Creek Public School, Lockhart-Morundah Rd, Boree Creek	Primary School	29
Corowa Public School, Honour Avenue, Corowa	Primary School	226
Corowa South Public School, Hume St, Corowa	Primary School	49
Howlong Public School, Hawkins St, Howlong	Primary School	194
Lowesdale Public School, Riverina Hwy, Lowesdale	Primary School	21
Mulwala Public School, Melbourne Street, Mulwala	Primary School	59
Oaklands Central School, Coreen St, Oaklands	Central/Community School	63.6
Rand Public School, Cowal St, Rand	Primary School	27
Savernake Public School, Riverina Hwy, Savernake	Primary School	5
Urana Public School, William Street, Urana	Primary School	8
Corowa High School, Redlands Rd, Corowa	Secondary School	309
Lockhart LGA		
Lockhart Central School, Halliday St, Lockhart	Central/Community School	84
Pleasant Hills Public School, Crawford Street, Pleasant Hills	Primary School	24
The Rock Central School, Ford St, The Rock	Central/Community School	173
Yerong Creek Public School, Cole St, Yerong Creek	Primary School	23

SCHOOL	TYPE*	ENROLMENT (2020)
Wagga Wagga LGA		
Uranquinty Public School, Pearson Street, Uranquinty	Primary School	43
Forest Hill Public School, Sturt Hwy, Forest Hill	Primary School	251
Humula Public School, School St, Humula	Primary School	19
Ladysmith Public School, Tywong St, Ladysmith	Primary School	26
Lake Albert Public School, Main St, Lake Albert	Primary School	526
Tarcutta Public School, Centenary Ave, Tarcutta	Primary School	17
Wagga Wagga Public School, Gurwood St, Wagga Wagga	Primary School	442
North Wagga Public School, Hampden Ave, Wagga Wagga	Primary School	273
South Wagga Public School, Edward St, Wagga Wagga	Primary School	332
Kapooka Public School, Sturt Ave, Kapooka	Primary School	79
Turvey Park Public School, Halloran Street, Wagga Wagga	Primary School	390
Koorringal Public School, Lake Albert Rd, Wagga Wagga	Primary School	453
Mount Austin Public School, Bourke St, Mount Austin	Primary School	235
Ashmont Public School, Bardia St, Wagga Wagga	Primary School	245
Red Hill Public School, Hawkes Place, Wagga Wagga	Primary School	240
Sturt Public School, White Avenue, Wagga Wagga	Primary School	401
Willans Hill School, Lord Baden Powell Drive, Wagga Wagga	Schools for Specific Purposes (Medium / High Support needs)	62
Shepherds Park School, Fernleigh Rd, Wagga Wagga	Schools for Specific Purposes (Juvenile Justice establishment)	29
The Bidgee School, Mitchelmore St, Wagga Wagga	Schools for Specific Purposes (Behaviour Disorder)	46
Wagga Wagga High School, Coleman St, Wagga Wagga	Secondary School	1034.6
Mount Austin High School, Leavenworth Drive, Wagga Wagga	Secondary School	463
Koorringal High School, Ziegler Ave, Koorringal	Secondary School	883.3

Source: Department of Education datahub data.cese.nsw.gov.au

*Note: Public school information only.

Tertiary education

Table B-3 Tertiary education facilities by LGA

INSTITUTE	LOCATION
Wentworth LGA	
TAFE NSW Coomealla at Dareton	Silver City Highway, Dareton
Edward River LGA	
TAFE NSW Deniliquin	Poictiers St &, Macauley St, Deniliquin
Hay LGA	
TAFE NSW Hay	178/182 Lachlan St, Hay
Federation LGA	
TAFE NSW Corowa	2 Murray St, Corowa
Wagga Wagga LGA	
TAFE NSW Wagga Wagga	Corner Macleay &, Coleman St, Wagga Wagga
Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga Campus	Boorooma St, North Wagga Wagga

Health care

Table B-4 Public hospital facilities and capacity

LGA	SERVICE NAME	CAPACITY (BEDS)	SERVICE TYPE
Wentworth LGA	Wentworth Health Service	15	Hospital
Balranald LGA	Balranald Health Service	27	Multi-purpose Service Hospital
Murray River LGA	Barham Multipurpose Service	6	Hospital
Edward River LGA	Deniliquin Health Service	41	Hospital
Hay LGA	Hay Health Service	28	Hospital
Murrumbidgee LGA	Jerilderie Multipurpose Service	15	Hospital
Federation LGA	Corowa Health Service	53	Hospital
Lockhart LGA	Lockhart Multipurpose Service	20	Hospital
Wagga Wagga LGA	Wagga Wagga Health Service	325	Hospital

Table B-5 Health and medical services, capacity and service type (excluding public hospital services)

SERVICE NAME	SERVICE TYPE
Wentworth LGA	
Dareton Primary Health	Community clinic
One Health Buronga	General Practitioner
Coomealla Health Aboriginal Corporation (CHAC)	Aboriginal Health Clinic
Wentworth Medical Practice	General Practitioner
Balranald LGA	
Balranald Medical Centre	General Practitioner
Maari Ma Health Balranald	Aboriginal health services
Bes Murray Community Health Centre	Community clinic
Murray River LGA	
Moama Health Clinic	General Practitioner
Martin St Medical Centre	General Practitioner
Echuca Moama Family Medical Practice	General Practitioner
Edward River LGA	
Deniliquin Specialist Community Mental Health Drug and Alcohol Service – Cressy Street Centre	Mental health
Deniliquin Community Health Centre	Community clinic
Deniliquin Clinic	General Practitioner
Shiloh Medical Practice	General Practitioner
Hay LGA	
Hay Aboriginal Medical Service	Aboriginal health services
Hay Medical Centre	General Practitioner
Murrumbidgee LGA	
Coleambally Medical Centre	General Practitioner
Jerilderie Medical Centre	General Practitioner
Darlington Point Medical Centre	General Practitioner
Federation LGA	
Corowa Medial Centre	General Practitioner
Corowa Mediclinic	General Practitioner
Rutherglen Medical Centre	General Practitioner

SERVICE NAME	SERVICE TYPE
Lockhart LGA	
Lockhart Medical Practice	General Practitioner
Glenrock Country Practice	General Practitioner
Wagga Wagga LGA	
Peter Street Medical Centre	General Practitioner
Wagga Wagga Medical Centre	General Practitioner
Wagga GP After Hours Service	General Practitioner
Trail Street Medical Centre	General Practitioner
Central Wagga Medical and Skin Clinic	General Practitioner
St George Family Medical Centre	General Practitioner
Trinity Medical Centre	General Practitioner
Kincaid Medical & Dental Centre	General Practitioner
Morgan St Healthcare Clinic	General Practitioner
Blamey Street Surgery	General Practitioner
Riverina Family Medical	General Practitioner
Riverina Medical and Dental Aboriginal Corporation	General Practitioner
Hammond Health	General Practitioner
Tatton Medical Centre	General Practitioner
Koorringal Medical Centre	General Practitioner
Glen Rock Country Practice	General Practitioner
KRS Health Family Medical Practice	General Practitioner

Emergency services

Table B-6 Emergency services by LGA

SERVICE	ADDRESS
Wentworth LGA	
Wentworth Police Station	74 Darling St, Wentworth
Buronga Police Station	2/4 Chapman St, Buronga
Dareton Police Station	52 Sturt Pl, Dareton
NSW Wentworth Fire Station	82 Adams St, Wentworth
Wentworth Ambulance Station	41–45 Armstrong Ave, Wentworth
NSW Rural Fire Service Wentworth	58-60 Mitchell Ave, Dareton
Curlwaa Fire Station	Curlwaa
Curlwaa Rural Fire Brigade	40 Memorial Rd, Curlwaa
Balranald LGA	
Balranald Police Station	Market St, Balranald NSW
Fire and Rescue NSW Balranald Fire Station	123 Market St, Balranald
Balranald Ambulance Station	47 Court Street, Balranald
NSWRFS Balranald Fire Station	45 Market St, Balranald
Murray River LGA	
Moama Police Station	29 Maiden St, Moama
Barham Police Station	51 Noorong St, Barham
Moulamein Police Station	Corner of Brougham St and Tallow St, Moulamein
Barham Ambulance Station	48-50 Gonn St, Barham
St John Ambulance Australia (VIC) - Campaspe Division	Rochester RSL Hall, Northern Highway, Rochester, Victoria
NSW Rural Fire Service - Mid Murray Zone	305 Duncan St, Deniliquin
Edward River LGA	
Deniliquin Police Station	7 Hardinge St, Deniliquin
Deniliquin Ambulance Station	172-174 Dick St, Deniliquin
Deniliquin Fire Station	264 George Street, Deniliquin
NSW Rural Fire Service - Mid Murray Zone	305 Duncan St, Deniliquin
Hay LGA	
Hay Police Station	412 Moppet Street, Moppett St, Hay
Fire and Rescue NSW Hay Fire Station	380 Macauley St, Hay
Hay Ambulance Station	351 Murray St, Hay

