



APPENDIX

P

SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT





Proposed Segment Factory

Social Impact Assessment

Prepared for Snowy Hydro Limited
September 2019



Proposed Segment Factory

Social Impact Assessment

Report Number

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Client

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Executive Summary

Snowy Hydro Limited (Snowy Hydro) proposes to develop Snowy 2.0, a large-scale pumped hydro-electric storage and generation project which would increase hydro-electric capacity within the existing Snowy Mountains Hydro-electric Scheme (Snowy Scheme).

Separate applications are being submitted by Snowy Hydro for different phases of Snowy 2.0, including Exploratory Works for Snowy 2.0 (the Exploratory Works) and Snowy 2.0 Main Works (the Main Works). A separate application has also been submitted for a proposed factory that would manufacture precast concrete segments that would line the tunnels being excavated for Snowy 2.0 Main Works (Application Number SSI 10034). This Social Impact Assessment supports the EIS for the proposed segment factory.

The construction phase of the proposed segment factory would last about five months utilising a workforce of about 30 people, 80% of which are estimated to be sourced from the Snowy Monaro Regional local government area (LGA).

The factory would operate over a period of about 3.5 years utilising a workforce of about 125 people, 80% of which are estimated to be sourced from the Snowy Monaro Regional LGA.

The primary social area of influence (ie study area) for the proposed segment factory is Cooma township. The extended study area includes Adaminaby township. These communities have the potential to experience change during the establishment and operation of the proposed segment factory.

Consultation on Snowy 2.0, including consultation on the proposed segment factory, has demonstrated overwhelming support for the project. The support for Snowy 2.0 is largely two-fold; because of the benefits the project would deliver to the NEM, and the economic benefits generated in the local region. While the support for the proposed segment factory is intrinsically linked to the broader support for Snowy 2.0, consultation demonstrated support given perceived localised economic benefits.

Stakeholders perceived that the proposed segment factory would have a positive effect on employment and business opportunities, especially the possibility of increased traineeship opportunities and business expansion in the area. Notwithstanding this, some stakeholders expressed some for potential staffing competition with the proposed segment factory. The SIA community engagement activities also revealed worries throughout the community regarding a housing shortage and the inadequacy of existing housing. Other matters discussed across consultation activities include community values, service provision, access to recreation, and public safety.

The assessment of the social impacts considered a range of complex factors and often competing interests. The impact assessment is reflective of this and has:

- assessed some aspects of the proposed segment factory as both negative and positive as they relate to different groups of people;
- included negative impacts on local communities while documenting the benefits to the broader region;
- considered the impacts on vulnerable groups and provided management strategies to ensure that any existing disadvantages are not exacerbated; and
- considered each communities access to critical resources, such as housing and health care, and how this affects their resilience.

The key potential social impacts identified were:

- Way of life:
 - an existing underemployment issue in Cooma, particularly for youth and people aged over 50, would create opportunity for employment;
 - an existing shortage of housing would exacerbate access to housing for homeless and at risk of homelessness in Cooma;
- Access to, and use of infrastructure, services and facilities:
 - the current lack of safe crossings near schools on the Snowy Monaro Highway and Sharp Street may create a public safety issue, with concerns specifically for increased risk to vulnerable groups such as children, elderly and those with a disability;
 - health services are currently at capacity and there is an existing shortage of specialists in the Snowy Monaro region that an influx of workers, should it occur, may exacerbate; and
- Personal and property rights:
 - the existing underemployment provides an opportunity to improve the livelihood of the part-time and casual workforce due to the flow on employment generated in the retail, accommodation and food industry as a result of the segment factory.

Many of the negative impacts identified related to existing social issues such as lack of housing, homelessness, pressures on health services and underemployment. These are factors that would be outside of the responsibility of Snowy Hydro. As such the mitigation and management strategies have identified the responsible parties and recommended mitigation and management strategies along with potential delivery partners.

The community, while acknowledging the negative impacts, expressed overall support for the segment factory at Polo Flat and appreciated the benefits of job and business opportunities.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Snowy 2.0

Snowy Hydro Limited (Snowy Hydro) proposes to develop Snowy 2.0, a large-scale pumped hydro-electric storage and generation project which would increase hydro-electric capacity within the existing Snowy Mountains Hydro-electric Scheme (Snowy Scheme). Snowy 2.0 is the largest committed renewable energy project in Australia and is critical to underpinning system security and reliability as Australia transitions to a decarbonised economy. Snowy 2.0 will link the existing Tantangara and Talbingo reservoirs within the Snowy Scheme through a series of underground tunnels and a new hydro-electric power station will be built underground.

Snowy 2.0 has been declared to be State significant infrastructure (SSI) and critical State significant infrastructure (CSSI) by the NSW Minister for Planning under Part 5 of the NSW *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act). CSSI is infrastructure that is deemed by the NSW Minister for Planning and Public Spaces to be essential for the State for economic, environmental or social reasons. An application for CSSI must be accompanied by an environmental impact statement (EIS).

Separate applications are being submitted by Snowy Hydro for different phases of Snowy 2.0, including Exploratory Works for Snowy 2.0 (the Exploratory Works) and Snowy 2.0 Main Works (the Main Works).

The first phase of Snowy 2.0, the Exploratory Works (Application Number SSI 9208), includes an exploratory tunnel and portal and other exploratory and construction activities primarily in the Lobs Hole area of the Kosciuszko National Park (KNP). Exploratory Works has been assessed in a separate EIS and is subject to an approval issued by the former NSW Minister for Planning on 7 February 2019. Construction for Exploratory Works has already commenced.

The second phase of Snowy 2.0, the Snowy 2.0 Main Works (Application Number SSI 9687), covers the major construction elements of Snowy 2.0, including permanent infrastructure (such as the underground power station, power waterways, access tunnels, chambers and shafts), temporary construction infrastructure (such as construction adits, construction compounds and accommodation), management and storage of extracted rock material and establishing supporting infrastructure (such as road upgrades and extensions, water and sewage treatment infrastructure, and the provision of construction power). Snowy 2.0 Main Works also includes the operation of Snowy 2.0. The EIS for Snowy 2.0 Main Works was submitted to the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) in September 2019.

A separate application has also been submitted for a proposed factory that would manufacture precast concrete segments that would line the tunnels being excavated for Snowy 2.0 (Application Number SSI 10034). This Social Impact Assessment (SIA) supports the EIS for the proposed segment factory.

On 26 June 2019, Snowy Hydro referred the proposed segment factory (Reference Number 2019/8481) to the Commonwealth Minister for the Environment under the provisions of the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act). On 13 August 2019, the proposed segment factory was determined by the Acting Assistant Secretary Assessments and Waste Branch of the Commonwealth Department of the Environment and Energy (DEE), as delegate to the Minister, to be 'not a controlled action' and therefore does not require further assessment or approval under the EPBC Act.

1.2 The proposed segment factory

The tunnels for Snowy 2.0, including the exploratory tunnel for Exploratory Works and underground tunnels linking Tantangara and Talbingo reservoirs for the Main Works, would be excavated, for the most part, using tunnel boring machines (TBMs) and would be lined using precast concrete segments. These segments are proposed to be manufactured at the proposed segment factory to be located on the south-eastern side of Polo Flat (the site), which is an industrial area located to the east of Cooma.

The proposed segment factory would contain a building for the casting and curing of the segments, uncovered storage areas for raw materials and segments, vehicle parking areas and associated offices and workshops.

Main inputs for the segments include aggregate, sand, cement and rebar steel. Primary outputs include the segments which would be transported to the TBM launch sites for Exploratory Works and Main Works within KNP.

The construction phase of the proposed segment factory would last about five months utilising a workforce of about 30 people. Construction would take place six days a week (from Monday to Saturday) and for 10 hours per day.

The factory would operate over a period of about 3.5 years utilising a workforce of about 125 people. It would be operational 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The proposed segment factory would be constructed and operated by Future Generation Joint Venture (FGJV) which has been contracted by Snowy Hydro to construct Snowy 2.0.

At the completion of the construction of Snowy 2.0, the proposed segment factory would be decommissioned.

Further details of the proposed segment factory are provided in Chapter 2 of this report.

1.3 Location of the site

The site of the proposed segment factory is located on the south-eastern side of Polo Flat, predominantly on the southern part of the land owned by Snowy Hydro. The site is located to the east of Polo Flat Road and to the north of Carlaminda Road.

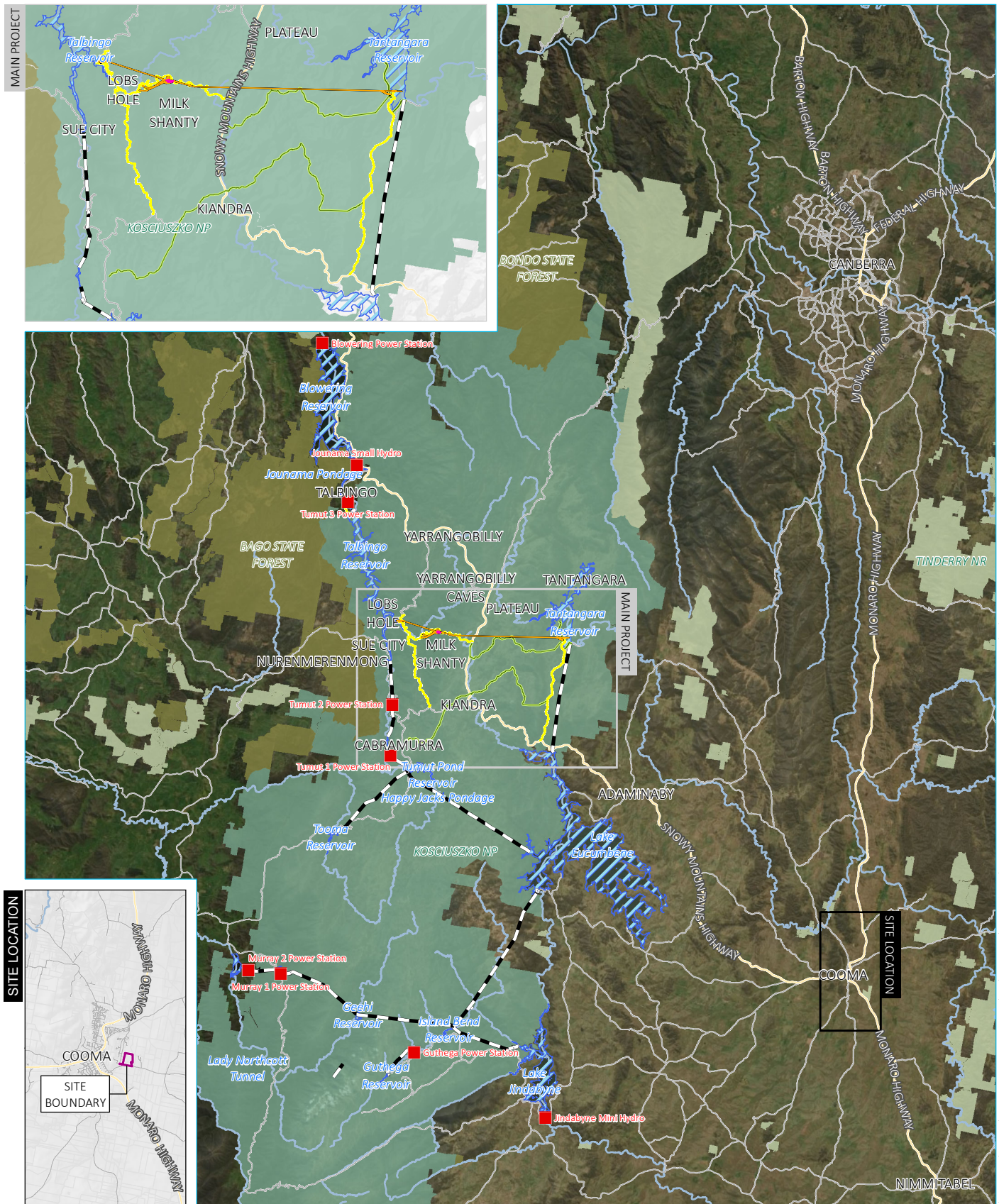
Figure 1.1 shows the location of the site in a regional context and Figure 1.2 shows the site in its local context.

The site contains the following land parcels:

- southern part of Lot 14 in Deposited Plan (DP) 250029 – also known as 9 Polo Flat Road, Polo Flat;
- Lot 3 in DP 238762 – also known as 33 Carlaminda Road, Polo Flat; and
- an unmade road corridor, directly south of the aforementioned lots.

Except for a few buildings located on the southern part of Lot 3 in DP 238762, the site is vacant and dominated by grassland. A third order watercourse flows in a north-westerly direction through the middle of the site.

Lot 14 in DP 250029 is a large parcel of land which contains a private airfield predominantly located in the middle and northern part of the land. This airfield was originally established in 1921 and further developed in the late 1950s and 1960s to service the Snowy Scheme. It became the base for the Snowy Mountains Hydro-electric Authority's (the predecessor to Snowy Hydro) flying unit and aircraft. The land was sold by Snowy Hydro in 1998 where it continued use as a private airfield. Snowy Hydro purchased the land again in early 2019.



Source: EMM (2019); FGJV (2019); Snowy Hydro (2019); DFSI (2017); GA (2011); LPMA (2011)

0 10 20 km
GDA 1994 MGA Zone 55



KEY

- Site boundary
- Rail line
- Main road
- Local road or track
- Watercourse
- Cadastral boundary
- NPWS reserve

Location of site in local context

The site is surrounded by industrial development to the west and predominantly rural land to the south and east. To the north of the site is the remainder of Lot 14 in DP 250029 which contains the private airfield, and other industrial development. Snowy Hydro's private airfield contains a main north-south aligned runway, hangers and offices. It also contains an above ground fuel tank for the refuelling of planes and helicopters.

Lot 3 in DP 238762 contains a communications tower which ceased use (ie transmission) in August 2019.

There is an isolated industrial operation containing a residence located about 150 metres (m) to the south-east of the site, and an abattoir located about 350 m to the east.

The nearest residence is a rural residence located about 450 m to the south-south-east of the site. The nearest residences within Cooma are located about 1 km to the west of the site.

1.4 Proponent

Snowy Hydro is the proponent for the proposed segment factory. Snowy Hydro is an integrated energy business – generating energy, providing price risk management products for wholesale customers and delivering energy to homes and businesses. Snowy Hydro is the fourth largest energy retailer in the NEM and is Australia's leading provider of peak, renewable energy.

As previously stated, the proposed segment factory would be constructed and operated by FGJV which has been contracted by Snowy Hydro to construct Snowy 2.0.

1.5 Purpose of this report

This social impact assessment (SIA) report supports the EIS for the proposed segment factory. It documents the assessment methods and results, the initiatives built into the project design to avoid and minimise associated impacts, to the local community, and the mitigation and management measures proposed to address any residual impacts not able to be avoided.

The specific objectives of this assessment are to:

- describe the existing social conditions and demographic profile;
- identify and assess the extent and nature of potential social risks;
- evaluate the significance of the social impacts, positive and negative arising from the project;
- provide mitigation measures to reduce the negative social impacts and enhancement measures for significant positive impacts; and
- develop a monitoring and management framework.

1.6 Assessment guidelines and requirements

This social impact assessment (SIA) report has been prepared in accordance with the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs), issued by the DPIE on 31 July 2019. The SEARS states:

Social: an assessment of the social impacts of the project on the locality, including the demand for any infrastructure or services in Cooma.

This SIA addresses the social impacts and benefits of the proposed segment factory at Polo Flat to the local region, and to the State. It considers whether the segment factory increases the demand for community infrastructure and services.

To inform preparation of the SEARs, the DPIE invited relevant government agencies to advise on matters to be addressed in the EIS. These matters were considered by the Secretary for DPIE when preparing the SEARs.

This SIA has been prepared in accordance with the *Social impact assessment guideline: For State significant mining, petroleum production and extractive industry development* (DPE, 2017).

2 Project description

2.1 Introduction

It is proposed to construct and operate a factory on the site to supply precast concrete segments that would line the tunnels for Snowy 2.0.

The construction phase of the proposed segment factory would last about five months utilising a workforce of about 30 people. The operational phase would last about 3.5 years utilising a workforce of about 125 people.

The proposed segment factory would be decommissioned at the completion of operations.

2.2 Construction

2.2.1 Main activities

The following main activities would be undertaken for the construction of the proposed segment factory:

- demolition and removal of buildings and decommissioned telecommunications tower on the southern part of site;
- clearing, removal of topsoil and vegetation (topsoil excavated would be stockpiled on site for later use if deemed suitable);
- undertaking earthworks to establish level surfaces;
- establishment of primary access road;
- installation of site services (power, water and communications);
- establishment of site surfaces (ie concrete, asphalt and cement soil); and
- construction of site facilities and buildings, including precast building, concrete batching plant (CBP), workshops, offices, parking areas, storage areas and associated facilities.

2.2.2 Earthworks

Excavation will be carried out at the site to provide level surfaces, establish the access road and create the required trenches for drainage.

Where possible excavated material would be reused on site for filling and compaction (including benching areas of the site where required). Where there is a deficit of excavated material, additional material would be sourced from local quarries.

2.2.3 Traffic movements

Construction vehicle movements will comprise construction worker's light vehicles and heavy vehicles transporting equipment, building and construction materials, waste, and fill material if required.

2.2.4 Construction timeframe and hours

The construction phase of the proposed segment factory would last about five months (estimated to commence in March 2020 subject to obtaining the required approvals). Construction would be undertaken from Monday to Saturday for 10 hours per day. Access to the site would generally start at 6 am for pre-starts and toolbox talks, and construction would commence at 7 am.

2.2.5 Workforce

A workforce of about 30 people would be required to construct the proposed segment factory.

2.3 Operations

2.3.1 General

The segments would be produced by casting concrete (made in the CBP) in reusable steel moulds which would then be cured in a chamber. Following curing, the segments would be temporarily stored onsite before being transported to the TBM launch sites within KNP.

The casting and curing would be undertaken in the precast building. Storage of the segments would predominantly be undertaken in uncovered storage areas.

Main inputs for the segments include aggregate, sand, cement, water and steel rebar.

Approximately 130,500 segments would be manufactured over the operational period.

2.3.2 Site layout

The layout of the proposed segment factory is shown in Figure 2.1. Details of the site layout are provided below.

i General layout

The CBP and precast building (which contains a casting room and curing chamber) would be located at the southern end of the site. Open storage areas would be located predominantly to the north of the building on the northern part of the site.

Site offices and workshops would be located in the south-western corner of the site.

