



Muswellbrook Solar Farm

OX2-Idemitsu Joint Venture

Independent Planning Commission

Public Meeting

Wednesday 12 February 2025



Acknowledgment

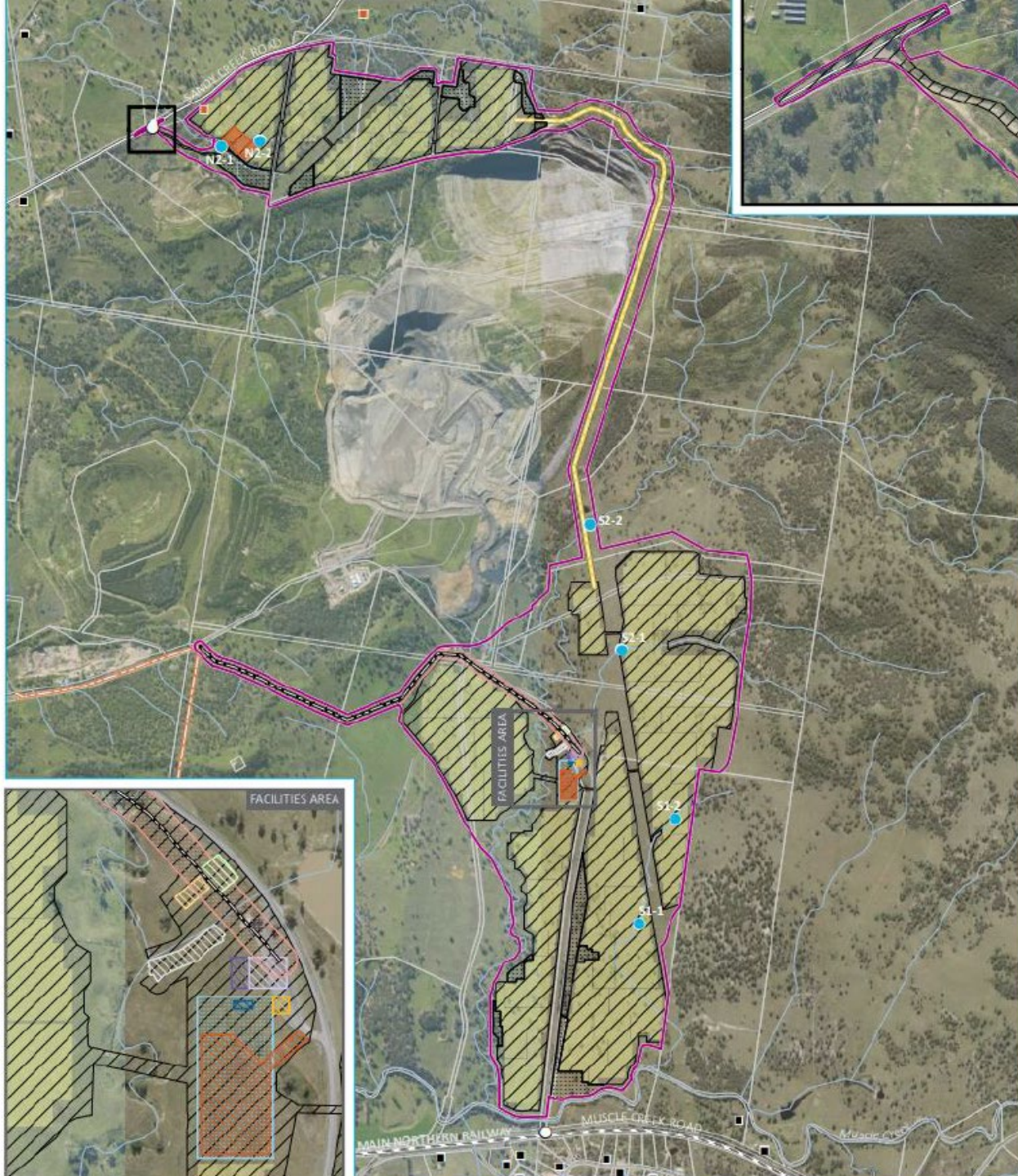


The project is located within the Traditional lands of the Wonnarua people. We wish to acknowledge them as traditional custodians of the land and pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people past and present. We acknowledge their continuous connection to Country.