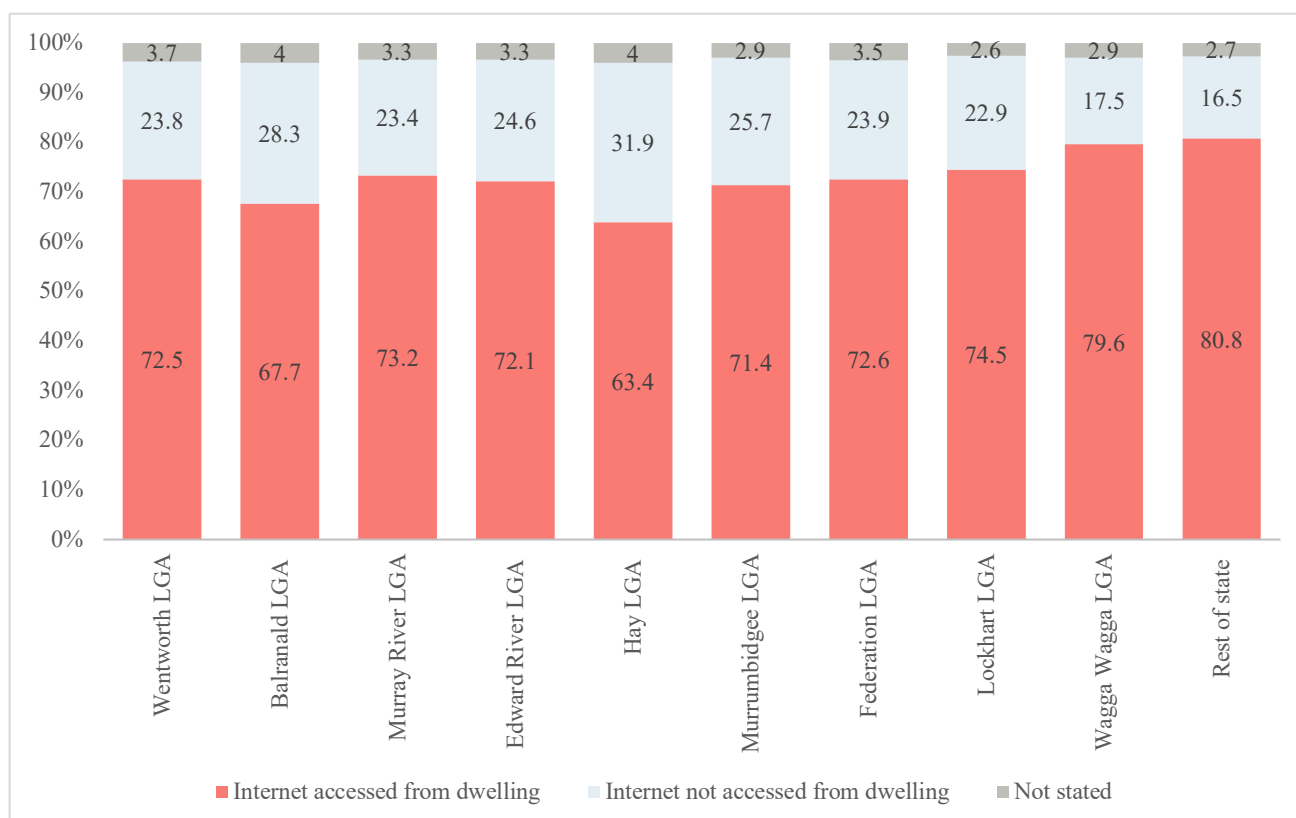
SERVICE	ADDRESS
Murrumbidgee LGA	
Coleambally Police Station	Corner of Brolga Pl and Kookaburra Ave, Coleambally
Darlington Point Police Station	Bridge St, Darlington Point
Coleambally Ambulance Station	48-50 Kingfisher St, Coleambally
Jerilderie Ambulance Station	31 Southey St, Jerilderie
NSW Rural Fire Service - Mid Murray Zone	305 Duncan St, Deniliquin
Coleambally Rural Fire Brigade	Coleambally
Darlington Point Rural Fire Brigade	Darlington Point
Federation LGA	
Corowa Police Station	15 Queen St, Corowa
Mulwala Police Station	81 Melbourne St, Mulwala
Urana Police Station	9/11 William St, Urana
Corowa Ambulance Station	185 Sanger St, Cowra
Fire and Rescue NSW Corowa Fire Station	57 Riesling St, Corowa
NSW Rural Fire Service	311 Redlands Rd, Corowa
Fire and Rescue NSW Mulwala Fire Station	Melbourne St, Mulwala
Lockhart LGA	
Lockhart Police Station	59 Green St, Lockhart
The Rock Police Station Corner Emily Street	Emily St and, Nicholas St, The Rock
Lockhart Ambulance Station	2-4 Green St (Cnr East St), Lockhart
Lockhart Fire Station	84 Ferrier Street, Lockhart
Wagga Wagga LGA	
Wagga Wagga Police Station	Wagga Wagga Police Station 217-219 Tarcutta St, Wagga Wagga
Wagga Wagga Ambulance Station	117 Fernleigh Road, Wagga Wagga
Wagga Wagga Fire Station	36-38 The Esplanade, Wagga Wagga
Turvey Park Fire Station	75 Fernleigh Road, Turvey Park

Open space and recreation

Table B-7 Sporting and recreational facilities

LGA	SPORTING FACILITIES (COMPLEXES, OVALS, POOLS AND SKATE PARKS)	PARKS AND OPEN SPACE (PARKS, PLAYGROUNDS AND PUBLIC OPEN SPACES)	TOTAL (APPROX.)
Wentworth	7	14	21
Balranald	15	14	29
Murray River	12	45	57
Edward River	6	148	154
Hay	10	14	24
Murrumbidgee	6	18	24
Federation	5	30	35
Lockhart	8	7	15
Wagga Wagga	65	132	197

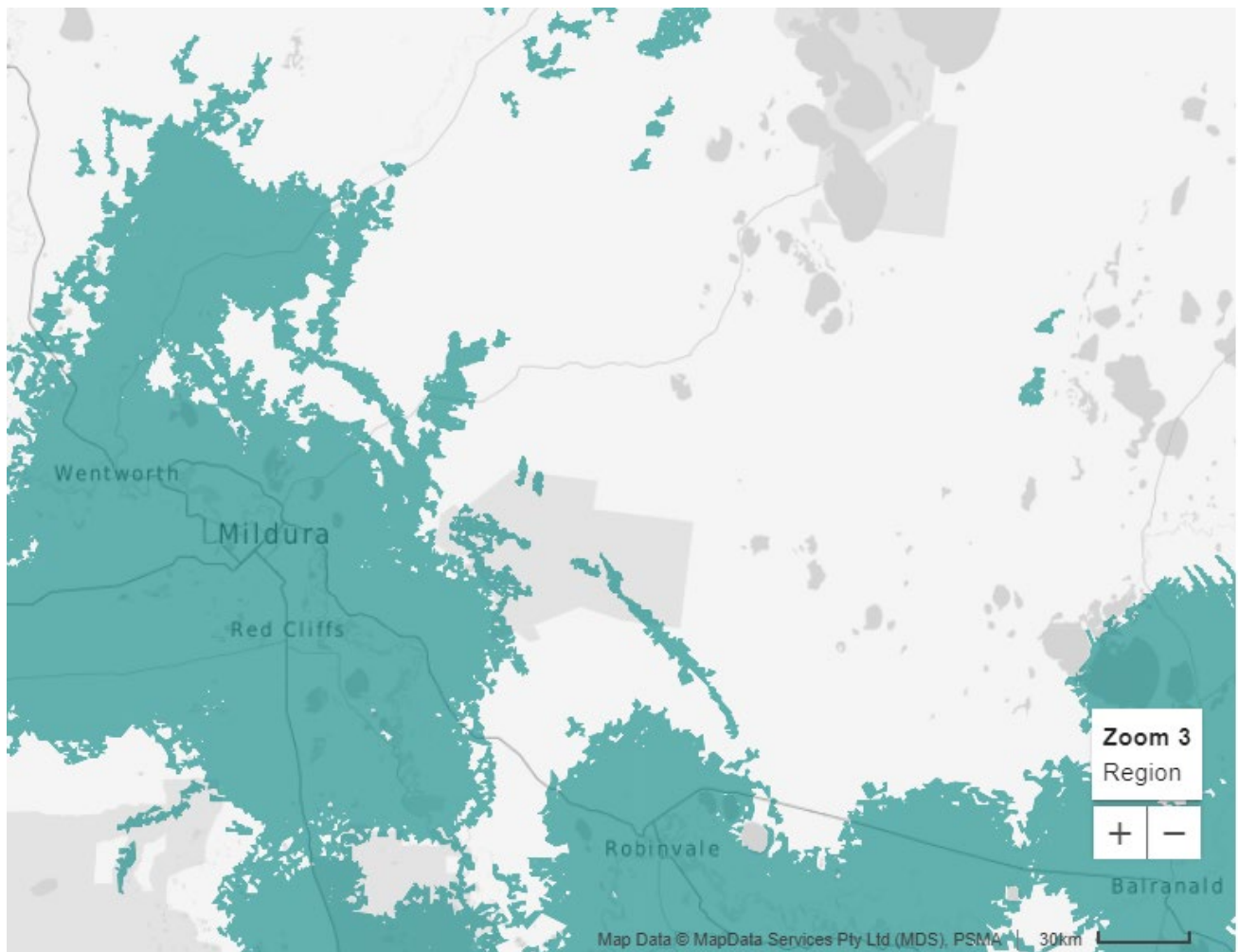
Internet coverage



Source: ABS QuickStats, 2016, Wentworth (A), Balranald (A), Murray River (A), Edward River (A), Hay (A), Murrumbidgee (A), Federation (A), Lockhart (A), Wagga Wagga (C), Remainder of State/Territory (SOSR).

