

Birriwa Solar and Battery Project

Independent Planning Commission

Applicant Meeting

Thursday 30 May 2024

Birriwa Solar

Renewable Energy from ACEN

Presentation Guide

- **Project overview**
- **Key issues**
- **Other matters**

Acknowledgement of Country

ACEN Australia acknowledges the Wiradjuri people who are the Traditional Custodians of the Land on which our Birriwa Solar and Battery project is proposed to be located.

We acknowledge the resilience and knowledge of the Traditional Custodians of this Nation.

We pay our respects to elders past and present, the many Aboriginal people that did not make their elder status and to those that continue to care for Country.

Future Endeavours-

Artist: Rick Slaven. Contemporary Aboriginal artist and proud Mowgee / Wiradjuri man
Artwork commissioned by ACEN Australia

ACEN Australia

ACEN Australia is the platform representing ACEN's renewable energy assets in Australia. With more than 1 gigawatt (GW) capacity of large-scale renewable energy generation in construction and operations, and more than 13GW capacity in the development pipeline, its portfolio includes solar, wind, battery and pumped hydro projects across Australia.

New England Solar (Stage 1) in NSW is ACEN Australia's first operational project. It is one of Australia's largest solar projects participating in the National Electricity Market (NEM) and is the largest solar project in Australia to be financed on a fully merchant basis.

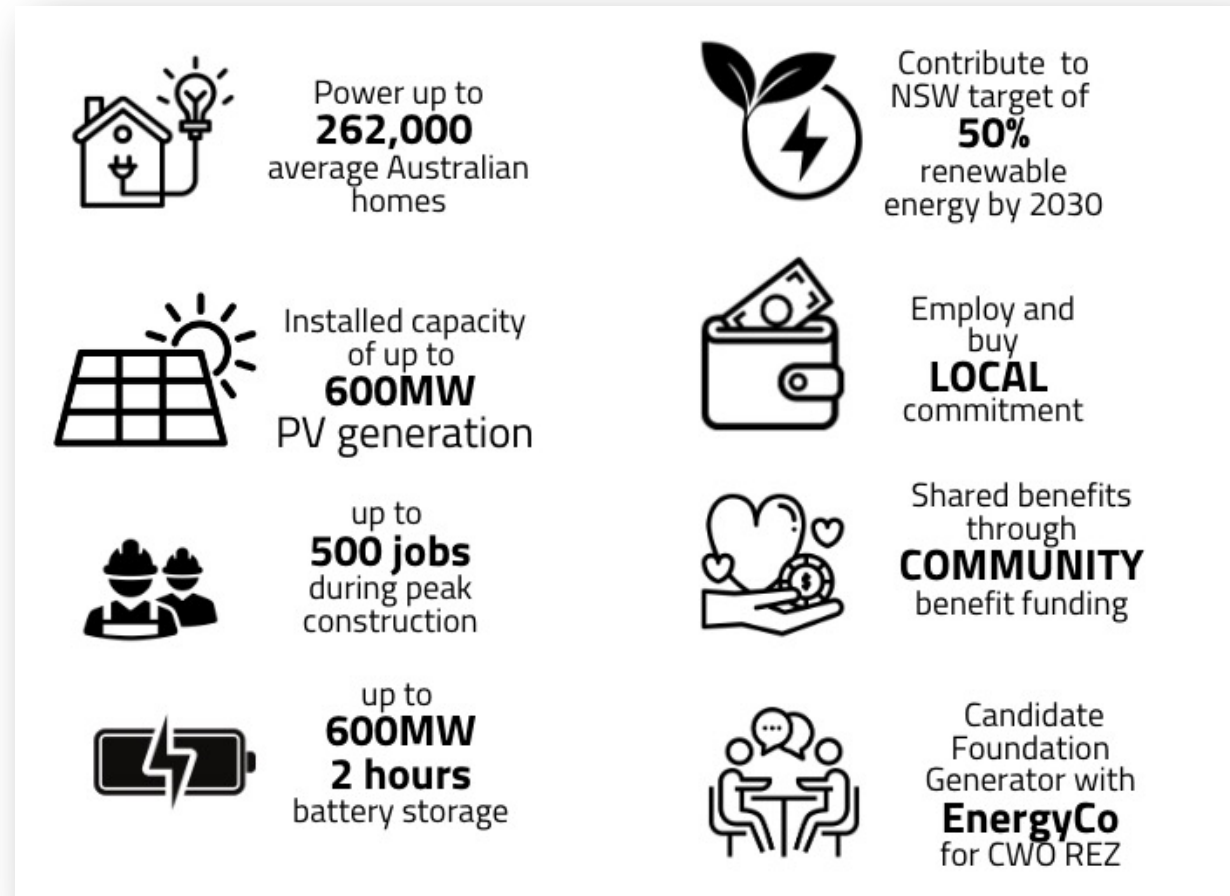
Stubbo Solar in the NSW Central West Orana Renewable Energy Zone is ACEN Australia's second project, which commenced construction in late 2022.