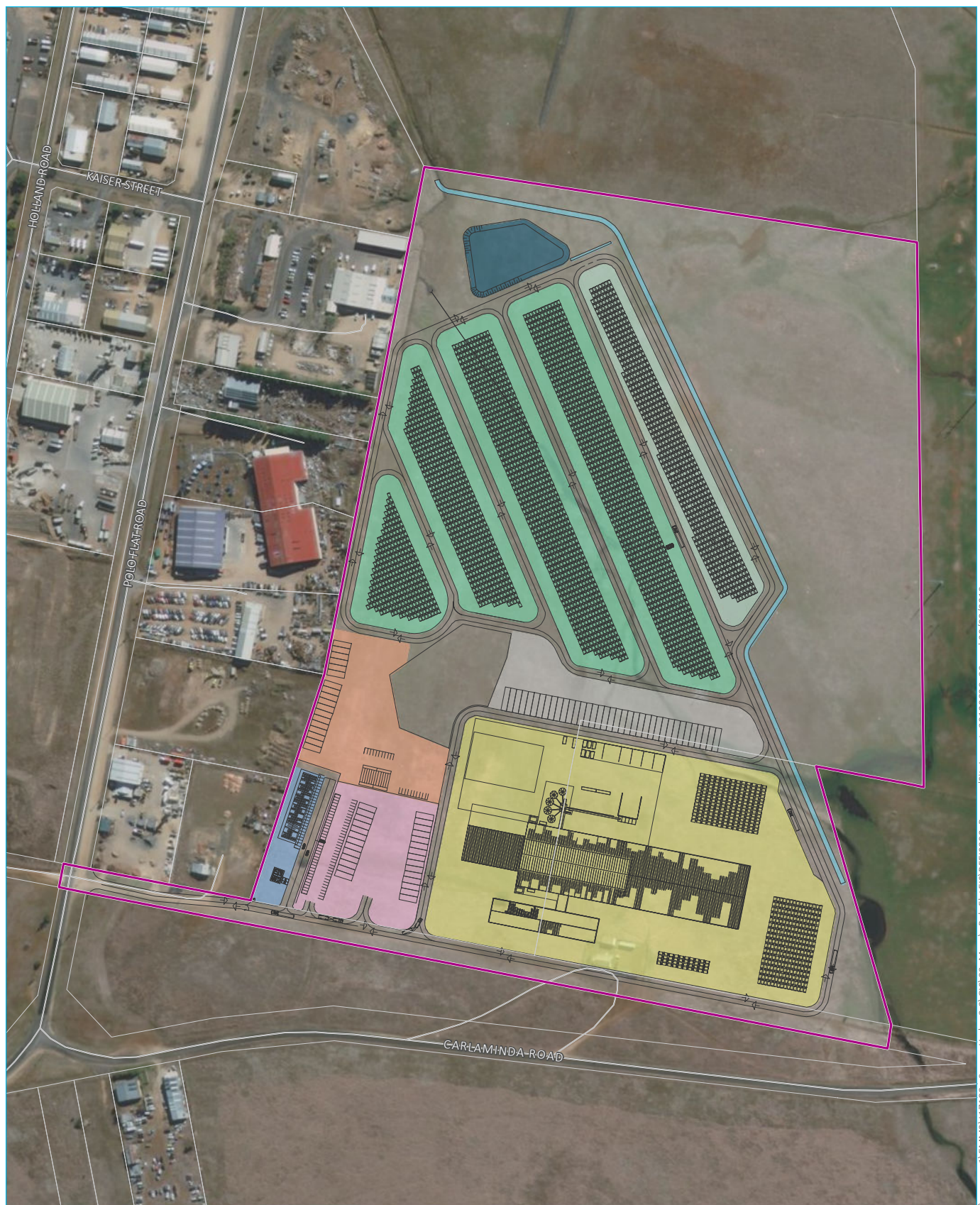
ii Ingress and egress

Vehicle ingress and egress to the site would be provided on a new access road which would connect to Polo Flat Road. The access road would be constructed on an existing informal service road located in the unmade road corridor immediately north of Carlaminda Road.

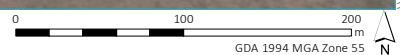
iii Raw materials storage

Cement silos, and aggregate and sand storage areas for the CBP would be located adjacent to the CBP. Storage would be sized to hold approximately three days production.

Other raw materials include steel rebar and concrete admixtures which would be stored in, or adjacent to, the precast building.



Source: EMM (2019); FGJV (2019); Snowy Hydro (2019); DFSI (2017); ESRI (2019); GA (2011); LPMA (2011)



KEY

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| Site boundary | Precast yard, concrete plant, aggregates area, precast warehouse, segment storage | Trailer parking |
| Local road or track | Bus stop and parking | Storage area |
| Cadastral boundary | Offices, guard house and first aid | Emergency storage area |
| Indicative site layout | Mechanical and plant workshop with parking | Detention basin |
| | | Drainage |

Proposed layout

Snowy 2.0
Social Impact Assessment
Proposed Segment Factory
Figure 2.1



iv Parking

Two large parking areas are proposed in the south-western corner of the site, and to the north of the precast building. Parking in the south western area would be used for light vehicles, trucks and buses. Parking to the north of the precast building would be used for trucks.

v Drainage

A diversion drain would be constructed around the eastern perimeter of the site to divert water from the third order watercourse. The drain diversion would be constructed to match the general width and depth of the existing watercourse.

A detention basin would be provided to the north of the site to collect surface flows. Overflows from the detention basin would be directed into the diversion drain.

2.3.3 Utility connections

The proposed segment factory would be connected to utility mains, including communications, electricity, water, wastewater and gas.

2.3.4 Segment inputs

As previously stated, main inputs for the precast concrete segments include aggregate, sand, cement and steel rebar. These main inputs would likely be sourced from locations in proximity to site and/or from quarries near Canberra.

In addition to these main inputs, several accessories are also required to produce the segments, such as reinforcement cages, steel fibres, gaskets and inserts. These inputs would likely be sourced locally or from Canberra.

2.3.5 Segment transport

Following casting, curing and storage, the segments would be transported to the TBM launch sites within KNP.

2.3.6 Traffic movements

Operational vehicle movements will comprise light vehicles (worker's vehicles and service vehicles) and heavy vehicles required for the transportation of the main inputs for the segments and for the transportation of the segments from the site to the TBM launch sites within KNP.

2.3.7 Staff and manpower

A workforce of about 125 people would be required to operate the proposed precast segment factory. As many local workers as possible would be sourced from the Snowy Mountains Regional LGA and surrounding localities.

2.3.8 Hours of operation

It is proposed to operate the proposed segment factory 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It is estimated that the factory would operate for a period of about 3.5 years.

2.4 Decommissioning

As previously stated, the proposed segment factory would be decommissioned at the completion of construction of Snowy 2.0 which would include removal of all plant and equipment. Snowy Hydro would retain the main structures such as the precast building, workshops and offices and seek to use these for an alternative industrial use.

It is envisaged that Snowy Hydro would submit a separate application for approval for an alternative use of the site prior to the decommissioning phase of the project.

3 Methodology

This SIA was prepared in accordance with DPIE's *Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements*:

- **Social:** an assessment of the social impacts of the project on the locality, including the demand for any infrastructure or services in Cooma.

In addition, during the scoping phase EMM liaised with Dr Richard Parson from the DPIE who advised that the SIA adopt the approach provided in the *Social impact assessment guideline: For State significant mining, petroleum production and extractive industry development, September* (SIA Guideline) 2017.

The assessment of social impacts was conducted using the SIA Guideline (DPE, 2017) definition of social impacts which refers to potential changes to people's:

- **way of life:** how people live, work, play and interact;
- **community:** its composition, cohesion, character, how it operates and sense of place;
- **access to and use of infrastructure, services and facilities:** provided by all levels of government, not-for-profit organisations, or volunteers;
- **culture:** shared beliefs, customs, values and stories, and connection to land, places and buildings;
- **health and well-being:** physical and mental health;
- **surroundings:** access to and use of ecosystem, public safety and security, access to and use of natural and built environment, aesthetic value and/or amenity;
- **person and property rights:** economic livelihoods, personal disadvantage or civil liberties;
- **decision-making systems:** extent community can have a say in decisions that affect their lives, access to complaint, remedy and grievance mechanisms; and
- **fears and aspirations:** combination of above, or about future of their community.

3.1 Scoping

The identification of the area of social influence was determined by EMM's SIA National Technical Leader with consideration of results from the SIA findings from the Exploratory Works and preliminary findings of the Main Works and the scale of the project. Consideration was given to:

- potentially affected people and the area of social influence, therefore the geographic location/s most likely to experience impacts, both negative and positive; and
- the level of investigation each identified potential impacts requires.

3.2 Literature review

Desktop review of relevant government strategies and plans and academic research, provided in the References section and throughout the report, that inform the baseline study and the impact assessment.

3.3 Social baseline

A study of the existing social conditions in the study area was conducted to create a baseline against which potential social impacts can be identified and analysed. The social baseline contributes to an understanding of the pre-existing community strengths and vulnerabilities. A range of primary and secondary data sources were used to investigate:

- the demographic profile of the study area, including population statistics and patterns, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander populations, and vulnerable groups;
- community culture and values, including Aboriginal and European histories, and modern histories;
- existing social infrastructure, focusing on education services, health services, emergency services, transport infrastructure and community services;
- workforce data that considers existing employment and the proposed construction and operational workforces;
- housing and accommodation, including tenure types and structures, housing repayments, temporary accommodation, and rental market trends; and
- community health and wellbeing.

A summary of the social baseline is presented in Section 6 and the full baseline study is provided in Annexure D.

3.4 Impact assessment

Social impacts were identified through an assessment of the predicted and potential changes to the social conditions as a consequence of the project against the baseline. An assessment of the community strengths, vulnerabilities, issues and opportunities was conducted to identify vulnerabilities and understand the community's capacity to cope with potential social impacts.

3.4.1 Social impact field study

The SIA conducted a range of field study activities with key stakeholders and community members to identify the potential social impacts that informed the social risk assessment:

- in-depth interviews with impacted stakeholders identified in the SIA of Snowy 2.0 Main Works;
- telephone interviews for impacted stakeholders identified in the SIA of Snowy 2.0 Main Works unable to attend in person;
- two community workshops – one morning workshop and one evening workshop to maximise opportunities for participation;
- community survey (on-line); and
- three business consultation sessions conducted by the Snowy 2.0 project team.

A summary of the findings is provided in Section 5.

3.4.2 Social risk assessment

A social impact workshop was conducted to assess impacts using a social risk framework shown in Table 3.1. Using this consequence and likelihood framework allows the assessment of the level of significance of a social impact as low, moderate, high or extreme based on a combination of likelihood and consequence. Both negative and positive impacts have been assessed.

Table 3.1 Social risk matrix

LIKELIHOOD	CONSEQUENCES				
	Minimal	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
Almost certain					
Likely					
Possible					
Unlikely					
Rare					
Social Risk Rating					
	Low	Moderate	High	Extreme	

Source: Department of Planning and Environment. 2017. New South Wales Social Impact Assessment Guideline for State significant mining, petroleum production and extractive industry development.

The social risk assessment process includes an assessment of consequences and likelihood:

1. Determining the consequence based on the definitions in Table 3.2 using a worst case but reasonable scenario:

Table 3.2 Consequence category definitions

Category	Definition
Catastrophic	Long-term, high magnitude and far reaching social impacts. Positive social impacts will provide enormous value both locally and regionally. Society has no capacity to cope with potentially catastrophic negative social impacts.
Major	Long-term and potentially far reaching social impacts. Positive social impacts will provide substantial value to society. Society has limited capacity to adapt and cope with the negative social impacts.
Moderate	Medium-term social impacts. Positive social impacts can be enhanced to provide substantial value to society. Society has the capacity to adapt and cope with the negative social impacts.
Minor	Short-term and mostly local social impacts. Positive social impacts provide some value to society. Negative social impacts can be easily adapted to by society.
Minimal	Local and small-scale social impacts. These social impacts provide limited value or costs to society. These social impacts may require future consideration if, for example, there is a change to the Project design.

2. Determining the likelihood of occurrence using the definitions outlined in Table 3.3 using a worst case but reasonable scenario:

Table 3.3 **Likelihood category definitions**

Category	Definition
Almost certain	Expected to occur regularly. Expected to occur in 90% to 100% of circumstances.
Likely	Expected to occur at some time. Expected to occur in 70% to 89% of circumstances.
Possible	Might occur at some time. Will occur in 31- 69% of circumstances.
Unlikely	Unusual or unexpected occurrence. Might occur in 11% to 30% of circumstances.
Rare	Could happen, but is not expected to occur. Could occur in 0-10% of circumstances.

3.5 Impact mitigation and benefit enhancement

Impact mitigation and benefit enhancements were informed by workshops conducted during the social impact field study (Section 3.4.1) with service providers, key stakeholders and residents and using tried and proven mitigation and enhancement strategies.

3.6 SIA, mitigation and management

The SIA is a report documenting the SIA process, baseline study, outcomes from field study, and the social risk assessment. A monitoring and management framework proposes the mitigation and enhancement strategies for the identified social impacts.

4 Political and planning context

This section provides a summary of the relevant plans and strategies across the SMRC area that inform the social risk assessment and mitigation and management strategies.

4.1 Snowy Monaro Regional Council

The Snowy Monaro Regional LGA located in the Snowy Mountains and Monaro regions of NSW. The Snowy Monaro Regional Council (SMRC) was formed on 12 May 2016 through a merger of Bombala, Cooma-Monaro, and Snowy River Councils (SMRC, 2019). The council is supported by two separate funds established by the NSW government to support the establishment of new councils and fund community infrastructure and services:

- New Council Implementation Fund; the
- Stronger Communities Fund Major Projects Program.

The first Council elections for SMRC were held on 9 September 2017 with 11 Councillors to elect, compared to the 23 Councillors for the former Councils. Council's vision is to be "a trusted community partner", and describes their main values as "solutionary, together, accountable, innovative, and caring". Council's head office is in Cooma (SMRC, 2019).

The four core economic drivers of the SMRC are agriculture, timber, tourism and water. As such, many of their planning and economic policies and priorities focus on supporting infrastructure associated with these sectors (SMRC, 2019).

SMRC utilises an Integrated Planning and Reporting (IPR) framework in their planning processes. This framework aims to "improve the sustainability of local communities by encouraging councils, residents and state agencies to work together to achieve the objectives set out within these long-term plans" (SMRC, 2019). It includes the integration of a Community Strategic Plan (informed by statements from community members), Delivery Program, and Operational Plan, in addition to Council's Resourcing Strategies (Long Term Financial Plan, Workforce Plan, and Asset Management Plan). While the Community Strategic Plan presents a broad strategic roadmap until 2040, the Delivery Program presents an outline for Council's actions for three years, with the required development of an annual Operational Plan prior to the start of each consecutive year of a Delivery Program. Strengthened collaboration between community, business, and government is the primary emphasis in the Council's planning context (SMRC, 2018).

Both SMRC and the NSW Government administer land use control and planning within the LGA. Land use within SMRC is principally guided by the *Snowy River Local Environmental Plan 2013*.

Sections 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4 summarise key planning documents for the SMRC.

4.2 Snowy Monaro Regional Economic Development Strategy 2018 – 2022

The Snowy Monaro Regional Plan (regional plan) identifies the Polo Flat Industrial Precinct Improvements as priority infrastructure in support of the Snowy 2.0 construction. The regional plan recognises the importance of sourcing local workers, contractors and sub-contractors to maximise the benefits to the local economy. The opportunities identified include:

- review how to make the most of the opportunities associated with Snowy 2.0;
- address “first mover” disadvantages in meeting enabling infrastructure costs;
- secure reliable, high capacity digital and mobile connections; and
- collaborate with industry, high schools, Country Universities Centre and Cooma TAFE to match training courses to industry needs.

4.3 State-wide Destination Management Plan, Destination NSW, 2019

The State-wide Destination Management Plan identifies 10 strategic focuses to support NSW 2030 Visitor Economy Goal of \$55 billion overnight visitor expenditure and \$25 billion overnight regional expenditure.

Within the plan, the Snowy Mountains is identified as a ‘hero’ destination which provides a world class, iconic and unique visitor experience. The Snowy Mountains is considered to have 13 offerings, five of which are based around natural recreation:

- Nature and Adventure;
- Skiing and Snowy Activities;
- Walking & Hiking;
- Aquatic Activities; and
- Specialist Interest Activities.

The Snowy Scheme is acknowledged as an important aspect of the regions history and heritage and will continue to play a role in local tourism.

4.4 Snowy Monaro Regional Planning and Land Use Discussion Paper, Snowy Monaro Regional Council, 2019

The discussion paper aims to re-evaluate planning issues, opportunities and challenges, and future land use needs since the amalgamation of Bombala, Cooma-Monaro and Snowy River councils.

Snowy 2.0 is identified as a major project in the region which will create unique planning pressures. These pressures include demand for large amounts of temporary worker housing, demand for industrial land in relation to construction, and infrastructure to move large machinery and materials. The discussion paper anticipates that Adaminaby will experience the greatest influx of workers due to its proximity to the site for the Snowy 2.0 Main Works, and over the coming decades experience significant population growth. The discussion paper does acknowledge that the number of expected workers for the entire Snowy 2.0 project, is currently unknown.

4.5 Skills Audit Report, Regional Development Australia: Southern Inland, 2018

The Skills Audit Report summarises research undertaken by Regional Development Australia. The aim of the report is to identify perceived skill shortages within industry and business in the Southern Inland area of NSW. The findings of the audit are used to support targeted education and skills training programs to assist with regional development.

The study concluded there was an overall skills shortage in the Southern Inland region. Skills shortages were associated with the remoteness of the area, a lack of technical skills and a lack of experience amongst candidates.

The Snowy Monaro area reportedly had the greatest skills shortage of the seven areas investigated with a skill shortage of 81 per cent, see Figure 4.1. It was reported that location, lack of technical knowledge amongst candidates and a shortage of accommodation in the local area were identified as the top reasons for skill shortages in the Snowy Monaro Regional LGA.