Project Overview

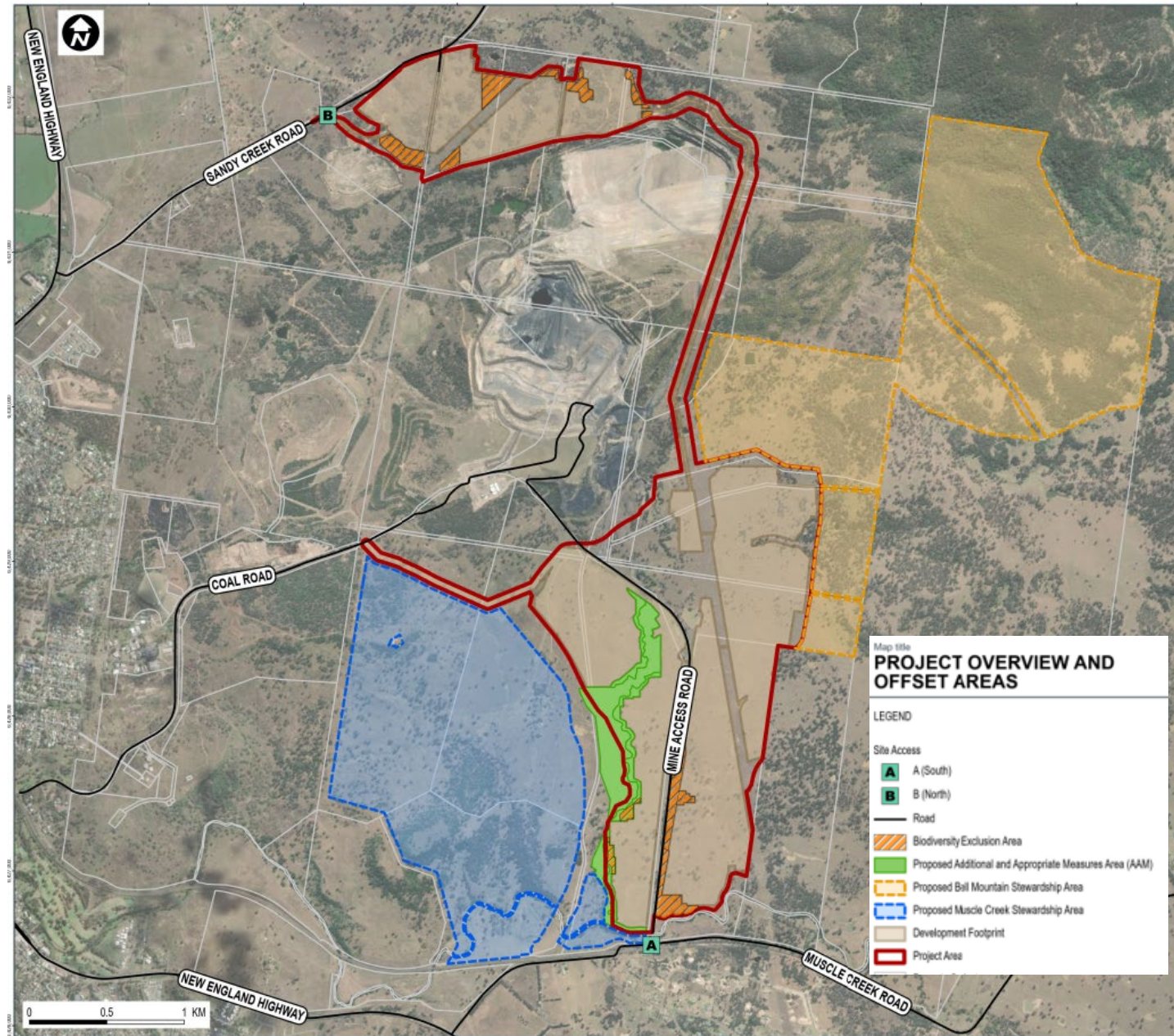


- 135MWac solar farm and 135MWac BESS with up to 2 hours of storage
- Development footprint is 318ha and is located adjacent to the Muswellbrook Coal Mine on land primarily owned by Idemitsu.
- Up to 200 jobs during peak construction and 9 operational jobs
- Shared benefits through community benefit funding
- Located within Hunter-Central Coast Renewable Energy Zone
- Contribute to NSW and Commonwealth renewable energy targets
- Good solar resource and available grid capacity
- Grid connection offer received from Ausgrid
- A leading example of the transition of the Upper Hunter from coal mining to innovative post-mining land uses