With 90+ employees and growing, our people are based in Tasmania, Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland and West Australia.

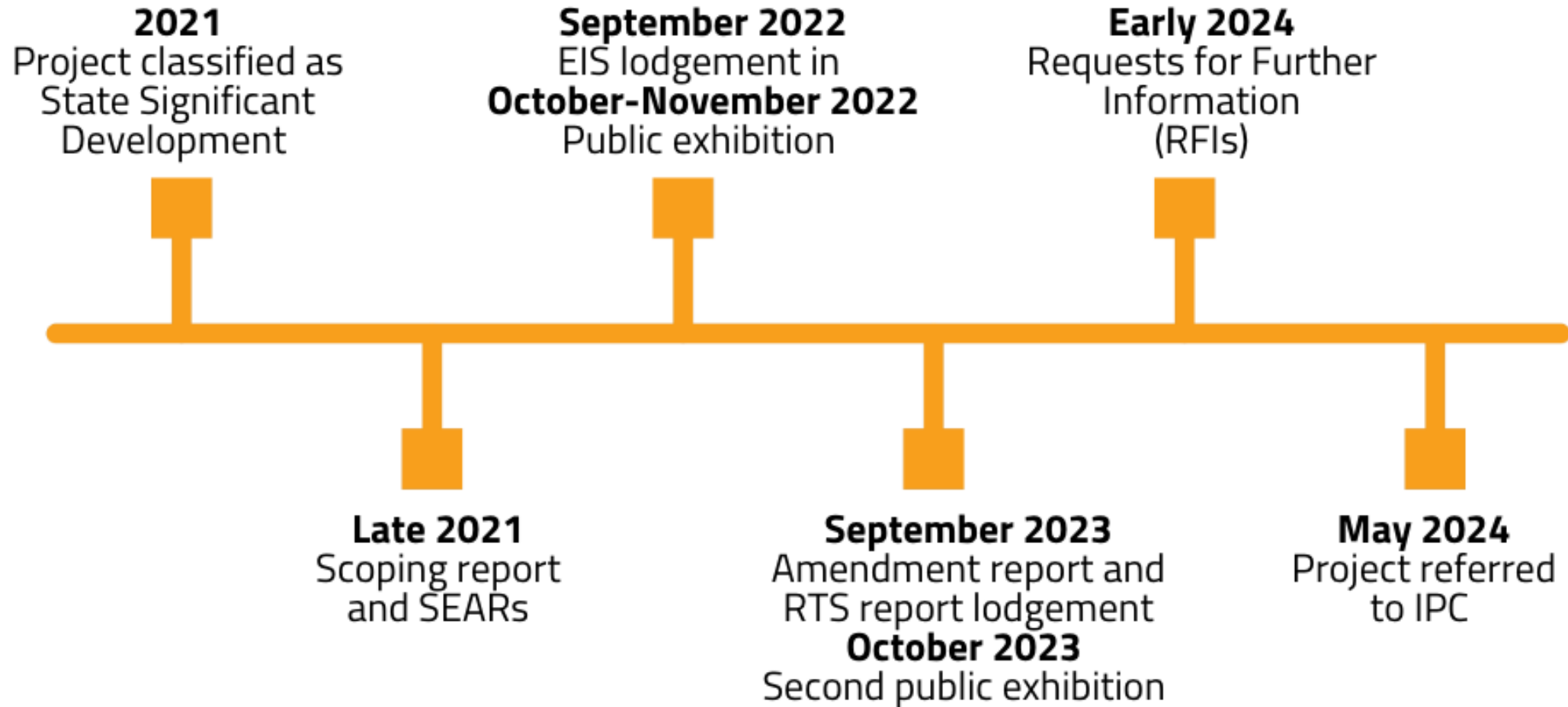
Birriwa Solar and Battery project

At a glance

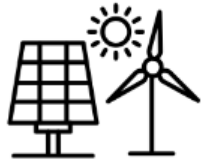
- 600MW large-scale solar PV electricity generation
- Battery storage 600MW for 2 hour duration (1,200MWh)
- Local road upgrades
- Connection to the proposed CWO REZ (CFG process)



Development application timeline



Project justification and characteristics



Supports the transition away from coal-fired generation



Consistent with relevant Commonwealth, State and regional policies



BESS which will help improve grid stability and energy security



Close proximity to Merotherie Energy Hub



Development footprint: 1,197 hectares of mostly cleared sheep/cattle grazing and dry land cropping



