

Goulburn River Solar Farm

COMMUNITY UPDATE
JANUARY 2024



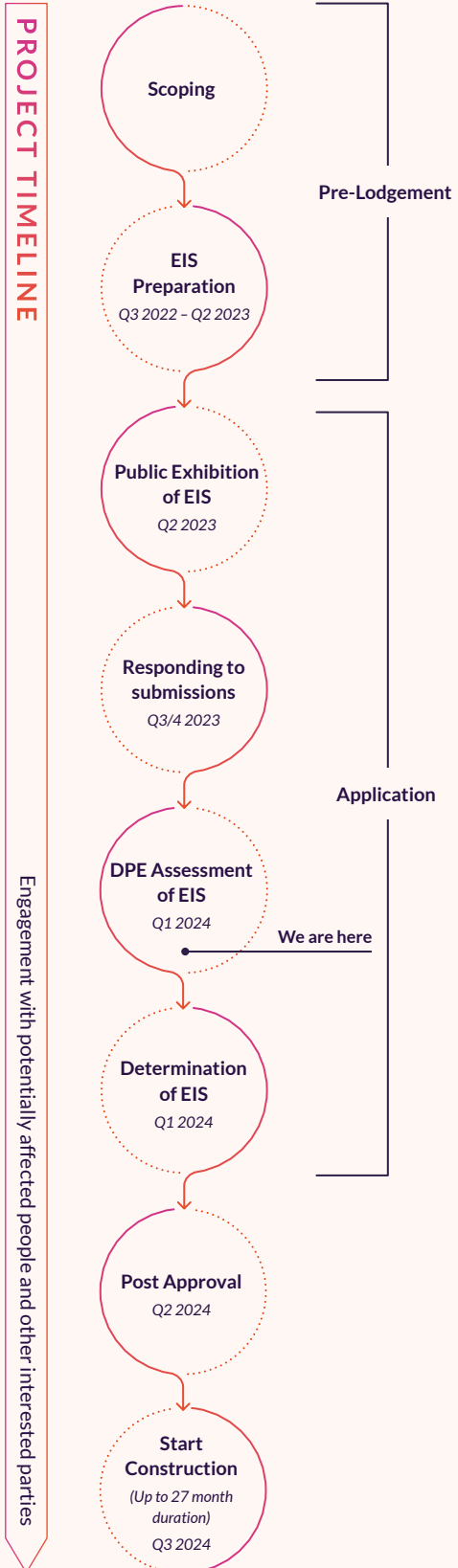
Project update

As the proposed Goulburn River Solar Farm planning process continues, keeping you informed and involved is our top priority.

