COBBORA
solar project

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
Public Exhibition 3 September – 1 October 2025

SUMMARY BOOKLET
1 September 2025

PACIFIC PARTNERSHIPS

Acknowledgement of Country

Pacific Partnership acknowledges the traditional custodians of the lands and water of Australia, most notably the Wiradjuri Nation, the traditional owners of the lands on which our project resides. We acknowledge their contribution to the community and their deep connection to the land. We pay our respects to Elders both past and present.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (EIS) PROCESS

An **Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)** in New South Wales (NSW) is a formal document required for major development proposals that may significantly affect the environment. The Cobbora Solar and Battery Energy and Storage System (BESS) EIS has been prepared by AECOM Australia Pty Ltd (AECOM) on behalf of the Proponent to support an application for development consent under Part 4 of the *NSW Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act). The Project is classified as State Significant Development (SSD) under the EP&A Act and meets the definition of 'electricity generating works'.

The purpose of this EIS is to provide a detailed description of the Project, including a description of the existing environment and an assessment of its potential direct, indirect and cumulative impacts, and the nature of community and stakeholder consultation undertaken. This EIS also identifies measures and strategies to avoid, minimise, mitigate, offset and/or monitor potential impacts.

This EIS has been prepared to address the Planning Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) issued by the Secretary on 7 November 2024. The Project was referred under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) (EPBC Ref: 2022/09269) and was determined to be a Controlled Action on 29 September 2022. As a result of this, supplementary SEARs were issued detailing the requirements of the Australian Government for the EIS. As such, in addition to the SEARs (State), this EIS has been prepared to also address the Supplementary SEARs (Commonwealth).

EIS Structure

The Cobbora Solar and BESS Project EIS has been prepared in accordance with the NSW Government's State Significant development guidelines – Appendix B – *preparing an environmental impact statement* (DPIE, 2022b). The EIS structure is as follows:

Table 1 – Structure and content of the EIS

CHAPTERS AND APPENDICES	DESCRIPTION
Summary	Concise description of the proposed works, environmental assessments, and findings of the EIS
Chapter 1.0 Introduction	Provides a brief description of the Project and relevant background information
Chapter 2.0 Strategic context	Provides the strategic context and explains the need for the Project
Chapter 3.0 Project description	Provides a summary of the Project, including the key components of the Project, design requirements and alignments
Chapter 4.0 Statutory context	Outlines the statutory requirements and approvals required to support the Project
Chapter 5.0 Stakeholder and community engagement	Outlines the consultation activities undertaken to date, key issues raised and how these have been addressed
Chapter 6.0 Assessment of impacts	Provides the results of the environmental assessments and outlines appropriate mitigation measures.

CHAPTERS AND APPENDICES	DESCRIPTION
Chapter 7.0 Justification of the Project	Provides a conclusion to the EIS, including justification for the Project and whether the Project achieves the objectives
Chapter 8.0 References	Summarises the supporting material that was referenced in preparing this EIS
Appendix A – SEARs Table	Supporting studies and information for the assessment of Project alternatives
Appendix B – Detailed Maps and Plans	Provides supporting detailed maps and plans for the Project
Appendix C – Statutory Compliance Table	Identifies all relevant statutory requirements for the Project and indicates where they have been addressed
Appendix D – Community Engagement Materials	Provides community notification material used throughout engagement activities
Appendix E – Compilation of Mitigation Measures	Table that provides a list of proposed mitigation measures to reduce potential impacts
Appendix F – Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment	Technical report providing a detailed analysis of the existing landscape character within the region and potential landscape and visual impacts, including a Glint and Glare assessment
Appendix G – Biodiversity Development Assessment Report	Technical report providing a detailed analysis of the biodiversity within the region and potential impacts
Appendix H – Traffic and Transport Impact Assessment	Technical report providing a detailed analysis of the traffic and transport within the region and potential impacts
Appendix I – Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment	Technical report providing a detailed analysis of the noise and vibration within the region and potential impacts
Appendix J – Social Impact Assessment	Technical report providing a detailed analysis of the social context within the region and potential impacts
Appendix K – Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report	Technical report providing a detailed analysis of the Aboriginal heritage within the region and potential impacts
Appendix L – Historic Heritage Assessment Report	Technical report providing a detailed analysis of the non-Aboriginal heritage within the region and potential impacts
Appendix M – Preliminary Hazard Analysis	Technical report providing a detailed analysis of the potential hazards associated with the Project
Appendix N – Bushfire Threat Assessment	Technical report providing a detailed analysis of the bushfire risk within the region and potential impacts
Appendix O – Flood Impact Assessment	Technical report providing a detailed analysis of flooding within the region and potential impacts
Appendix P – Soils, Land and Agriculture Impact Assessment	Technical report providing a detailed analysis of the soil, land, and agriculture environment within the region and potential impacts, including a Land Use Conflict Risk Assessment (LUCRA) and Agrisolar Grazing Strategy
Appendix Q – Subdivision Plan	Table that provides the schedule of land within the Project Area

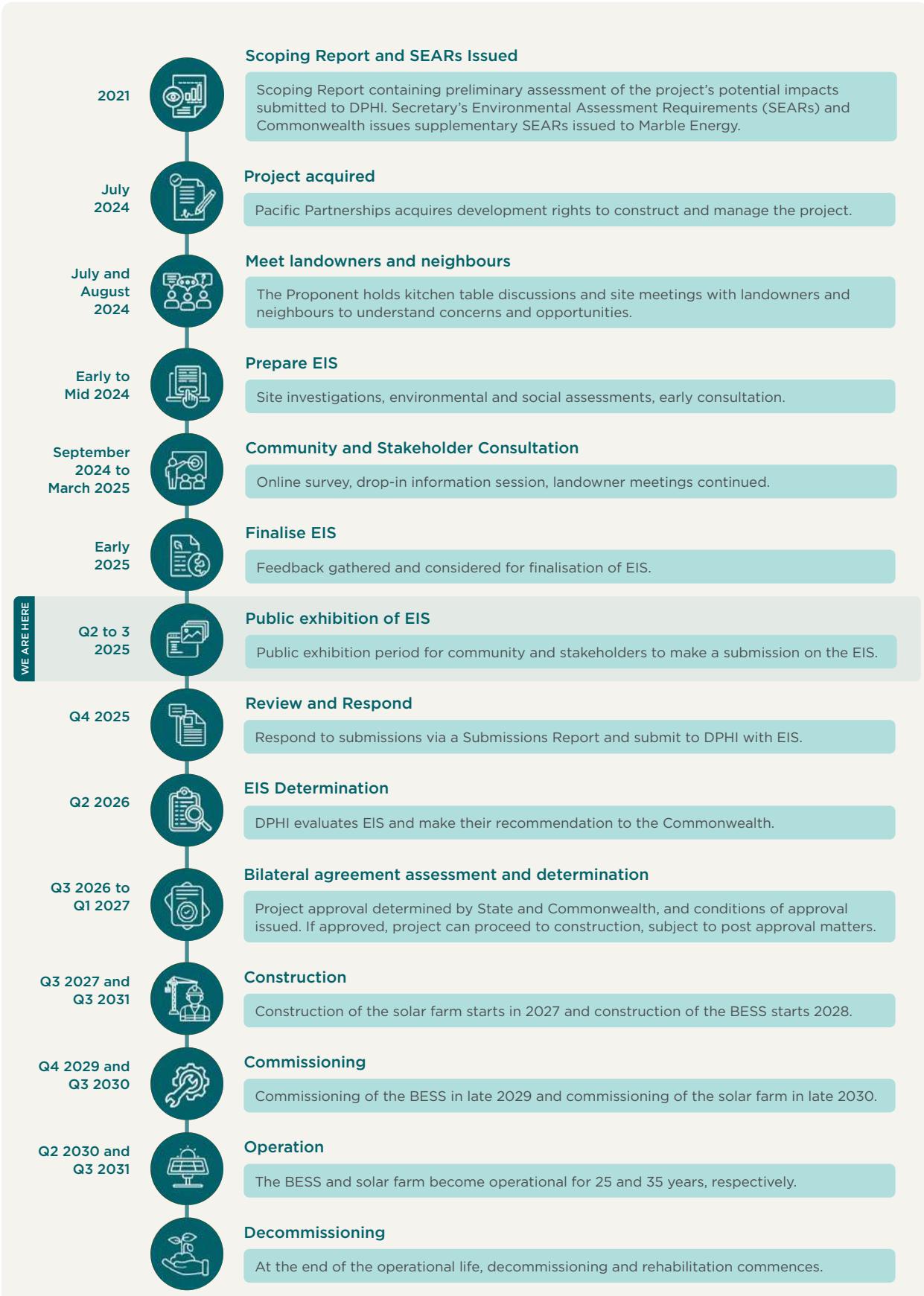


Figure 1 – Indicative timeline

Accessing the EIS during Public Exhibition

The Cobbora Solar and BESS Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is on public exhibition from 3 September to 1 October 2025. You can access the Project EIS at Major Projects | Planning Portal - Department of Planning and Environment.