Figure B-1 Internet access at home

Mobile coverage



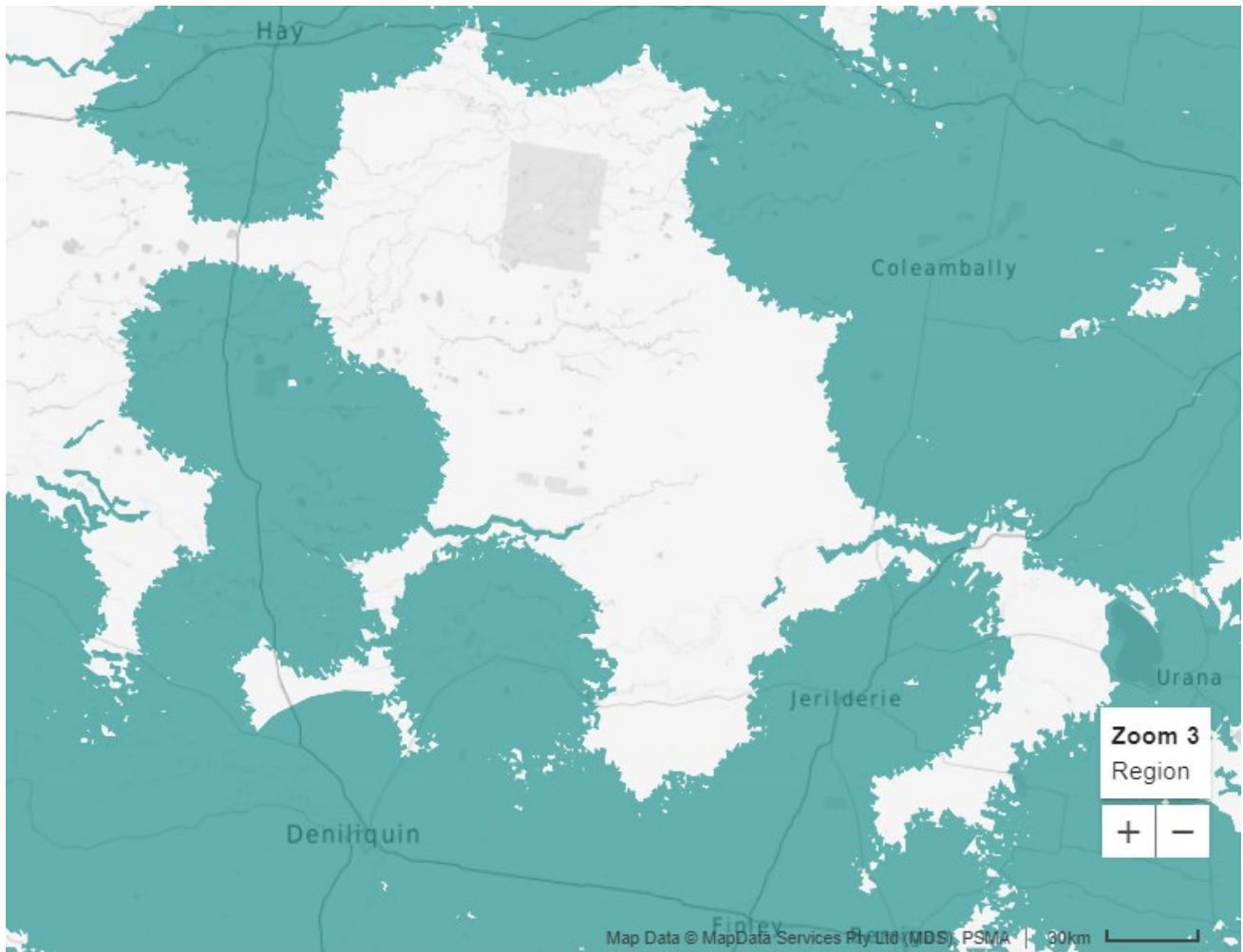
*Key: Blue shaded area = mobile coverage

Figure B-2 Telstra mobile 3G coverage



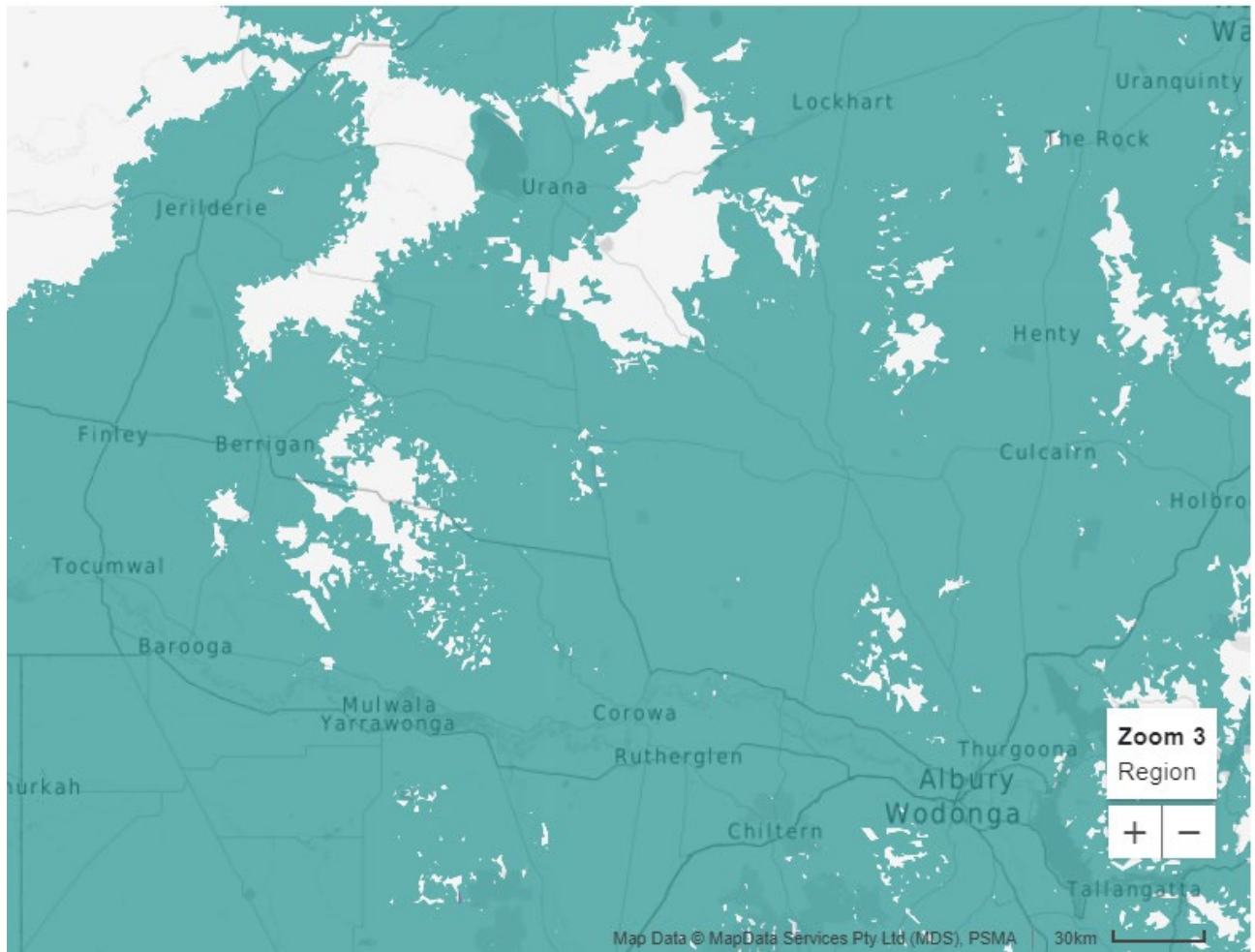
*Key: Blue shaded area = mobile coverage