Construction over approx. 28 months



Agreements with the landholders for the duration of the project



Access route from the Port of Newcastle to the project site



Excellent solar resources



Workers accommodation facility for up to 500 workers



KEY

Project layout

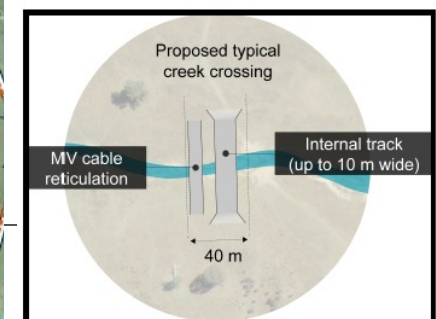
- Project area
- Development footprint
- Road upgrade corridor
- Restricted development area
- Vegetation to be retained
- Potential public road crossing location
- Potential creek crossing point (refer to inset below for indicative design)
- Connection point (option A or B)
- Indicative noise wall location
- Solar panel setback
- Landscape screen planting
- Project access point
- Project emergency access point
- Proposed operational infrastructure area including substation, operational facility and BESS (option A or B)
- Accommodation facility
- Temporary construction compound

Existing environment

- Dwelling not associated with the project
- Dwelling associated with the project
- Aboriginal heritage site (to be salvaged)
- Aboriginal heritage site (to be avoided)
- Major road
- Minor road
- Named watercourse
- Cadastral boundary
- Local government area boundary

Central West Cycle (CWC) Trail

- CWC main route - Gulgong to Dunedoo
- CWC alternate route - Slap Dash Creek side trail



Source: EMM (2023); DFSI (2017, 2023); GA (2011); ACEN (2023)

Community engagement and consultation

ACEN Australia recognises the importance of early and effective engagement with communities and stakeholders.

We are committed to implementing a transparent and inclusive approach to working with communities and stakeholders who may be directly and indirectly impacted by our projects.



Sharing in the benefits

- Social Investment Program (SIP)
- Neighbouring Property Benefit Scheme (NBPS)
- Voluntary Planning Agreement (VPA)



Ongoing commitment to engagement




Social Participation and Communications Policy

Built on a foundation of trust and shared value, ACEN Australia seeks to develop relationships with communities that create enduring and positive impact.



How we do this:

- Engage early and often, and listen to the full range of community views, including those from minority groups
- Communications about our business and activities is transparent
- Understand and value the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous cultures, rights, experiences and heritage as an integral part of our shared Australian identity
- Encourage social participation in our activities through procurement, employment and training streams
- Social investments contribute to building thriving and resilient communities and economies
- Relationships and commitments are long term, integrated into whole-of-business processes and full project life-cycle
- Be guided by industry and global standards including the [Clean Energy Council Best Practice Charter](#) and the [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals](#)
- Integrate activities into full project life-cycle and business systems to monitor, measure and report on our performance

**David Pollington**
Managing Director
ACEN Australia
November 2023



Birriwa Solar and Battery Project Community engagement plan As at April 2024



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/repowering of the site at the end of the project's life.