Drop-in information sessions will be held in the area to give the community and stakeholders an opportunity to talk to the Project team about the EIS. Please join us at one of the information sessions detailed below.

Community drop-in information sessions:

Western Plains Cultural Centre Auditorium

76 Wingewarra Street, Dubbo

Wednesday 17 September 2025, 9am – 1pm

Elong Elong Community Hall

31 Dubbo Street, Elong Elong

Wednesday 17 September 2025, 4pm-7pm

Dunedoo Old Bank Building

42 Bolaro Street, Dunedoo

Thursday 18 September 2025, 2pm-6pm

If you would like a USB containing the full EIS, please call our team on 02 9182 8591 or email contactus_cobbora@cobborasolarfarm.com.au.

Details on how to make a submission about this project are located in the section titled Next Steps in this booklet.

ABOUT THE PROJECT

Project Overview

The Project Area was strategically chosen within the Central West Orana Renewable Energy Zone due to several favourable site characteristics, including suitable topography, appropriately classified land, minimal impact on neighbouring properties and proximity to a robust road network.

Through analysis, the area was identified as an optimal location for renewable energy generation, with strong resource potential and proximity to existing electrical infrastructure. Careful consideration has also been made to best utilise land use interaction to include agriculture and biodiversity conservation.

During community engagement activities in late 2024, some community members made a request to rename the Project. Community support for the project name to be changed to an alternative will be recognised by Pacific Partnerships, with implementation to take place following the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process.

Key features of the Project are summarised in **Table 2** and shown on **Figure 2**, with an indicative process flow diagram shown on **Plate 1**. These features comprise the Project for which development consent is sought under this State Significant Development Application (SSD-29491142).

Table 2 – Key Features of the Project

Key Infrastructure	700 MW AC solar farm, 400 MW / 1,600 MWh 4 hours Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) enough to power 280,000 homes.
Project location	Approximately 20 km south-west of Dunedoo and 55 km east of Dubbo in the Central West Orana (CWO) Renewable Energy Zone (REZ).
Project Area	Approximately 1,600 ha of the total 3,000 ha Project Area (53%) will be developed.
Access	Four access points along Spring Ridge Road and one on the Golden Highway.
Grid connection	Up to four grid substations locations connecting to the Elong Elong Energy Hub and on to the National Electricity Market.
Construction	**Expected duration:** 47 months (including commissioning) **Expected start:** Late 2027 **Construction hours:** Standard working hours (7am to 6pm - Monday to Friday; 8am to 1pm- Saturdays and no work on Sundays or public holidays) **Number of workers:** Up to 734 full-time-equivalent (FTE) workers during the peak construction period **Number of vehicle movements:** 14 light, 88 heavy and 2 Over Size Over Mass (OSOM) vehicles per day, and 34 shuttle bus movements per fortnight (two weeks) (during peak).
Workforce accommodation	Approximately 9 ha in size contained within the site and will accommodate the total maximum workforce required.
Operational	**Timeframe:** Expected early generation and supplying energy to the grid from early 2030. **Expected lifespan:** 35 years for the solar farm and 25 years for the BESS (may be subject to extension subject to further planning approval) **Operational hours**: daylight hours, 7 days a week for the solar farm and 24 hours per day, 7 days a week for the BESS. If necessary, reactive or emergency maintenance may need to occur outside of standard working hours, however this is expected to be rare and will be appropriately notified to neighbouring properties affected by the works. **Number of workers:** 20 FTE workers
Decommissioning and rehabilitation	At the end of the Project's operational life, all above ground components will be removed and re-purposed where possible and land rehabilitated to achieve pre-existing conditions as far as reasonably practicable.
Estimated cost of development	$1.4 billion