Figure B-3 Telstra mobile 3G coverage, Balranald LGA and Hay LGA



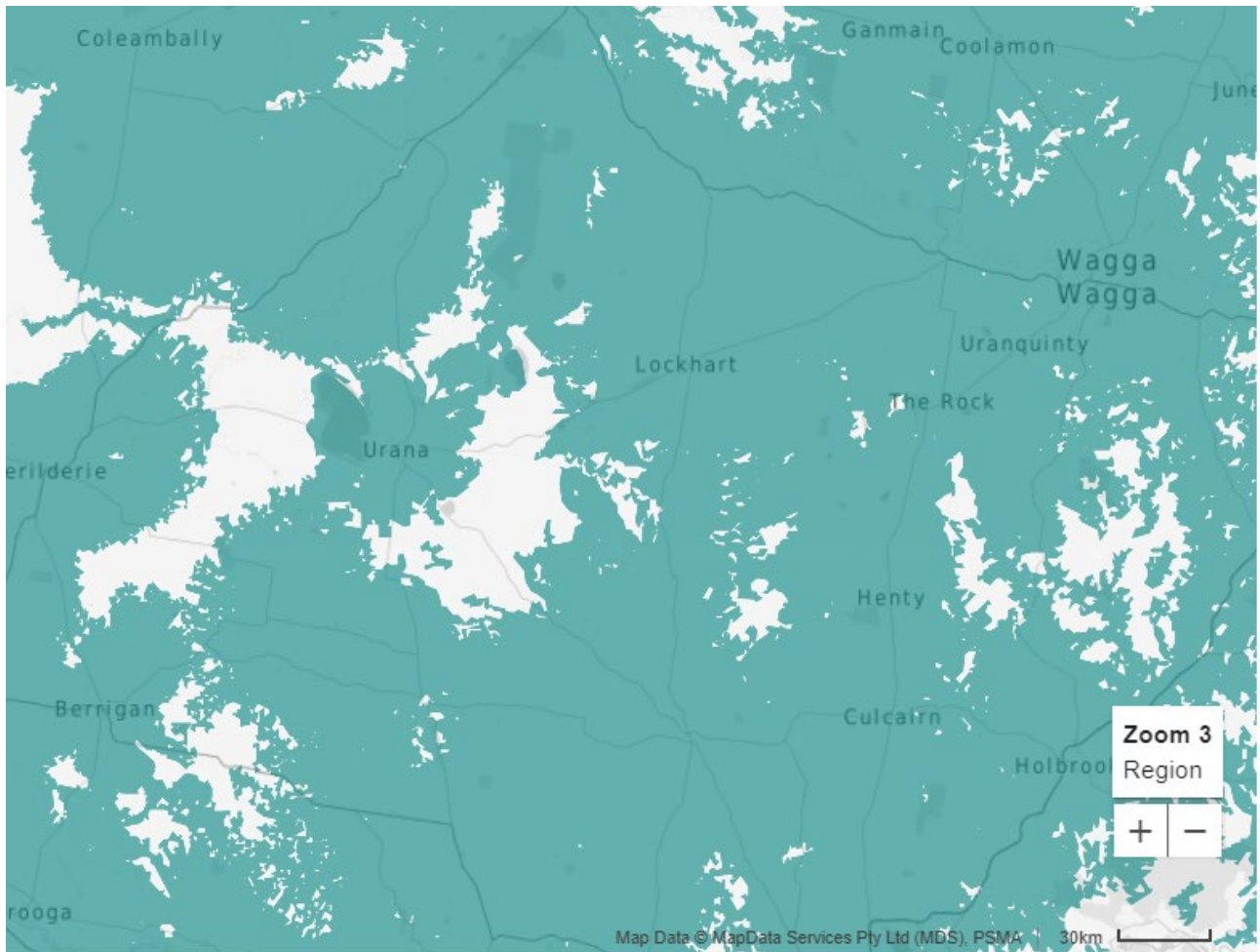
*Key: Blue shaded area = mobile coverage

Figure B-4 Telstra mobile 3G coverage Edward River, Murrumbidgee and Federation LGA's



*Key: Blue shaded area = mobile coverage

Figure B-5 Telstra mobile 3G coverage Federation and Lockhart LGAs



*Key: Blue shaded area = mobile coverage

Figure B-6 Telstra mobile 3G coverage Lockhart and Wagga Wagga LGAs

Appendix C

Affected roads



C1 Affected regional roads

Table C-1 Regional roads affected by the proposal

ROAD NAME	PAVEMENT
Arumpo Road	Sealed
Baratta Street	Sealed
Carne Street	Sealed
Kyalite Road	Sealed
Moulamein Road	Sealed
Paterson Street	Sealed
Pretty Pine Road (west)	Sealed
Tallow Street	Sealed
Balranald Road (near Moulamein)	Sealed
Maude Road	Sealed/Unsealed
Pretty Pine Road (east)	Sealed
Wanderer Street	Sealed
Conargo Road (in Conargo)	Sealed
Morundah Road	Sealed
Yamma Road	Sealed
Conargo Road (near Sturt Highway)	Sealed
Back Berrigan Road	Sealed
Boree Creek Road	Sealed
Urana-Lockhart Road	Sealed
Chapman Street	Sealed
Cocketgedong Road	Sealed
Federation Way (north of Urana)	Sealed
Federation Way (south of Urana)	Sealed
Mahonga Road	Sealed
William Street	Sealed
Woodhouse Street	Sealed
Albury Road	Sealed
East Street	Sealed
Ford Street	Sealed

ROAD NAME	PAVEMENT
Green Street	Sealed
Lockhart Collingullie Road	Sealed
Lockhart-Kywong Road	Sealed
Lockhart Road (west of Bullenbong Creek)	Sealed
Reid Street	Sealed
The Rock-Collingullie Road	Sealed
Urana Street (The Rock)	Sealed
Urana-Lockhart Road	Sealed
Holbrook Road	Sealed
Lockhart Road (east of Bullenbong Creek)	Sealed
Tumbarumba Road	Sealed

C2 Affected local roads

Table C-2 Local Roads affected by the proposal

ROAD NAME	PAVEMENT
Corbett Avenue	Sealed
Dansons Road	Unsealed
Melaleuca Street	Sealed
Modica Cres	Sealed
Abbotts Tank Road	Unsealed
Benanee Road	Unsealed
Euston Prungle Road	Sealed
Mccabe Street	Sealed
Windomal Road	Sealed
Church Street	Sealed
Baldon Road	Unsealed
Balranald Road (south of alignment)	Unsealed/Sealed
Balranald Road (north of alignment)	Unsealed/Sealed
Binbinette Road	Unsealed
Brougham Street	Sealed
Cedar Avenue	Sealed
Impimi Road	Unsealed
Keri Keri Road (south)	Unsealed
Keri Keri Road (north)	Unsealed
Morago Street	Sealed
Glenhope Road	Unsealed
Jerilderie Road	Sealed
Romani Road	Sealed
West Burrabogie Road	Unsealed
Booroorban-Tchelery Road	Sealed
Carrathool Road	Sealed
Dry Lake Road	Unsealed
East-West Road	Unsealed
Millears Road	Sealed

ROAD NAME	PAVEMENT
Monimail Road	Sealed
Moonbria Road	Unsealed
Nesbits Road	Sealed
Wandook Road	Sealed
Warwillah Road	Unsealed
Willurah Road	Sealed
Bundure Road	Sealed/Unsealed
Cadell Road	Sealed
Colombo Road	Unsealed
Crutchs Road	Unsealed
Fernbank Road	Unsealed
Four Corners Road	Sealed
Jerilderie-Urana Road	Sealed
Liddles Lane	Unsealed
Mcdonald Road	Unsealed
McLennons Bore Road	Unsealed
North Boundary Road	Sealed
Six Mile Lane	Unsealed
Thurrowa Road	Sealed/Unsealed
Wilson Road	Sealed
Barragunda Road	Unsealed
Battens Road	Sealed
Berrigan Oaklands Road	Sealed
Browley Street	Sealed
Coonong Road	Unsealed
Cullivel Road	Sealed
Drummond Street	Sealed
Eades Street	Sealed
Greenvale Road	Sealed
Gums Road	Unsealed
Lachlan Street	Sealed
Mallons Road	Unsealed
Meritons Road	Unsealed

ROAD NAME	PAVEMENT
Spraydon Road	Unsealed
Strontian Road	Sealed
West Gums Road	Unsealed
Yarrabee Street	Sealed
Andriskes Lane	Unsealed
Ben Hoffmans Lane	Unsealed
Bidgeemia Road	Sealed
Boyds Road/Somervilles Road	Unsealed
Bullenburg The Rock Road	Sealed
County Boundary Road	Sealed
Dunlevys Lane	Unsealed
Flood Detour Road	Unsealed
Frank Westblades Lane	Unsealed
French Park-Bullenbung Road	Unsealed
Hendersons Road	Unsealed
Lockhart Boree Creek Road	Sealed
Lockhart The Rock Road	Sealed
Mangoplah Road	Sealed
Old French Park-Bullenbung Road	Sealed
Osborne Yerong Creek Road	Sealed
Ryans Lane	Unsealed
Solider Settlement Road	Sealed
Slys Lane	Sealed
Spanish Avenue	Sealed
Strong's Lane	Unsealed
Tenison Lane	Unsealed
The Rock Mangoplah Road	Sealed
Tribolets Road	Unsealed
Urana Street (Lockhart)	Sealed
Wandella Lane	Unsealed
Webbs Lane	Unsealed
Yuluma Road	Sealed
Ashfords Road	Sealed