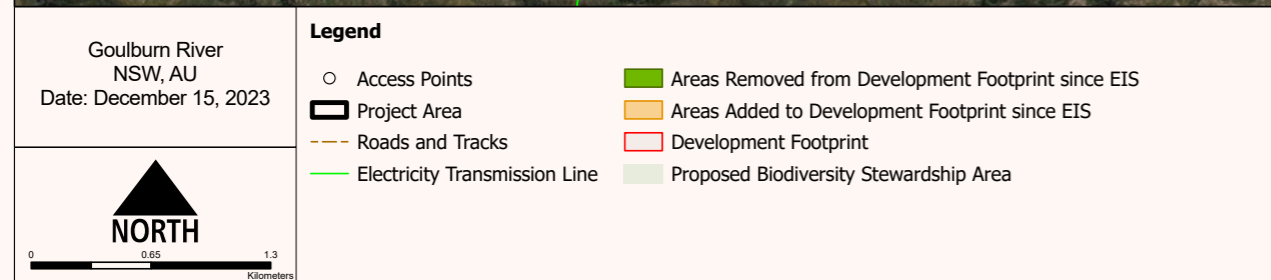
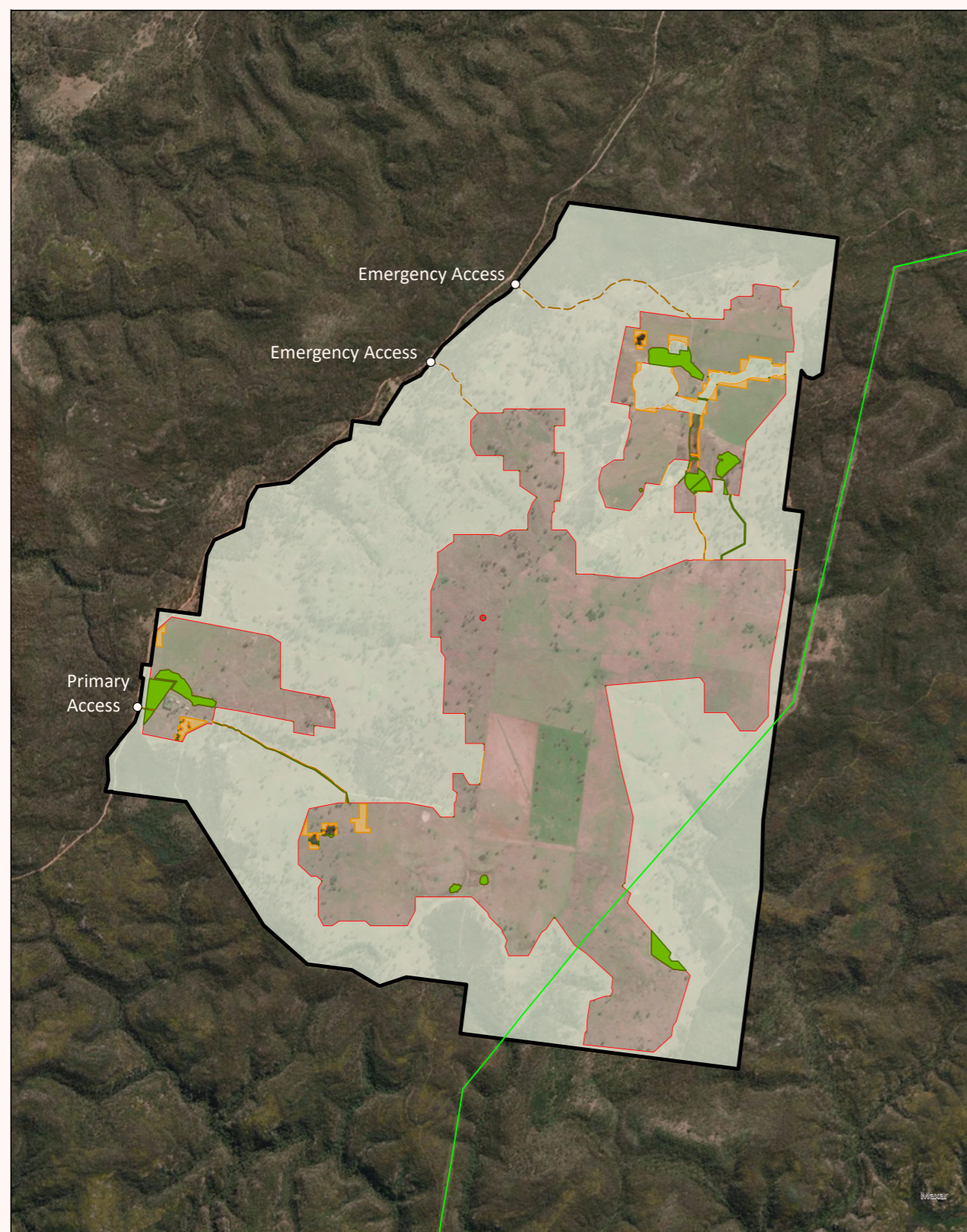
Over the past two years, our team has actively engaged with a range of community members and interested stakeholders. This includes not just the residents living nearby but also local businesses, service providers, community groups, and government agencies.

Our engagement efforts are focused on ensuring that everyone who might be impacted by or interested in the project has a voice. We believe that your insights and feedback are invaluable in guiding our project towards a future that benefits the entire community.

The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the project was placed on public exhibition from 13 June 2023 to 10 July 2023. The purpose of this newsletter is to share insights from the submissions we received during this period and how your valuable feedback is shaping the project for the better.



Goulburn River Solar Farm – changes since EIS submission (Figure 1)



What we learned from your feedback

During the EIS public exhibition, we received a total of 53 unique¹ public submissions. Breaking it down, 45 expressed objections, five showed support, and three were general comments. Additionally, we received valuable insights from 12 NSW Government agencies and two local councils.

