

# CWO REZ Transmission Operational Facility at Mudgee

## Emma Bowman - Objection

I object to the CWO REZ transmission Mudgee Maintenance facility.

**DISCLAIMER:** I, as a farmer working full time, have not had adequate time to read, comprehend and respond to the 679 pages contained in the modification report and associated documents so reserve the right to send additional information to the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure as it becomes available to me.

I also acknowledge that the Department, EnergyCo and ACERZ use the issues and concerns raised through submissions during the public exhibition period to further justify the project, and in this case, modification. Valuable feedback, local knowledge and significant issues are also generally ignored by the aforementioned authorities hence a lack of depth to my submission.

### Location of operational facility

During all stages of “community engagement” regarding the CWO REZ transmission project EnergyCo, and now ACERZ, has spruiked the benefits of local (Dunedoo, Coolah, Gulgong, Cassilis Elong Elong) employment both during construction and operation. Justification of the operational facility being located close to Mudgee are the current skilled workforce due to the mining industry, access to facilities ie. Mudgee airport, and the site being less exposed to natural disasters ie. flood and fire. Does this suggest that the site of the Main Energy Hub is not suitable, as stated by countless community members during early “consultation” sessions? How will local workers benefit from the CWO REZ transmission project operation if workers will be mainly from Mudgee – the modification report suggests 90%, leaving 4-5 jobs for the rest of the region?

As stated, the Mudgee Maintenance Facility is located “away from the project alignment”. It makes no sense to construct an operational depot so far from the project especially given EnergyCo owns ample land to accommodate such a facility – land that, although not compulsorily acquired, the sale of which was not negotiated in good faith.

**Mudgee doesn't even feature on the map of the transmission project!!**

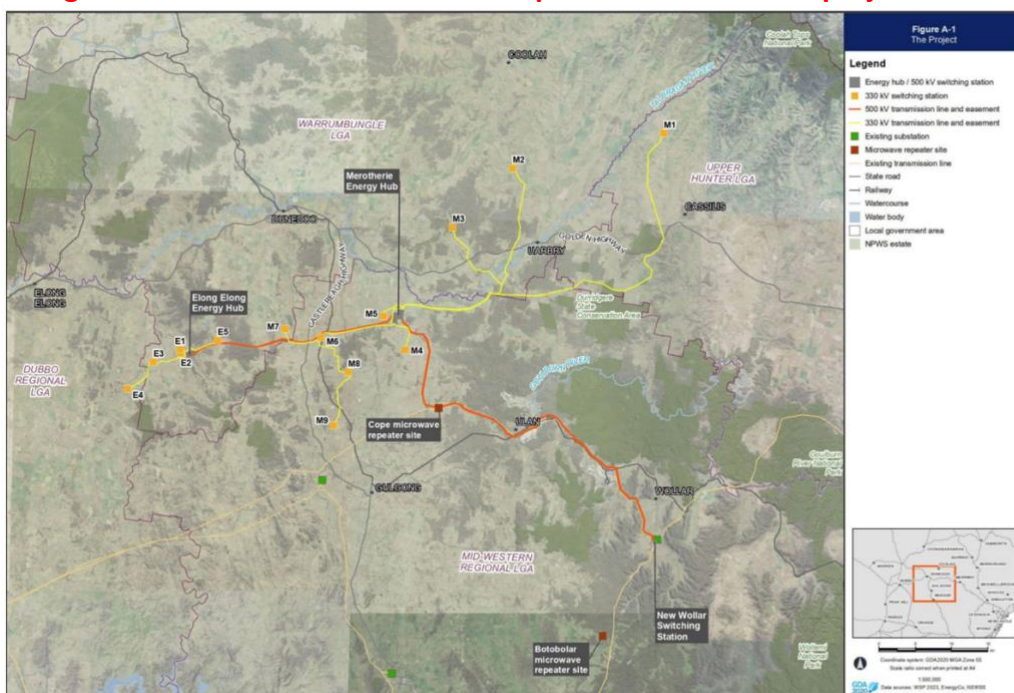
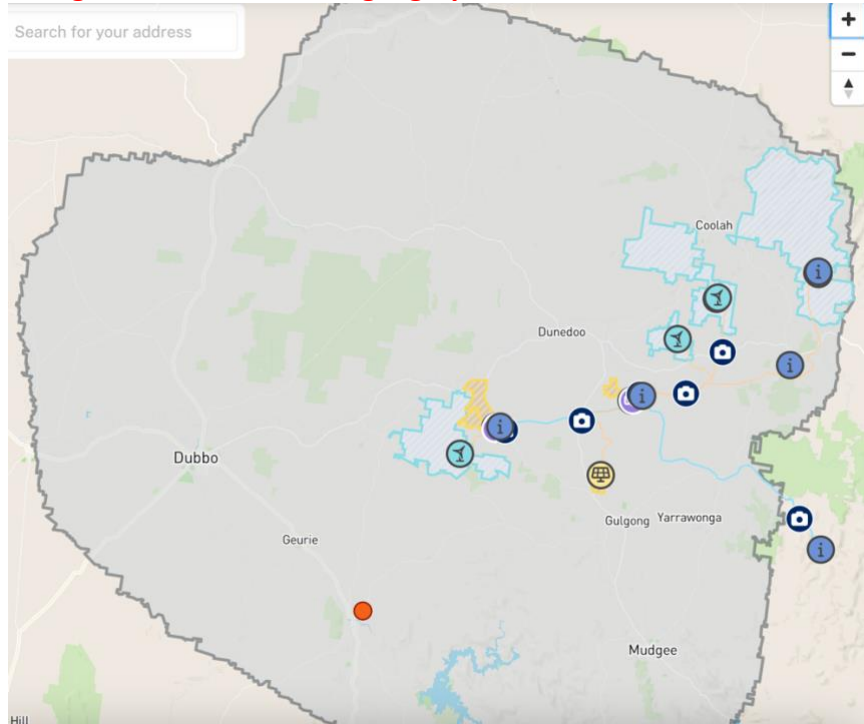