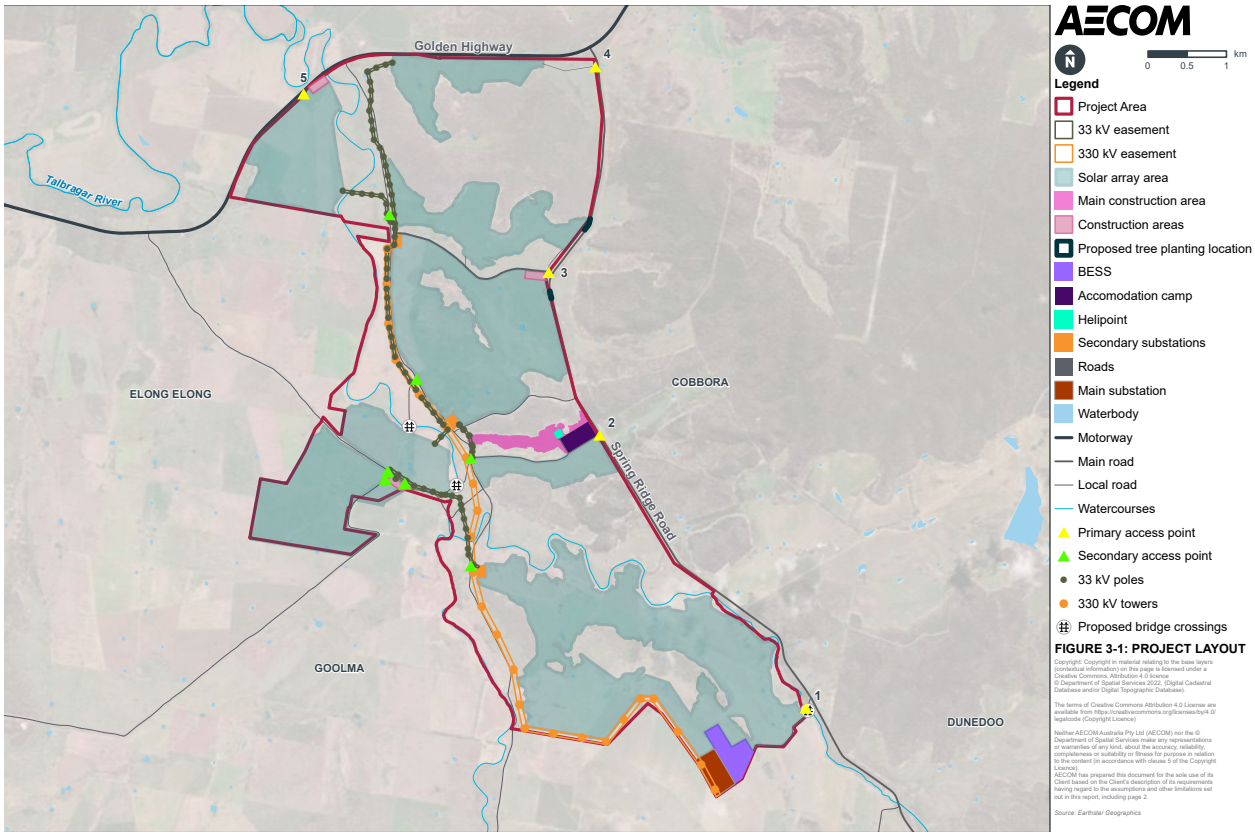


Figure 2 - Project Layout

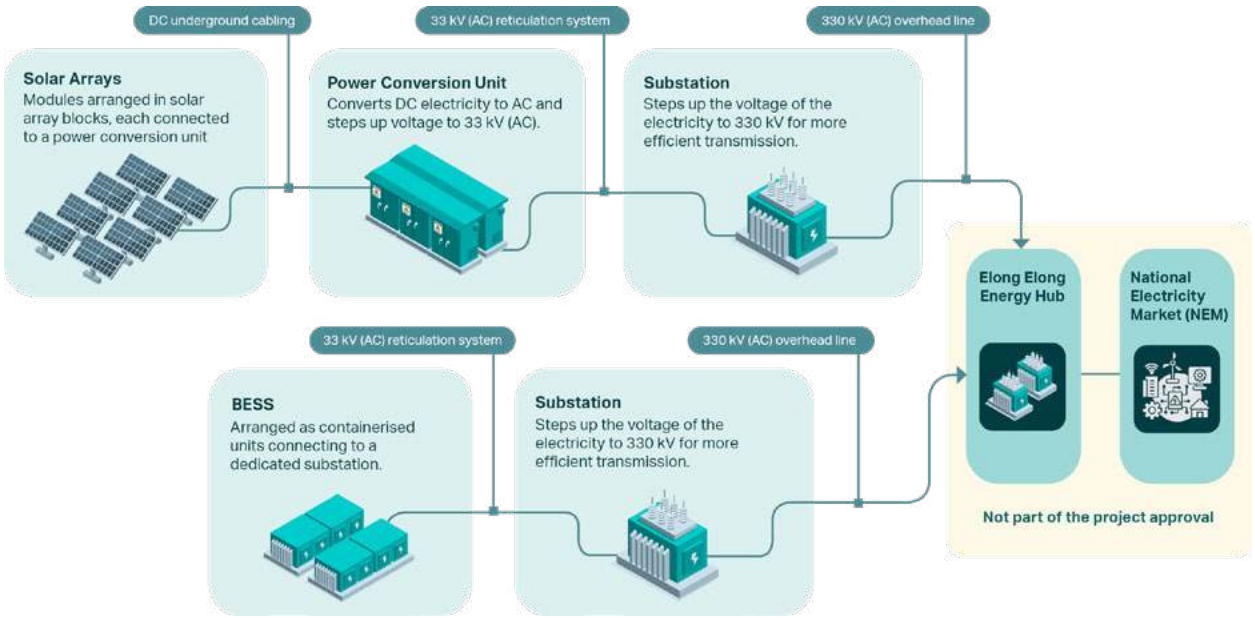


Plate 1 - Indicative process flow diagram of Project components

Key Infrastructure

Solar

The Project will involve the installation of approximately 1,320,000 PV solar panels, each being 2.4 m by 1.3 m, and 3.5 centimetres (cm) thick. The PV solar panels will be mounted on a single-axis tracking system, aligned in a north-south direction, to orient the panel to follow the sun from east to west each day. The tracking system will comprise galvanised steel racking frames fixed onto a horizontal tracker tube, with this mounted on vertical piles driven or screwed into the ground. These racks will be constructed in rows spaced between 5 m and 14 m apart, subject to final design (refer to **Figure 3**).

A solar farm is usually split into solar array blocks which comprise a multitude of interconnected solar panels to deliver a power output to a Power Conversion Unit (PCU) (refer to **Plate 2**). The PV solar modules and trackers will be arranged into solar array blocks, each connected to a single PCU. Each PCU will be a containerised design, mounted on a concrete pad or piles. The PCUs are anticipated to be approximately 2.5 m tall and have a footprint of approximately 6.0 m by 2.5 m each (refer to **Plate 2**).

The PCUs comprise three main components:

- Inverters – converts the DC electricity generated by the PV modules into alternating current (AC)
- Transformers – step up the voltage of the electricity to 33 kV (AC) for transmission to a substation
- Ring main unit – connects electrical loads which can also control, protect and isolate electrical equipment.

Plate 2 – PCU at Glenrowan Solar Project (source: Pacific Partnerships, 2025)

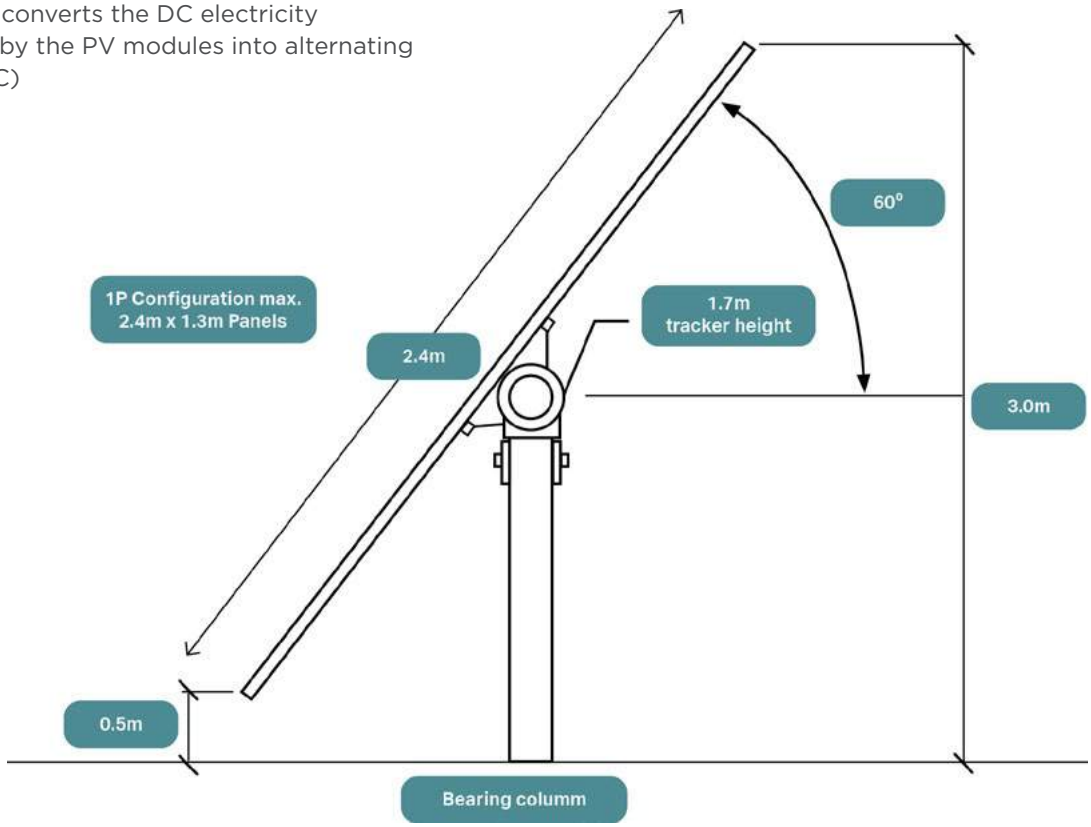


Figure 3 – 1P Tracking System (Preferred)

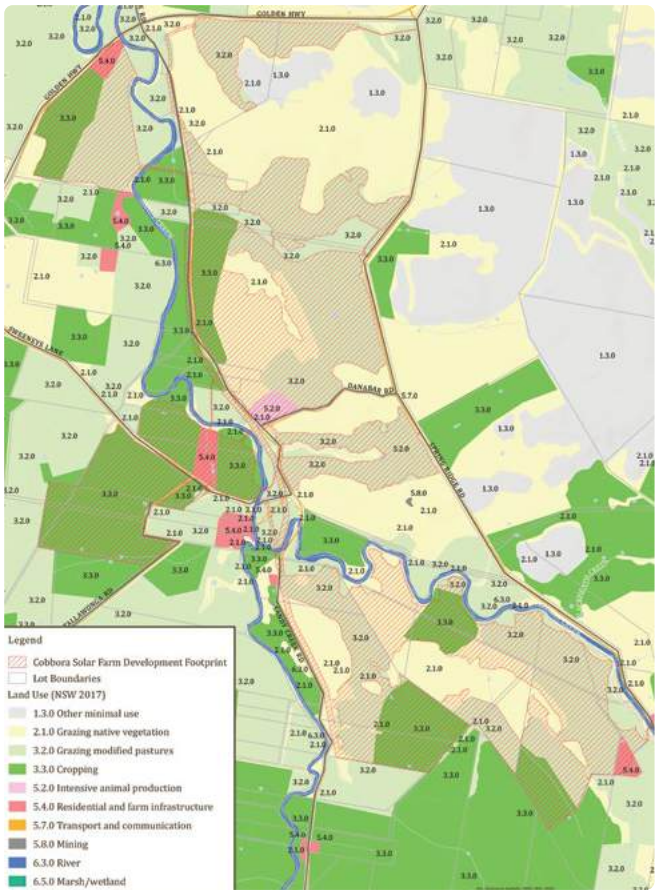
IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

The EIS documents a range of environmental assessments. These assessments identify potential environmental impacts that may result from the Project and identify measures to manage or mitigate these impacts as appropriate. The key environmental assessments have been summarised in the next few pages.

LAND USE

A detailed soil assessment was undertaken to understand the soil types and agricultural capabilities of the project area. A total of 873 ha of the 3,000-hectare site is classified as LSC3 high capability land that can sustain high-impact land uses, such as cropping with cultivation. The rest of the land is classified as LSC4 and LSC5 which is moderate to low capability land that is severely limited for high-impact land use such as cropping. The Land and Soil Capability classification scale spans from 1 to 8 where LSC1 relates to land that has high capability with no limitations through to LSC8 which is land that is incapable of sustaining any usage apart from nature conservation.

LGA	ESTIMATED GROSS VALUE IN LGA ($/HA/YEAR)	DEVELOPMENT FOOTPRINT (HA)	ESTIMATED PRODUCTIVITY ($/YEAR)
Dubbo	290.1	1,608	466,480
Warrumbungle	321.1	1,608	516,329



The site is zoned Rural 1 Primary Production under the Warrumbungle and Dubbo Local Environmental Plans.

The primary use of the Development Footprint is livestock grazing of sheep and cattle on modified pastures and fodder crops.

Productivity of the Development Footprint has been based on the Department of Primary Industries 2024 Gross Margin Budget for Livestock and Agricultural Census of 2020-2021.