ROAD NAME	PAVEMENT
Billagha Street	Sealed
Boiling Down Road	Unsealed
Brunskill Road	Sealed
Dunns Road	Sealed
Elizabeth Avenue	Sealed
Glenfield Road	Sealed
Gregadoo East Road	Sealed
Gregadoo Road	Sealed
Hanging Rock Road	Sealed
Inglewood Road	Sealed
Koorinal Road	Sealed
Lake Albert Road	Sealed
Lloyd Road	Sealed
Mitchell Road	Sealed
Narrung Street	Sealed
Old Station Road	Unsealed
Oxley Bridge Road	Sealed
Pearson Street	Sealed
Plumpton Road	Sealed
Red Hill Road	Sealed
Rohans Road	Sealed
Rowan Road	Unsealed
Somervilles Road	Unsealed
The Rock-Narranderra Road	Sealed
Travers Street	Sealed
Uranquinty Cross Road	Sealed
Vincent Road	Sealed
Yarragundry Street	Sealed
Key Street	Sealed
Ryan Street	Sealed

Appendix D

Engagement



D1 Summary of stakeholders engaged

Table D-1 Summary of stakeholder engagement activities

STAKEHOLDERS	ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY	SUMMARY
Energy Regulator / Operator		
Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) Australian Energy Regulator.	Project briefings and subsequent updates Regulatory consultation (RIT-T)	14 briefings and project updates have been provided
Local Members of Parliament (State and Federal)		
Federal Member for Riverina, The Hon Michael McCormack MP [Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure, Transport & Regional Development] Federal Member for Farrer, The Hon Sussan Ley MP [Minister for Environment] Federal Member for Hume, The Hon Angus Taylor MP [Minister for Energy and Emissions Reduction] NSW Member for Albury, Justin Clancy MP [Chair, Legislative Assembly Committee on Investment, Industry and Regional Development] NSW Member for Murray, Helen Dalton MP NSW Member for Hornsby, Matt Kean MP [Minister for Energy and Environment] SA Member for Stuart, Dan van Holst Pellekaan MP [Minister for Energy and Mining]	Project briefings and subsequent updates Community consultation discussions Regulatory consultation and project updates with Energy Ministers	77 briefings and project updates have been provided

STAKEHOLDERS	ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY	SUMMARY
Government – Departmental and Agency		
<p>Australian Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment</p> <p>Australian Department of Education, Skills & Employment</p> <p>Australian Department of Industry, Innovation & Science</p> <p>NSW Department of Communities and Justice, including its divisions of NSW Police Force and Fire & Rescue NSW</p> <p>NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) and its divisions NSW Crown Lands, NSW Environment, Energy and Science, NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service and NSW Department of Primary Industries</p> <p>NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet (heritage)</p> <p>NSW Department of Regional NSW, and its divisions NSW Local Land Services and Forestry Corporation NSW</p> <p>NSW Health, including its division of NSW Ambulance</p> <p>Transport for NSW, including Property Acquisition NSW</p>	<p>Project briefings and subsequent updates</p> <p>Subject matter specific engagements.</p>	<p>209 briefings, project updates, subject matter specific engagements and correspondence have been made.</p>
Local government – Elected Officials/ Executive Staff		
<p>Albury Shire Council</p> <p>Balranald Shire Council</p> <p>Edward River Council</p> <p>Hay Shire Council</p> <p>Lockhart Shire Council</p> <p>Murray River Council</p> <p>Murrumbidgee Council</p> <p>Federation Council</p>	<p>Project briefings and subsequent updates</p> <p>Route selection workshop</p> <p>Community consultation discussions.</p>	<p>684 briefings, project updates, subject matter specific engagements and correspondence have been made.</p>

STAKEHOLDERS	ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY	SUMMARY
Griffith City Council Riverina and Murray Joint Organisation (RAMJO) Narrandera Shire Council Wagga Wagga City Council Wentworth Shire Council		
Traditional Owners and other Aboriginal Groups		
Balranald Local Aboriginal Land Council Barkandji Traditional Owners (Native Title Group) Barkindji Maraura Elders Council (BMEC) Barkindji Maraura Elders Environment Team (BMEET) Cummeragunja Local Aboriginal Land Council Deniliquin Local Aboriginal Land Council Griffith Local Aboriginal Land Council Hay Aboriginal Corporation Hay Local Aboriginal Land Council Maliyan Horizon Muthi Muthi Nations Nari Nari Tribal Council Narrandera Local Aboriginal Land Council National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) NSW Aboriginal Affairs (Broken Hill) NSW Aboriginal Land Council NSW Indigenous Chamber of Commerce	Project briefings and subsequent updates Media advertisements Direct letters and notices Site walkovers and cultural heritage clearance activities.	138 briefings and project updates have been provided to Aboriginal groups and representatives Media advertisements were published in the Koori Mail, Weekly Times and Mildura Weekly in August 2020 as notice and registration of Aboriginal interests 53 consultation letters were issued in August 2020 to assist in the assessment of the proposal and provide input to the preparation of a cultural heritage assessment report

STAKEHOLDERS	ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY	SUMMARY
NTSCORP Outback Academy Ta-Ru Board of Management / Maraura Barkintji Traditional Owners Wagga Wagga Local Aboriginal Land Council Other Aboriginal Corporations and individuals, which are Registered Aboriginal Parties for the proposal		
Industry and interest groups		
AI Group Albury Chamber of Commerce Business NSW Business SA Committee4Wagga Energy Consumers Australia Energy Users Association of Australia Industry Capability Network NSW Farmers Association Primary Producers SA Public Interest Advocacy Centre Regional Development Australia Viewmont Gold Wagga Wagga Business Chamber Yanco Creek and Tributaries Advisory Committee (YACTAC)	Project briefings, regulatory consultation and subsequent updates including webinars EnergyConnect website Interactive map.	157 briefings and project updates have been provided to industry and interest groups 400+ individual businesses registered interest from NSW and Australia in working with Transgrid on EnergyConnect 39 organisations supporting community activity in the southwest of NSW received a grant from Transgrid's Community Partnerships Program in 2020

STAKEHOLDERS	ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY	SUMMARY
Other businesses expressing interest in providing goods and services to the EnergyConnect project Other local associations and interest groups, particularly recipients of Community Partnership Funding		
Directly impacted landholders		
Landholders (owners, occupiers, lease and other interest holders in the corridor).	Direct letters and information packs Project factsheets Face to face meetings, emails, phone calls and text messages Property maps Drop-in information sessions and public events including webinars Interactive map Media advertisements Requests for access to property (for site investigation studies)	241 introductory letters and additional information provided to each landholder Over 3,200 engagement contacts, including face to face meetings, emails, phone calls and text messages Invitations to community information sessions and public events.

STAKEHOLDERS	ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY	SUMMARY
Community members		
Community and local land users (considered not directly impacted)	<p>To cover the broad area affected by the Project, it was important to provide a number of channels to communicate with the local community and solicit feedback on the project proposal. This included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Toll free number — Email address — EnergyConnect website — Drop-in information sessions and public events including webinars — Interactive map — Fact sheets — Media advertisements. 	<p>Invitations to community information sessions and public events via promotions in local newspapers, email, websites and social media</p> <p>Attendance at community events</p> <p>Over 8,000 interactive map views and over 300 comments, since 29 February 2020</p> <p>Over 8,400 website views, since 9 March 2020.</p>

D2 Discussion guide for interviews with Councils

Table D-2 Interview agenda

Project	PS117658	Date	Transgrid
Venue	[Venue]	Time	December 2021
Purpose	To gather Council insight and input on socio-economic matters		
Attendees		Apologies	

Table D-3 Discussion items

ITEM	DISCUSSION POINT	NOTES
1.	Introduce attendees and purpose of meeting	[Name / Note]
2.	Overview of SEIA and EIS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SEARs issued, EIS planning pathway is progressing SEIA is one of the various technical studies that comprise the EIS that will go to DPIE early next year SEIA focusses on the local community and local economy – impacts or benefits of the project – how people in your council/LGA perceive the project, their views and expectations for both its construction and operations 	
3.	Local social and economic context <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How would you describe your LGA and the community? How has your community changed over time? What would you say is most valued by the community? Current challenges and opportunities for your local community and region? 	
4.	Council priorities and implications of the project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council priorities and expectations related to the project Interests, concerns and comments of the project for your LGA and residents Any implications on local infrastructure and service provision – current capacity (high level) of health, emergency services, accommodation, community services etc. How does Council see EnergyConnect aligning with Council's strategic plans over the coming years? How could the project help to address or work toward current strategies and local aspirations? 	
5.	Workforce management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any prior recent experience with an incoming temporary workforce (other industries/projects) and lessons learned? Any preliminary social and economic interests, concerns or opportunities related to the incoming workforce? 	