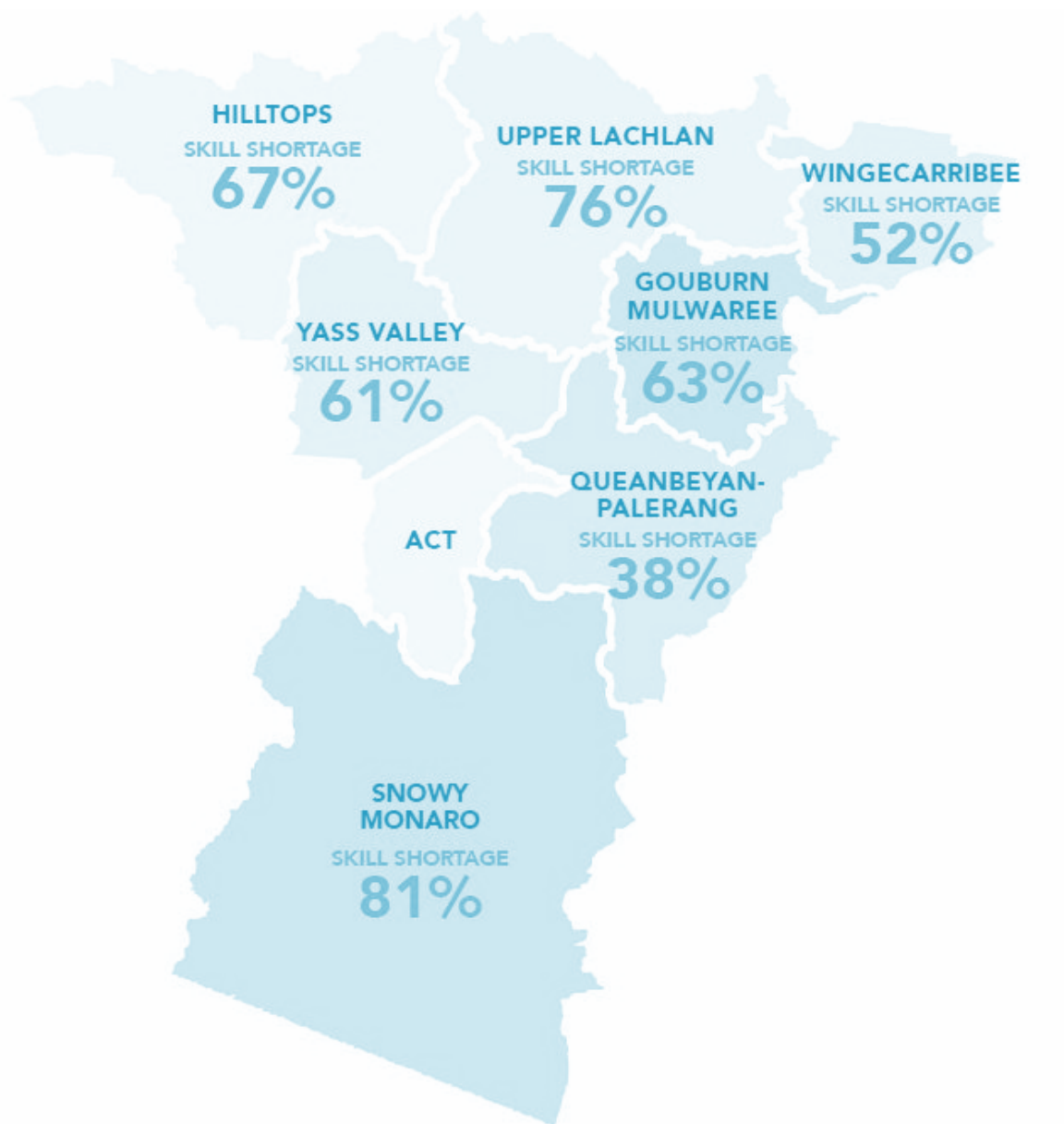


Figure 4.1 Skills demands in the Southern Inland Region

5 SIA field study

Consultation on Snowy 2.0, including consultation on the proposed segment factory, has demonstrated overwhelming support for the project. The support for Snowy 2.0 is largely two-fold; because of the benefits the project would deliver to the NEM, and the economic benefits generated in the local region. While the support for the proposed segment factory is intrinsically linked to the broader support for Snowy 2.0, consultation demonstrated support given perceived localised economic benefits.

Stakeholders perceived that the proposed segment factory would have a positive effect on employment and business opportunities, especially the possibility of increased traineeship opportunities and business expansion in the area. Notwithstanding this, some stakeholders expressed potential staffing competition with the proposed segment factory. The SIA community engagement activities also revealed worries throughout the community regarding a housing shortage and the inadequacy of existing housing. Other matters discussed across consultation activities include community values, service provision, access to recreation, and public safety.

The number of participants involved in the SIA community engagement totalled 131 across all workshops, plus 48 completed surveys, and discussion with businesses along Sharp Street. Some participants may have participated in more than one workshop, as well as completed the survey.

Across all the data, qualitative and quantitative, matters relating to traffic were the main issues raised throughout all engagement platforms. Participants consistently noted their concern for existing road safety and the ways in which the proposed segment factory may affect conditions and further exacerbate existing risk hazards. Reductions in speed limits was among the most frequent request for addressing traffic concerns. In addition, concerns were raised in regard to increased highway traffic and the safe movement of agricultural stock.

The remainder of this chapter provides the findings from each of the SIA community engagement activities.

5.1 Information sheet

An information sheet (Annexure A) was prepared that provided a project overview, map of the project site, outlined the assessment process and the requirements of the SIA. The information sheet also provided links to the scoping report on the DPIE website and the on-line survey (Section 5.3).

There were 168 Information sheets distributed to businesses and residents along Polo Flat Road, Monaro Highway, Sharp Street and Snowy Mountains Highway. Businesses along Sharp Street were delivered information sheets in person.

5.2 Social impact workshops

Two community workshops (see Table 5.1) were held on 23 July 2019 and 24 July 2019 as part of the SIA field study. These workshops were held to consult with residents, service providers, local businesses and community organisations regarding the current status of the project, the role of SIA, and the potential social impacts associated with the proposed segment factory. The workshops began with an overview of the project, followed by details of the assessment process (including information pertaining to SIA specifically), and included a discussion of the community's values, strengths, and vulnerabilities, as well as the opportunities and impacts related to the proposed project.

Table 5.1 Community workshops

Location	Date	Time	Venue	Participants
Cooma	23 July 2019	5:30 pm to 7:30 pm	Cooma Ex-Services Club	6
Cooma	24 July 2019	9:30 am to 11:30 am	Cooma Ex-Services Club	11

Participation in the workshops was promoted through phone and email invitations. There were six attendees at the first workshop and 11 at the second. The attendees for both workshops comprised a diverse range of stakeholders involved with the study area. Participants included:

- education representatives;
- real estate and local business representatives;
- Cooma Chamber of Commerce representatives;
- tourist accommodation representatives;
- NSW Rural Fire Services representatives;
- charity organisation representatives;
- a state agency representative; and
- residents of the study area.

Both workshops featured discussion of similar matters relating to the community and the proposed segment factory. A summary of the workshop results is presented in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2 Summary of social impact workshops

Matters	Details
Local business and industry	Large businesses may not remain viable in rural towns. Community members are weary of the boom and bust economy associated with resources. This project may build a strong pathway into industry. There is potential for the growth of existing and new businesses associated with the project and additional migration of its workforce to the local area.

Table 5.2 **Summary of social impact workshops**

Matters	Details
Community health and wellbeing	Community is generally viewed as being safe, as is evidenced by their low crime rate. Mental health, particularly youth mental health, is vulnerable.
Community values	There is a valued sense of community with members describing their community as “friendly”, “connected”, “historical”, “purposeful”, “inclusive”, and “supportive”. The variable seasons, climate, and natural environment of the area are central to community identity, livelihood activities, and community assets. Rural living identity. Non-resident visitors do not possess local knowledge and values, there are worries of a change of Comma’s identity.
Employment	There are issues of underemployment. Opportunities for the training of locals and youth (currently a lack of training and apprenticeships for various trades). Staff competition between the project and local businesses. Lack of small trades services and skilled workers, especially electricians and plumbers. The proposed project could create more jobs.
Housing and accommodation	There are issues of overcrowding during the snow season when tourists are visiting. Housing supply and demand are not aligned. The type of housing and standard of housing is different from expectations. The general cost of living is regarded as affordable, but it is increasing.
Demographics	Young people leaving the community to pursue education, training, employment, and lifestyle opportunities that are not available locally. The population of students could increase with migration to the area for work (potentially more school funding).
Social infrastructure	Aged services and disability services are very good. The Country University Centre may increase the potential for people to pursue tertiary education without having to leave the community, especially with diminishing TAFE offerings. Emergency and specialist health services are insufficient, with travel to Canberra often necessary for various specialist health services. Lack of recreation and sporting services above the age of 12. Childcare services are already at capacity or are nearly at capacity.
Traffic	Traffic and road safety are primary concerns of community members, especially adequate crossing infrastructure in front of schools and for aged persons/persons with a disability. Road safety concerns are increased during the holiday season.

These workshops highlighted several key social themes that characterise the local community. The strongest themes in workshop discussions include:

- concerns about existing and future road safety measures (including worries about the impacts of heavy vehicle use and increased traffic in school areas, insufficient pedestrian crossing infrastructure, and the potential impacts on roads);
- there is an issue with youth retention in the community (youth are leaving for larger city centres);
- while aged and disability services are very good, other social infrastructure is insufficient or at risk of becoming insufficient (particularly specialist medical services, emergency services, mental health services, and childcare services);
- the community is interested in expanding industry in the area, and the associated potential economic and employment benefits;
- housing availability, standards, and affordability are decreasing, while persons at risk of socioeconomic disadvantage are increasing;
- there is a lack of a skilled workforce for small trade services (especially electrotechnology and plumbing) that may be exacerbated by employment competition by the project and reductions in training programs;
- the natural environment is an integral part of the community's identity and livelihood activities; and
- the community distinguishes themselves from metropolitan areas (regarded as a collective as opposed to individuals, rural versus urban identity).

Data from these workshops are discussed in further detail in subsequent sections and inform the identified social impacts in Section 8.

5.3 Online survey

An on-line survey (Annexure B) was administered to provide community input to the identification of social impacts as a consequence of the proposed segment factory. The survey provided both quantitative and qualitative data on the community's views about the project. It included multiple choice answers as well as opportunities to provide additional comments. Identified community stakeholders were informed of the online survey through email and phone invitation.

The survey was also advertised on Snowy Hydro's website and distributed in print form at the Polo Flat Segment Factory Consultation presentation, and two subsequent community consultation sessions at Shannons Flat and Adaminaby facilitated by Snowy Hydro and FGJV. Businesses were also informed of the online survey during the interviews of local businesses.

The survey had 48 respondents, 50% male, 48% female and 2% identified as other. There was a reasonable representation of respondents from different age groups except those under the age of 25 (Figure 5.1).

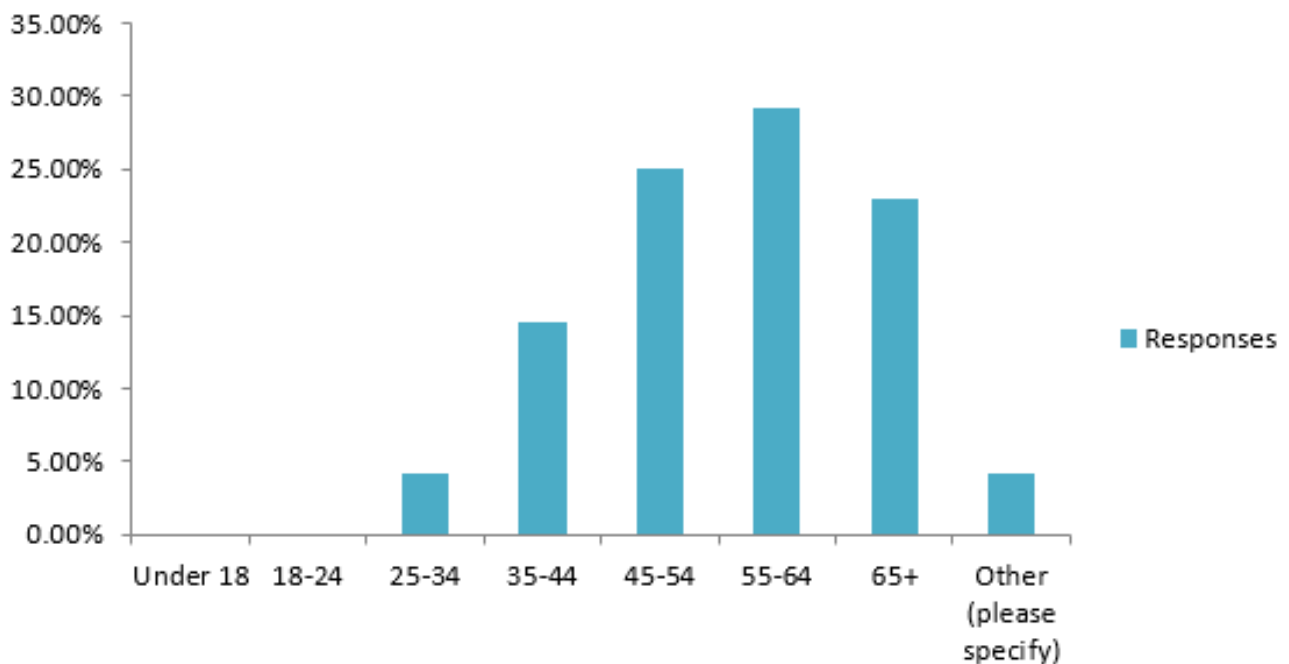


Figure 5.1 Age profile of respondents

All those who responded had existing knowledge of Snowy Hydro with 87% having had interactions with Snowy Hydro Limited on a variety of issues including:

“The speed limit on Polo Flat Road. It HAS to be reduced.”

“Stock crossing over Snowy Mountains Highway.”

“60 km speed limit Polo Flat Road.”

“Potential loss of staff.”

“...issues about design for road safety, EDUCATION of local and visitor drivers in sharing the road with many semi-trailers, how to pass safely these trucks!”

“Employment, “Dutch Disease”, housing, accommodation, road usage, services to camps and more.”

“Transport route”

“Traineeships and work experience for school students”

“Accommodation”

Respondents were asked to rank potential social impacts as either negative, neutral or positive, results are presented in Figure 5.2. Most potential social impacts were ranked as neutral by respondents. Those potential social impacts ranked positive include local business (87%), employment (86%), property prices (60%), rental or temporary accommodation (63%), community values (62%), and way of life (49%).

Respondents ranked hygienic environment (eg dust in house) (30%) as the biggest potential negative impact followed by rental or temporary accommodation was the next biggest concern at 20%. All other potential impacts were ranked as negative by 10% or less of respondents.

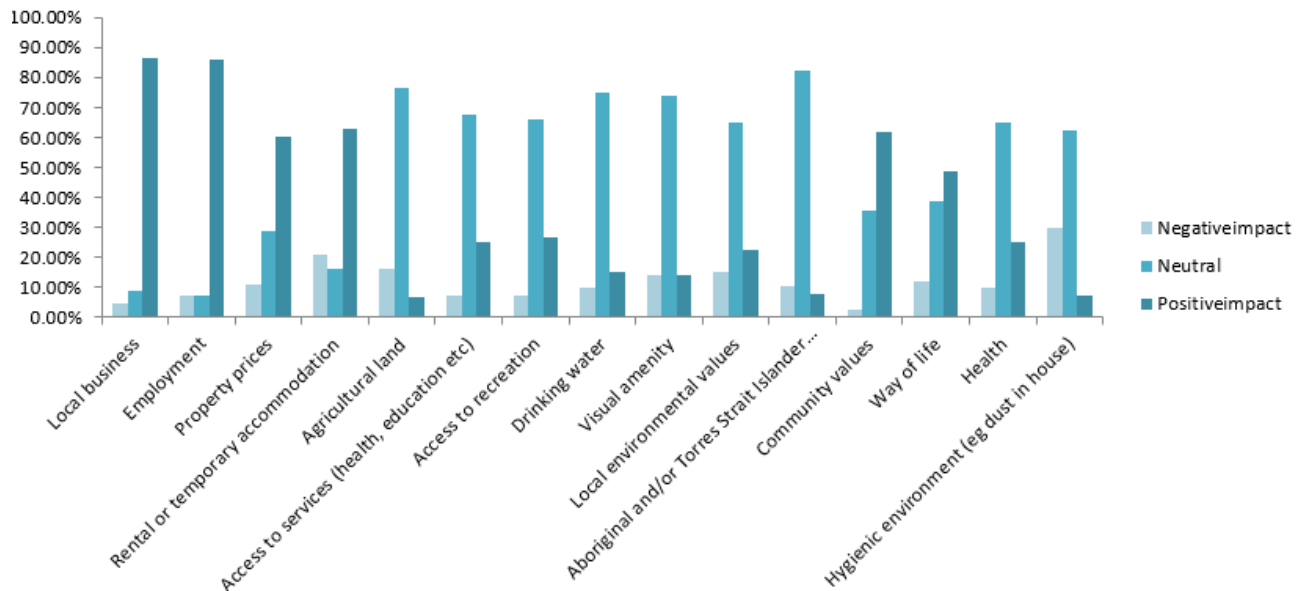


Figure 5.2 Perceived potential social impacts

5.4 Business consultation

Business consultation on Snowy 2.0, including consultation on the proposed segment factory, has demonstrated overwhelming support for the project. The support for Snowy 2.0 is largely two-fold; because of the benefits the project would deliver to the NEM, and the economic benefits generated in the local region.

Snowy Hydro organised and ran three consultation sessions with business owners specifically to inform the SIA. Letter invites were sent to residents and landowners residing or owning properties in the local area.

The three sessions were attended by a total of 114 attendees across all sessions.

Figure 5.3 represents the range and frequency of issues raised with those represented as largest being most frequently raised. The consultation report can be found in Annexure C.

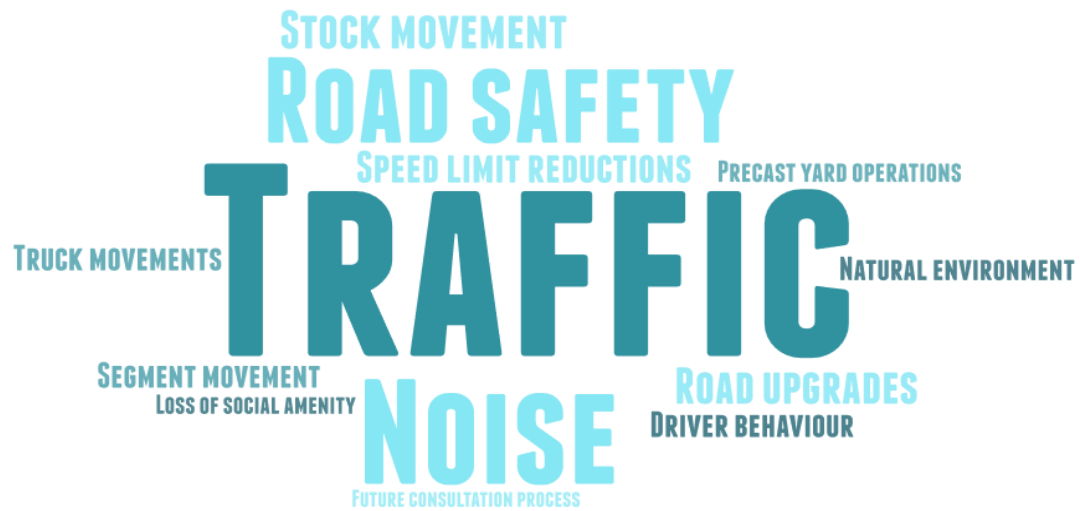


Figure 5.3 Business consultation issues raised

In addition to the above issues and as previously mentioned, attendees at the business consultation sessions reported that while they acknowledge the potential issues related to the segment factory at Polo Flat, they were overall supportive of the project. The most frequently raised benefits related to jobs and business opportunities the project creates.

6 Social baseline

This chapter provides a summary of the baseline information for Cooma and key social conditions for the social area of influence for the proposed segment factory that contribute to the identified social impacts. A complete baseline study that forms the basis for the SIA is provided in Annexure D.

6.1 Social area of influence

The primary social area of influence (ie study area) for the proposed segment factory is Cooma township. The extended study area includes Adaminaby township. These communities have the potential to experience change during the establishment and operation of the proposed segment factory.

Cooma and Adaminaby are located within the Snowy Monaro Regional LGA. Cooma is the largest township in Snowy Monaro Regional LGA and is home to 6,379 residents (ABS, 2016). Adaminaby is a small town located approximately 55 km west of Cooma and is home to 210 people (ABS, 2016), its population has declined from 235, or 7.1% since 2011.

6.2 Access

The access to Cooma is primarily via the Monaro Highway which runs from the Victorian border, via Rockton, Bombala, Nimmitabel, Cooma, Bredbo, Michelago and Royalla to Canberra. This accessibility allows large numbers of tourist visitors each year who visit Cooma for the snow seasons due to its proximity to the snowfields. The surrounding pristine rivers and lakes and natural beauty continues to attract tourists and visitors in the summer season.