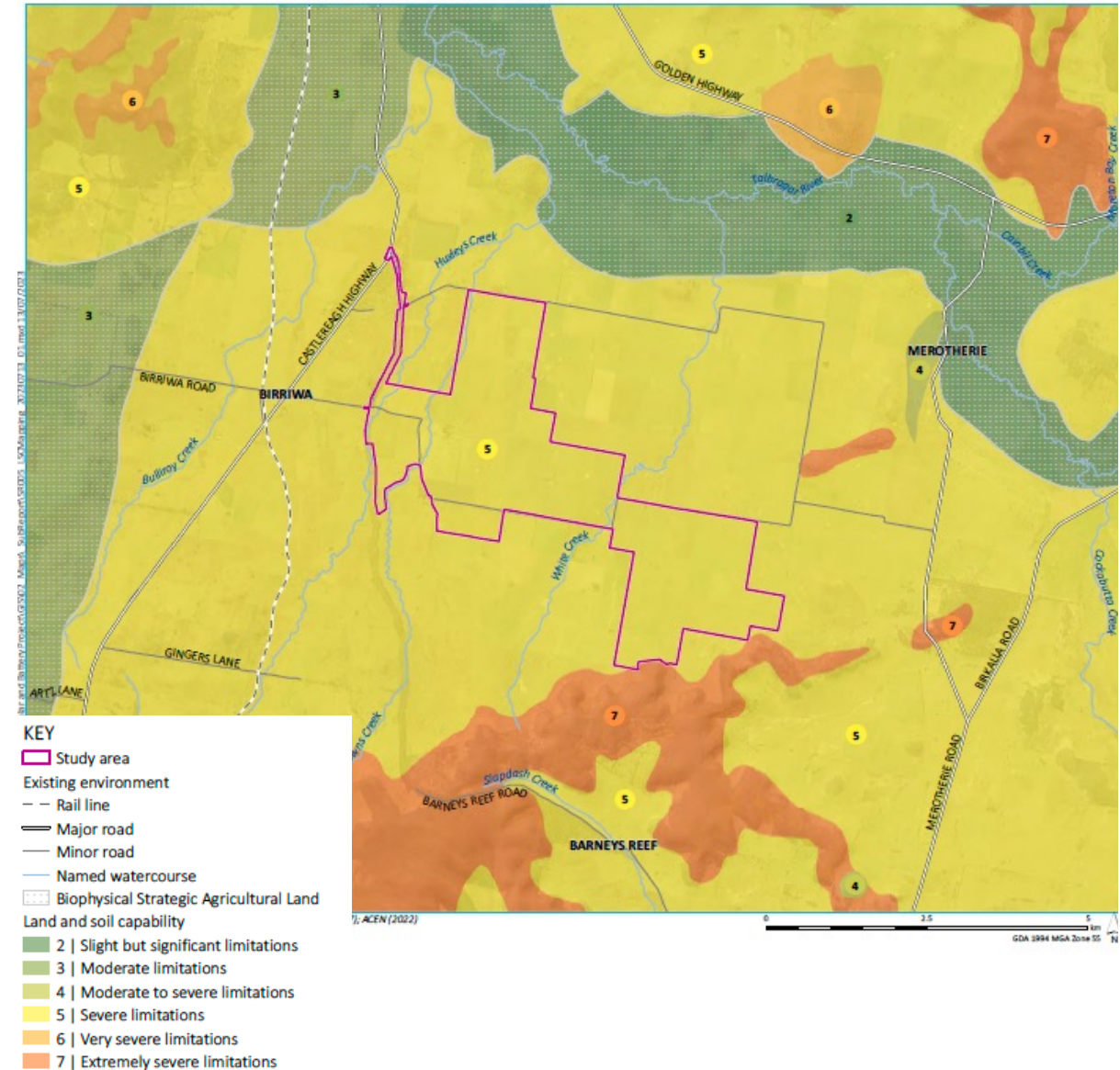
Key Issues

- Land use compatibility
- Traffic and transport
- Visual impacts
- Accommodation camp and social impacts
- Cumulative impact