Appendix E

Transgrid policies



**ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT
ISLANDER ENGAGEMENT AND
PARTICIPATION POLICY
1 MAY 2020**





Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement and Participation Policy

Transgrid recognises that it has a significant role to play in reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. The purpose of this Policy is to affirm TransGrid's commitment with Indigenous people and communities during the development, delivery, maintenance and operation of its assets.

Policy Principles

Transgrid will adhere to the following principles with regards to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People and communities affected by our activities:

- > Respect and recognise ongoing connection to Country and the importance of cultural heritage
- > Create participation opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and businesses
- > Lead the way in engaging with and developing sustainable relationships
- > Enhance the cultural awareness of our employees and contractors to ensure they understand its importance and relevance.

Our vision for reconciliation

Through its Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (Feb, 2020), Transgrid has confirmed its commitment to advancing reconciliation through an expanded focus on strengthening relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, developing strategies to empower them, and engaging our people and stakeholders in driving positive change. Transgrid envisages a future where educational and employment opportunities are of the same high standard as those enjoyed by other Australians, and a future where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People's deep knowledge of and connection to land is recognised, respected and celebrated by all Australians.

As we continue to maintain and develop our energy network we are in a unique position to play a part in nurturing a synergy with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and communities, as we recognise that they hold great knowledge of, and have deep connections to, the lands upon which our assets exist.

We will do this by improving relationships with, showing respect for, and increasing opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as colleagues, stakeholders, community members and consumers of our services. We will maintain a culture that values diversity and equity, and encourage all Transgrid employees and contractors to be role models for reconciliation.

"I want the indomitable spirit of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to become the very beating heart of Transgrid.

That can only happen with reconciliation. That can only happen with understanding. That can only happen with listening and sharing of knowledge.

That two-way engagement is our goal".

Sean McGoldrick

EM Major Projects, 1 May 2020

Document controls:

Revision no:	0	HP TRIM No:	D2020/01429	Approval Date:	1 May 2020
Business function:	Network Planning and Operations			Document type:	Policy
Process owner:	Head of Property & Environment				
Author:	Sherrie Castaldini, Indigenous Engagement Team Leader				
Reviewers:	Heather Wagland, Head of Property & Environment				
Approver:	Sean McGoldrick, Executive Manager Major Projects Michael Gatt, Executive Manager Works Delivery, RAP Committee Member				

Implementation:

This policy will be implemented in the following ways:

- > Made available to all employees/contractors via the Wire
- > Made available to external stakeholders via the TransGrid website
- > Will be reviewed every 12 months

Change history:

Revision no	Approved by	Amendment

Complaints Handling Policy

November 2019

1. Introduction

Transgrid recognises the major role we play within local communities across New South Wales, the Australian Capital Territory, and Victoria, and the impact our activities can have on communities, residents and families.

We value feedback from our external stakeholders and to ensure we can respond appropriately, all complaints and feedback are recorded and assessed as part of our complaints management process.

Transgrid recognises every stakeholder has the right to lodge a complaint if they are not satisfied with our services or actions, and we have made a commitment not to discriminate against anyone as a result of that person making a complaint.

At Transgrid, we are committed to effectively engaging with stakeholders who seek our advice and assistance, and we endeavour to ensure you feel comfortable discussing matters further, seeking more information or raising a complaint with us.

2. Definitions

Transgrid has adopted the definition of a complaint from the *Australian Standard AS ISO 10002-2006 Customer Satisfaction – Guidelines* for complaints handling in organisations:

“A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction made to an organisation, related to its products or services, or the complaints handling process itself, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.”

3. Purpose

The purpose of Transgrid's Complaints Handling Policy is to:

- Provide an effective and equitable complaint and dispute resolution process for all complaints related to Transgrid operations and services;
- Ensure complaints are resolved in a fair, quick and consistent manner across the business to maintain a high level of stakeholder satisfaction and customer service;
- Identify, track and resolve complaints and enquiries to improve stakeholder relations and organisational performance;
- Recognise and protect stakeholders' rights to lodge a complaint regarding Transgrid; and
- Define procedures which enable the identification and resolution of contentious issues on a mutually acceptable basis.

4. Objectives

The objective of this Policy is to embed an effective and efficient complaints management process within Transgrid, which:

- Is aligned with our business values, vision and strategic objectives;
- Applies to all individuals who wish to make a complaint or dispute relating to Transgrid;
- Reflects industry best practice and is compliant with the *Australian Standard AS ISO 10002-2006 'Customer Satisfaction – Guidelines for complaints handling in organisations'*; and
- Is supported by Transgrid corporate policies and procedures, specifically:
 - Stakeholder Engagement Charter; and
 - Code of Ethics and Conduct.

4.1 Our guiding principles

Transgrid's complaints management process is guided by the following principles:

- **Accessibility:** Identify key stakeholders and work with them throughout a project lifecycle.
- **Transparency:** Open and honest feedback will be sought and incorporated into planning processes.
- **Communication:** Proactively develop two-way communication channels tailored to the needs and interests of stakeholders.
- **Inclusiveness:** Through early and open engagement we will integrate interests of stakeholders into our decision making.

5. Complaints and dispute resolution

5.1 How to make a complaint

By phone

You can call us and speak with a member of our Community Engagement Team on the toll-free hotline 1800 222 537.

Online

You can email your complaint to community@Transgrid.com.au or visit our website and lodge a complaint at www.Transgrid.com.au/contactus.

In writing

Address your complaint to:

Community Engagement Manager, Transgrid
 180 Thomas Street, Sydney
 PO Box A1000, Sydney South NSW1235 Australia

In person

Visit our head office at 180 Thomas Street, Sydney, or call into one of our regional depots to lodge a complaint in person. For regional depot locations, visit www.Transgrid.com.au/contactus.

5.2 Information to include

To help us investigate and resolve your complaint effectively, please provide us with the following information:

- Your full name, address and contact phone number(s);
- A description of your complaint;
- Any additional documentation or information that may support your complaint; and
- How you would like your complaint to be resolved.

5.3 Our commitment to respond

We endeavour to resolve all complaints at the first point of contact. However, there are some instances where this is not possible and further investigation may be required. In these instances, we will aim to acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 48 hours and provide a resolution within ten business days.

Should we be unable to meet these timeframes, we will advise you of our suggested course of action and timeframe, as well as the name of a contact person for any further queries regarding the matter.

As a general rule, Transgrid will respond via the same channel as the complaint is received unless advised otherwise.

5.4 Complaint escalation

If a complaint is unresolved:

- (a) Transgrid will inform the complainant they have a right to raise the complaint to a higher level within our management structure.
- (b) If a complaint cannot be resolved to a customer's satisfaction following further internal investigation, a complainant may contact the Energy & Water Ombudsman of New South Wales (EWON), or the Energy & Water Ombudsman of Victoria (EWOV).

6. Contact us

We value your feedback and are committed to effectively engaging with you. If you would like to lodge a complaint, seek information or advice, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Transgrid
180 Thomas Street, Sydney
T 1800 222 537
E community@Transgrid.com.au
www.Transgrid.com.au

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

Achieve zero harm to our employees, visitors, delivery partners and the public

Transgrid is committed to ensure safety is a pre-condition to anything we do, achieve zero harm to our employees, visitors, delivery partners and the public, continuously improve our performance, demonstrate compliance to relevant legislation, codes of practice and industry standards.

Transgrid's Health and Safety principles are that:

- Physical and Mental Health and Safety is our first priority
- Harm is preventable with positive health and safety leadership
- All employees and delivery partners are empowered to stop work if they have a health or safety concern
- Working safely is a condition of employment for employees and delivery partners
- The health and safety of employees, visitors, delivery partners and the public should be protected
- The transmission network is operated safely
- Health and Safety is an integral part of all our business decisions.

To achieve our Health and Safety principles, Transgrid will:

- Provide a safe and healthy work place for our employees and delivery partners, and ensure the safety of visitors and the public when near our assets or on our property
- Identify and assess health and safety hazards and risks prior to commencing all activities, projects and work to eliminate or control the risk to as low as reasonably practicable
- Identify risks, implement appropriate control measures and effectively communicate this information to all relevant employees and delivery partners
- Comply with relevant health and safety legislation, regulations and codes of practice

- Continually improve our health and safety performance through establishing measureable performance objectives and actions
- Foster a positive safety culture in which employees and delivery partners collaborate, learn from each other and are empowered to stop unsafe activities or situations
- Engage in open communication, consultation and participation with employees, visitors, delivery partners and the public on issues that have the potential to affect their health and safety
- Ensure employees and delivery partners understand their health and safety responsibilities
- Safely plan, design, construct, commission, operate, maintain, replace and retire assets
- Manage the health and safety risks associated with the interaction of our assets, with property of other persons and the environment
- Respond to and thoroughly investigate for the purpose of learning and eliminating risk on all incidents and provide timely and effective injury management that promotes early and sustainable return to duties
- Implement the Health and Safety Framework
- Regularly monitor and review the health and safety management system through the use of effective lead and lag indicators.