6.3 Economy

Tourism provides Cooma and Adaminaby with a thriving accommodation and food services industry that provides a large number of jobs to local residents. Other industries that provide most jobs were retail, health care and social assistance and agriculture, forestry and fishing, and electricity, gas, water and waste services. Unemployment is low across the Snowy Monaro Regional LGA at 3.3% with Cooma's unemployment at 4.9% and Adaminaby was higher at 5.8%. This compares to NSW at 6.8%. However, residents at Cooma reported that underemployment is a problem for youth and people aged 50 years and over. While there is no data on the underemployment in the Snowy Monaro Regional LGA or its towns there is evidence that rural town generally have higher rates of underemployment (Workshop, EMM 2019). The low total income in Cooma (\$601) and Adaminaby (\$492) compared to SMRC (\$675) and NSW (\$664) may be indicative of underemployment.

6.4 Disadvantaged

Although Cooma and Adaminaby have high rates of employment there are some identifiable vulnerable groups. Among those groups are a small number of people who require assistance due to a profound or severe disability. This group require support with a range of activities related to self-care, mobility and communication. The proportion of the population in both locations if people aged 65 years and over is significantly higher than NSW. Research into the health of the ageing population indicates the ageing will continue to increase demand for health services and place pressure on health care resources (Harris & Sharma, 2018). The other vulnerable group are the homeless and at risk of homeless, there are 89 homeless people in the Snowy Monaro Regional LGA (ABS, 2016). There is anecdotal evidence from service providers in the area that the number of homeless and people at risk of homelessness is higher. It was reported that a small number of homeless are sleeping in the dilapidated building located on the site (ie Lot 3) (personal communication, 2019).

6.5 Services and businesses

Cooma is the service centre hub for the Snowy Monaro Regional LGA with a range of schools, childcare and health services, including a hospital. The health services were deemed good by residents to an extent, who then also noted that while they had GP services and a hospital there are no specialists available. Residents are required to drive to Canberra to seek specialist care. In addition, the existing GP services are at capacity with GPs running both the hospital and their own private practice. Difficulty attracting and retaining health professionals to work in a rural location was raised by residents as a contributing factor.

Evidence supports that in Australia there are long-term problems of workforce shortages and maldistribution, difficulties with recruitment and retention, and inadequate access to, and availability of, appropriate services to rural areas (Wakeman, J. & Humphreys, J.S., 2019). Childcare services were also reported to be at capacity with a recent childcare centre closure.

As previously mentioned, retail trade and accommodation and food services are top industries in both Cooma and Adaminaby. Community members and business acknowledge the positive effects of increases in customer numbers for both small and larger businesses in the area, especially with the influx of workers into the local area during the construction and operation phases of Snowy 2.0. Some local businesses also expressed their interest in providing services to the proposed project. These businesses, as well as businesses not aligned with hospitality and other tourist-aligned businesses (such as agriculture) share many of the main roads and highways which would be used by vehicles related to the project during construction and operation phases.

6.6 Housing and accommodation

The availability of rental housing in both Cooma and Adaminaby is low. This is supported by rental market trends evidenced from various property websites and anecdotal evidence from the local community. Community members consistently reported a lack of quality housing, and a misalignment of the type of housing available and the expected standard of housing. Proposed housing developments are still waiting on approval (personal communication, 2019). Although mortgage repayments and rent are less than NSW averages, median weekly income is also substantially lower. There is evidence from community residents that the cost of living in the area is increasing, contributing to issues of housing affordability for low-income individuals and families, as well as homeless populations and those at risk of homelessness.

Due to the study area's location in the Snowy Mountains, temporary accommodation is high in demand with tourist engagement in seasonal attractions and activities. Accommodation owners reported that these accommodations were either at capacity or nearly at capacity during the busy snow season (personal communication, 2019). There is anecdotal evidence that workers from outside the SMRC area stay in these rooms at semi-long-term rates (personal communication, 2019) further contributing to vacancy reductions.

6.7 Recreation

Recreation activities are abundant in the study area. The seasonal climate and existing natural environment provide the opportunity for both residents and tourists/visitors to the area to engage in several activities, including fishing, camping, horse riding, water sports, and bushwalking, as well as skiing in the wider region. Other recreational activities available in the community are a variety of sporting clubs and arts/cultural clubs. However, there is anecdotal evidence from the community that although there is a diversity of sporting and recreation facilities available, there are limited recreation and sporting clubs available for youth and young adults specifically.

7 Strengths and vulnerabilities, issues and opportunities

This chapter provides an analysis of the findings from the community and stakeholder engagement activities and the baseline study to determine the strengths and vulnerabilities of the community as well as the issues and opportunities that exist. This assessment will determine the community's ability to withstand adverse impacts.

7.1 Community strengths and vulnerabilities

Table 7.1 Community strengths and vulnerabilities

Strengths	Vulnerabilities
Social infrastructure	
Support services provided for youth, employment, home living support and counselling.	Limited access to specialist services and health services (GP and Hospital) have capacity issues and staffing shortages.
Good range of services available to people with a disability across the region. Particularly important with an aging population.	Limited sporting and recreational activities for youth and young adults.
'Wheelies with Wings' program provides flying scholarships for the disabled, improving the resilience of a group that may be considered more vulnerable (Wheelies with Wings, 2019).	Lack of diversity in sport activities, the continued opportunity to play sport over the age of 12 is very limited locally.
Health and emergency services are good.	Non-sporting recreational activities are also limited.
Country Universities Centre tertiary education institution.	Contributes to the problem of retention of youth in the area.
Increased accessibility to tertiary education in the region and associated improved participation in higher education.	Limited alternatives for youth who are not into sports.
Potential reduction in economic and intellectual migration of regional youth (Country Universities Centre, 2017), which is particularly important given the aging population of the local area.	Often it is necessary to travel to Canberra to access specialist medical services.
Some community members identified the area as having a good range of medical services.	Pharmacy access is not open 7 days.
Good recreational and sporting services.	Access to mental health services is limited. Youth mental health concerns were mentioned in particular.
Diverse but could be improved.	Cost of sport/school excursions/skiing is high, making it difficult for persons and families that are more socioeconomically disadvantaged to access them.
Well networked.	Road safety, in general and increases during the holiday season.
Resourceful.	Reducing services eg banks.
	Small rate of homelessness compared to NSW, but those who are homeless are still vulnerable.
	Community reported anecdotal evidence that the actual homelessness rate and people at risk of homelessness is higher than available data indicates.
	Public transport.
Workforce	
Low unemployment.	Underemployment.
	Police have trouble attracting staff.
	Lack of skilled workforce.
	Lack of electrician and plumbing training and apprenticeships.
	Shortage of emergency services and staff (links to social infrastructure vulnerabilities).

Table 7.1 Community strengths and vulnerabilities

Strengths	Vulnerabilities
Housing and accommodation	
Housing costs are low in comparison to NSW.	Housing shortage.
High home ownership, especially in Adaminaby.	Overcrowding during winter season.
	Housing stress/affordability/availability.
Local business and industry procurement	
Diverse industries that provide employment.	Lack of growth in industry.
	Large businesses withdrawing offices and services from rural towns.
	Automation.

Table 7.2 Community strengths and vulnerabilities

Strengths	Vulnerabilities
Community health and wellbeing	
Currently there is a strong sense of community: Resilient. connected to formal networks as well as social networks. possess a strong identity with a story, history and purpose. capacity to promote community. helpful and supportive. Committed to community, local opportunities provide reasons to stay. Feel safe and secure with low crime in the regional area compared to other LGAs in NSW (rated 77 out of 120 LGAs). Value their surrounding environment: Community members noted that the “beautiful environment” of Cooma and Adaminaby was a community strength. Research indicates that immersive nature-experiences benefit mental, physical, and social health and wellbeing outcomes for people (Mygind et al., 2019; Sandifer, Sutton-Grier & Ward, 2015). Low level of socio-economic disadvantage.	Ageing population. Increasing aged population and decreasing younger population. Adaminaby over 50% of the population aged 55 years and above, largest proportion being 65 years and over, representing over 30% of the population (median age 56). Median age Cooma 45. Higher than NSW average of 38, also has a slightly higher proportion of aging population, over 36% of the population is 55 years and above (although this is consistent with the wider region, it is higher than the proportion for NSW of 28.17%, indicating younger populations are leaving more rural areas to live in metropolitan areas). Larger proportion of the population requires assistance in self-care, mobility, and/or communication (6.0% Cooma, 9.1% Adaminaby, 5.4% NSW). This could be indicative of ageing population, those with old age needing more assistance than younger populations. Evidence of anti-social violence/behaviour. Increasing rates of domestic violence related assault (approximately 16%). Fear of stigma, shame, community gossip and a lack of perpetrator accountability deter women from seeking help (Camp & Tayton, 2015). Disadvantaged families and families at risk of socioeconomic disadvantage.

7.2 Community issues and opportunities

This section summarises the issues and opportunities identified by the community during workshops. It is important to note that community members acknowledged that not all the issues raised were directly related to the project rather that existing conditions were likely to be exacerbated. Likewise, community members expressed that not all opportunities would be the responsibility of Snowy Hydro.

Table 7.3 Community issues and opportunities

Issues	Opportunities
Community and stakeholder engagement	
Uncertainty and unknowns as communication about some aspects of the Polo Flat factory project is in the early stages. Community surveys indicate that some community members were not aware of the proposed construction of the concrete segment factory or possessed a low level of knowledge about this specific project.	Increased and consistent communication between the community, government, and project. Streamline planning processes.
Social infrastructure	
Rate of growth in the region places pressure on planning processes, particularly housing developments. Shrinking TAFE offerings. Decreasing diversity in education and training options. Particularly problematic as the community has expressed that there exists a shortage of a skilled community workforce in the trades, particularly electricians and plumbers, neither of which are programs that are available at TAFE NSW Cooma (TAFE NSW, 2019). Not only does not contribute to increased skilled workers in these fields in Cooma, but encourages locals and youth interested in pursuing these programs to leave the local area. There are existing traffic and road safety concerns. Insufficient crossing infrastructure throughout the local area, with the community specifically noting the absence of a safe crossing in front of Monaro High School, as well as elderly and disabled crossings. The community has noted the poor state of some roads in the area, and their concerns that they will not be able to support additional traffic and heavy vehicles Road and traffic problems are likely to be exacerbated by increased traffic associated with the project if they are not addressed. Childcare, preschool, and afterschool care services are already at capacity (or are close to it). These services may become increasingly insufficient as project workers migrate to the area with their families.	The creation of project jobs in addition to an increasing population may enable the creation of more programs at a tertiary level, particularly in the trades. Lack of traineeships and apprenticeships in specific trades such as electrotechnology and plumbing may have been influenced by a lack of demand and people in the area. An increase in students attending primary and secondary education may enable more funding for schools. Increased participation by both youth and adults in community activities. Infrastructure improvements. Greater attention placed on the improvement of roads and associated infrastructure with increased use, including improved signage, safe crossing at schools and main street, and road repairs. Employment of traffic control workers. Potential for the rescheduling of truck movements to avoid school drop-off and pick up hours. Road safety education. Increased flights direct to Cooma. Could increase tourism in the area, benefiting the local economy. Provision of emergency housing for those at risk of homelessness Education programs for road safety targeting tourists and residents.

Table 7.3 Community issues and opportunities

Issues	Opportunities
Workforce	
Availability of trades services and workforces for other local projects and jobs reduced due to competition with the project.	The training of locals and youth to fill workforces that are lacking skilled personnel.
Exhausted access to skilled workforce, particularly trades workforces.	Job creation and opportunities for local employment.
Community members have expressed that builders are not readily available, as well as other trade services, particularly electricians and plumbers servicing the community.	Training and job opportunities may positively contribute to increased youth retention.
Maintaining staff due to competition is difficult.	
Presence of other projects in the area also drawing the local workforce.	
Other projects mentioned by the local community were the Monaro High School project and the proposed wind farm.	
Housing and accommodation	
Housing	Increased investor interest in Cooma (real estate/development).
Availability.	Approval and delivery of housing developments.
Affordability.	Progressing the approved housing development would avail an additional 60-120 houses.
Supply and demand not aligned.	
Type of housing and standard of housing expectation is inconsistent with the housing reality.	
Land restrictions for housing blocks.	
Housing development has been approved but is not progressing.	
Temporary accommodation.	
Local business and industry procurement	
Boom and bust economy—balancing the economic benefits in the long term.	Build strong pathways into industry.
The proposed segment factory is estimated to be operational for 3.5 years, the economic and business effects of its decommissioning following the completion of the construction of Snowy 2.0 are uncertain.	Broader than just the construction of the proposed segment factory.
Trucks impacting cafés and restaurants.	Industry growth.
Noise/dust created by heavy vehicles may deter tourists and locals from frequenting affected establishments.	The creation of new businesses associated with the needs of the project itself, as well as with the needs and demand of the project workforce (both local and non-local).
	Attraction of services and investments.
	Increases in customer bases.
Community health and wellbeing	
Community concerns about a Cooma identity change.	Administer SMRC Community Connect program to workers as part of induction to maximise their immersion in the community.

8 Social impact assessment

This chapter provides a ranking of the identified social impacts of the proposed segment factory. The aim of the SIA is to assess the proposed change to the current social environment and has utilised data from several sources to develop a layered picture of the potential social impacts that are likely to arise from the project.

In order to prioritise the identified social impacts, a risk-based framework has been adopted in the assessment of social impacts. Consideration of the findings from technical reports as well as the perceptions of stakeholders when conducting the social risk ranking to ensure an integration of expert and local knowledge in impact assessment and the development of appropriate impact mitigation, amelioration and enhancement strategies.

Assessment of social impacts is complex and as such requires the balancing of a range of factors and often competing interests. The impact assessment is reflective of this and has:

- assessed some aspects of the proposed segment factory as both negative and positive as they relate to different groups of people;
- included negative impacts on local communities while documenting the benefits to the broader region;
- considered the impacts on vulnerable groups and provided management strategies to ensure that any existing disadvantages are not exacerbated; and
- considered each communities access to critical resources, such as housing and health care, and how this affects their resilience.

The social impacts below have been assessed initially as unmitigated (negative) or un-enhanced (positive) and then the residual effect is assessed on the basis that mitigation of negative impacts or enhancement of positive impacts are successfully implemented.

8.1 Way of life impacts

This section provides a detailed assessment, unmitigated and mitigated, on the way of life impacts and the matters that significantly impact the way of life as a result of the proposed segment factory. The matters assessed include:

- access to adequate housing;
- access to adequate employment; and
- access to recreational activities.

The assessment also considered how people interact with one another daily as this was an important factor in accessing recreational activities.

8.1.1 Access to housing (vulnerable groups) - unmitigated

Cooma has a small homeless population, 89 as at 2016 (ABS, 2016), and anecdotally that number has increased since. Service providers reported that the current housing shortage is making it difficult to house those in need both in Cooma and Adaminaby. This is further compounded by service providers inability to find rental properties in surrounding towns as employed people are increasingly forced to seek rentals outside of Cooma. Their ability to provide temporary housing is already hindered as hotels are at capacity with the tourist season and the influx of workers from the broader Snowy 2.0.

Both Council and service providers reported that there are currently a small number of people sleeping in the dilapidated buildings located on the site (ie Lot 3). This provides a safe and somewhat warmer option to rough sleeping during the harshness of winter. With the potential for the project to commence in early 2020 and the lack of available and affordable housing in Cooma and the surrounds there is a likelihood that these people will be displaced and their quality of life diminished.

The increase in workers during construction and operations of the segment factory will make the ability to access housing for this vulnerable group more difficult. The combination of a possible housing shortage coupled with an increase in workers and their families seeking accommodation in Cooma is likely to increase the cost of housing. Should the cost of rental properties increase, with underemployment already a concern, there is potential that people could move from 'at risk' to homeless and the number of homeless could increase.

Given the current social conditions surrounding the availability and affordability of housing it is almost certain that access to affordable and adequate housing will be further exacerbated for the homeless and at risk and the consequences will be major as the services have limited ability to adapt their services to provide the required support. Therefore, the unmitigated impact has been assessed as an extreme negative impact on the homeless and at risk of homeless throughout the construction and operation phases of the proposed segment factory.

8.1.2 Access to housing (vulnerable groups) – mitigated

There is currently a housing development that has approval but has not commenced construction. At the time of this study there was no indication of when the construction of the housing development is scheduled to commence, nor the exact number of houses that will be provided. To minimise and avoid housing issues, the project has proposed the provision of staff accommodation within Cooma known as 'Pacific Hills' which would provide 120 short-term rooms and 30 additional long term accommodation cabins to house the workforce sourced outside SMRC area. This equates to a capacity to house up to approximately 250 people.

To further mitigate issues with access to housing, Council could fast track approvals for housing development and facilitate delivery of housing stock more rapidly. The provision of additional housing in Cooma would improve housing availability and reduce the risk of increasing rental prices to a level that may force those at risk of homeless into homelessness. In addition, the provision of additional jobs into the local area and Snowy Hydro's willingness to offer traineeships to young people living locally, is likely to reduce underemployment and housing stress for lower income households.

While the delivery of a staff accommodation will alleviate additional stress on housing demand the current need for housing indicates it is unlikely that the delivery of additional housing will mitigate the impact on people that are homeless.

Snowy Hydro and FGJV are aware of a small number of homeless people sleeping in the buildings that are to be demolished to allow for construction of the proposed segment factory. Snowy Hydro has expressed its willingness to work with service providers to alert them that they will need to seek alternative shelter. This early intervention will at least prevent further displacement of a small number of this vulnerable group and ensure that any relocation is conducted in a sensitive manner. In addition, contact with service providers creates opportunity to intervene and commence the process for seeking longer term housing and provision of support.

Assessment of the mitigated risk assumes that the additional housing at 'Pacific Hills' will be available which will assist with any exacerbation of homelessness, and that support will be provided to ensure the homeless sleeping on the site will be assisted. More broadly, and irrespective of the proposed segment factory, a continuation of existing high housing demand pressure on access to affordable housing will continue to require attention from service providers and result in indirect impacts to the broader homeless population. The consequences remain major due to the existing and ongoing limited capacity to provide affordable housing to the homeless. Therefore, the mitigated indirect impact has been assessed as high negative impact on the homeless throughout the construction and operation phases of the project. A summary of the assessment is provided in Table 8.1.

Table 8.1 **Summary of access to affordable housing**

Social impact	Matter	Affected parties	Duration	Extent	Unmitigated	Mitigated
Way of life	Access to affordable housing	Homeless and at risk of homelessness	Construction and operation	Cooma	Extreme negative	High negative

8.1.3 Access to housing (workforce) – unmitigated

There is anecdotal evidence that workers seeking housing in Cooma are having trouble finding adequate housing that meets their expectations. This is exacerbated by the shortage of housing. With the projected increases in construction and operational workforces, workers from outside the SMRC area may be forced to either drive longer distances to work, and/or adopt drive-in-drive out arrangements which would minimise time with family and negatively impact their quality of life as these arrangements often require long hours and extended time away from home. The impacts are to both workers, regarding adapting to work conditions associated with DIDO and how workers interact with family.