Land and Soil Capability (LSC)

- Minesoils undertook a soil and land resource survey over the 1600 ha of the Development Footprint including 69 drilled boreholes for the collection and laboratory analysis of soil samples (1 bore hole per <25ha).
- The soil testing indicated that the Development Footprint ranges in LSC3-5 out of a 1-8 classification range, where LSC 1 and 2 are best used for cropping:

LSC 3: High Capability Land – covering 873ha

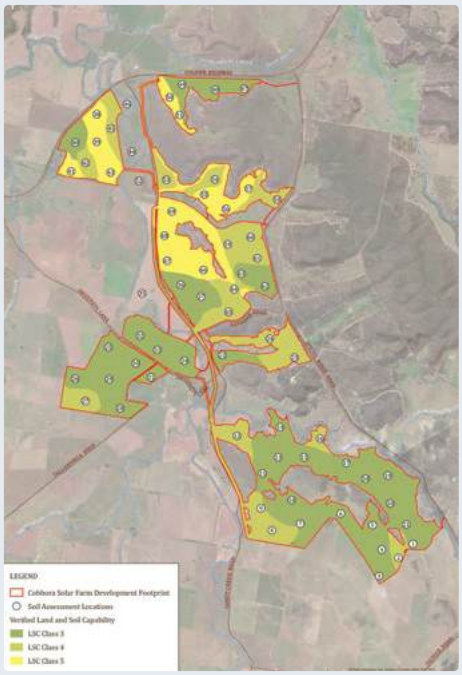
LSC 4: Moderate Capability Land- covering 437 ha

LSC 5: Moderate to Low Capability Land – covering 298 ha.

- The reduction of land for agricultural use during operation is considered to pose a negligible impact as it represents a 0.3% reduction for both LGAs.

Land and Soil Capability (LSC) classification

LSC1	Extremely high capability land that has no limitations
LSC2	Very high capability land; can be easily managed
LSC3	Land has moderate limitations; is capable of sustaining high-impact use but must be carefully managed for cropping or intensive grazing
LSC4	Land has moderate to high limitations for high-impact usage. Limitations must be specially managed with a high level of expertise
LSC5	Land has high limitations for high-impact usage. Restricted mainly to grazing
LSC6	Low capability land that is restricted to low impact usage such as grazing, forestry or conservation
LSC7	Land has very low capability; there should be minimal disturbance of native vegetation
LSC8	Land is incapable of sustaining any land use apart from nature conservation



Project Mitigation Measures - Agrisolar

- Implement an Agrisolar Grazing Plan based on the Agrisolar Strategy prepared for the EIS where sheep grazing can co-locate with solar generation.
- Return all disturbed soils within the Development Footprint to an equivalent LSC following the Project's end of life.
- Implement a Biodiversity Management Plan that includes the management of pest weeds and animals.
- Implement a Biosecurity Management Plan during the construction and operational phase of the project to manage risks such as Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) and other contagious animal diseases that affect sheep and cattle in the region.

VISUAL AMENITY

Glint and glare was assessed according to the Solar Guidelines (DPHI, 2024d) and considered three viewpoint categories:

- Residential: private receptors identified within 3 km of the Development Footprint and with a line of sight of the Project
- Road and rail: public road and rail receptors identified within 1 km of the Development Footprint
- Aviation: receptors identified within 5 km of the Development Footprint.

The assessment considered a scenario of 'normal tracking' during daylight hours, assuming that the solar modules will be following the sun during all daylight hours where the maximum tilt of 60° will be reached for sunrise and sunset.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

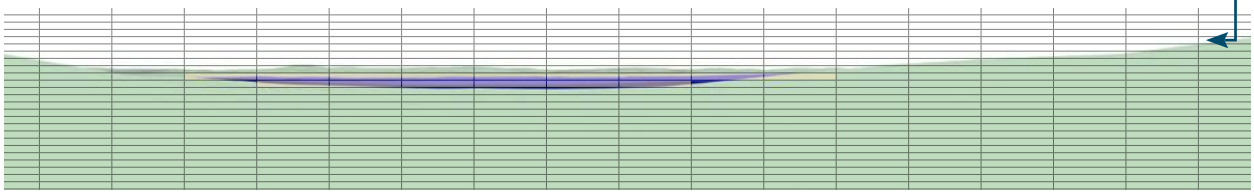
- Baseline analysis to establish the existing landscape character
- Identify Landscape Character Zones
- Assess the Landscape Character Impact

VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- Visual Impact Assessment
- Simple Assessment
- Lots with Dwelling Entitlements
- Night lighting
- Detailed Assessment
- Intermediate Assessment
- Cumulative Impact Assessment
- Glint & Glare Assessment

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES & MITIGATION

- Visual Performance Objectives
- Mitigation Measures



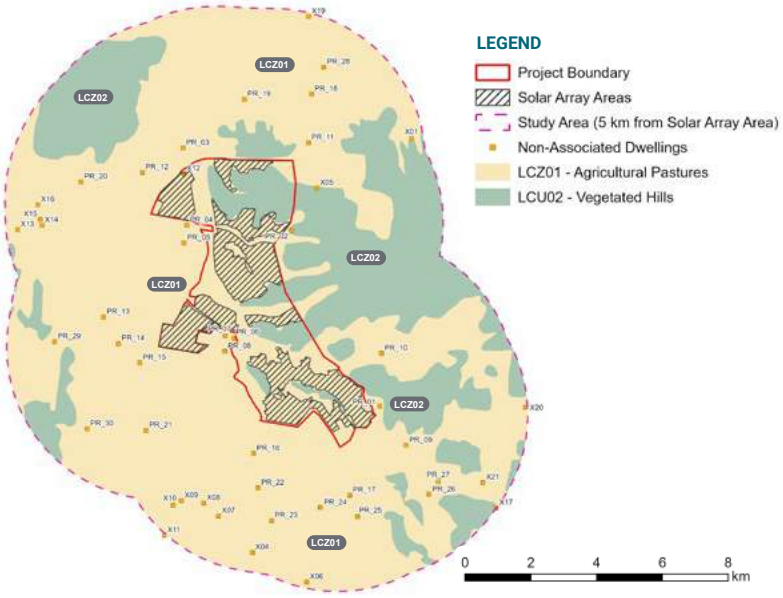
Intermediate Assessment - Calculating Visual Magnitude

Detailed Assessment - Calculating Visual Magnitude

VISUAL MAGNITUDE THRESHOLDS	
NUMBER OF OCCUPIED CELLS	**VISUAL MAGNITUDE RATING**
1 - 7	Very Low
8 - 14	Low
15 - 25	Moderate
26 - 36	High
37 +	Very High

Landscape Character Assessment

Landscape Character Zones - LCZs divide the landscape based on common distinguishing visual characteristics, including landforms and major land cover patterns.



Visual Impact Assessment

Three levels of visual impact assessments were completed on the project site, the results are provided below.

STAGE OF ASSESSMENT	IMPACT
Simple assessment - Desktop basis	31 private and 13 public viewpoints considered
Intermediate assessment - Wireframes used determine the magnitude rating.	Private viewpoints: • High visual impact: Two viewpoints (PR_2 and PR_6) • Moderate visual impact: Three viewpoints (PR_1, PR_5, X05) Public viewpoints: • Moderate visual impact: Five viewpoints (VP03, VP04, VP06, VP08, VP13)
Detailed assessment - Photomontages prepared for accurate impact assessment.	Private viewpoints: • Low impact for all, visibility screened by vegetation. Public viewpoints: • Moderate impact (VP06), Low/Very low impact (4), visibility fragmented or screened by roadside vegetation.

Management and mitigation measures

MANAGEMENT AND MITIGATION MEASURE	TIMING
Lighting will be designed and installed in accordance with AS4228-1997 - Control of Obtrusive Effects of Outdoor Lighting and will follow best practice lighting principles identified within the Dark Sky Planning Guidelines.	Detailed design and Construction
Non-reflective surface treatments will be applied to buildings and structures where practical to minimise reflection.	Detailed design
Ancillary components of the Project will be designed to minimise visual impact as much as possible.	Detailed design
A Landscape Plan will be prepared and will detail strategic planting to screen views and glare in accordance with the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.	Construction
If the Project results in a cumulative visual impact, additional screen planting will be provided on completion of the construction of Dapper Solar Farm and Sandy Creek Solar Farm.	Operation

Glint and Glare

- The assessment provides worst-case scenario results based on topography alone and does not account for existing screening elements such as vegetation or structures.
- Glare can be classified broadly as:
  - **Green** – low potential for temporary after-image
  - **Yellow** – potential for temporary after-image
  - **Red** – high potential for permanent eye damage, not expected for solar panels.
- Glint and glare impacts can be classified broadly as:
  - **Low** – less than 10 hours per year
  - **Moderate** – greater than 10 hours per year and less than 30 hours per year
  - **High** – greater than 30 hours per year.

