

Energy Co  
155 Macquarie St  
DUBBO NSW 2830

01 November 2023

### **Response to the Energy Co EIS for the Central West Orana Transmission Project**

I am a Cassilis farmer and business owner. Like all Cassilis residents, I will be directly affected by the transmission line & REZ construction in my local area.

There are a multitude of impact issues poorly addressed or inaccurately addressed in the EIS. The following I see as the most critical:

#### **1. ROAD SAFETY**

- Highway – No highly detailed information has been communicated effectively on changes to traffic flow and safely on the Golden Hwy specifically between Sandy Hollow and Cassilis. Business and families need to know detailed expected time details while hwy is upgraded and through REZ construction as has huge implication's for business efficiently hence profitability.
- Cassilis village – Simply the locality of Cassilis cannot safely or effectively handle and increase in traffic. Again no direct effective consultation has occurred.

#### **2. AGRICULTURAL IMPACT**

- Lack of use of crown land- Crown land / TSRs should be seen as higher priority for use in project facilitation.
- Land Purchase -Energy Co entering into the private agricultural land market for the use of non agricultural activities is a direct conflict of interest of current government policy.

#### **3. COMMUNITY IMPACT**

- Neeley's lane TWA – No consultation held at Cassilis or with surrounding Agricultural community.
- **Unethical Strategy -Being of a government nature the confidentiality under which the Neeleys Lane land purchase was made is highly deceptive and unethical, Energy Co was fully aware the acquisition of this land would be highly condemned by the community.**

#### 4. LACK OF COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

- No EIS information sessions have been held at Cassilis at all. Infact, EnergyCo has not consulted with the Cassilis community since 2022 – 12 months, despite planning to build a 800 bed TWA within 13km of the town.
- No information has been widely or accessibly disseminated to the Cassilis community regarding the proposed Neeley's lane TWA. For example; plans to direct 56 vehicles per hour from the TWA past the local primary school are buried in >1000 page EIS and associated technical papers.
- Grossly inadequate surveying of social and agricultural stakeholders with only 3 Cassilis community members surveyed, 7 farmers across the whole transmission area and limited documented consultation with Upper Hunter Shire Council. In my understanding this is in direct breach of SEARS requirements.
- **Energy Co has given no consideration to the demographic of the community to make a submission, many do not have computer access or computer literacy level high enough to make a submission, this excludes a majority of those effected from being heard. Face to face oral submissions would need to be recorded on behalf of community to give all a fair opportunity to have their opinions submitted.**
- The design of the EIS response is of a nature that is highly prohibitive for submissions and this can only be interpreted as a direct strategy by Energy co to exclude/lower the amount feedback it will receive; giving a statistically low community opposition to the project.

Sincerely, a dismayed citizen, business owner and tax payer