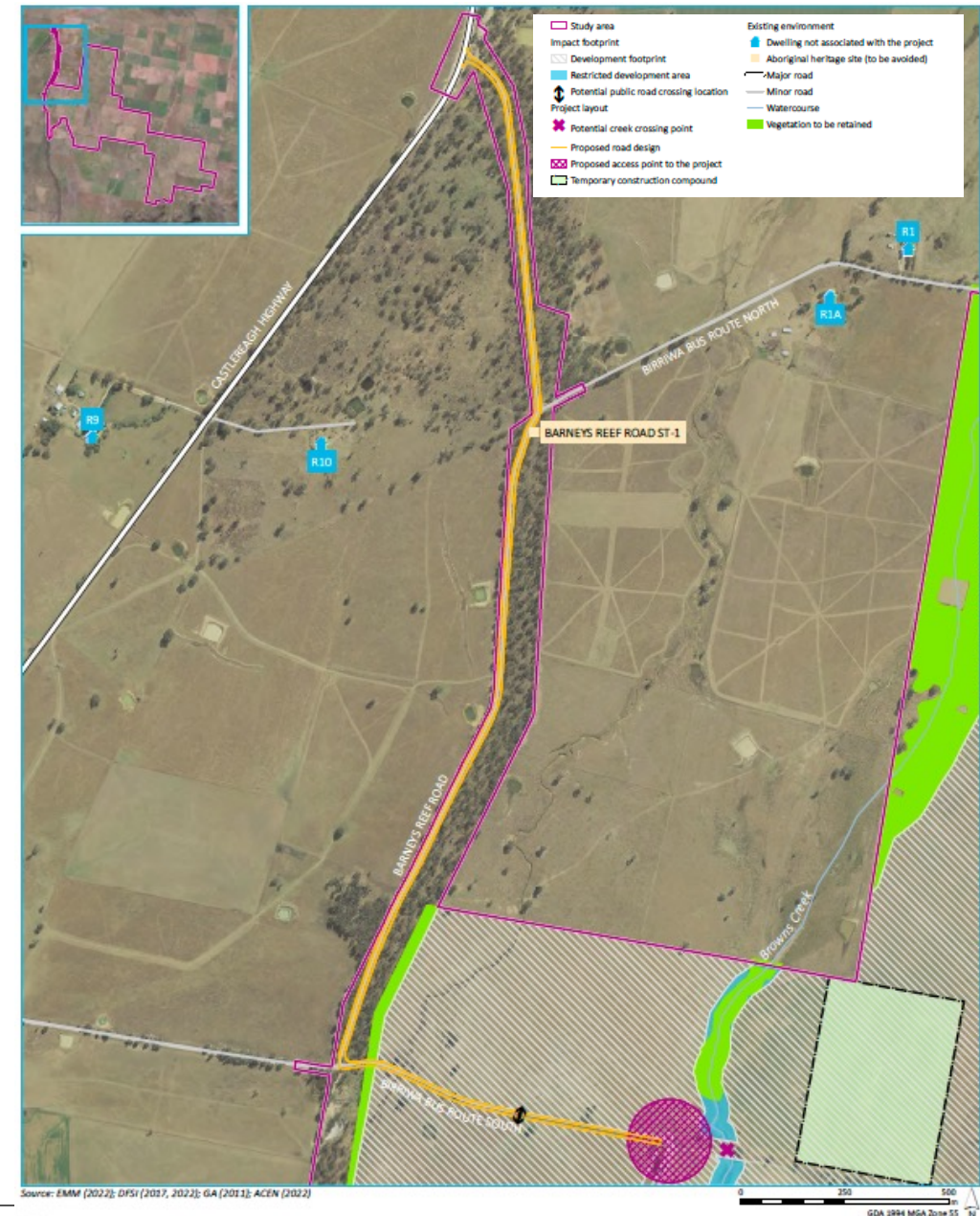
Land use and compatibility

- The project avoids Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land (BSAL)
- The project sits within land class 5 and 7 (moderate-low to very low capability)
- Temporary and reversible change of land use
- Continuation of sheep grazing within the development footprint
- Potential loss of small area of grazing but balances against project's broader benefits



Traffic and transport

- Traffic assessment was very conservative and considered worst-case scenarios for traffic
- Local road upgrades in consultation with local Councils based on Austroad standards
- Intersection with Castlereagh highway was designed in consultation with TfNSW, with final design to be completed prior to construction commencement
- EnergyCo's Port to REZ (P2R) project will also propose the delivery of Castlereagh Highway intersection
- Proposed access point to the site off Birriwa Bus Route South
- Public road crossings at designated locations in consultation with MWRC

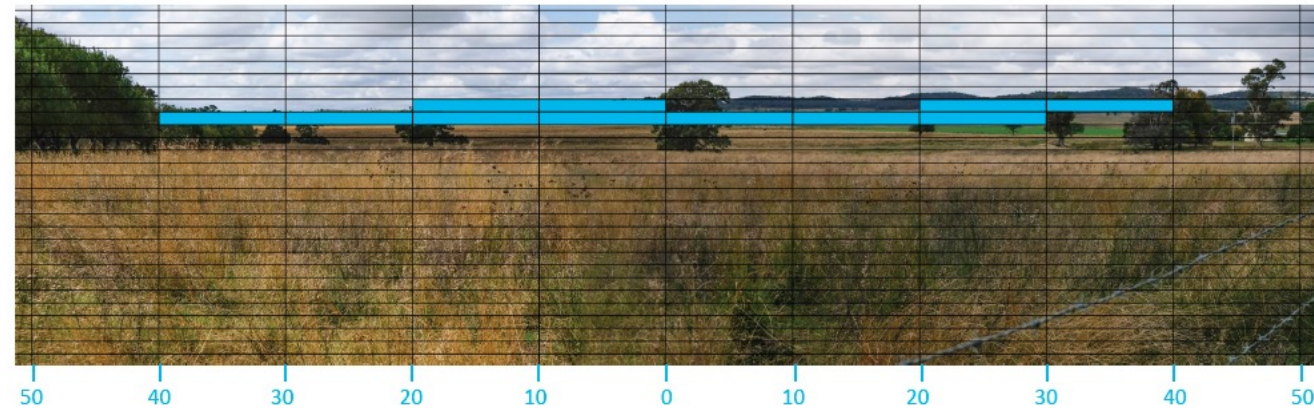


Visual impacts

- 22 non associated residences within 2km, including the Birriwa village
- Proposed mitigation: setback and vegetation screening
- Residual visual impacts assessed as 'low to very low' using the methodology in the Revised Large-Scale Solar Energy Guidelines (2022)