The current housing stock indicates that it is almost certain that there will be insufficient housing, particularly during the operational phase. The consequences are that workers will adjust their way of life by either driving longer distances to work or entering DIDO arrangement that will negatively impact their way of life in the medium term. As the project will be five months construction and 3.5 years operational this is not a permanent impact. Therefore, the unmitigated impact has been assessed as a moderate negative impact on workers from outside Cooma during the operational phase of the project. A summary of the assessment is provided in Table 8.2.

8.1.4 Access to housing (workforce) – mitigated

As stated above there is currently no certainty around the timing for the construction of additional housing. Council could fast track approvals for housing development and facilitate delivery of housing stock more rapidly. However, the provision of a proposed workers accommodation at Pacific Hills which would accommodate approximately 30 to 50 workers sourced outside SMRC area. The provision of additional housing would provide workers the opportunity to reduce the impacts associated with long commutes.

In addition, the adoption of fatigue management strategies, rosters that minimise time away from home, and support programs for workers and their family would minimise the negative impacts on workers lifestyle and provide more opportunity for spending time with family.

Assuming the effective implementation of the mitigation measures it is likely that workers access to adequate housing in Cooma will be somewhat improved. The consequences would be reduced to minor due to the short-term nature of the impact and the ability for workers and their families to adapt to new routines. Therefore, the mitigated impact is assessed as low and negative for workers and their families during the operational phase of the project. A summary of the assessment is provided in Table 8.2.

Table 8.2 **Summary of access to workforce housing**

Social impact	Matter	Affected parties	Duration	Extent	Unmitigated	Mitigated
Way of life	Access to housing	Workforce and their families	Operation	Cooma Snowy Monaro Regional LGA	Moderate Negative	Low Negative

8.1.5 Access to adequate employment – unenhanced

There is anecdotal evidence that Cooma youth and people aged over 50 years are experiencing underemployment. Youth are most often employed in part time and/or seasonal work. People aged over 50 years were reportedly experienced but either unable to gain full time employment. Given the ageing population in Cooma and Adaminaby there may be potentially a large number of underemployed workers aged over 50 years.

An inability to obtain full time employment provides both a financial and job instability. People who are underemployed will have less money to spend on social and recreational activities, and have trouble getting a mortgage.

The limited opportunities for youth mean that they often leave Cooma once school is complete to pursue further study or work in Canberra or other city centres. There is currently a pilot program that targets youth during Year 9 and 10 to link them with potential local job opportunities.

Due to the underemployment of youth with minimal skills and people aged 50 years and over it is unlikely that without support they would gain full time employment on the project during construction or operations. In addition, those who did gain full time employment would benefit beyond the life of the project due to the skills and experience gained increases ongoing full-time employment. However, the current pilot program for youth might see limited jobs for youth and the experience of some people aged 50 may see small numbers employed. The consequence would be negligible as the additional jobs would provide limited value. As such the unenhanced impact is assessed as low positive for youth and people aged over 50 for the construction, operational phases and post closure of the project. A summary of the assessment is provided in Table 8.3.

8.1.6 Access to adequate employment – enhanced

A workforce of about 125 people would be required to operate the proposed segment factory. Most of this workforce would be sourced locally from Cooma and surrounding localities. The commitment from Snowy Hydro to provide training and apprenticeships for local youth, and if extended to people aged over 50, would increase access to full time employment.

Assuming the enhancement strategies were effectively implemented there would be an increased number of youth and people aged 50 and over with full time employment in Cooma and surrounding localities. This would reduce underemployment and improve the life of those employed by providing financial and job security to those employed. Consequently, they would increase their ability to fully participate in social and recreational activities and be better able to apply for mortgages. Youth would have more choices for local employment and be less likely to leave to seek jobs in larger city centres. Spending would increase and this would have a flow on benefit to the Cooma economy more broadly.

The assessment of the enhanced impact is high positive for youth and people over 50 years in Cooma and surrounding localities. The benefits go beyond construction and operation and into post closure of the project as due to increased skills and employability the fiscal benefits remain. A summary of the assessment is provided in Table 8.3.

Table 8.3 Summary of access to adequate employment

Social impact	Matter	Affected parties	Duration	Extent	Unenhanced	Enhanced
Way of life	Access to adequate employment	Youth and people aged 50 years and over	Construction, operation and post closure	Cooma Adaminaby Snowy Monaro Regional LGA	Low positive	High positive

8.1.7 Access to lifestyle activities – unmitigated

During the construction and operational phases of the project there will be an increase in daily truck movements (two-way) that will travel along the main highway through the busy main street (Sharp Street) of Cooma. In addition to the trucks there will be additional car movements during peak period due to worker access to site. Residents of Cooma do much of their 'living' along Sharp Street, which is a hub for shopping, cafes and dining as well as the main business centre. There are also hotels and accommodation catering to the tourists both in the snow season and summer season. Residents in Adaminaby would also be travelling to Cooma to access recreational activities.

The increase in traffic due to trucks and other vehicles along the Sharp Street raised concern amongst residents that the combination of increased traffic, noise and dust will impact their access to cafes and shopping. This is compounded by the limited parking currently available. Residents in attendance at the workshop reported that locals already try to access back streets to avoid the main strip and that the increased traffic will exacerbate this problem. It would be reasonable to expect that local residents would continue to avoid the inconvenience of traffic, noise and dust as traffic increases. This may result in an interruption to how residents interact and engage with each other daily by reducing the incidental meetings and interactions. It is likely that locals would choose alternate locations for socialising for the period of the construction and operations.

Given the number of trucks, the level of inconvenience raised by the community as a concern that the traffic creates along an already busy main street where residents shop and socialise, it is possible that access to recreational activities will continue to be impacted. The consequence is minor due to the short-term nature of the impacts and the community's ability to adapt and cope with the negative social impacts. Therefore, the unmitigated impact is assessed as moderate negative for Cooma residents during construction and operational phases. A summary of the assessment is provided in Table 8.4.

8.1.8 Access to lifestyle activities – mitigated

The ability to reduce truck movements along the main street is minimal. While there may be the ability to divert trucks on occasion the haulage route through town is unavoidable. As such the likelihood and consequence for the mitigated impact remain the same, almost certain and minor. Therefore, the mitigated impact is assessed as moderate negative for Cooma residents during construction and operational phases. A summary of the assessment is provided in Table 8.4

Table 8.4 Summary of access to lifestyle activities

Social impact	Matter	Affected parties	Duration	Extent	Unmitigated	Mitigated
Way of life	Access to recreational activities	Local residents	Construction, operation	Cooma Adaminaby	Moderate negative	Moderate negative

8.2 Access to and use of infrastructure, services and facilities impacts

This section provides a detailed assessment, unmitigated and mitigated, of the access to and use of infrastructure, services and facilities impacts and the matters that is significant as a result of the project. The matters assessed are:

- public safety; and
- access to health and childcare services.

8.2.1 Public safety - unmitigated

Cooma residents expressed concern for the public safety regarding the current absence of road crossings in the centre of town and around schools.

The main strip in Cooma is busy with both light and heavy vehicles and has angle parking that can hinder the ability to see approaching vehicles. The absence of safe crossings for pedestrians is of concern for children, elderly and those living with a disability (WHO, nd; IRSR, 2019; personal communication, 2019). Residents reported having to stop and assist elderly and a blind person to cross the road. Residents are concerned there will be an accident causing serious injury or death. The addition of more heavy trucks and other vehicles along the main strip will exacerbate the problem and create an even greater risk. Residents also expressed that the whole community is affected when these accidents occur as Cooma is a small town.

There is currently a school zone along the highway where the traffic is reduced to 40 km per hour, however there are no safe crossings for children. The reduction of speed limits in school zones can bring “significant safety benefits by reducing vehicular speeds and fatal and injury crashes” (Cosgrave et al., 2019). Due to the lack of safe crossings residents reported that students frequently cross the highway and there is great concern, again, there will be an accident causing serious injury or death.

In addition, residents perceive the roads into and out of Cooma as being unsafe with high incidents of serious accidents. Residents in Cooma and Adaminaby identified risky driving behaviours, particularly from tourists and visitors, as major contributors to the road safety problem on the highway. Residents expressed concern that the further addition of trucks and other vehicles will exacerbate an existing problem and increase the risk of a serious accident causing injury or death.

Given the current lack of safe crossing along the main strip and around schools and the further addition of heavy trucks and other vehicles will exacerbate an existing problem and it is possible there will be an accident that causes either serious injury or death. The consequences would be catastrophic due to the potential loss of life and the broad impact it has on the residents. The magnitude of this impact is long term as the grief and loss is not limited to the time of the accident and or loss. Therefore, the unmitigated social risk is assessed as extreme high for residents of Cooma, children, elderly, and people with a disability. A summary of the assessment is provided in Table 8.5.

8.2.2 Public safety - mitigated

There are a range of mitigation strategies that are well established and known to reduce the risk of accidents. The introduction of pedestrian crossings at one or both ends of the main strip would create safe crossings for pedestrians and would dramatically reduce the risk of accidents. The community consistently expressed their concerns about public safety related to the increased traffic with particular concern for kids, elderly and people with a disability who are identified in research on road safety as being at significant risk (WHO, nd; IRSR, 2019; personal communication, 2019).

While there is a school zone which reduces the speed limit to 40 km per hour and minimises risk there would need to be the introduction of safe crossings both near schools and in the centre of town. Having a crossing with traffic control measures would provide another safety measure by providing safe crossing and supervision. The combination of a school zone and safe crossings are commonly adopted by roads authorities for managing the risk of accidents around schools.

Adoption of an education and awareness program would educate tourists and other motorists of the safety hazards. Improving signages that inform drivers of the speed limits and road conditions along the highway may reduce the risk of accidents and improve road safety for all road users.

“...issues about design for road safety, EDUCATION of local and visitor drivers in sharing the road with many semi-trailers, how to pass safely these trucks!” (resident)

The successful implementation of these mitigation strategies would reduce the risk of an accident causing serious injury or death to unlikely. Although the risk is dramatically reduced should an accident occur the consequences would remain catastrophic as the serious injury or death may occur and if they did the effects to Cooma and all road users would be unaltered regardless of the mitigation. Therefore, the mitigated social risk is assessed as high negative for residents of Cooma, and vulnerable groups such as children, elderly, and people with a disability. A summary of the assessment is provided in Table 8.5.

Table 8.5 **Summary of public safety**

Social impact	Matter	Affected parties	Duration	Extent	Unmitigated	Mitigated
Access to and use of infrastructure, services and facilities	Public safety	Residents Road users	Construction, operation	Cooma Adaminaby SMRC	Extreme negative	High negative

8.2.3 Access to health and childcare services - unmitigated

Cooma have a range of health services available in town, GPs, hospital, and pharmacies. Cooma has an ageing population, and this places larger pressure on primary health care services and hospitals as people tend to get sicker as they get older. Residents reported that GPs are stretched and are working across the hospital and their local practices. In addition, there are limited specialist and mental health services available in Cooma with residents reporting needed to travel to Canberra for specialist care. This problem is compounded by the challenges associated with attracting and recruiting health services personnel. Given the age profile of residents in Adaminaby it is likely they would be travelling to Cooma for health services and when required to Canberra for specialist care.

Currently childcare centres are almost at capacity and would be unable to accept further enrolments that would be required due to an increase in the population as workers relocate families to Cooma.

The projected workforce requirements some workers may move with their families to Cooma. The increase in population would impact Cooma residents by placing additional pressures on the health services and increase wait times for GPs and hospitals. Given the current capacity and an increase in population it is possible that residents will wait longer to see GPs and at hospitals. It is likely that the childcare would not be able to take on additional enrolments. The consequences are minor as the impact is short term and the ability for the community to adapt by seeking alternate childcare arrangements and traveling to seek medical care is evident. Therefore, the unmitigated social risk is assessed as moderate negative for residents of Cooma during the construction and operation phases of the project. A summary of the assessment is provided in Table 8.6.

8.2.4 Access to health and childcare services - mitigated

To improve access to health care, service providers would require an active attraction and recruitment drive to attract GPs and other medical professionals to Cooma. This may also require the health services are provided adequate funding for required positions to meet increasing demand.

Assuming adequate funding is received will not guarantee the attraction and recruitment of staff to a rural town. Evidence suggest that “attracting and retaining experienced and skilled health professionals to work and live in rural areas is a global issue” (Cosgrave et al, 2019). This indicates that while there is an ongoing need to attract and retain health professionals this may take time and given the short-term nature of the project is unlikely the issue will be resolved in time. As such the mitigated social risk remains unchanged as moderate negative to Cooma residents during the construction and operation phases.

However, childcare services are likely to be able to adapt and employ additional workers in a timely manner. The consequences would then become rare that the childcare service would be unable to meet the demand of an increase in population. Therefore, the mitigated social risk is assessed as low negative to residents of Cooma through construction and operation. A summary of the assessment is provided in Table 8.6.

Table 8.6 Summary of access to health and childcare services

Social impact	Matter	Affected parties	Duration	Extent	Unmitigated	Mitigated
Access to and use of infrastructure, services and facilities	Health services	Residents	Construction, operation	Cooma Adaminaby	Moderate negative	Moderate negative
	Childcare services	Residents				Low negative

8.3 Personal and property rights impacts

This section provides a detailed assessment, unmitigated and mitigated, of the personal and property rights impacts and the matters that significantly impact the way of life as a result of the project. The matters assessed is livelihood.

8.3.1 Livelihood – unenhanced positive impacts

Cooma has a strong retail and accommodation and food services industry that are among the top providers for jobs in the region. Located near the Snowy Mountains, Cooma attracts large numbers of tourists and visitors during the snow season and in summer attracts campers and hikers. Accommodation providers reported they are currently busy during the tourist seasons. An influx of workers, some of whom would stay in hotel accommodation, has the potential to increase occupancy rates, potentially to 100% during peak operation. In addition, the workers would be staying longer term and increasing occupancy all year round. It is reasonable to assume that workers residing in Cooma through construction and operation would spend money in retail shops, cafes and restaurants located in Cooma.

As workers fill the accommodation in Cooma there will be less availability for tourist and short-term visitors who will be forced to seek accommodation in other locations. It is reasonable to assume that businesses in the broader Snowy Monaro Regional LGA who would benefit from increased occupancy as tourists seek alternate locations for accommodation. In these locations it would be reasonable to assume that tourists would increase spending across the LGA as they spend money in retail and other outlets across the area.

There is potential that as businesses get busier outside the tourist season that there would be increased hours for the current casual and part time workers. It would be reasonable to expect that some of those underemployed will be either made permanent or at a minimum increase their income during construction and operation.

There were some concerns raised by residents that the traffic and associated noise and dust impacts would deter local from accessing cafes and restaurants. However, the increase in the occupancy rates beyond the tourist seasons to all year round during construction and operation, also generating business activity more broadly. It is reasonable to assume that the increase in workers staying and spending money in local businesses would offset any potential loss of business from residents.

It is possible that accommodation will increase occupancy in Cooma with tourists seeking accommodation in other localities thus increasing capacity across Snowy Monaro Regional LGA. This would see increased spending in Cooma and the LGA not only during the tourist season but all year round during construction and operation. The consequences of increased capacity and spending would be moderate adding substantial value to society. Therefore, the social risk to livelihood is assessed as high positive to businesses, particularly those in the retail and accommodation and food industries, in Cooma and the Snowy Monaro Regional LGA more broadly. A summary of the assessment is provided in Table 8.7.

8.3.2 Livelihood – enhanced positive impacts

Strategies that encourage workers to live or stay in Cooma and surrounding towns during construction and operation will further increase the spending in town and maximise the benefits to livelihoods of business owners. This would include the provision of additional housing in Cooma to attract workers and their families. These livelihood benefits would extend beyond Cooma and to the Snowy Monaro Regional LGA more broadly and increase job opportunities for the underemployed.

Assuming Snowy Hydro and FGJV successfully encouraged workers sourced from outside the SMRC region to reside in or stay in Cooma and surrounding towns during construction and operation, and Council were able to facilitate additional housing, the benefits to Cooma would be further enhanced. If this were to occur, it is likely that business would see an increase in business activity and potential for more jobs for the underemployed. The consequence would be moderate due to the substantial value generated from increased revenue for businesses and employment and financial stability for the underemployed. As such the enhanced social benefit is high positive for business, particularly those in the retail and accommodation and food industries, and the underemployed in Cooma and the Snowy Monaro Regional LGA more broadly. A summary of the assessment is provided in Table 8.7.

Table 8.7 Summary of livelihood (positive)

Social impact	Matter	Affected parties	Duration	Extent	Unmitigated	Mitigated
Personal and property rights	Livelihood	Business (retail and accommodation and food industry) Underemployed	Construction, operation	SMRC	High positive	High positive

8.3.3 Livelihood – unmitigated

During the construction and operation there is potential that some businesses may suffer from a loss of trade as locals seek to avoid the traffic, noise and dust along the main strip in Cooma. There is evidence to suggest that small businesses are more vulnerable to periods of downturn in trade and during projects are more prone to closure than larger businesses or those that can directly service projects (Reserve Bank of Australia, 2012). While in Cooma conducting the field study for this SIA it was observed that there are currently businesses that have closed along the main street. While the reasons for closure are unknown it does indicate that for some businesses there is limited trade to sustain business. The further impacts associated with the increase in traffic, dust and noise from additional trucks may deter residents and decrease trade.

It is possible that some businesses may experience a downturn in trade during the construction and operation in Cooma. The consequences are minor as they are short term. Therefore, the unmitigated social risk is moderate negative for small businesses in Cooma. A summary of findings is provided in Table 8.8.

8.3.4 Livelihood – mitigated

Procurement process for the segment factory may provide opportunity for some small business to supply services or materials to the project. Prioritising local businesses and ensuring the procurement process is not too cumbersome may allow small businesses in Cooma to benefit from the project which would offset any downturn in trade during construction and operation. This would only be of benefit for those offering services that are required by the project. However, it would minimise the number of small businesses that are potentially negatively affected.

Assuming opportunities are provided to small businesses in Cooma it would be unlikely that large numbers of small businesses are at risk of closure or downturn in trade. The consequence would be minor as they are short term. Therefore, the mitigated social risk is low negative for small business in Cooma. A summary of findings is provided in Table 8.8.

Table 8.8 **Summary of livelihood**

Social impact	Matter	Affected parties	Duration	Extent	Unmitigated	Mitigated
Personal and property rights	Livelihood	Small business	Construction, operation	Cooma	Moderate negative	Low negative

9 Mitigation and management

This section provides a summary of the identified social impacts along with the corresponding perceived stakeholder risk rankings and mitigated technical risk rankings. In addition, key potential stakeholder partners have been identified to participate in the monitoring and management of impacts, along with a range of proposed social impact mitigation and management strategies.

Consultation on Snowy 2.0, including consultation on the proposed segment factory, has demonstrated overwhelming support for the project. The support for Snowy 2.0 is largely two-fold; because of the benefits the project would deliver to the NEM, and the economic benefits generated in the local region. While the support for the proposed segment factory is intrinsically linked to the broader support for Snowy 2.0, consultation demonstrated support given perceived localised economic benefits.

A workshop was conducted with Snowy Hydro and FGJV to develop mitigation and management of the identified potential impacts, including strategies to maximise the positive impacts. The process included the identification of the organisation responsible for mitigation and management of the identified potential impacts and the opportunity for partnerships. A summary is provided in Table 9.1.