FIGURE 1-1 THE APPROVED PROJECT IN ITS REGIONAL CONTEXT (SOURCE: CENTRAL-WEST ORANA RENEWABLE ENERGY ZONE TRANSMISSION PROJECT AMENDMENT REPORT APPENDIX A: UPDATED PROJECT DESCRIPTION)

On page 20 of the Modification Report it states that “additionally, it is anticipated that the central location of Mudgee, in relation to the overall geographical spread of the Approved Project” – central to what?

What impact will the traffic travelling between the proposed Mudgee Maintenance Facility and Main Energy Hub have on local roads and major highways like the Castlereagh Highway? What route will the operational vehicles take between the proposed facility and Main Energy Hub? Has EnergyCo/ACERZ adequately assessed the impacts on the Castlereagh Highway, Golden Highway, Merotherie Road, Birriwa Bus Route South due to operational vehicles given it seems all will travel the same way at the same time?

### **Mudgee is not even in the geographical centre of the CWO REZ!**



### **Lack of Community Consultation**

**Please evidence how consultation of the broader CWO REZ, and transmission impacted communities was carried out regarding the proposed maintenance facility? Who did EnergyCo consult prior to the purchase of the land for the proposed maintenance facility? What was the cost of the aforementioned land parcel?**

A flyer drop and door knock of 7 nearby neighbours, and real estates of tenanted properties that are nearby neighbours is not “community consultation”. It is no wonder that “feedback received confirmed general awareness of the facility’s purpose, location, and expected impacts, with no substantive objections or requests for additional mitigation received to date” given no landowners or community members impacted by the CWO REZ transmission project were consulted regarding the modification.

### **Errors/ Inaccuracies/Contradictions**

1. Page 12 – “This site was chosen for its proximity to the **Methotherie** Energy Hub and transmission lines.”
2. Page 20 – “Additionally, it is anticipated that the central location of Mudgee, in relation to the overall geographical spread of the Approved Project would translate to a more productive

workforce, improve safety outcomes especially related to travelling and increase overall operational resilience.”

Page 95 – “Owing to the location of the proposed facility, away from the project alignment and close to a major highway,”

**Is the proposed facility central to the geographical spread of the project or located away from the project alignment? I don't believe it can be both!**

3. Page 21 – “The workforce would be expected to travel to and from Merotherie each day to complete their daily tasks and attend training amongst other operational maintenance tasks.”  
Page 21 & 22 – “The approved Merotherie site is in a remote location, and it is likely that factors such as travel distances and lack of amenities would discourage the skilled workforce required for infrastructure maintenance.”

**I don't believe the workforce would be expected to live full time at the Main Energy Hub – why can the main operational maintenance facility not be located at Merotherie, and the workforce not travel from their homes to the energy hub every day? The travel distances are the same – meeting at the main energy hub would just mean the workforce are not being paid, on the taxpayers dime, for the time they are travelling between Mudgee and Merotherie! That would also mean any operational workers living in the immediate local region (Dunedoo, Coolah etc.) would be advantaged due to less travel time.**

### **Additional Issues**

“The facility may also provide a front of house for the community and stakeholder relations program, providing easy access for members of the community to learn more about the CWO REZ Project.”

ACERREZ has recently opened a Community Information Centre in Mudgee – “away from the project alignment” – and EnergyCo's office is located in Dubbo – even further away from the approved project footprint. **Why have ACERREZ and/or EnergyCo not opened an office in one of the communities impacted by the CWO REZ transmission project? Is a lack of social license for the project an issue?**

EnergyCo owns the whole of the property “Round Camp”, and another block adjacent. **What will the remainder of the land owned by EnergyCo be used for following construction given the accommodation facility will be decommissioned and the Energy Hub only requires a portion of the land acquired?**