GLINT AND GLARE IMPACTS OUTCOME	
VIEWPOINTS	**DESCRIPTION OF IMPACT**
Residential	No potential “Yellow” or “Green” glare identified for any non-associated dwellings within the Study Area.
Road	No roads have the potential to experience “Yellow” glare.
Rail	No rail receptors identified within 1 km of the solar array area.
Aviation	No aviation receptors identified within 5 km of the Development Footprint

Receptors are individuals and / or defined groups of people who have the potential to be affected by the Project.

TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT

Impacts to local property driveway access along Spring Ridge Road are expected to be minimal due to the small number of properties on this road. At most, up to two general traffic vehicles will feed into Spring Ridge Road from the Golden Highway at peak times.

Partial or temporary road closures and traffic diversions may be required to facilitate improvements at the Golden Highway and Spring Ridge Road intersection and local widening of Spring Ridge Road at the project area access points. However, these are likely to be short-term and are not expected to result in any significant impacts to local access along Spring Ridge Road.

The Project development area spans Warrumbungle Shire and Dubbo Regional Councils and we will work with both Local Government Areas and other developers to support that local roads are adequately maintained and accessible during the construction and operational phases of the project. Findings from our EIS assessment follow.

Construction Phase

- Traffic Volumes: During peak construction (August 2028), up to 51 vehicles per day (7 light vehicles, 44 heavy vehicles) and up to 1 Over Size and Over Mass (OSOM) vehicle per day.
- Access Points: Five access points are proposed, with one on the Golden Highway and four on Spring Ridge Road.
- Road Upgrades: Local widening of Spring Ridge Road and the Golden Highway at access points to accommodate heavy construction vehicles.
- Intersection Performance: Basic left-turn and right-turn treatments required at the Golden Highway / Spring Ridge Road intersection.

Operational Phase

- Traffic Volumes: Expected to generate 40 vehicle movements daily for 20 full-time workers.
- Road Capacity: Golden Highway and Spring Ridge Road have sufficient capacity to accommodate operational traffic.
- Parking: 30-40 permanent parking spaces required within the development footprint.

Traffic Impact from Central West Orana Renewable Energy Zone

- Spicers Creek Wind Farm: Construction of up to 117 wind turbine generators and BESS. Construction traffic is expected to use the Golden Highway and either Sweeneys Lane or Saxa Road.
- Dunedoo Solar Farm: Development of a 55 MW AC solar farm. Construction traffic would primarily use the Golden Highway and Castlereagh Highway.
- Birriwa Solar Farm: Development of a 600 MW solar PV farm and a 600 MW BESS. Construction traffic would use the Golden Highway and Castlereagh Highway.
- Tallawang Solar Farm: Development of a 500 MW AC solar farm and a 500 MW BESS. Construction traffic would use the Golden Highway and Castlereagh Highway.
- Elong Elong Energy Hub: Development of grid infrastructure to connect renewable energy projects to the Central-West Orana Renewable Energy Zone (CWO REZ) grid.
- Sandy Creek Solar Farm: Development of a 700 MW AC solar farm and a 700 MW BESS. Construction traffic would use the Golden Highway and Spring Ridge Road.

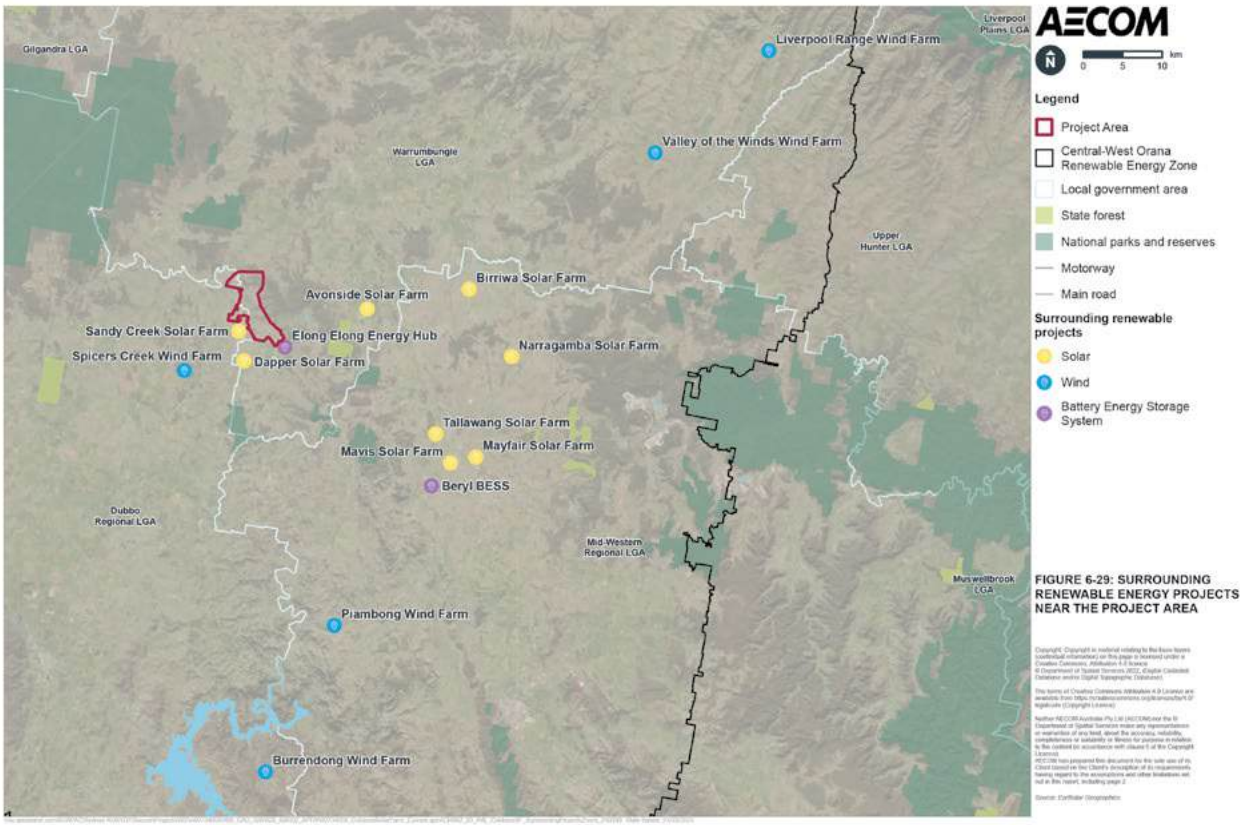


FIGURE 6-29: SURROUNDING RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS NEAR THE PROJECT AREA

Potential Cumulative Impacts

- Traffic Volumes: The construction periods of the Elong Elong Energy Hub and Sandy Creek Solar Farm are likely to align with the Cobbora Solar Project, potentially causing cumulative traffic impacts such as localised congestion and longer travel times.
- Haulage Routes: Material transportation for these projects is expected to overlap with the Cobbora Solar Project's haulage route, particularly between the Port of Newcastle and the Golden Highway / Castlereagh Highway intersection.
- Road Capacity: While the Golden Highway is expected to accommodate cumulative traffic outside peak hours, Spring Ridge Road may require further upgrades to handle combined traffic volumes.

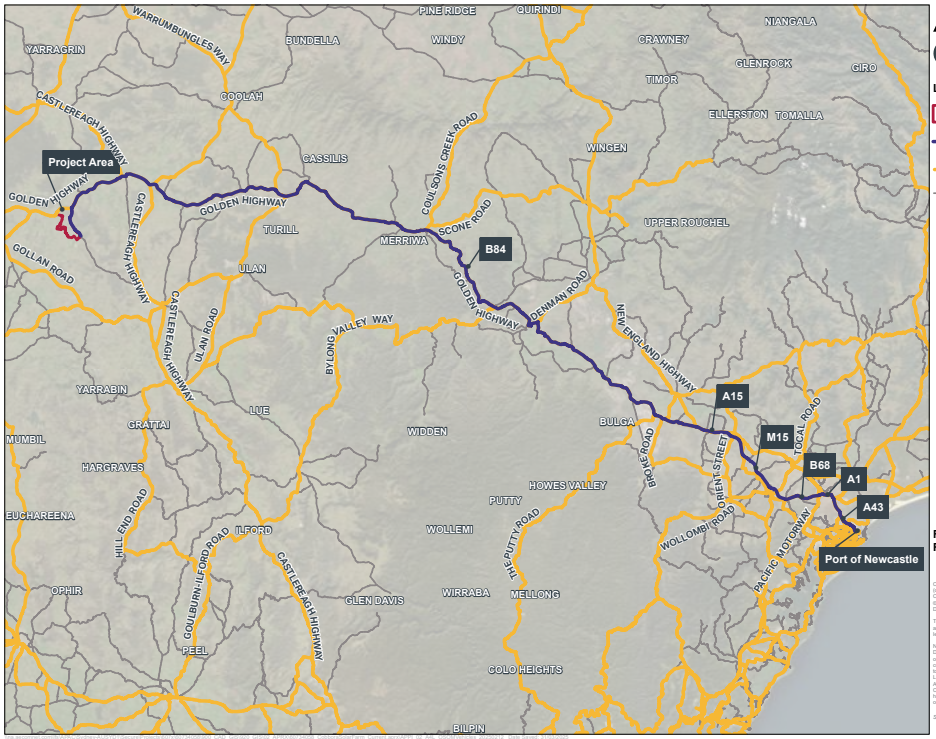


FIGURE 2-4: PROPOSED HAULAGE ROUTE FOR OSOM VEHICLES

Summary of Mitigation and Management Measures

- **Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP):** To be prepared in consultation with relevant authorities.
- **Road Upgrades:** Local widening and intersection improvements to facilitate safe vehicle movements.
- **Pavement Condition Surveys:** To assess and restore road conditions post-construction.
- **Cyclist Safety:** Awareness measures for drivers regarding the Central West Cycling Trail.