Coordinates (Lat, Long)	-32.136209, 149.518711
Distance to development	835 m
Viewpoint type	Private
Viewpoint sensitivity	Moderate
Scenic quality	Low
Overall sensitivity	Low
Occupied Cells	11
Magnitude rating	Low
Visual impact rating	Low





KEY

Project layout

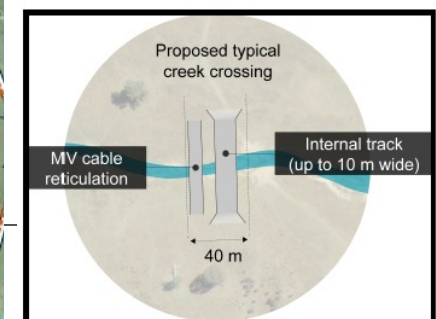
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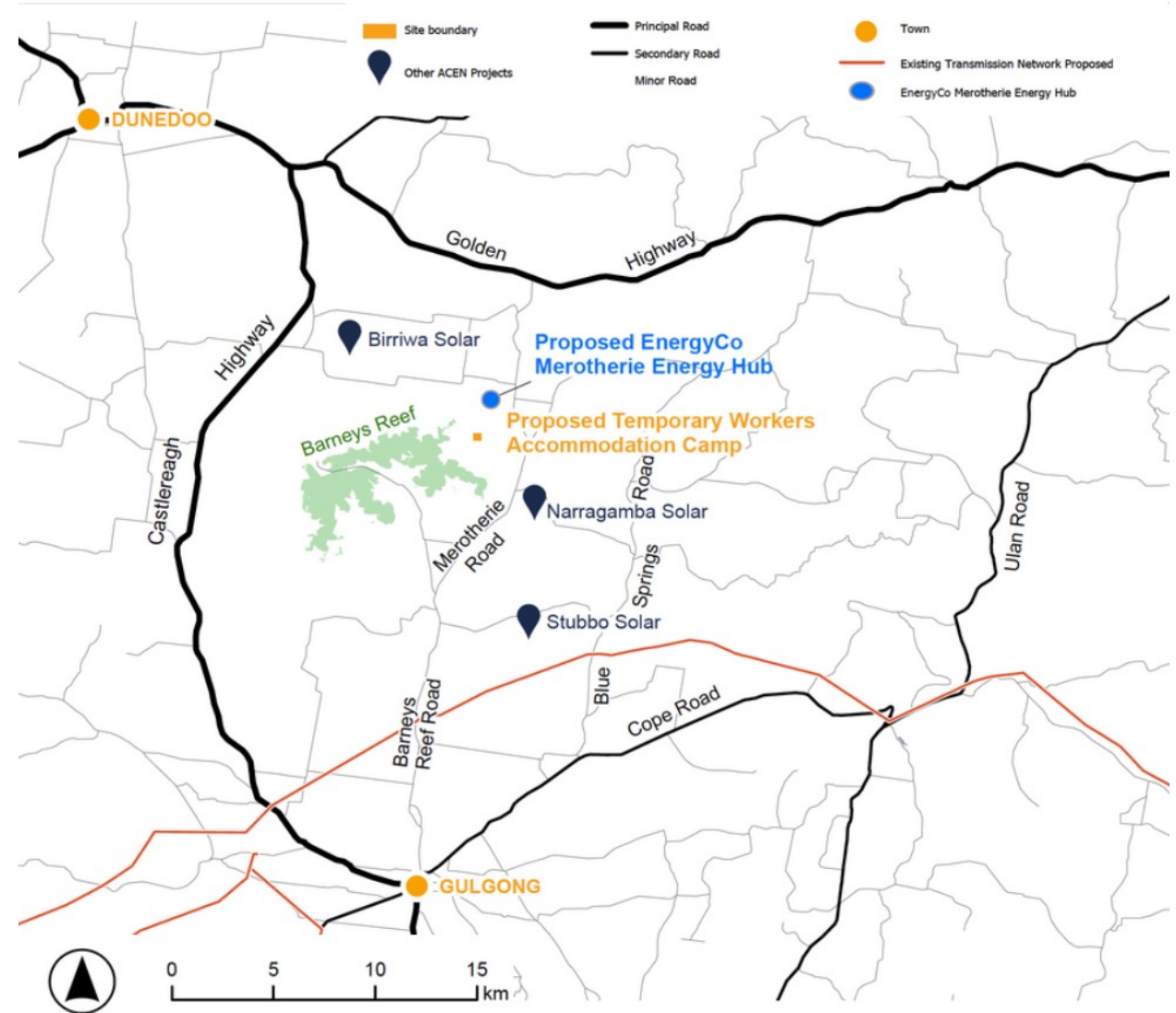


Source: EMM (2023); DFSI (2017, 2023); GA (2011); ACEN (2023)

Temporary Workers Accommodation facility and social impacts

Ability for the local area to accommodate the incoming workforce required to service the project.