This section also provides a monitoring and management framework.

Table 9.1 **Summary of mitigation and management strategies**

Social impact	Matter	Unmitigated	Mitigated	Responsibility	Potential partners	Proposed mitigation and management
Way of life	Access to affordable housing	Extreme negative	High negative	Family and Community Services SMRC	Mission Australia - Cooma Path2home - Cooma	Increase number of emergency housing for homeless and at risk of homelessness.
				Snowy Hydro and contractor	-	Establishment of workers accommodation at Pacific Hills if approved. Consultation and early notification to any existing homeless on site.
	Access to housing	Moderate Negative	Low Negative	Snowy Hydro Contractor	-	Establishment of workers accommodation at Pacific Hills if approved Fatigue management strategy. Rostering that supports DIDO workers to spend time with their family. Support program for workers.
	Access to adequate employment	Low positive	High positive	Snowy Hydro FGJV	Local high schools	Training and apprenticeships for local youth and people aged over 50. School Based Apprenticeship Training Pilot Program. (see 1 below).
	Access to recreational activities	Moderate negative	Moderate negative	FGJV	RMS SMRC	Investigate feasible alternate routes (see 2 below).

Table 9.1 **Summary of mitigation and management strategies**

Social impact	Matter	Unmitigated	Mitigated	Responsibility	Potential partners	Proposed mitigation and management
Access to and use of infrastructure, services and facilities	Public safety	Extreme negative	High negative	SMRC RMS TfNSW Schools	Snowy Hydro FGJV	Provide safe crossings outside schools and traffic control measures as identified in the Traffic and Transport Assessment conducted as part of the EIS. Provide safe crossings along Sharp Street in Cooma town centre Adoption of education and awareness program to educate tourists, visitors and other motorists of safety hazards. Improved signage of speed limits and road conditions along the highway. Educate schools and kids on road safety.
				Snowy Hydro FGJV	-	FGJV implement their Drivers Code of Conduct (details below). Adoption and enforcement of safe driving practices for truck drivers and all workers Advocate for improved road safety and signage.
	Health services	Moderate negative	Moderate negative	DoH NSW Health	-	Develop and implement an attract and recruitment strategy for health professionals, particularly GPs, to Cooma. Provide funding to support the level of health service demand.
	Childcare services		Low negative	Childcare centres	-	Recruit additional workers to meet growing demand.
Personal and property rights	Livelihood - Business (retail and accommodation and food industry) Underemployed	High positive	High positive	Local businesses Chamber of Commerce	-	Establishment of workers accommodation at Pacific Hills if approved. Employment of local workers where possible. Extension of hours for existing part-time and/or casual staff.
	Livelihood – small business	Moderate negative	Low negative	FGJV Snowy Hydro	-	Procurement processes that provide opportunity for local businesses to supply to the project.

1. School Based Apprenticeship Training (SBAT) - Pilot Program – local government area Schools:
 - FGJV has begun discussions with the NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet, NSW Department of Education, TAFE, Monaro High School and Tumut High to develop a pilot program to improve the educational opportunities of youth in the area starting at high school. FGJV, through Snowy 2.0, would be the first contractor in NSW to roll out school-based apprenticeship training to school aged students to get them job ready for the workforce.
 - Developing student “skill sets” by completing existing school based Vocational Educational Training courses e.g. Construction Pathways Certificate II as early entry to stage 6 in year 10 (4 units x 1year) and Cert III in Process Manufacturing. This would provide students with an opportunity to complete HSC units earlier in their school career and improve preparedness for future employment. This would then provide them with the potential to take part in the SBAT program with Snowy 2.0 at the segment factory at Polo Flat.
 - Resource and delivery would be tailored to meet the expectations of FGJV and provide students with a vocational pathway leading to successful career along with valuable experience that could form the basis of tertiary study.
 - Promoted to students across the communities of Snowy Monaro Regional Council and Snowy Valleys Council areas.
 - It would provide an avenue for significantly improving the engagement and retention of local students and significantly reduce rates of youth unemployment.
 - It will provide students with the opportunity to remain in their local community with the associated flow on social and economic benefits for the area.
 - If the pilot is successful, the framework would be rolled out to other major infrastructure projects in the region.
2. An alternative route for heavy vehicles between the proposed segment factory and the Snowy 2.0 construction sites within KNP which bypasses Cooma is being pursued by Snowy Hydro in consultation with SMRC and the State Government. This route includes Yallakool, Mittagang, Shannons Flat and Bobeyan roads.

Use of the alternative route by heavy vehicles generated by the proposed segment factory would likely require upgrade works including:

- the sealing of Shannons Flat and Bobeyan roads; and upgrade to the intersections of Bobeyan Road and Snowy Mountain highway, Yallakool Road/Polo Flat Road and Monaro Highway.

It is Snowy Hydro and FGJV’s intention to use the alternative transport route during peak traffic flows on the Monaro and Snowy Mountains highways after the relevant roads and intersections have been upgraded to the required standards. If and when used, this alternative route would reduce traffic volumes generated by the proposed segment factory in Sharp Street in Cooma, including during peak holiday periods.

It should be noted that the use of the alternate transport route does not form part of the project, and therefore approval is not being sought for the use of the route at this stage. Should the alternate transport route be upgraded to the standard required, Snowy Hydro and FGJV would seek approval separately.

9.1 Monitoring and measurement

The potential social impacts identified in this SIA for the Polo Flat Segment Factory is outlined in Section 8 above. It is proposed that a monitoring and management framework be developed to ensure that the identified positive and negative impacts are monitored over time to measure the effectiveness or otherwise of the proposed management measures, including the changing conditions and trends in the Snowy Monaro region over the same period.

It is proposed that the monitoring and management framework identifies the following key aspects:

- track progress of mitigation and management strategies;
- assess actual project impacts against predicted impacts;
- identify how information will be captured for reporting to impacted stakeholders including landholders, communities and government on progress and achievements;
- key performance indicators, targets and outcomes;
- responsible parties; and
- mechanisms for ongoing adaption of management measures when and if required.

To ensure the effectiveness of the management measures for the identified positive and negative impacts, it is recommended that a continuous improvement approach be adopted allowing for the review and adaption of impacts, management measure and outcomes.

Abbreviations

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
CUC	Country Universities Centre
DPIE	Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
FGJV	Future Generation Joint Venture
GP	general practitioner
IEO	Index of Education and Occupation
IER	Index of Economic Resources
IPR	Integrated Planning and Reporting
IRSAD	Index of Relative Socio-Economic Advantage and Disadvantage
IRSD	Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage
LGA	local government area
SEIFA	Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas
SIA	Social Impact Assessment
SMRC	Snowy Monaro Regional Council
TAFE	TAFE NSW
UCL	Urban Centre and Locality

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Annexure A

Information sheet

Segment Factory for Snowy 2.0

Project overview

To support the Snowy 2.0 broader project, Snowy Hydro Limited (SHL) proposes to develop a concrete segment factory located on the south-eastern side of Polo Flat, which is an industrial area located to the east of Cooma. The proposed segment factory would manufacture precast concrete segments that would line the tunnels being excavated for Snowy 2.0, and transport to the construction sites within the Kosciuszko National Park via Snowy Mountains Highway.

The construction phase of the proposed segment factory would last about five months, utilising a workforce of about 30 people. The factory would operate over a period of about 3.5 years, utilising a workforce of about 125 people. The proposed segment factory would be operational 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

At the completion of the construction of Snowy 2.0, the proposed segment factory would be decommissioned.

Project site

The project site of the proposed segment factory is located on the south eastern side of the Polo Flat industrial area, predominantly on the southern part of the land owned by SHL. The site is located to the east of Polo Flat Road and to the north of Carlaminda Road. The site is surrounded by industrial development to the west and predominantly vacant land to the south and east. To the north of the site is the private airfield and other industrial development. Location of the proposed segment factory is shown in the following map (pink boundary).



Assessment process

On 7 March 2018, the NSW Minister for Planning declared Snowy 2.0 to be State Significant Infrastructure (SSI) and Critical State Significant Infrastructure (CSSI). The declaration came into effect on 9 March 2018 and is reflected in the *State Environmental Planning Policy (State and Regional Development) 2011* (SRD SEPP). The project will be subject to a Development Application (DA), which will be assessed by the NSW Department of Planning, Infrastructure & Environment (DPIE).

The DA will be supported by an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and associated supporting technical assessments for key environmental aspects (including but not limited to):

- noise and vibration, air quality, surface water/flooding, traffic, soils and contamination, biodiversity, Aboriginal heritage, historic heritage, economic, visual, hazards; and
- a social impact assessment (SIA).

Social impact assessment requirements

The requirements of the SIA at each phase of the EIS process is outlined in the following table.

Table 1 SIA requirements by EIS phase

Phase	Requirement
Scoping	Identify area of social influence
	Identify potential material
EIS preparation	Prepare a social baseline and predict trends and conditions
	Evaluate significance of social impacts
	Develop response to social impacts and evaluate residual impacts
	Development monitoring and management framework
Public exhibition	Department places EIS on public exhibition
Respond to submission	Applicant of EIS prepares a submission report that explains how submissions have been addressed
Assessment	Department assess the project and provides findings to the consent authority
Determination	Consent authority approves or refuses the project along with conditions
Post approval	Applicant implements mitigation and enhancement measures

Next steps

A summary of the next steps along with estimated timeframe is outlined in the following table.

Table 2 Next steps

Activity	Timeframe
EIS and SIA preparation	July to September 2019
DA lodgement to DPIE	September 2019

To find out more about the project you can read the Scoping Report on the DPIE website: <https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/project/14716>

To contribute to the social impact assessment of the project, take 5 minutes and complete the on-line survey: <https://www.snowyhydro.com.au/our-scheme/snowy20/feedback/>

Annexure B

Online survey

Segment Factory Project

Social impact survey

Snowy Hydro Limited (Snowy Hydro), the operator of the Snowy Mountains Hydro-electric Scheme, is proposing to build and operate Snowy 2.0. This pumped-hydro project would increase the energy capacity within the existing Snowy Scheme by linking the Tantangara and Talbingo Dams with tunnels feeding a new underground power station.

As part of the project, Snowy Hydro proposes to construct and operate a factory that would manufacture precast concrete segments that would line the tunnels being excavated for Snowy 2.0. The proposed concrete segment factory will be located on the south eastern side of Polo Flat, an industrial area located to the east of Cooma. The project lies north of Carlaminda Road and East of Polo Flat Road. It is expected to operate for 3.5 years with a workforce of approximately 125 people.

* 1. Have you heard of Snowy Hydro?

☐ Yes

☐ No

* 2. Have you had any interaction with Snowy Hydro?

☐ Yes

☐ No

* 3. If you have had discussion with Snowy Hydro, what issues did you discuss?

* 4. How would you rate your awareness of the Segment Factory servicing the broader Snowy 2.0 Project on a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 is no knowledge and 10 is a lot of knowledge?

No knowledge										A lot of knowledge
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 5. Below is a list of potential social impacts. For each social impact please tick the box that best describes how the proposed Segment Factory servicing the Snowy 2.0 Project is likely to affect you and/or your community.

	Negative impact	Neutral	Positive impact
Local business	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Property prices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rental or temporary accommodation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Agricultural land	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Access to services (health, education etc)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Access to recreation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drinking water	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Visual amenity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Local environmental values	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander customs and values	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community values	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Way of life	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hygienic environment (eg dust in house)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other (please specify)

* 6. What is your postcode/suburb?

* 7. My age is: (please tick one box)

☐ Under 18

☐ 45-54

☐ 18-24

☐ 55-64

☐ 25-34

☐ 65+

☐ 35-44

☐ Other (please specify)

* 8. I identify as: (please tick boxes that apply to you)

☐ Male

☐ Torres Strait Islander

☐ Female

☐ I speak a language other than English at home

☐ Other

☐ I have a disability and/or special need

☐ Aboriginal

☐ Other (please specify)

9. Would you like to be contacted? If so, please provide your contact details below.

☐ Yes

☐ No

Your contact information: Name/ Email/ Telephone

Annexure C

Consultation report

1 Polo Flat Precast Factory Consultation Report

To support the Polo Flat consultation activities a letter was drafted by FGJV and Snowy Hydro Limited to send to all residents affected by the development of the Polo Flat Precast Yard and alternate logistic route. Snowy Monaro Regional Council assisted FGJV by utilising their local rates database and sending letters to the identified affected residents. Letters (315) were sent to residents and landowners residing or owning properties on:

- Shannons Flat Road.
- Polo Flat Road.
- Yallakool Road.
- Mittagang Road.
- Part of Snowy Mountains Highway.

Residents and landowners were provided with three opportunities to engage on the Polo Flat Precast Yard with the Project Team. These included:

Table 1.1 Consultation details

Date	Time	Location
24 July 2019	6-8 pm	H Hardware, Polo Flat
30 July 2019	6-8 pm	Shannons Flat Hall, Shannons Flat
31 July 2019	6-8 pm	Snowy Scheme Museum, Adaminaby

The Project Team provided a short presentation outlining information on several key areas including:

- Project fast facts;
- Polo Flat history;
- Precast Yard design layout;
- Precast factory key facts;
- Segment production key facts;
- Estimated traffic movements – Precast Yard;
- Proposed EIS requirements;
- EIS issues considered;

- Regional impacts;
- Possible alternate route; and
- Approvals process for alternate route

A formal and informal question and answer session was held after each presentation for all attendees. All attendees were also asked to complete the “Concrete Segment Factory Project Social Impact Survey” to provide important feedback to the team. The surveys completed were onsite at the meetings and attendees were informed that the survey was also available online (numbers of those not included in the report).

Outlined below is the number of surveys received by consultation venue:

Table 1.2 On-line survey by consultation venue

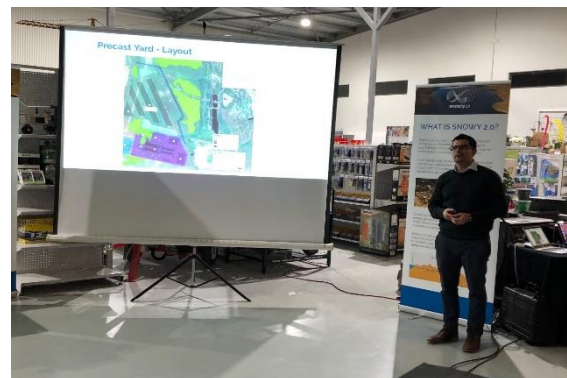
Venue	Number of Surveys Received
Polo Flat – H Hardware	14
Shannons Flat – Shannons Flat Hall	15
Adaminaby – Snowy Museum	6

1.1 Polo Flat Social Impact Assessment Business Consultation Session

This session was organised by Snowy Hydro Limited and supported by FGJV and was targeted at existing Polo Flat businesses. Approximately 80 people attended the session.

The attendees asked 19 questions during the formal question and answer session. Key issues raised included:

- Predicted noise and traffic impacts;
- General enquiries relating to how segments would be moved around the area;
- Request to reduce the speed limit on Polo Flat Road;
- Road safety;
- Planned road upgrades because of Snowy 2.0 activities;
- Loss of social amenity; and
- Information on future consultation process and activities.



Caption: Snowy Hydro and FGJV Polo Flat Business Consultation

1.2 Questions raised by attendees

1. Where are the concrete segments going to be transported from?
2. Will truck movements occur on a 24/7 basis?

3. How heavy are the concrete segments?
4. Will the loads be wide or a standard load?
5. Will the speed limit on Polo Flat Road be reduced?
6. How are the segments being loaded onto trucks?
7. Will there be an upgrade at the intersection of Yallakool Road and the Monaro Highway?
8. Where will the segment factory get their water from?
9. Does this water usage impact the current Cooma capacity?
10. What is the timeframe from construction of the factory to operation?
11. What time of the day will you be operating with truck movements if you use Mittagang Road?
12. Is the bridge over Cooma Creek safe for truck movements?
13. Is Yallakool Road safe for truck movements?
14. What is the approval process for the alternate route?
15. What is the ongoing consultation process for the alternate route?
16. A lot of traffic will be going through the centre of town how will this affect the amenity of Cooma and local businesses?
17. Will you be straightening out Polo Flat Road as part of the proposed upgrades?
18. Where is the cement, gravel and sand coming from?
19. What are the proposed traffic impacts on people?



Caption: Snowy Hydro and FGJV Polo Flat Business Consultation



Caption: Snowy Hydro and FGJV Polo Flat Business Consultation

1.3 Polo Flat Social Impact Assessment Resident/Landowner Consultation Session - Shannons Flat Hall

This session was organised by Snowy Hydro Limited and supported by FGJV and was targeted at residents and landowners affected by the alternate route option. Approximately 23 people attended the session.

The attendees asked 18 questions during the formal question and answer session. Key issues raised included:

- Road safety;
- Extent of road upgrades;
- Operations of Precast Yard;
- Environmental impacts;

- Impacts to stock movement; and
- Driver behaviour.

There was generally a positive sentiment within the room with overwhelming support for the project. There was little objection to the use of the alternate route conditional on the safe upgrade of Shannons Flat Road for heavy vehicle use. Attendees also had no objection to Shannons Flat Road being used in its current state for heavy vehicle use in case of emergencies.

1.3.1 Questions raised by attendees

1. Will mobile reception be improved with the road upgrades?
2. Where will the water will be coming from for the Precast Yard?
3. Where is the sand coming from?
4. Can fixed wing aircraft still operate from the airfield?
5. Will the Shannons Flat upgrade include a dual carriageway?
6. Who will maintain the road once upgraded?
7. How will we be able to move stock across the road?
8. With 20 million dollars secured to upgrade the road how much of the road does that seal?
9. How long will the segment plant be opened?
10. With talk of a Snowy 3.0 why would you decommission the segment plant?
11. How is endangered fauna and threatened species going to be addressed?
12. What is the percentage increase of heavy vehicles using Shannons Flat Road as part of the alternate route proposal?
13. How will you address spreading of love grass in the area with Snowy 2.0 truck movements?
14. What type of upgrade would be happening on Shannons Flat Road is funds could be secured?
15. How will you address local driver behaviour on Shannons Flat and Bobeyan Roads?
16. How will you fund the upgrade of Shannons Flat Road?
17. What trailer size are you using to move the segments?
18. How can the community get involved in supporting the need to upgrade Shannons Flat Road with the local Council and politicians?



Caption: Snowy Hydro and FGJV Shannons Flat Resident/Landowner Consultation



Caption: Snowy Hydro and FGJV Shannons Flat Resident/Landowner Consultation

1.4 Polo Flat Social Impact Assessment Resident/Landowner Consultation Session - Snowy Museum, Adaminaby

This session was organised by Snowy Hydro Limited and supported by FGJV and was targeted at residents and landowners affected by the alternate route option. Approximately 15 people attended the session.

The attendees asked 11 questions during the formal question and answer session. Key issues raised included:

- Traffic impacts;
- Truck movements at night;
- Reduction of speed limits;
- Safety of stock movements;
- Noise impacts by additional truck movements;
- Designated truck stops;
- Road upgrades; and
- Road upgrade funding.