NOISE AND VIBRATION

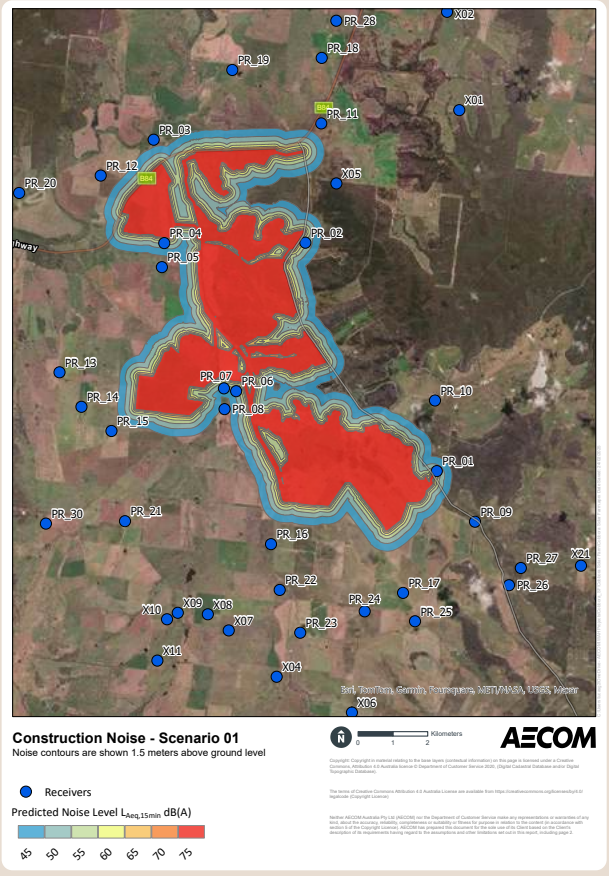
Noise from construction activities is predicted to comply with the recommended noise management levels (NMLs) at all but three receivers. No receivers will be subject to noise levels exceeding the 'highly noise affected' level of 75 dB(A). Noted exceedances on those three receivers are mainly due to piling and concrete sawing construction activities. These activities are only expected to occur intermittently and at locations more central to the Project Area and further from receivers.

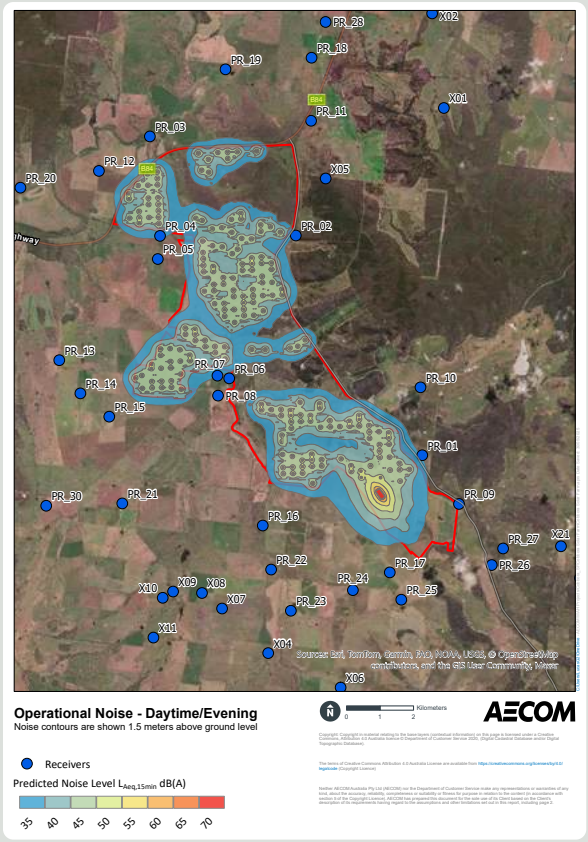
A Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment (NVIA) has been prepared to assess these potential impacts during project construction and operation. Mitigation measures are proposed to address residual noise impacts and we will continue to consult with landowners to develop the most effective management strategies and to deliver tailored solutions.

Construction Noise

Our assessment approach and findings for the construction phase follows:

- Assessment Method: Based on worst-case scenarios using SoundPLAN 8.2 and CONCAWE method.
- Duration: ~47 months (2027–2031).
- Key findings:
  - Most receivers comply with noise management levels (NMLs)
  - Exceedances at PR_01, PR_02, PR_06 during all scenarios (max 22 dB above NML)
  - No receivers exceed the "highly noise affected" threshold of 75 dB(A)
  - Construction traffic noise increase is <2 dB(A) on Golden Highway; <55 dB(A) on Spring Ridge Road.





Operational Noise

Our operational noise assessment approach and findings include:

- Sources: Inverters, trackers, transformers, BESS.
- Assessment: Includes tonality and low-frequency penalties.
- Key findings:
  - Daytime: Compliant at all sensitive receivers*
  - Evening: Exceedances at PR_01, PR_02 (5 dB), PR_06 (3 dB)
  - Night: Compliant at all receivers (only BESS operates)
  - Alternative layout reduces exceedances to negligible (≤1 dB).

Vibration Assessment

- Construction Vibration: Impact piling is the main source. Safe working distances for structural damage and human comfort are met.
- Operational Vibration: Not significant.

Cumulative Impacts

- Nearby projects: Spicers Creek Wind Farm, Sandy Creek Solar Farm, Dapper Solar Farm, CWOREZ.
- Construction: Potential cumulative noise increase ≤3 dB(A).
- Operation: Minor exceedances possible; further assessment recommended during detailed design to understand if operational noise requires mitigation.

Summary of Management Measures

- Construction Noise and Vibration Management Plan (CNVMP) to be developed.
- Notification to affected residents and consult prior to commencement of works to understand how to best manage the impact.
- High-noise activities will be scheduled with built-in breaks to provide respite periods.
- Use of non-tonal reversing alarms during the construction phase.
- Layout planning to minimise noise/vibration impacts.

BIODIVERSITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

There have been numerous studies of the area in relation to its ecology and a Biodiversity Management Plan will be implemented to ensure that all objectives relating to flora and fauna are met. The project plan has avoided heavily vegetated areas with high biodiversity value. However, some vegetation including trees will be removed as part of the project's construction. Cleared areas will be offset by securing like for like sites prior to construction. The project preference is to establish areas as Biodiversity Stewardship Sites within the site which may include planting more trees on the site surrounding the project.

The Cobbora Solar project Biodiversity Development Assessment Report (BDAR) assessed the potential impacts of the project on biodiversity, including native vegetation and threatened species, and outlined how these impacts will be avoided, minimised, and offset in accordance with NSW and Commonwealth environmental laws, supporting the project's environmental approval process.

Field investigations were conducted over multiple seasons and years (2022–2024) to capture seasonal variation and maximise detection of flora and fauna.

Significant Impact Criteria Assessment

The significant impact criteria assessment was completed by comparing the project's predicted impacts on threatened species and ecological communities against national guidelines, using survey results and habitat analysis, to determine if any impact would be significant under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act.