- Worker's accommodation facility is the key addition to the proposal in the Amendment Report
- Site selection for the accommodation facility:
 - No additional visual impacts
 - Avoids biodiversity and heritage values
 - Avoids area of hydrological constraints
 - Options to manage waste, wastewater and access to water assessed in consultation with MWRC
- Social impacts and mitigation measures:
 - Safety measures
 - Medical services
 - Licensed social area



Cumulative impacts

- Assessment with information available at the time of report preparation
- CFG process: on-going coordination with EnergyCo to address cumulative impacts

Other matters

- Waste and servicing
- Merotherie Energy Hub
- Reduction in proposed workforce
- Subdivision
- Decommissioning
- Contamination

Response to Department's recommended conditions of consent

- The Department's Assessment report adequately reflects and summarises the proposal
- ACEN is satisfied with the Department's recommended conditions of consent
- Clarification on the location of the Site Access point as shown in the plan:
 - There is a minor error on the Project Layout plan included in the Assessment Report and the Recommended conditions of consent
 - The Site Access point did not change between the Original Project Site (Figure 2, page 3) and the Amended Project Site (Figure 3, page 4)
 - The proposed Site Access should be located as shown on Figure 2

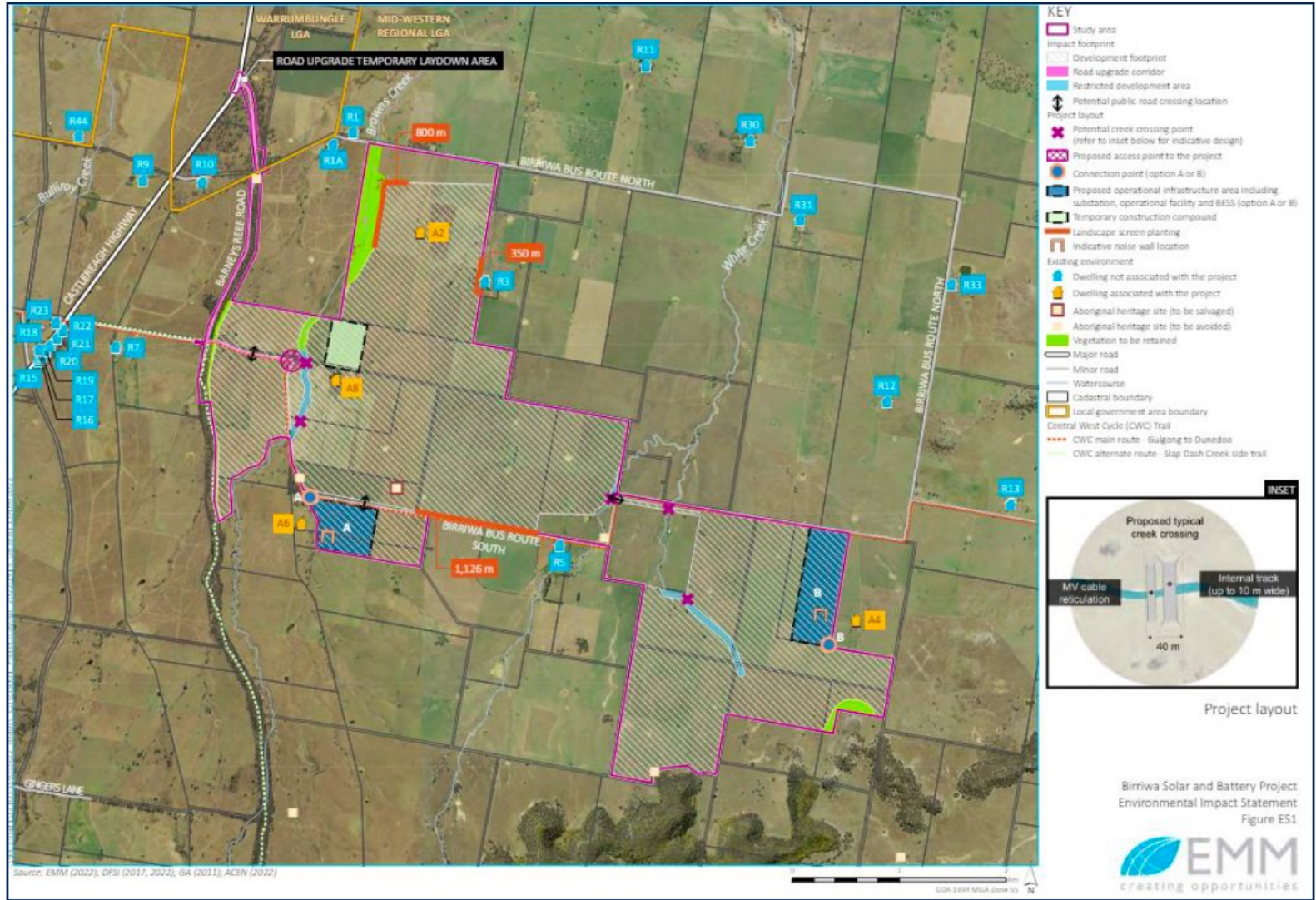


Figure 2 | Original Project Site

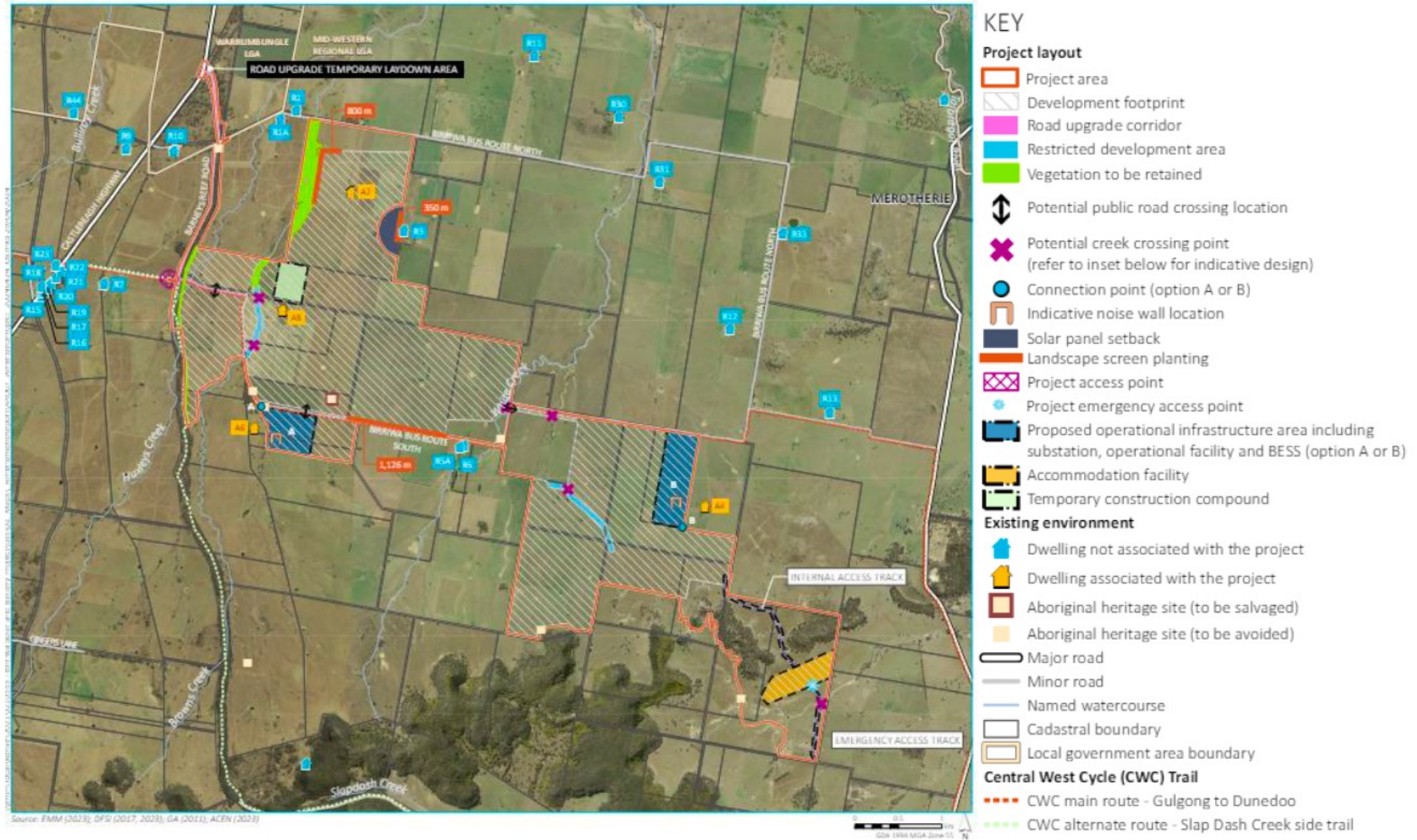


Figure 3 | Amended Project Site