1.4.1 Questions raised by attendees

1. Will heavy vehicle movements for Snowy 2.0 operate at night?
2. Will the speed limit be reduced for Adaminaby?
3. Would you consider installing rubber pavement on the Snowy Mountains Highway to reduce truck noise?
4. How will the movement of heavy traffic affect the centre of Cooma especially at the roundabouts?
5. Will the bridge be upgraded at the Shannons Flat/Bobeyan Road?
6. Would there be some consideration in improving the stock crossing signage in the area?
7. Who is going to fund the roadworks required for Snowy 2.0?
8. Will only empty trucks be coming back on the proposed alternate route?
9. Are there any examples of operational precast factories within Australia or the world?
10. Will marked truck rest stops be allocated and built in the Adaminaby area?

Will any areas on the Snowy Mountains Highway be upgraded for the operation of the Polo Flat Precast Yard?



Caption: Snowy Hydro and FGJV Adaminaby Resident/Landowner Consultation

Annexure D

Social baseline

SIA Baseline Report

Proposed segment factory

Prepared for Snowy Hydro Limited
July 2019

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SIA Baseline Report

Proposed segment factory

Report Number

J17188 RP 103a

Client

Snowy Hydro Limited

Date

30 July 2019

Version

v1 Final

Prepared by



Andrea Kanaris

Associate, SIA National Technical Leader

30 July 2019

Approved by



Brett McLennan

Director

30 July 2019

This report has been prepared in accordance with the brief provided by the client and has relied upon the information collected at the time and under the conditions specified in the report. All findings, conclusions or recommendations contained in the report are based on the aforementioned circumstances. The report is for the use of the client and no responsibility will be taken for its use by other parties. The client may, at its discretion, use the report to inform regulators and the public.

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Photographs

Photograph 1.1	Model of original Snowy Scheme on the main street of Cooma township	6
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1 Social baseline

1.1 Introduction

The social baseline study describes the existing population and social conditions of potentially affected communities within the SIA study area which form the benchmark against which the social impacts outlined in the Social Impact Assessment (SIA) were assessed.

1.2 Overview of study area

The primary social area of influence (ie study area) for the proposed segment factory is Cooma township. The extended study area includes Adaminaby township. These communities have the potential to experience change during the establishment and operation of the proposed segment factory.

Cooma is located to the west of the site and Adaminaby is approximately 55 km west of Cooma. Both townships are within the Snowy Monaro Regional local government area (LGA).

Snowy Monaro Regional Council (SMRC) was established in May 2016 following the merger of Bombala, Cooma-Monaro Shire and Snowy River Shire councils. The largest town in the Snowy Monaro Regional LGA is Cooma with a population of 6,379 in 2016.

1.3 Demographic profile

In the 2016 Census, Cooma Urban Centre and Locality (UCL) had a total population of 6,379 people. Over the 10-year period from the 2006 Census to 2016 Census, the population slightly decreased from 6,588 to 6,379 people, approximately a 3% drop (Table 1.1).

Adaminaby UCL has a total population of 210 people in the 2016 Census. The township experienced a significant decrease in population since 2006, from 235 to 210 people, approximately -11% decrease (Table 1.1).

Table 1.1 Population trend, 2006 to 2016

Study area	2006 Census	2011 Census	2016 Census	Total % change 2006 – 2016	% of population change 2006 – 2011	% of population change 2011 – 2016
Cooma UCL	6,588	6,301	6,379	-3.2%	-4.4%	+1.2%
Adaminaby UCL	235	226	210	-10.6%	-3.8%	-7.1%
Snowy Monaro Regional LGA	19,450	19,691	20,218	+4.0%	+1.2%	+2.7%
Non-metropolitan NSW	2,419,769	2,512,952	2,643,536	+9.3%	+3.9%	+5.2%
NSW	6,549,174	6,917,656	7,480,228	+14.2%	+5.6%	+8.1%

Source: 2016 Census of Population and Housing – General Community Profile (ABS 2016).

Despite the previous decrease in population in Cooma and Adaminaby the projected population of the Snowy Monaro Regional LGA is estimated to increase from 20,750 in 2016 to 21,550 by 2036 (Table 1.2) according to NSW State and LGA population and household projects (DPIE 2019).

Table 1.2 **Projected population, 2016 to 2036**

Location	2016	2021	2026	2031	2036	Total change	Total % change
Snowy Monaro Regional LGA	20,750	21,100	21,350	21,500	21,550	+800	+3.9%

Source: 2016 NSW projection data by LGA (DPIE 2019).

1.3.1 Population by age and sex

The median age in Cooma is 45, slightly higher than 43 in the Snowy Monaro Regional LGA and non-metropolitan NSW (also 43), and 39 in NSW (Table 1.3).

In Adaminaby, the biggest reduction in age group was between 0 to 4 years by 60%. At the time of the 2016 Census, more than 50% of the population in Adaminaby were aged 55 years and above, with the largest proportion being 65 years and over, representing more than 30% of the total population. The median age in Adaminaby is 56, which is significantly higher than 43 in the Snowy Monaro Regional Council LGA.

The male and female ratio in Cooma is fairly equal, at 50.2% and 49.9% respectively, however, there are 9% more males than females, 53% and 44% respectively, in Adaminaby.

Both Cooma and Adaminaby have a low population in age groups between 15 to 19 years and 20 to 24 years. This trend is consistent with Snowy Monaro Regional LGA and non-metropolitan NSW and NSW in general (Table 1.3).

Table 1.3 **Aged group distribution and median age, 2016**

Age group	Cooma UCL	Adaminaby UCL	Snowy Monaro Regional LGA	Non-metropolitan NSW	NSW
0-4 years	4.8%	1.9%	4.7%	5.9%	6.2%
5-14 years	10.7%	8.1%	12.4%	12.5%	12.3%
15-19 years	6.0%	4.8%	5.8%	6.0%	6.0%
20-24 years	5.4%	5.7%	5.3%	5.6%	6.6%
25-34 years	11.6%	5.7%	11.1%	11.0%	14.3%
35-44 years	11.0%	5.7%	12.2%	11.5%	13.4%
45-54 years	13.8%	12.4%	15.0%	13.2%	13.1%
55-64 years	13.4%	21.4%	14.3%	13.8%	12.0%
65 years and over	23.4%	30.5%	19.2%	20.6%	16.3%
Median age of persons 2016	45	56	43	43	38

Source: 2016 Census of Population and Housing – General Community Profile (ABS 2016).

1.3.2 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population

In Cooma, 3.20% of the total population are identified as Indigenous population, representing 204 people. It is slightly higher compared to Snowy Monaro Regional LGA and NSW State average, but lower compared to non-metropolitan NSW (Table 1.4).

The indigenous population in Adaminaby has not been recorded.

Table 1.4 Indigenous persons as percentage of population, 2016

Study area	Indigenous population
Cooma UCL	3.20%
Adaminaby UCL	-
Snowy Monaro Regional LGA	2.2%
Non-metropolitan NSW	5.5%
NSW	2.9%

Source: 2016 Census of Population and Housing – General Community Profile (ABS 2016)

1.3.3 Vulnerable groups

The Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) is a suite of four summary measures that were created from Census data, including:

- the Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage (IRSD);
- the Index of Relative Socio-Economic Advantage and Disadvantage (IRSAD);
- the Index of Education and Occupation (IEO); and
- the Index of Economic Resources (IER).

Each index is a summary of a different subset of Census variables and focuses on a different aspect of socio-economic advantage and disadvantage.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) broadly define relative socio-economic advantage and disadvantage in terms of people access to material and social resources, and their ability to participate in society.

The IRSD ranks areas on a continuum from most disadvantaged (high in rank, eg, rank 1) to least disadvantaged (low in rank, eg rank 129). The IRSAD also ranks area in the same way, high in rank being most disadvantaged, low in rank being most advantaged, out of 152 and 129 NSW LGAs in 2011 and 2016 respectively.

Table 1.5 SEIFA, 2011 and 2016

	IRSD 2011 (out of 152)	IRSAD 2011 (out of 152)	IRSD 2016 (out of 129)	IRSAD 2016 (out of 129)
Snowy Monaro Regional LGA	-	-	Rank 100 in NSW	Rank 90 in NSW
Cooma Monaro LGA (former)	Rank 103 in NSW	Rank 95 in NSW	-	-
Snowy River LGA (former)	Rank 133 in NSW	Rank 123 in NSW	-	-

Source: 2016 Census of Population and Housing – General Community Profile (ABS 2016).

Snowy Monaro Regional LGA is performing towards least disadvantaged in NSW.

1.3.4 Cultural diversity

In Cooma UCL, the majority of the population is Australia born (76.1%). Other common countries of birth were England (2.6%), New Zealand (1.5%), Germany (1.4%), Italy (0.8%) and Netherlands (0.6%). This cultural diversity is significantly less diverse than the NSW average of 65.5% of the population born in Australia (Table 1.6).

Cooma has a much higher instance of generational Australians. 60.8% of people in Cooma UCL had both parents born in Australia, compared to 45.4% of population in NSW.

81.9% of the Cooma population only speak English at home, with 9.2% of households speaking a language other than English. This is higher compared to NSW at 68.5% of population only speaking English at home.

Table 1.6 Country of birth, 2016

Study area	Born in Australia	Both parents born in Australia	English only spoken at home	Households where a non-English language is spoken
Cooma UCL	76.1%	60.8%	81.9%	9.2%
Adaminaby UCL	81.7%	61.5%	97.0%	7.7%
NSW	65.5%	45.4%	68.5%	26.5%

Source: Source: 2016 Census of Population and Housing – General Community Profile (ABS 2016)

Similarly, in Adaminaby UCL, the majority of the population is Australia born (81.7%), higher than Cooma and NSW. Other common countries of birth were England (9.1%), Scotland (1.5%), Austria (1.5%) and France (1.5%). This reflects a significantly less diverse community than Cooma and NSW.

Adaminaby also has a much higher instance of generational Australian, 61.5% of people in Adaminaby UCL had both parents born in Australia.

There are 97% of Adaminaby population that only speak English at home, with 7.7% of households speaking a language other than English at home. This is significantly higher compared to NSW at 68.5% of population only speaking English at home.

1.3.5 Disability

In Cooma, 381 people are in need of assistance with a profound or severe disability, who are defined as needing help or assistance in one or more of the three core activities of self-care, mobility and communication, because of a disability, long term health condition (lasting six months or more) or old age. This represents 5.9% of the Cooma population and is higher than the NSW average of 5.4% (Table 1.7).

In Adaminaby, there are 9.0% of the population who require the same assistance, which is significantly higher than Cooma and NSW average. This could be due to a large percentage of aged population in Adaminaby (Table 1.7).

Table 1.7 **Core activity need assistance, 2016**

Study area	Has need for assistance	Does not have need for assistance
Cooma UCL	6.0%	82.0%
Adaminaby UCL	9.1%	85.2%
NSW	5.4%	87.7%

Source: 2016 Census of Population and Housing – General Community Profile (ABS 2016).

Snowy Monaro Regional Council provides a range of services for people with a disability across the region. This includes meals on wheels, social support, home maintenance, home modification, transport, respite and more.

1.3.6 Homelessness

The number of estimated homelessness in Snowy Monaro Regional LGA in the 2016 Census is 89 people. This represents 0.2% of homelessness rate in NSW. However, there is anecdotal evidence that the actual homelessness rate and people at risk of homelessness is higher.

“The radio station that will be demolished on site is a well-known popular spot for homelessness.”

– Snowy Monaro Regional Council

1.3.7 Aged population

Both Cooma and Adaminaby have a relatively higher median age (45 and 56 respectively) compared to the LGA, non-metropolitan NSW and NSW. The percentage of the population aged 65 years and over are also much higher than NSW, particularly in Adaminaby (Table 1.8).

Table 1.8 **Aged group distribution and median age, 2016**

Age group	Cooma UCL	Adaminaby UCL	Snowy Monaro Regional LGA	Non-metropolitan NSW	NSW
65 years and over	23.4%	30.5%	19.2%	20.6%	16.3%
Median age of persons 2016	45	56	43	43	38

Source: 2016 Census of Population and Housing – General Community Profile (ABS 2016).

1.4 Community culture and values

1.4.1 Aboriginal history

The Snowy Monaro Region has been home to Aboriginal communities for thousands of years. Over time, a number of Aboriginal groups have been identified as having ancestral connections to the region. These groups include the Bidjawal people in the south eastern parts of the region, the Walgalu people in the west of the region, and the southern Ngannawal people in the far north east of the region (SMRC 2019).

1.4.2 European history

European colonisation began in the region in the 1830's, following exploration by Captain J.M.Currie. By the late 1800's, towns and settlements had established in Bredbo, Cooma, Old Adaminaby, Nimmitabel. (SMRC 2019).

1.4.3 Other history

The Gold Rush came to the region in the late 1850s, with camps established at Kiandra and Bredbo/Cowra Creek. The discovery brought thousands of new residents to the region including large numbers of Chinese migrants. Mining had mostly ended by the early 1900s, however both Kiandra and Cowra Creek are still home to historical artefacts (SMRC 2019).

1.4.4 Modern history

The design and construction of the Snowy Scheme left a lasting infrastructure on the geography and social fabric of the region. The Scheme is widely recognised as one of the major infrastructure projects in Australia's modern history.

Construction of the Snowy Scheme brought an estimated 100,000 migrant workers from over 30 nationalities in Australia. Cooma's population approximately quadrupled between the 1940s and 1960s as hundreds of new homes were built to accommodate workers and support staff associated with the Snowy Scheme (SMRC 2019).



Photograph 1.1 Model of original Snowy Scheme on the main street of Cooma township

1.5 Social infrastructure

1.5.1 Education

i Primary and secondary education

There are six primary, secondary and combined schools in the study area. Of these, four are government schools and two are non-government schools. The percentage of populations attending primary and secondary schools in the local area is relatively lower than non-metropolitan NSW and NSW. This can be attributed to the relatively high proportion of aged population in these communities (Table 1.9).

Table 1.9 School data, 2018

School	Sector	Type	Year range	Full-time equivalent teaching staff	Full time equivalent enrolments
Cooma North Public School	Government	Primary	K-6	18	324
Cooma Public School	Government	Primary	U, K-6	18.6	259
Monaro High School	Government	Secondary	U, 7-12	47.4	460
Snowy Mountains Christian School	Non-government	Combined	K-10	8.5	79
St Patrick's Parish School	Non-government	Combined	K-10	19.4	239
Adaminaby Public School	Government	Primary	K-6	1.3	19

Note: U = students and/or classes, which cannot readily be allocated to a specific year of education; eg students with special education needs.

Source: myschool.edu.au.

ii Tertiary education

There is a TAFE and a Country Universities Centre in Cooma.

TAFE NSW Cooma is located at the northern entrance to Cooma. It has developed flexible delivery strategies to service a small but growing population, spread out over a large area. TAFE NSW Cooma offers various qualification level and courses, such as Diploma, Certificate I to Certificate IV and short courses. Courses can be conducted over full time and part time.

The Country Universities Centre (CUC) is a not for profit organisation, established with the aim of making tertiary education more accessible for regional and remote communities in NSW. CUC Snowy Monaro provides space, high speed internet, video conferencing and other facilities to students in the Snowy Monaro region with a place to focus on study, without having to travel or relocate to a university town and campus. The facilities are offered free of charge to anyone enrolled in a University course, undergraduate or postgraduate degree.

iii Education data

At the time of the 2016 Census, there were 1,999 people in Cooma enrolled in an educational institute (preschool, infants/primary, secondary, technical or further educational institution, university or other tertiary institution, and other type of educational institution). In Adaminaby, there are 39 people who are currently attending an educational institution. Percentage of persons attending an educational institution and percentage of persons aged 15 years and above with a qualification is presented in Table 1.10.

Table 1.10 Education data, 2016

	Cooma UCL	Adaminaby UCL	Snowy Monaro Regional LGA	Non-metropolitan NSW	NSW
Type of education institution attending 2016 (% of persons attending an educational institution)					
Preschool	4.8%	0.6%	4.9%	6.1%	5.7%
Infants/primary	22.2%	20.5%	26.2%	27.3%	26.1%
Secondary	17.3%	28.2%	19.0%	20.6%	20.1%
Technical or further educational institution	6.4%	23.1%	6.2%	6.5%	6.2%
University or other tertiary institution	6.4%	0%	6.9%	10.3%	16.2%
Non-school qualifications 2016 (% of persons aged 15 years and above with a qualification)					
Postgraduate degree level	3.7%	3.0%	4.1%	4.5%	9.4%
Graduate diploma and graduate certificate level	2.3%	0%	2.5%	2.6%	2.1%
Bachelor degree level	14.9%	5.0%	17.1%	17.7%	23.3%
Advanced diploma and diploma level	12.0%	12.1%	13.4%	14.0%	12.1%
Certificate level	38.0%	52.5%	39.8%	40.4%	36.7%

Source: 2016 Census of Population and Housing – General Community Profile (ABS 2016).

1.5.2 Health services

Cooma and Adaminaby are located within the area of South Eastern NSW Health Network. This section summarises the services provided to Cooma and Adaminaby.

i General practitioner service

Between 2015 and 2016, the percentage of adults (aged 15+ years) who saw a general practitioner (GP) in the last 12 months within the South Eastern NSW area was 83.3%. This is slightly higher than the national figure of 81.9%. The percentage of adults who saw a GP after hours, during 2015-2016 was 3.3%, compared to national performance of 8%. The number of adults who visited a GP after hours increased from 4.7% in 2012 to 2014 to 7.1% in 2014 to 2015 but reduced again in 2015 to 2016.

Continued access to a preferred GP is a factor which promotes consistent health care services in any community. In the South Eastern NSW area (2013-2014 data), 81.8% of adults indicated they have a preferred GP. This is higher than the national benchmark of 79.7%. For the same period, however, 39.2% indicated that they had difficulty accessing their preferred GP. This percentage is higher than the national benchmark of 28.5%.

In summary, the majority of adults living in the South Eastern NSW area, including Cooma and Adaminaby, are able to identify a preferred GP but they also experience some difficulty in accessing their preferred GP when needed. This suggests that a GP identified as preferred GP by adults in the community are not able to fully accommodate the demands for access to their services.

There are no medical centres in Adaminaby, residents travel to Cooma to access GP and hospital services. While there are medical centres in Cooma, there is no after hour GP services. Residents go to the hospital for after hour medical services. Further, hospital doctors are available on a rostered basis and sourced from the Cooma medical centres.

ii Hospital service

Cooma hospital is a small regional facility with an emergency department with less than 50 beds. The number of patients admitted to Cooma Hospital has increased from 2,902 in 2012-2013 to 4,485 in 2016-2017 (Table 1.11). During the same period there was a decline in childbirth and emergency surgical treatment. The number of admissions under other medical treatment has, however, increased over the years. There were no mental health related hospital admissions from 2012 to 2017.

Table 1.11 Number of admissions to Cooma Hospital

Admission category	2012 – 2013	2013 – 2014	2014 – 2015	2015 – 2016	2016 – 2017
Childbirth	165	157	151	145	135
Surgical (emergency)	10	11	13	11	6
Surgical (non-emergency)	298	275	310	292	286
Medical (emergency)	1,617	1,604	1,640	1,748	1,835
Medical (non-emergency)	237	261	1,186	1,542	1,577
Other acute (emergency)	17	9	13	10	13
Other acute (non-emergency)	476	488	517	540	472
Mental health	0	0	0	0	0
Rehabilitation	34	30	22	41	61
Palliative	28	12	13	8	43
Other subacute and non-acute	20	22	19	<5	57
Total	2,902	2,869	3,884	4,337	4,485

Source: myhospitals.gov.au.