Key Project Refinements

- Additional vegetation retained along Muscle Creek, Mine Access Road and 4th Order Strahler Stream to protect areas of higher conservation value, provide connectivity and provide visual screening
- Protection and restoration of 33ha of Box Gum Woodland (Additional and Appropriate Measures Area). This is in addition to retirement of Box Gum Woodland biodiversity credits in accordance with the Biodiversity Assessment Method
- Avoidance of culturally modified tree
- Additional traffic management and mitigation measures to minimise potential for conflict at the New England and Sandy Creek Road intersection
- Finalisation of terms of community benefit funding through Voluntary Planning Agreement with Muswellbrook Shire Council.
- Accommodation Heads of Agreement



Community Engagement

Engagement	Date
Early Engagement (letterbox drop, information session and individual meetings)	Early 2022 onwards
Project Newsletter distributed and Media Advertisements at time of submission of EIS	September 2023
Second Community Information Session	September 2023
Response to individual requests for information	December 2023
Community Update (Feb) and Additional Information factsheet Distributed	March 2024
Ongoing engagement and individual meetings with neighbours	April 2024
Community Update (May) <i>Distributed via Muswellbrook Shire Council</i>	May 2024
Photomontage permission requests / provision of completed photomontage	June 2024 / August 2024
Community Update (August) Distributed	August 2024
Ongoing engagement and individual meetings with neighbours	September 2024
Community Update (October) Distributed	October 2024
Third Community Information Session	October 2024
Community Update with IPC information	December 2024 and January 2025



Muswellbrook Solar Farm
Community Newsletter

ESCO Pacific | Part of OX2

"We are excited to reach this milestone for the project and becoming one step closer to the transition to clean energy for the area."

Sharon Oke, Head of Communities and Public Affairs, OX2

A Development Application has now been submitted to the NSW Dept Planning & Environment, a significant milestone for the Muswellbrook.

Muswellbrook Solar Farm is a 135MW solar and battery project located approximately 2.5km east of Muswellbrook, with the majority on the site being land owned by Muswellbrook Coal Company (MCC), a wholly owned subsidiary of Idemitsu Australia Pty Ltd. The project is being developed in partnership with Idemitsu. Once operational, it will generate renewable electricity to the national market, generating power for Australian homes. The Muswellbrook project would require the installation of associated infrastructure including a transmission line to connect it to the national grid.

Muswellbrook Coal Mine
Coal mining operations at the Muswellbrook Coal Company site were completed at the beginning of 2023, after 115 years of operation. This is an exciting opportunity to redevelop the site and generate positive investment and employment in the region.





PUBLIC NOTICE

Muswellbrook Solar Farm **OX2**

Muswellbrook Solar Farm is a 135MW solar and battery project located approximately 2.5km east of Muswellbrook.

The project is being developed in partnership with Idemitsu.

Details of the planning application are available on the NSW Government's Major Projects website.

Community Information Session

OX2 and Idemitsu warmly invite you to a Community Drop In Session. Come and chat to the team to discover more about the Muswellbrook Solar Farm and the planning pathway.

Monday 28th October 2024

Muswellbrook Library,
Seminar Room,
126 Bridge Street,
Muswellbrook

Drop in anytime between 3:30pm and 6pm

To ask a question or receive project updates via email, please register by sending an email to helen.kennedy@ox2.com or calling Helen on 0403 920 098



BEST PRACTICE CHARTER FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS

We commit to honouring the Clean Energy Council's Best Practice Charter in our renewable energy projects and associated transmission infrastructure:

- 1 We will engage respectfully with the local community, including Traditional Owners of the land, to seek their views and input before submitting a development application and finalising the design of the project.
- 2 We will provide timely information and be accessible and responsive in addressing the local community's feedback and concerns throughout the life of the project.
- 3 We will be sensitive to areas of high biodiversity, cultural and landscape value in the development and operation of projects.
- 4 We will minimise the impacts on highly productive agricultural land and explore opportunities to integrate agricultural production.
- 5 We will consult the community on the potential visual, noise, traffic and other impacts of the project, and on the mitigation options.
- 6 We will support the local economy by providing local employment and procurement opportunities.
- 7 We will offer communities the opportunity to share in the benefits of the project, and consult them on the options available, including relevant governance arrangements.
- 8 We commit to using the project to support educational and tourism opportunities where appropriate.
- 9 We will demonstrate responsible land stewardship over the life of the project and welcome opportunities to enhance the ecological, cultural and/or agricultural value of the land.
- 10 During the life of the project, we will recycle waste materials where feasible and commit to responsible decommissioning or refurbishment/renewing of the site at the end of the project's life.

Powering the great shift

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Economic Benefits



The project would generate direct and indirect benefits to the local community:

- Up to 200 construction workers during the peak construction period and 9 operational workers
- Expenditure on accommodation and businesses in the local economy by workers who would reside in the area

A Local Employment Strategy has been developed as part of the EIA and will be refined as the project progresses including:

- Partnering with the Industry Capability Network (ICN) to maximize opportunities during the pre-construction phase.
- Collaborating with training providers to develop job readiness training and apprenticeships.
- Engaging with Muswellbrook Shire Council and the local business community.
- Establishing partnerships with Aboriginal businesses.
- Collaborating with St Hellier's correctional facility.

Business Engagement

OX2 has actively engaged with the local business community by:

- Joining the Muswellbrook Chamber of Commerce to foster connections and establish itself within the regional business network.
- Collaborating with BlackRock Industries, a 100% Indigenous-owned company based in the Hunter Valley, which has facilitated introductions to other local businesses including Brightlands Living (Accommodation developer) and KCE (civil contractor).
- Participating in the Second Chance for Change Program Steering Committee through BlackRock Industries.

Community Benefit Sharing



Voluntary planning agreement with Muswellbrook Shire Council (MSC) consisting of:

- Monetary contribution of \$850 per MW paid annually
- Annual instalments spent in the following areas:
 - 10% MSC specialist staff contribution
 - 45% Muswellbrook Shire Community Benefit Fund contribution (incorporating training and scholarships)
 - 45% neighbour benefits contribution (administered via Council)
- Four (4) local, that is, residents of Muswellbrook Shire, apprentices/trainees on the site during the construction phase

Neighbour Benefit Fund

Designed with Muswellbrook Shire Council during VPA negotiations

In line with NSW Benefit Sharing Guideline for Renewable Energy Projects, November 2024

1.2km distance to allow residents who may have a visual impact (albeit low or very low) to receive a benefit

**Muswellbrook Solar Farm
Community Benefit Sharing Program
2024**

Muswellbrook Solar Farm is a 135MW solar and battery project. Annually, Muswellbrook solar farm will contribute \$850 per MW of installed capacity to a Community Benefit Sharing Program.

The current estimated installed capacity is 135MW which equates to a total of \$114,750.00 provided each year to the program. If the project capacity decreases, the program's total funding will decrease.

The funds are divided between different aspects of the Program, agreed with Muswellbrook Shire Council under a Voluntary Planning Agreement.

The two main aspects of the Community Benefit Sharing Program to which the funds will be divided are:

- Community Benefit Fund
- Neighbour Benefit Fund

Neighbour Benefit Fund

45% of the Community Benefit Sharing Program is designated for a neighbour benefit fund.

This is to be distributed to all existing dwellings within 1.2km of the solar farm boundary via an annual Rate Rebate. Rebates will begin once the solar farm is constructed and becomes operational.

The rebate will be a reduction in the annual rates payable by those dwelling owners of approximately \$550 each year for the life of the project (anticipated to be 35 years) and will increase annually in line with CPI (equates to over \$20,000 in total).

Existing dwelling entitlements at the time of approval of the solar farm will also be eligible for the rebate once a dwelling is constructed on the property.

Community Benefit Fund

45% of the Community Benefit Sharing Program funding is designated for a community benefit fund.

This is to be distributed through the Muswellbrook Shire Council Grants Program, each year for the life of the project (35 years) and will increase annually in line with CPI.

For further information contact:

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Powering the great shift

Thank you