Document controls:

Revision no:	6	HP TRIM No:	D2003/2837	Approval Date:	5/2/21
Business function:	Manage Health, Safety and Environment		Document type:	Policy	
Process owner:	Manage Health, Safety and Environment				
Author:	Megan Calvert, HSE Systems Manager				
Reviewers:	Krista Lee- Fogarty, Head of Health, Safety and Environment Jason Conroy, Chief Financial Officer Craig Stallan, EM, Works Delivery Brian Salter, EM, Legal Governance and Risk Chris Pemberton, EM, Corporate Services Richard Lowe, EM/Business Growth Eva Hanly, EM, Strategy Innovation and Technology Graeme Wedderburn Head of Corporate Affairs				
Approver:	Sean McGoldrick, Executive Manager, Network Planning and Operations				

Implementation:

This policy will be implemented in the following ways:

- The Health and Safety Policy is to be displayed at offices and manned substations
- The Health and Safety Policy is to be provided to all delivery partners
- The Health and Safety Policy is to be available to external stakeholders via the Transgrid website
- Notification on the HSE Updates Wire page when the policy is approved.

Change from previous version:

Revision no	Approved by	Amendment
4	Paul Italiano, Chief Executive Officer	Changed signatory to Paul Italiano (new Chief Executive Officer)
5	Paul Italiano, Chief Executive Officer	Inclusion of "All employees and contractors are empowered to stop work if they have a health or safety concern" into our Health and Safety Principles Inclusion of lead and lag indicators
6	Sean McGoldrick, Executive Manager, Network Planning and Operations	Inclusion of 'Ensure safety is a pre-condition to anything we do' in the overarching commitment. The term Contractor has been replaced with Delivery Partner Inclusion of mental health as our first priority in the Health and Safety Principles Inclusion of 'with positive health and safety leadership' to the 'All harm is preventable' Health and Safety Principle Inclusion of reference to hazards and controlling the risk to as low as reasonably practicable Inclusion of 'positive safety culture in which employees and delivery partners collaborate, learn from each other and are empowered to stop unsafe activities or situations' Inclusion of 'thoroughly investigate for the purpose of learning and eliminating risk on all incidents and provide timely and effective injury management that promotes early and sustainable return to duties'

Office of the Landowner and Community Advocate

Charter

1. Purpose

The Office of the Landowner and Community Advocate has been established to assist Transgrid to implement the best possible landowner and community engagement practices on all of its major transmission projects.

2. Environment

Transgrid continually undertakes large projects to ensure New South Wales' energy supply into the future. This requires the construction of new electrical infrastructure across publicly and privately owned land. Transgrid is committed to adopting best practice community engagement processes in its dealings with impacted landowners and communities.

3. Guiding principles

1. Landowners and community representatives are entitled to be treated fairly and with respect when dealing with Transgrid.
2. Transgrid processes that relate to impacted landowners and communities will be open and transparent.
3. Outcomes achieved by Transgrid will balance the interests of all parties.
4. The Advocate's Office will operate independently of other Transgrid operations and will be adequately resourced, having access to all relevant Transgrid staff, records and data.
5. Disputes between landowners and Transgrid which cannot be resolved by Transgrid are best dealt with by the NSW Energy and Water Ombudsman and the Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner.

4. Role of the Advocate

The Advocate will:

- be the pre-eminent source of advice to Transgrid's Chair, CEO and Executive and Board on all aspects of best practice community engagement and stakeholder consultation
- be consulted by Transgrid regarding communication plans and specific documentation about projects that impact landowners and communities
- contribute to and critically review all Transgrid's policies, strategies, processes and procedures for engagement with communities and landowners
- communicate with Transgrid staff, landowners, communities and the media to understand issues and concerns
- assist Transgrid to be accountable for its undertakings and commitments to landowners and communities
- facilitate the voice of landowners and the broader community in identifying opportunities and alternatives.

The Advocate will not be an arbiter in disputes between landowners and Transgrid and will not determine the location of new transmission infrastructure.

5. General organisation

The Office of the Advocate is a small independent entity comprising:

- the Landholder and Community Advocate – a person with extensive experience in consumer engagement and protection
- a Deputy Advocate – with similar experience
- administrative support.

6. Reporting arrangements

- The Landowner and Community Advocate is an independent entity reporting directly to the Chair of the Transgrid Board of Directors and the Chief Executive Officer.
- The Office of the Advocate will provide the Chair and the Chief Executive Officer with a report on its operations each year.
- The role of the Advocate will be reviewed 12 months from the date of its establishment.