In 2017 to 2018, 100% of patients (26 surgeries) received Category 1 surgery within 30 days at Cooma Hospital, which is above the national hospital peer group performance, at 99%. This may be due to the reduced number of surgeries undertaken in 2017 to 2018, compared to 2016 to 2017 (68 surgeries).

Category 2 surgery within 90 days is 98%, consistent with the national peer group average of 98%. The number of surgeries performed were 60.

Category 3 surgeries within 365 days was at 99% compared to national peer group average of 100%. The number of surgeries performed was 125.

In 2017 to 2018, the median waiting time for Category 1 surgery was 23 days at Cooma Hospital, which is a longer waiting period compared to the national peer group performance of 12 days. The median waiting time for Category 2 surgery was 57 days, compared to the national peer group performance of 35 days. A category 3 surgery has a median waiting time of 175 days, which is a more significant variation from the national peer group performance of 84 days. The overall waiting time in Cooma Hospital for any type of surgery is therefore generally longer than the national average.

Cooma Hospital is identified in the NSW Budget for FY2019/2020 for a \$9.30 million redevelopment.

There is currently no hospital service in Adaminaby with no plans for a hospital in the future.

1.5.3 Emergency services

There is one police station, one ambulance station, and one rural fire and rescue station in Cooma.

The Cooma police station is part of the Monaro Police District, district office is located in Queanbeyan. Other police stations in the proximity to the site is in Adaminaby to the west and Nimmitabel to the east. The Cooma police station is not open 24 hours.

The Cooma Ambulance Service is part of the NSW Ambulance Southern Zone. Other ambulance stations are in Perisher Valley and Jindabyne. The NSW Ambulance Service is generally busy during the snow season.

The Cooma-Monaro rural fire service is part of the Monaro rural fire services, situated in Polo Flat. Other Monaro rural fire services include an office in Bombala and Berridale.

At the time of this study the number of emergency service workers was not available and as such it is difficult to know the capacity of the emergency services.

1.5.4 Transport infrastructure

i Modes of travel

Based on the 2016 Census data for the Snowy Monaro LGA, approximately 66.3% of the LGA population travel to work by car as a driver or as a passenger. This represents 6,532 people. The percentage of people travelling to work by car as a driver or passenger is lower than regional NSW, at 73.4%. Approximately 1.7% of the LGA population travel to work by public transport, either train or bus, which is mainly due to the limited public transport options that are available in the LGA.

Approximately 10.6% of the LGA population aged 15 years and above did not go to work at the time of 2016 ABS Census data were collected. The LGA has 8.2% of population who worked at home, which is much greater than regional NSW at 5.8%. In addition, approximately 8.1% of the LGA population travel to work by either walking or bicycle, which represents 797 people, higher than regional NSW which is at 4.1%.

ii Airport

Snowy Mountains Airport is located 16 km south-west of Cooma on the Kosciuszko Road. It provides return services from the Snowy Mountains to Sydney and is serviced by Regional Express (Rex). A variety of options are available to passengers arriving at or departing from Snowy Mountains Airport, such as airport shuttle, private transfers, rental cars and taxi services to and from the airport.

The regional flight provides direct and non-direct services to and from Sydney to Snowy Mountains Airport all year round. NonDirect service stops at Merimbula. During the snow season, more flights are available.

The NSW Government's \$110 million Regional Tourism Infrastructure Fund supports regional tourism by funding critical visitor economy infrastructure projects such as rail trails, airports and cruise terminals. The NSW Government has committed \$70 million for upgrades to 27 regional airport projects that will boost their capacity and safety and increase their ability to attract visitors to regional NSW. The projects include terminal upgrades, apron and runway improvements, investment in airport emergency services, lighting upgrades and other vital works to accommodate more and larger aircraft, to improve safety and services.

Snowy Mountains Airport has been identified as a Stage 2 regional airport infrastructure project.

iii Public transport

There is no train service in Cooma and Polo Flat. The nearest train station to Cooma is in Canberra, which has connecting train services to Goulburn, the Southern Highlands townships and Sydney three times a day. Train services from Goulburn to Griffith and Melbourne is also available, via Yass and Cootamundra.

There is no direct bus or coaches services along Polo Flat Road, the closest bus stop to the project area is Cooma Hospital on Victoria Street (stop ID 263036), approximately 23-minute walk to the project access road that intersects with Polo Flat Road. The coach operator is Cooma Coaches, a private coach operator, Opal card is not accepted. The coach service (route 870) operates three times a day from Monday to Friday only.

iv Road network

Snowy Mountains Highway (B72) is a State-funded rural highway and is the main transport route that connects the site to Cooma and the Hume Highway. It runs from Princes Highway north of Bega, via Bemboka to the Monaro Highway south of Nimmitabel; then from the Monaro Highway at Cooma at the junction of Sharp Street and Bombala Street, via Sharp Street and then via Adaminaby, Kiandra, Rules Point, Tumut and Adelong to the Hume Highway near Hills Creek.

The Monaro Highway runs from the Victorian border, via Rockton, Bombala, Nimmitabel, Cooma, Bredbo, Michelago and Royalla to Canberra.

1.5.5 Community services

There are several community services offered to the residents in the region, they include aged care services; disability services; residential aged care services and youth services. In addition, Council also provide community transport services for eligible community members. Eligible community members are non-Aboriginal people aged 65 and above or Aboriginal people aged 50 and above with physical, psychological or mobility issues, younger people with a disability, and persons disadvantaged because of restricted access to public transport and living in rural and remote areas.

Council's community support services have been in operation since 1989. Services can be tailored to meet the needs of individuals and their carers by providing domestic assistance, personal care, social support, meals on wheels, home maintenance and goods and equipment purchase and hire.

Council's youth services include a Youth Development Officer, who works in partnership with young people, local services, schools and the YMCA's Youth Projects to develop and delivery opportunities for young people. The Youth Development Officer targets predominantly youth aged 12 to 17, and 18 to 24. Other youth services include The Hub Youth Centre, library services, school holiday programs, Youth Week and Snowy Monaro Regional Youth Council.

Council provide community transport services for people living in Cooma, Berridale and Bombala to and from Canberra and Bega for medical and social appointments, and to other regional towns for shopping on a fortnightly and monthly basis.

1.6 Workforce

1.6.1 Employment

The unemployment rate in Cooma is 4.9%, higher than the Snowy Monaro Regional LGA at 3.3%, but lower than the non-metropolitan NSW at 6.6% and NSW at 6.3%. Approximately 56% of the labour force in Cooma are in full-time employment and 34% are part-time. While the unemployment rate is relatively low, there is an ongoing issue with under-employment in Cooma (Table 1.12).

The major employment sector is retail trade, followed by health care and social assistance. Accommodation and food services are the third largest sector for employment.

Similarly, the unemployment rate in Adaminaby is higher at 5.8% than Snowy Monaro Regional LGA. However, it is lower than the NSW average and non-metropolitan NSW. Almost 70% of the labour force in Adaminaby is full time and less than 20% is part time. The major employment industry is accommodation and food services, followed by retail trade (Table 1.12).

Table 1.12 Employment and industry data, 2016

	Cooma UCL	Adaminaby UCL	Snowy Monaro Regional LGA	Non-metropolitan NSW	NSW
Full time	56.2%	69.2%	61.0%	55.2%	59.2%
Part time	33.7%	17.3%	30.1%	32.8%	29.7%
Unemployed	5.0%	5.8%	3.3%	6.6%	6.3%
Top 3 industries of employment	Retail trade	Accommodation and food services	Accommodation and food services	Health care and social assistance	Health care and social assistance
	Health care and social assistance	Retail trade	Agriculture, forestry and fishing	Retail trade	Retail trade
	Accommodation and food services	Agriculture, forestry and fishing & Electricity, gas, water and waste services	Retail trade	Education and training	Education and training
Top 3 occupations	Professionals	Labourers	Managers	Professionals	Professionals
	Technicians and trades	Technicians and trades	Technicians and trades	Technicians and trades	Clerical and administrative workers

Table 1.12 Employment and industry data, 2016

Cooma UCL	Adaminaby UCL	Snowy Monaro Regional LGA	Non-metropolitan NSW	NSW
Community and personal service workers	Managers	Professionals	Managers	Managers

Source: 2016 Census of Population and Housing – General Community Profile (ABS 2016).

1.7 Housing and accommodation

1.7.1 Housing type and structure

The proportion of occupied private dwellings in Cooma generally reflects the non-metropolitan state average but below NSW overall, except Adaminaby which has a lower proportion of occupied private dwellings. As would be expected in these rural areas, there is a predominance of separate houses, as opposed to semi-detached or apartment dwellings.

Table 1.13 Housing type and structure, 2016

	Cooma UCL	Adaminaby UCL	Snowy Monaro Regional LGA	Non-metropolitan NSW	NSW
Occupied private dwellings	86.8%	63.1%	75.9%	86.8%	90.1%
Unoccupied private dwellings	13.1%	36.9%	24.2%	13.2%	9.9%
Separate house	87.0%	94.1%	75.2%	82.2%	65.3%
Semi-detached, row or terrace house, townhouse	4.3%	0%	4.6%	9.2%	12.2%
Flat or apartment	6.3%	3.0%	5.5%	6.4%	20.7%
Other dwelling	1.2%	0%	1.5%	1.5%	1.3%

Source: 2016 Census of Population and Housing – General Community Profile (ABS 2016).

1.7.2 Tenure

There was a higher proportion of dwellings being purchased outright and a lower proportion of being rented in Adaminaby and LGA compared to non-metropolitan NSW and NSW. Adaminaby contained a larger proportion of fully owned dwellings, reflecting the older population age profile of these areas. Cooma, compared to Adaminaby and the rest of the indicators have a higher proportion of rental housing.

Table 1.14 Tenure, 2016

	Cooma UCL	Adaminaby UCL	Snowy Monaro Regional LGA	Non-metropolitan NSW	NSW
Owned outright	35.7%	56.4%	39.0-%	37.4%	30.7%
Owned with a mortgage	28.3%	17.8%	30.9%	30.6%	30.4%
Rented	31.3%	16.8%	25.1%	27.9%	30.3%
Other tenure	0.5%	0%	1.0%	1.0%	0.9%

Source: 2016 Census of Population and Housing – General Community Profile (ABS 2016).

1.7.3 Mortgage repayment and rent

Adaminaby has lower value rents and a higher vacancy rate, indicating lower rental demand. While Cooma has a higher mortgage repayment and higher rental rate, indicating a higher demand for rental housing in Cooma.

Table 1.15 Mortgage repayment and rent, 2016

	Cooma UCL	Adaminaby UCL	Snowy Monaro Regional LGA	Non-metropolitan NSW	NSW
Mortgage repayments (median mortgage repayments \$ monthly)	\$1,150	\$802	\$1,300	\$1,590	\$1,986
Rent (median rent \$ weekly)	\$222	\$150	\$220	\$270	\$380

Source: 2016 Census of Population and Housing – General Community Profile (ABS 2016).

1.7.4 Tourist accommodation

Cooma is situated in the Snowy Mountains region, famous for seasonal tourism attractions and activities. The tourist accommodation industry in Cooma is highly sought after during the snow season, often reaching capacity. A variety of tourist accommodation is available in Cooma and Adaminaby and are presented in the following table.

Table 1.16 Tourist accommodation, 2019

Tourist accommodation	Type of accommodation	Number of rooms
Alpine Hotel	Hotel and Bar	27
Australian Hotel	Hotel and Bar	10
Royal Hotel	Hotel and Bar	11
Alkira Motel	Motel	13
Alpine Country Motel	Motel	9
Altair Motel	Motel	19
Bunkhouse Motel	Motel	29

Table 1.16 Tourist accommodation, 2019

Tourist accommodation	Type of accommodation	Number of rooms
Cooma Country Club Motor Inn	Motel	27
Cooma Motor Lodge	Motel	43
Gateway Holiday Cabins	Cabins	10
High Country Motel	Motel	40
Kinross Inn	Motel	17
Nebula Motel	Motel	24
Nimmitabel Motel	Motel	10
Snow Season Motel Inn	Motel	60
Sovereign Inn	Motel	43
Swiss Motel	Motel	34
White Manor Motel	Motel	12
Ellstanmor Country Guest House	Guest House	4
Hillview	Guest House	2
Snow Goose Hotel	Hotel and Bar	9
Alpine Tourist Park	Tourist Park	-
Snowy Mountain Resort and Function Centre	Motel	46

Source: EMM 2018 and Google 2019.

1.7.5 Rental market trends

A search of rental housing available in Cooma and Adaminaby was undertaken using various websites, including realestate.com.au, domain.com.au, rent.com.au and realestateview.com.au on 29 July 2019. Results are presented in the following table.

Table 1.17 Rental housing availability, 2019

	Studio	One bedroom	Two bedrooms	Three bedrooms	Four + bedrooms	Total
Cooma	1	3	1	8	5	18
Adaminaby	-	1	-	1	1	3

Source: realestate.com.au, domain.com.au, rent.com.au, realestateview.com.au.

The results show that there were altogether 21 properties available to rent in Cooma and Adaminaby. The availability of rental property is low and is supported by stakeholder feedback on the emerging issue of availability of rental housing.

1.8 Health and community wellbeing

1.8.1 Health and wellbeing

Between 2014 and 2015, there were 162 deaths of residents in the Snowy Monaro Regional LGA. The death rate relative to total population has decreased by approximately 19% over the period 2001 to 2015. The published data indicates that the overall cardiovascular disease death rate was 172.1 per 100,000 people in the Snowy Monaro Regional LGA, higher than the NSW average of 155.7 per 100,000 people. Out of all circulatory disease, coronary heart disease death rate is the highest across NSW (66.8 per 100,000 people), and again this cause of death is higher in Snowy Monaro Regional LGA (72.1 per 100,000 people). Diabetes related death ranks second as a cause of death in Snowy Monaro Regional LGA, representing 29.5 per 100,000 people, which is the same as NSW average.

The road accident related death rate in Snowy Monaro Regional LGA represented 1.49% of the total NSW road accident related death rate in 2016.

1.8.2 Income

The median total personal income in Cooma and Adaminaby is \$601 and \$492 respectively. Both are lower than the LGA and NSW.

Table 1.18 Median income – individual, 2016

	Cooma UCL	Adaminaby UCL	Snowy Monaro Regional LGA	Non-metropolitan NSW	NSW
Individual (median income \$ weekly)	\$601	\$492	\$675	\$584	\$664

Source: 2016 Census of Population and Housing – General Community Profile (ABS 2016).

The median total household income per week in Cooma and Adaminaby is \$985 and \$725 respectively. Both are lower than the LGA, non-metropolitan NSW and NSW.

Table 1.19 Median income – household, 2016

	Cooma UCL	Adaminaby UCL	Snowy Monaro Regional LGA	Non-metropolitan NSW	NSW
Household (median income \$ weekly)	\$985	\$725	\$1,200	\$1,168	\$1,482

Source: 2016 Census of Population and Housing – General Community Profile (ABS 2016).

1.8.3 Dwellings with internet connection

The Australian Government's Regional Telecommunications Independent Review Committee conducted a Regional Telecommunications Review in 2015 into the adequacy of telecommunication services in regional, rural and remote parts of Australia.

It is evident in the review that regional users are evolving rapidly in their consumption of telecommunications services. They are reflecting society-wide changes in the way that they obtain entertainment and information, conduct their businesses and receive public services. They also have distinct needs and challenges arising from their geographic location and more mobile-dependent lives.

Some examples of the activities that require good mobile reception in the regional areas include:

- travelling long distances and spending extended periods of time outdoors, relying on mobile services for communication and safety;
- having a high dependence on online channels for accessing entertainment, shopping and essential services such as banking, education and healthcare;
- running home-based businesses, with different communications needs in comparison to other residential premises; and
- facing risks during natural disasters such as bushfire, creating a higher dependency on reliable emergency service connections, and a greater risk of mass service disruptions due to damage to infrastructure.

Coverage of non-metropolitan areas is lower than in urban areas. The mobile coverage by operators as a percentage of the population can be summarised as follows:

- Telstra
 - metro: 3G 100%, 4G 95%; and
 - non-metro: 3G 98%, 4G 74%.
- Optus
 - metro: 3G 100%, 4G 89%; and
 - non-metro: 3G 96%, 4G 60%.
- Vodafone
 - metro: 3G 99%, 4G 87%; and
 - non-metro: 3G 87%, 4G 50%.

In the 2016 Census, the number of dwellings does not have access to internet connection is 21.9% in Cooma and 23.2% in Adaminaby. This percentage is relatively high compared to NSW, which is at 14.7%.

1.8.4 Voluntary work

Volunteering rates can give an indication of social cohesion in a community, and the willingness of people to help each other. Volunteer rates in Cooma and Adaminaby are relatively high compared with the rates of NSW. The rates of voluntary work in the study area is presented in the following table.

Table 1.20 **Voluntary work, 2016**

	Volunteer	Not a volunteer	Total persons ⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾
Cooma UCL	21.8%	63.9%	5,390
Adaminaby UCL	28.8%	65.2%	184
NSW	18.1%	73.8%	6,093,895

Notes: 1. Count of persons aged 15 years and over.
 2. Total persons include voluntary work not stated.

Source: 2016 Census of Population and Housing – General Community Profile (ABS 2016).

1.8.5 Community safety and crime

Data from the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research indicates that the average crime ranking of Snowy Monaro Regional LGA in 2016 was at 77 out of 120 LGAs (ie LGAs that have populations greater than 3,000 people), with a ranking of one being the worst and 120 being the best. In 2012, Snowy Monaro Regional LGA was ranked 56, suggesting that crime risk in the Snowy Monaro Regional LGA has improved.

Note that the data is disaggregated by specific categories of crime (eg sexual offence, theft, fraud) and these are examined below.

Improvements are most evident in the following areas between the 2012 and 2016 periods:

- assault – non-domestic violence related offences;
- stealing related offences;
- fraud;
- intimidation, stalking and harassment related offences;
- other theft; and
- transport regulatory offences.

The two lowest ranking, being theft and transport regulatory offences had a nil incident rate in 2016.

However, Snowy Monaro Regional LGA was high in the following crime categories:

- sexual offences (ranked 40 in 2016);
- possession (ranked 20 in 2016);
- prohibited and regulated weapon offences (ranked 38 in 2016);
- offensive conduct (ranked 39 in 2016);
- offensive language (ranked 50 in 2016);
- liquor offence (ranked 6 in 2016); and
- resist or hinder officer (ranked 37 in 2016).

Liquor offence, in particular, got worse from ranking 12 out of 120 LGAs in 2012 to being number 6 out of 120 LGAs in 2016.

Abbreviations

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
CUC	Country Universities Centre
DPIE	Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
GP	general practitioner
IEO	Index of Education and Occupation
IER	Index of Economic Resources
IRSAD	Index of Relative Socio-Economic Advantage and Disadvantage
IRSD	Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage
LGA	local government area
SEIFA	Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas
SIA	Social Impact Assessment
SMRC	Snowy Monaro Regional Council
UCL	Urban Centre and Locality

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