Of the 53 public responses, 12 (22.6%) were received from the local area², five (9.4%) came from the regional area³, and the remaining 36 (67.9%) were from the broader community.⁴

A detailed Response to Submissions Report has been lodged with the Department of Planning and Environment which describes the submissions received and our response to each. A copy of the report is available [here](http://bit.ly/3NQECfc) (<http://bit.ly/3NQECfc>).

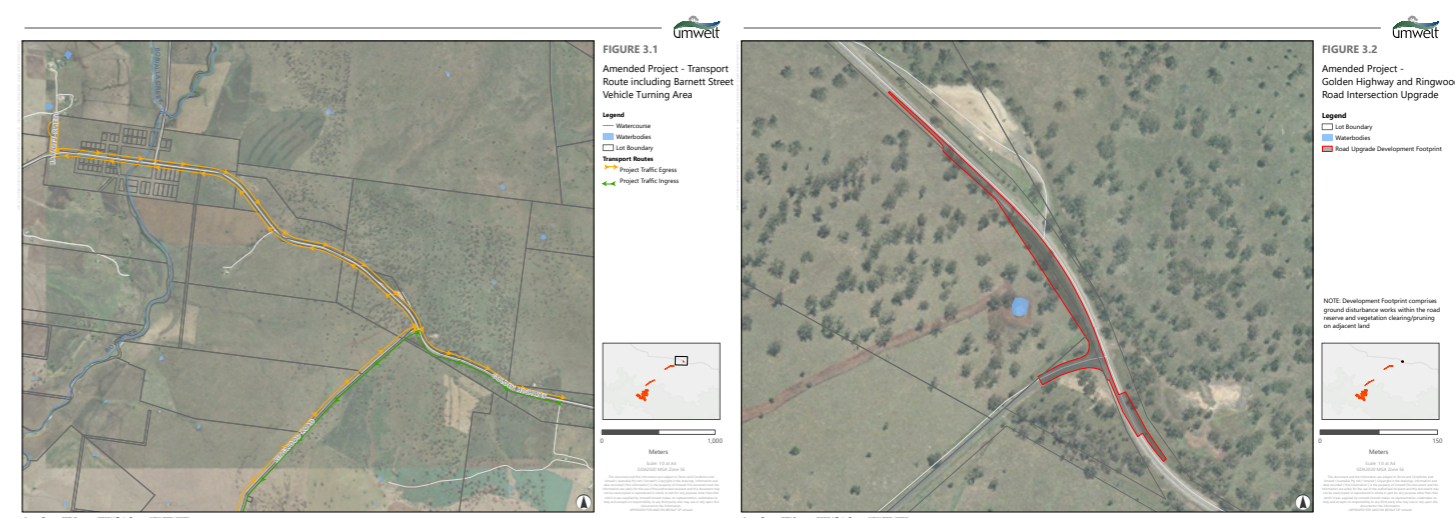
In our comprehensive Response to Submissions Report, we address the following matters raised by the community. These include:

- Questions about the adequacy of the EIS, and the consultation approach undertaken.
- 13 key themes regarding the economic, environmental and social impacts of the project, as outlined below:
 - » Road upgrades
 - » Impacts to water and waterways
 - » Change of land use
 - » Noise
 - » Economic
 - » Heritage (historic)
 - » Biodiversity
 - » Social and community cohesion disturbance
 - » Project end-of-life (i.e. decommissioning and rehabilitation)
 - » Cumulative impacts
 - » Hazards and risks
 - » Livelihoods
 - » Visual