Appendix F

Completed scoping worksheet



	Social Impact Assessment (SIA) Worksheet													Project name: Project EnergyConnect - Eastern Section													Date: December 2021				
PROJECT ACTIVITIES	CATEGORIES OF SOCIAL IMPACTS	POTENTIAL IMPACTS ON PEOPLE		PREVIOUS INVESTIGATION OF IMPACT	CUMULATIVE IMPACTS			ELEMENTS OF IMPACTS - Based on preliminary investigation					ASSESSMENT LEVEL FOR EACH IMPACT				PROJECT REFINEMENT	MITIGATION / ENHANCEMENT MEASURES													
Which project activity / activities could produce social impacts ?	what social impact categories could be affected by the project activities	What impacts are likely, and what concerns/aspirations have people expressed about the impact? Summarise how each relevant stakeholder group might experience the impact. NB. Where there are multiple stakeholder groups affected differently by an impact, or more than one impact from the activity, please add an additional row.	Is the impact expected to be positive or negative	Has this impact previously been investigated (on this or other project/s)?	If "yes - this project," briefly describe the previous investigation. If "yes - other project," identify the other project and investigation	Will this impact combine with others from this project (think about when and where), and/or with impacts from other projects (cumulative)?	If yes, identify which other impacts and/or projects	Will the project activity (without mitigation or enhancement) cause a material social impact in terms of its: You can also consider the various magnitudes of these characteristics					Level of assessment for each social impact	What methods and data sources will be used to investigate this impact?			Has the project been refined in response to preliminary impact evaluation or stakeholder feedback?	What mitigation / enhancement measures are being considered?													
								extent i.e. number of people potentially affected?	duration of expected impacts? (i.e. construction vs operational phase)	intensity of expected impacts i.e. scale or degree of change?	sensitivity or vulnerability of people potentially affected?	level of concern/interest of people potentially affected?		Secondary data	Primary Data - Consultation	Primary Data - Research															
The proposal has the potential to impact on known and previously unrecorded Aboriginal items.	culture	Impacts to valued cultural objects and spaces affecting Indigenous peoples relationship with Country.	Negative	Yes - other project	Energy Connect West, Inland Rail	Yes	Landscape impacts and potential native title property rights	No	Yes	No	Yes	Unknown	Detailed assessment of the impact	Required	Broad consultation	Targeted research															
The proposal has the potential to impact on known and previously unrecorded non-Aboriginal heritage items	culture	Impacts on heritage sites affecting historical cultural values in the region	Negative	Yes - other project	Energy Connect West, Inland Rail	No	Not required	No	Unknown	No	No	Unknown	Detailed assessment of the impact	Required	Broad consultation	Targeted research															
During construction, the proposal has the potential for temporary land use and property impacts such as interruptions to seasonal cropping and harvesting activities	livelihoods	Land use changes affect landholders ability to manage agricultural properties	Negative	Yes - other project	Energy Connect West, Inland Rail	Yes	Way of life impacts, surroundings	Yes	No	Unknown	Unknown	Yes	Detailed assessment of the impact	Required	Broad consultation	Targeted research															
the proposal has the potential to impact on existing land uses, including agricultural operations. This may include some limitations on agricultural activities in and around the transmission line easement (such as restrictions on tall crops or activities which require harvesting).	livelihoods	Land use changes affect landholders ability to manage agricultural properties	Negative	Yes - other project	Energy Connect West, Inland Rail	Yes	Way of life impacts, surroundings	Yes	Yes	Unknown	Unknown	Yes	Detailed assessment of the impact	Required	Broad consultation	Targeted research															
During construction, the presence of construction plant, vehicles and compound sites may result in short-term temporary visual impacts for sensitive receivers.	surroundings	Visual changes to landscape affect people sense of place	Negative	Yes - other project	Energy Connect West, Inland Rail	Yes	Way of life, access, livelihoods	No	No	No	Unknown	No	Minor assessment of the impact	Required	Limited - if required (e.g. local council)	Not required															
The clearing of vegetation and ground disturbance during construction of the transmission lines (and easement), substations and access tracks have the potential to result in long-term localised visual impacts.	surroundings	Visual changes to landscape affect people sense of place	Negative	Yes - other project	Energy Connect West, Inland Rail	Yes	Way of life, access, livelihoods	Yes	Yes	No	Unknown	No	Detailed assessment of the impact	Required	Broad consultation	Targeted research															
The proposal would introduce large steel lattice structures up to 80 metres in height and new substation infrastructure into the landscape. In this landscape, there is the potential for the structures to be visually noticeable from distances of several kilometres	surroundings	Visual changes to landscape affect people sense of place	Negative	Yes - other project	Energy Connect West, Inland Rail	Yes	Way of life, access, livelihoods	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unknown	Yes	Detailed assessment of the impact	Required	Broad consultation	Targeted research															
Water use and access to water during construction for activities such as concrete batching, dust suppression and minor uses including toilets for workers, could potentially be an issue for the proposal due to the water scarcity issues which are ongoing in this region given recent drought conditions.	livelihoods	Impacts to water supplies affect landholders ability to operate properties.	Negative	Yes - other project	Energy Connect West, Inland Rail	Yes	surroundings, way of life	Yes	Unknown	Yes	Yes	Yes	Detailed assessment of the impact	Required	Broad consultation	Targeted research															
Potential impacts on flooding relate to structures and infrastructure (such as the substation works) creating obstructions.	livelihoods	potential changes to hydrological flows affect people property and ability to manage land	Negative	Yes - other project	Energy Connect West, Inland Rail	Yes	access	No	Yes	Unknown	Yes	Yes	Detailed assessment of the impact	Required	Broad consultation	Targeted research															
The proposal would generate noise and vibration throughout the construction phase due to various activities including operation of heavy vehicles, helicopters (if required), vegetation clearing, bulk earthworks and excavations, and the construction of access tracks, stringing of the lines, road upgrades and increased traffic volumes.	health and wellbeing	Works at the transmission structure locations would be likely to have a minor and temporary nuisance noise impact on the closest sensitive receivers.	Negative	Yes - other project	Energy Connect West, Inland Rail	Yes	way of life, surroundings	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Detailed assessment of the impact	Required	Broad consultation	Targeted research															
The new transmission lines and substation have the potential to introduce some additional noise sources to their localities.	health and wellbeing	permanent noise impacts resulting from transmission may create nuisance, impact peoples health and wellbeing	Negative	Yes - other project	Energy Connect West, Inland Rail	Yes	way of life, surroundings	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Detailed assessment of the impact	Required	Broad consultation	Targeted research															
The density of vegetation across the proposal study area is highly variable, with heavily grazed paddocks, cultivation, open woodland, riparian zones and open shrub land each presenting a distinct bushfire risk.	health and wellbeing	Potential bushfire risk can result in stress and anxiety for affected landholders. Bushfires can result in harm to people and damage to property.	Negative	Yes - other project	Energy Connect West, Inland Rail	Yes	Livelihoods, way of life, surroundings	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Detailed assessment of the impact	Required	Broad consultation	Targeted research															
As a result of the proposal, a significant amount of expenditure will be spent within the local, regional and NSW economies during the construction phase over a relatively short period of time	livelihoods	Improved regional economic outcomes for regional residents, businesses and governments	Positive	Yes - other project	Energy Connect West, Inland Rail	Yes	Way of life, decision making systems	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Detailed assessment of the impact	Required	Broad consultation	Targeted research															
The construction phase would generate approximately 1,650 employee years (direct and indirect) in the NSW region during the construction period.	way of life	Regional employment opportunities	Positive	Yes - other project	Energy Connect West, Inland Rail	Yes	Livelihoods	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Detailed assessment of the impact	Required	Broad consultation	Targeted research															
The distance of the construction works from towns of sufficient size to support the required workforce would require the establishment of multiple temporary workers camps along the route to allow the safe and accessible accommodation of workers and support staff	way of life	potential impacts to local housing and accommodation markets	Negative	Yes - other project	Energy Connect West, Inland Rail	Yes	Livelihoods, community, surroundings, access	No	No	No	Unknown	Yes	Standard assessment of the impact	Required	Targeted consultation	Potentially targeted research															
The distance of the construction works from towns of sufficient size to support the required workforce would require the establishment of multiple temporary workers camps along the route to allow the safe and accessible accommodation of workers and support staff	access	Incoming workforce increases demands of local community and social services, limiting access for locals.	Negative	Yes - other project	Energy Connect West, Inland Rail	Yes	Livelihoods, community	Yes	No	Unknown	Yes	No	Detailed assessment of the impact	Required	Broad consultation	Targeted research															
The distance of the construction works from towns of sufficient size to support the required workforce would require the establishment of multiple temporary workers camps along the route to allow the safe and accessible accommodation of workers and support staff	community	Incoming workforce changes community composition in small regional towns and impacts peoples perceptions of safety	Negative	Yes - other project	Energy Connect West, Inland Rail	Yes	Livelihoods, access	Yes	No	No	Unknown	No	Standard assessment of the impact	Required	Targeted consultation	Potentially targeted research															
Construction activities that interact with publicly assessable areas (i.e. along public roads) could potentially result in adverse hazards and risks to public safety if not managed appropriately	health and wellbeing	Potential harm to people	Negative	Yes - other project	Energy Connect West, Inland Rail	Yes	surroundings, way of life, access	No	No	Unknown	Yes	Unknown	Detailed assessment of the impact	Required	Broad consultation	Targeted research															
The proposal would introduce new high voltage transmission lines and substation infrastructure between Buronga and Wagga Wagga, which would result in additional increases to electric and magnetic fields in the local area.	health and wellbeing	Public concern about increased exposure to EMFS creates anxiety and stress	Negative	Yes - other project	Energy Connect West	Yes	way of life, community	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Detailed assessment of the impact	Required	Broad consultation	Targeted research															
During construction, local air quality within the proposal study area may be temporarily affected by particulate (dust) and exhaust emissions from activities such as earthworks. For most of the proposal study area, any air quality impacts from construction are expected to be minor and short term due to the relatively small scale of construction works required at each transmission line structure location, distance from sensitive receivers, and the progressive nature of the construction works. However, the construction of the Dinawan substation and upgrade to the existing Wagga substation would result in potential localised air quality impacts for a longer duration of time.	health and wellbeing	Potential health impacts from increased dust and emissions. The main sensitive receivers for air quality impacts during construction would be residences within 100 metres from construction works. However, the construction of the Dinawan substation and upgrade to the existing Wagga substation would result in potential localised air quality impacts for a longer duration of time	Negative	Yes - other project	Energy Connect West, Inland Rail	Yes	way of life, surroundings	No	No	No	Yes	Unknown	Standard assessment of the impact	Required	Targeted consultation	Potentially targeted research															

PROJECT ACTIVITIES	CATEGORIES OF SOCIAL IMPACTS	POTENTIAL IMPACTS ON PEOPLE		PREVIOUS INVESTIGATION OF IMPACT		CUMULATIVE IMPACTS			ELEMENTS OF IMPACTS - Based on preliminary investigation					ASSESSMENT LEVEL FOR EACH IMPACT				PROJECT REFINEMENT	MITIGATION / ENHANCEMENT MEASURES
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			Is the impact expected to be positive or negative												Secondary data	Primary Data - Consultation	Primary Data - Research		
Consturction may result in an increase in local and regional traffic using the surrounding existing road network during the construction of the proposal, including over-size and non-standard loads	health and wellbeing	Potential road safety risks associated with increased movement of heavy vehicles along regional roads.	Negative	Yes - other project	Energy Connect West, Inland Rail	Yes	access	No	No	Yes	No	No	Minor assessment of the impact	Required	Limited - if required (e.g. local council)	Not required			
There may be some temporary disruptions to traffic movements along roads within the proposal study area during the stringing works above the road corridor.	access	Potentail delays and loger journey times for regional residents.	Negative	Yes - other project	Energy Connect West, Inland Rail	Yes	health and wellbeing	No	No	No	No	Yes	Minor assessment of the impact	Required	Limited - if required (e.g. local council)	Not required			
The main impacts on soils from the proposal would generally be from excavation works during construction. Contamination may occur from hydrocarbon spills from the operation of plant, equipment and vehicles during construction.	livelihoods	Changes to the viability of agricultural properties	Negative	Yes - other project	Energy Connect West, Inland Rail	Yes	Surroundings,, way of life.	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Detailed assessment of the impact	Required	Broad consultation	Targeted research			
The construction of the proposal may result in a range of typical waste materials including: > Spoil from excavation and access track works > Surplus construction materials > Vegetation > General domestic waste from construction and maintenance personnel > Waste from construction compounds and workers camps.	surroundings	Increased waster production could impact landscape and environmental values	Negative	Yes - other project	Energy Connect West, Inland Rail	No	Not required	No	No	No	No	No	Not relevant	Not required	Not required	Not required			
Resources used during the construction and operation of the proposal would include: > Water (construction and operational phases) > Electricity (construction and operational phases) > Fuel (construction and operational phases) > Concrete (primarily construction phase) > Steel (primarily construction phase).	livelihoods	While the proposal would result in some increased demand on local and regional resources, creating scarcity.	Negative	Yes - other project	Energy Connect West, Inland Rail	Yes	access	No	No	No	No	Yes	Minor assessment of the impact	Required	Limited - if required (e.g. local council)	Not required			

ABOUT US

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