Summary Table: Significant Impact Criteria Assessments

SPECIES / COMMUNITY	EPBC/BC STATUS	DETECTED ONSITE?	HABITAT IMPACTED	SIGNIFICANT IMPACT LIKELY?	KEY REASON(S) FOR CONCLUSION
Superb Parrot (*Polytelis swainsonii*)	Vulnerable	Yes (foraging)	Foraging only	No	No breeding habitat, large foraging areas retained
Diamond Firetail (*Stagonopleura guttata*)	Vulnerable	Yes	Minor	No	Large areas retained, only minor habitat loss
Corben's Long-eared Bat (*Nyctophilus corbeni*)	Vulnerable	Potential	Minor, few hollows	No	Only minor, less suitable habitat lost, large areas retained
Large-eared Pied Bat (*Chalinolobus dwyeri*)	Endangered	Yes	Minor, foraging	No	No breeding/roosting habitat, only minor foraging habitat lost
Brown Treecreeper (*Climacteris picumnus victoriae*)	Vulnerable	Adjacent	Minor, degraded	No	Only minor, degraded habitat lost, large areas retained
Box-Gum Woodland (CEEC)	Critically Endangered	Yes	Small, moderate condition	No	Strong avoidance, only small area lost, large areas retained
Grey Box Grassy Woodlands (EEC)	Endangered	Yes	Small, moderate condition	No	Strong avoidance, only small area lost, large areas retained

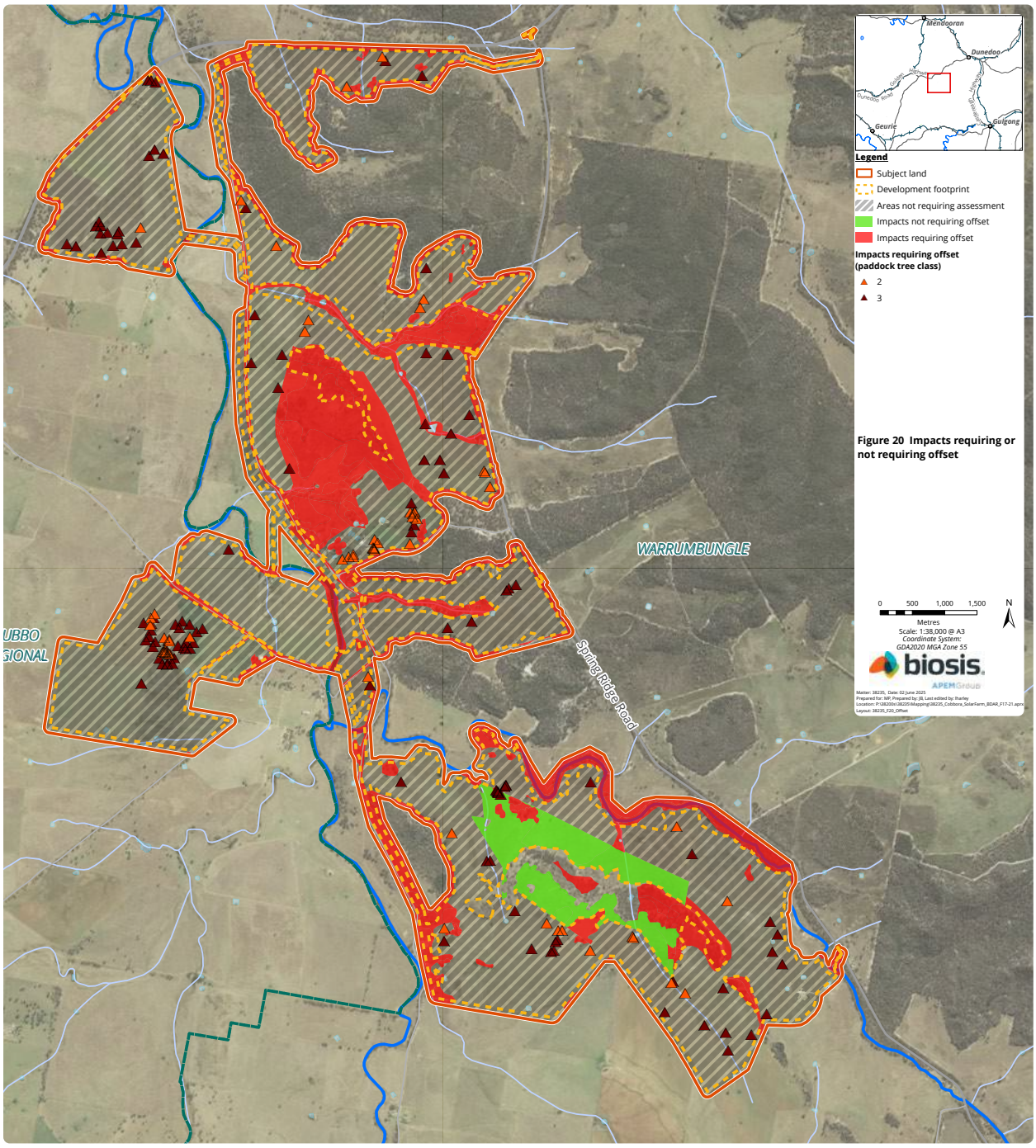


Figure 20 Impacts requiring or not requiring offset

Summary

For all assessed threatened species and ecological communities, the BDAR concludes that the Cobbora Solar Farm project is unlikely to result in a significant impact as defined under the EPBC Act, due to extensive avoidance and minimisation measures, retention of large areas of suitable habitat, and losses limited to small, isolated, or degraded patches.

Even after avoidance, the project will need to secure offsets. The project will secure the required offsets as far as practicable within the site.

Historical and Cultural Heritage Assessment

Aboriginal Cultural Heritage

The **Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report** assesses Aboriginal cultural heritage values, impacts, and management strategies for the proposed solar project in the Warrumbungle and Dubbo LGAs.

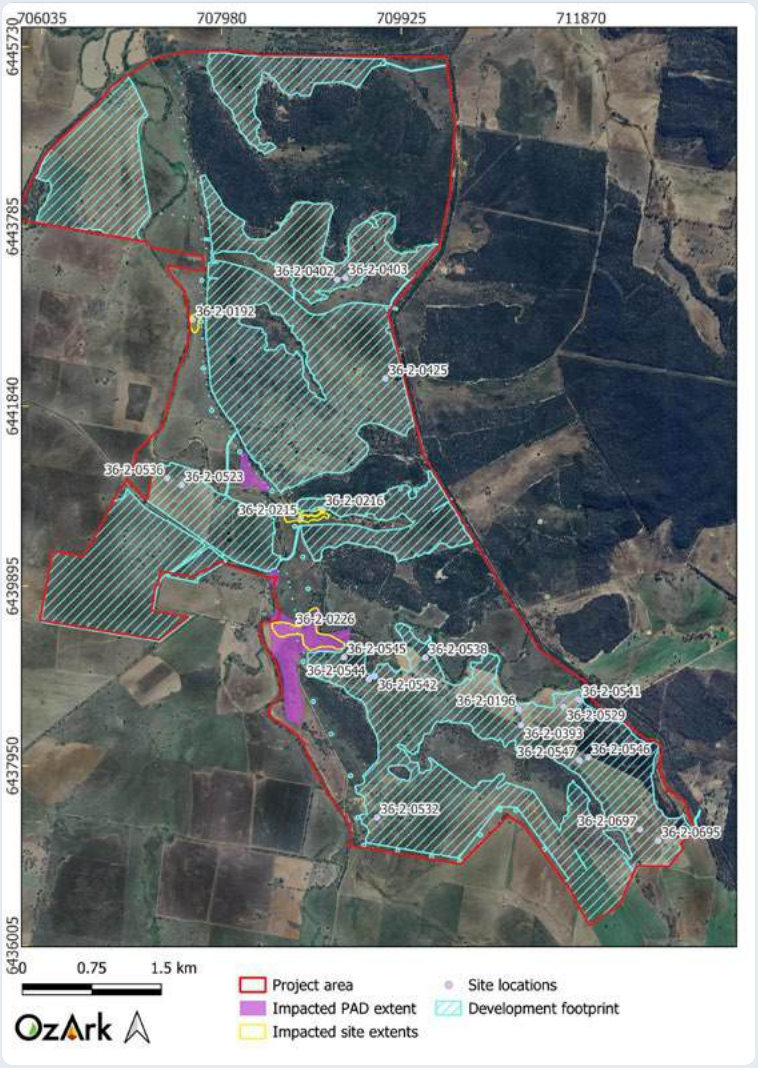
A pedestrian field survey was conducted in 2022 with Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP) representatives across the project area.

The survey identified:

- 30 previously unrecorded Aboriginal sites (15 isolated finds, 15 artefact scatters)
- 43 existing sites. Most sites were found near watercourses
- 33 areas of potential archaeological deposit (PAD) were identified.

Mitigation Measures

- **Salvage** - Impacted sites (22 sites, 3 PADs) will have artefacts mapped, described, and collected before construction.
- **Fencing** - Sites and PADs within 20 m of works will be fenced and marked as 'no-go' areas.
- **Sub-surface Excavation** - Focused archaeological digs at specific PADs where infrastructure will impact.



- **Management Plan** - An Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Management Plan (ACHMP) will be developed with RAPs, including protocols for unexpected finds and worker inductions.

Historic Heritage Assessment

Two historic items were identified within the project area:

- **HS01 (Mechanical Seeder):** Assessed as having no heritage significance; located in an exclusion zone and will not be impacted
- **HS04 (House and Outbuildings):** Also assessed as having no heritage significance; located within the development footprint and will be demolished.

No items within the project area are listed on national, state, or local heritage registers.