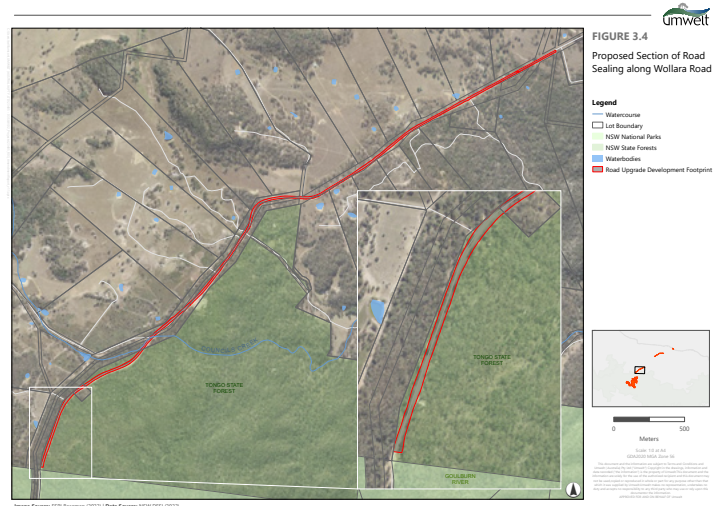
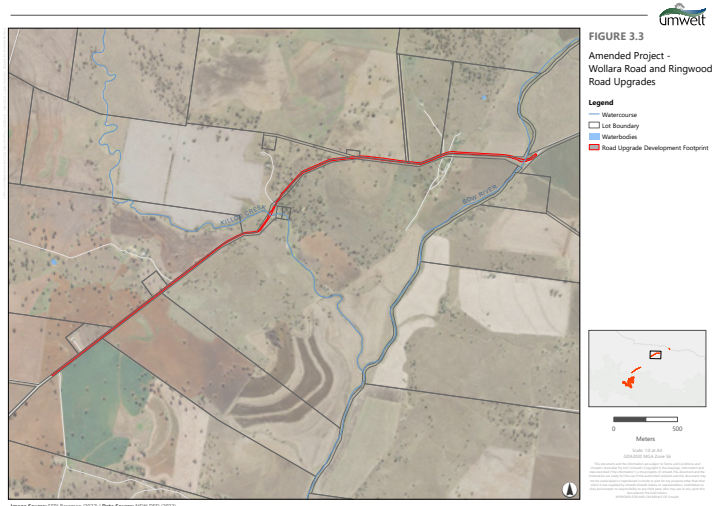
Changes resulting from community feedback

In response to the insights gathered from the EIS exhibition, and the valuable submissions we received, we have proposed several key amendments to the project. These changes reflect our commitment to addressing community concerns and enhancing the project's overall impact. The amendments include:

- Transport route adjustments (see figures 3.1 & 3.2):
 - » A revised route for construction vehicles, diverting west at the Golden Highway and Ringwood Road intersection to a designated turning area on Barnett Street, Merriwa.
 - » Upgrading the intersection of the Golden Highway and Ringwood Road for improved visibility and a safer road network.



¹ In accordance with the Guideline (DPE, 2022) multiple submissions from the same person or group are counted as one submission.
² Local is considered within approximately 5 km from the Project Area, including the locality of Merriwa.
³ Regional is considered between 5 and 100 km from the Project Area.
⁴ Broader community is considered more than 100 km from the Project Area.



- Road improvements to Wollara Road and Ringwood Road (see figures 3.3 & 3.4):
 - » A section of Ringwood Road, spanning 1.6 km from Killoe Creek to Binks Road, will undergo realignment, widening, and sealing. These changes are designed to enhance road safety and durability.
 - » On Wollara Road, a 4.7 km unpaved stretch extending from the boundary of the Goulburn River National Park to 1621 Wollara Road will be upgraded. This includes paving to improve road safety and usability. Please note, there are no planned upgrades for the segment of Wollara Road that lies within the Goulburn River National Park.
- Energy storage enhancements:
 - » Increasing the capacity of our Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and exploring a decentralised BESS option, involving smaller, distributed batteries instead of one large central unit.
- Development footprint and layout adjustments:
 - » Redesigning the development footprint to protect the habitat of the Regent Honeyeater and Box Gum Woodland and to avoid a Travelling Stock Route.
 - » Increasing the width of two internal access roads from 6m to 10m for underground transmission corridors.
 - » Reducing the overall development footprint to ~792 hectares, down from ~799 hectares.
- Additional infrastructure:
 - » Constructing an additional transmission tower within the existing easement of the 500kV transmission line.
- Workforce and accommodation strategy:
 - » Conducting further assessments and reviewing our approach for workforce accommodation, including the development of an Accommodation and Employment Strategy.
- Biodiversity stewardship:
 - » Advancing a plan to establish a biodiversity stewardship area (offset) across most of the project site, ensuring over 1,100 hectares will be dedicated to conservation for the long term.

Stay informed and get in touch

We welcome your continued interest and involvement in the Goulburn River Solar Farm Project. If you're looking for more information or wish to discuss any aspect of the project further, we're here to help.

Please feel free to reach out to us using the contact details below to get more insights into the project, or if you'd like to schedule a meeting with our project team. Your engagement is valuable to us, and we're always ready to answer any questions and listen to your feedback.

Contact us

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