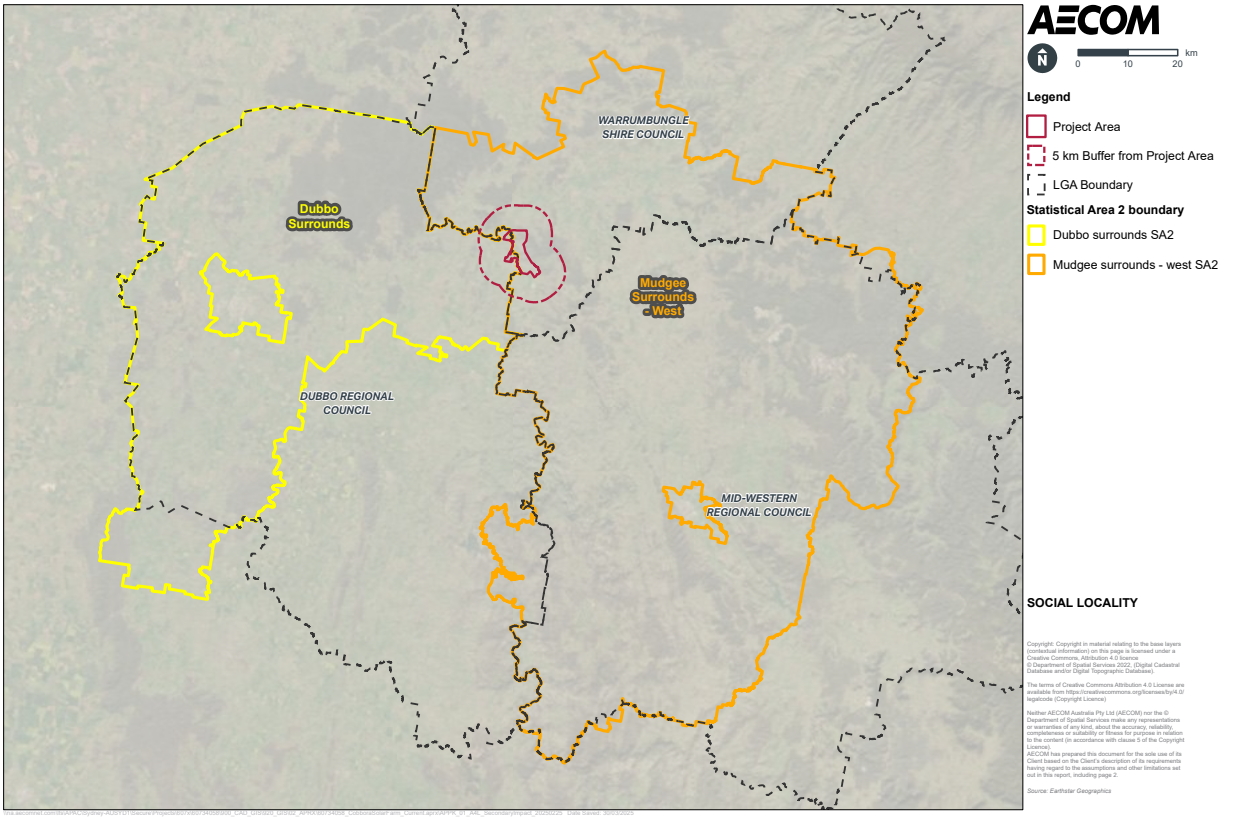
SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACTS

Extensive engagement is being done to assess the community's considerations throughout the planning and development phases. We will continue to listen to stakeholders and adapt our approach according to their needs. Where possible, we will work with other developers to ensure we are not overlapping or causing community fatigue.

Our Social Impact Assessment comprehensively evaluates how the proposed development may affect the surrounding communities including residents, businesses and stakeholders, during both construction and operation phases.

Assessment Methodology

- Based on ABS data, stakeholder consultation, and technical studies.
- Social locality defined using Statistical Area Level 2 (SA2) boundaries (Mudgee Surrounds – West and Dubbo Surrounds).
- Impacts assessed across categories such as:
  - Way of life
  - Community
  - Accessibility
  - Culture
  - Health and wellbeing
  - Surroundings
  - Livelihoods
  - Decision-making systems



Construction Phase Impacts

Challenges:

- Temporary changes to local demographics due to an influx of up to 734 workers which may temporarily increase demand for local health services, especially in nearby towns like Dunedoo and Dubbo.
- Minor impacts on local amenity (noise, dust, traffic).
- Potential cultural heritage impacts (22 Aboriginal sites affected).
- Cumulative impacts from nearby projects (construction fatigue).

Opportunities:

- Economic stimulus through local business engagement and job creation.
- Opportunities for local procurement and Aboriginal participation.

Potential population increase during construction, assuming all workers move into the nominated single SA2

SA2	2021 POPULATION (ABS, 2021)	ADDITIONAL PROJECT POPULATION INCREASE	TOTAL POTENTIAL POPULATION INCREASE IN SA2 (WITH THE PROJECT)	POTENTIAL POPULATION INCREASE (%)
Mudgee Surrounds - West	11,072	732	11,804	6.61%
Dubbo Surrounds	5,963	732	6,695	10.93%
Distributed across SA2s	17,035	732	17,767	4.12%

Potential Cumulative Impacts

1. Traffic and Transport

- Increased congestion, especially on Golden Highway.
- Potential delays and safety concerns due to overlapping construction traffic.

2. Noise and Vibration

- Combined noise from multiple sites may exceed acceptable levels.
- Likely to affect nearby residents, though mitigated by large land buffers.

3. Air Quality

- Dust and emissions from concurrent earthworks and vehicle movements.
  - Impacts expected to be localised and temporary.

4. Visual Amenity

- Multiple construction sites may alter the landscape character.
- Visual impacts primarily affect motorists and nearby residents.

5. Livelihoods

- Increased employment and business opportunities.
- Potential strain on local services and infrastructure.

6. Construction Fatigue

- Residents may experience stress or frustration due to prolonged disruption.
- Especially relevant for communities near Cobbora Township.

Operational Phase Impacts

Challenges:

- Visual and noise impacts for a small number of nearby residents.
- Cumulative visual impacts from other renewable projects.

Opportunities:

- Significant contribution to the National Electricity Market (enough to power ~ 280,000 homes).
- Long-term employment (20 FTE roles).
- Continued agricultural use (sheep grazing).

Mitigation and Management

- Development of:
  - Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan
  - Aboriginal Participation Plan
  - Accommodation, Employment and Procurement Strategy
  - Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP)
- Measures to reduce noise, visual, and traffic impacts.
- Cultural heritage management and salvage protocols.
- Coordination with other projects to avoid overlapping construction schedules.
- Clear communication with communities.
- Consistent branding and messaging to distinguish projects and reduce confusion.
- Grievance mechanisms to address community concerns.
- A camp will be constructed within the development footprint to accommodate workers during the construction phase.
- The project proposes health and safety protocols to minimise onsite incidents and engagement with local health providers to anticipate and manage demand including a site nurse to manage minor injuries and other health requirements for the construction crew.

NEXT STEPS – HAVE YOUR SAY

To have your say on this project, you must lodge a submission online through the NSW Planning Portal before the close of exhibition on Wednesday 1 October 2025.

To do this, search for this project at Major Projects | Planning Portal - Department of Planning and Environment (https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects) and click on 'Make a submission'. You will need to log in or create a user account.

Resources to help you use the NSW Planning Portal are available at State significant service help and support | Planning Portal - Department of Planning and Environment (https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/help) including a step-by-step guide on how to make a submission. If you require further assistance making a submission through the portal, please contact customer support on 1300 305 695 or the Cobbora Project line - 02 9182 8591.

Before making your submission, please read the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure's disclaimer and declaration at Disclaimer and Declaration | Planning Portal - Department of Planning and Environment (https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/help/disclaimer-and-declaration) and their privacy statement at Privacy | Planning (https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/privacy).

Your submission will be published on the NSW Planning Portal in accordance with their privacy statement and disclaimer and declaration. You can elect to have your name withheld from the published list of submitters. If you choose this option, do not include personal information in the body of your submission or in any attachments as your submission will be published in full.

When making a submission you will be required to include:

- Your name and address (unless you opt to withhold this information)
- The name of the project and the application number
- A statement on whether you 'support' or 'object' to the application or if you are simply providing comments
- The reasons why you support or object to the application
- A declaration of any reportable political donations you have made in the last two years (visit Donations and gift disclosure | Planning (https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/assess-and-regulate/development-assessment/planning-approval-pathways/donations-and-gift-disclosure) or phone 1300 305 695 to find out more from the Department)
- An acknowledgement that you accept the Department's disclaimer and declaration.

COBBORA
solar project

Cobbora Solar and BESS Project

Environmental Impact Statement

Public Exhibition 3 September – 1 October 2025

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About us

The Cobbora Solar and BESS Project is being developed by Pacific Partnerships. To learn more about us, please visit our website.

Next Steps

All submissions received during the public exhibition period will be responded to in a Submissions Report. DPHI will consider submissions and responses when determining the Project. We will inform the community once the Project is determined in late 2025.

02 9128 8591

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