

NEOEN



CULCAIRN SOLAR FARM & BESS

COMMUNITY COMMUNICATION STRATEGY & BENEFIT SHARING PLAN

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	CSF Stakeholder Register (internal)
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Acknowledgement of Country

Neoen would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the country on which we work, in particular the Wiradjuri people on whose land Culcairn Solar Farm is being built and the BESS proposed. We pay respect to their connections to land, sea and the community. and we pay our respect to the Elders – past, present, and future.

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INTRODUCTION

Neoen is a specialist, independent power producer with a long-term vision to produce renewable, competitively-priced energy sustainably and on a large scale. Our total capacity in operation and under construction globally is currently over 8.4 GW and we are targeting 10 GW by the end of 2025. Neoen is Australia's leading renewable energy producer with over 4.3 GW of wind, solar and battery storage projects in operation or under construction.

Neoen is the owner of the Culcairn Solar Farm (CSF), a 350MWac solar energy facility to be developed on leased farming land near Culcairn, in New South Wales. It is on the Traditional country of the Wiradjuri people. First proposed in 2018, the Project received Development Approval in 2021. The Project is currently in the construction phase with works started in March 2024.

Neoen understands that the success of CSF is dependent to a large extent on the development of genuine, open and ongoing relationships with key stakeholders and the local community. We recognise the importance of ensuring a “no surprises” dynamic with the local community and are committed to developing and nurturing long-term relationships between our team and various project stakeholders.

This Community Communication Strategy (CCS) and Benefit Sharing Plan (BSP) outlines our community engagement approach and objectives for ensuring key stakeholders and communities are involved and consulted throughout each stage of the Project's lifecycle. This plan has recently been updated in preparation for the Project moving through the post-approval stage towards pre-construction, and to incorporate content outlines in an NSW Social Impact Assessment Report. To illustrate how relationships and engagement will flow on from this stage, indicative engagement plans for the Operations and Decommissioning stages are also included.

Proposed engagement approaches are diverse and have been tailored to the expectations of stakeholders. Wherever possible, Neoen seeks to deliver engagement in alignment with the INVOLVE, COLLABORATE and EMPOWER levels of the [International Agency for Public Participation \(IAP2\) Spectrum](#) – to ensure stakeholder feedback, interests and concerns are adequately reflected in the final design and operational approach of the CSF asset.

Critical aspects of this CCS & BSP include:

- A community description and context which underpins engagement and planning
- Enquiries and complaints procedure
- Detailed stakeholder mapping incorporating the stakeholders and communities affected and/or interested in the project.

Governance

This plan aligns with Neoen's Community Engagement Toolkit by Project Stage (See Appendix A) and is intended as a living document, to be utilised by Project Managers, site-based teams and Neoen's dedicated Community Engagement Manager as the project progresses. This document will also be shared with nominated EPC and O&M contractors so that it can be incorporated into their stakeholder and site management plans to ensure CSF's engagement approach is consistent and coordinated.

Review

Periodical evaluation and reviews of this CCS & BSP will ensure the plan is routinely updated and informed to reflect changing circumstances, community feedback and ongoing improvements in Neoen's community engagement approach, so that our communication and engagement remain:

- Relevant to the project's evolving needs, issues and outcomes
- Responsive and tailored to the needs of key stakeholders and local community
- At the leading edge of industry and global best practice

1. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT APPROACH

1.1 Our approach

Neoen have a vertically integrated business model, meaning that we ‘develop to own’ our projects. This model is unusual in the industry, affording us a clear advantage over our competitors in respect to community engagement – our starting point is the clear understanding that we will be long-term neighbours and participants in the local community for the lifetime of the project.

As a result, Neoen considers it to be vitally important that trusting relationships are developed between the people on the ground who know the project the best, and the stakeholders that are part of and connected to their region and local community. Due to the rural nature of the community, our overall approach to consultation for the CSF will be open, relaxed, flexible and responsive – an approach preferred by stakeholders engaged to date.

1.2 Our values

Neoen has a clear set of values that underpin and guide our work. How these values translate into our external approach to building relationships with communities is described in **Table 1**.



Integrity

We operate with integrity, whatever we do, whenever and wherever we do it. We work with partners who abide by the same rules.



Commitment

We uphold all our commitments, internal and external. We believe in hard work and take pleasure in seeing a good job well done.



Audacity

We believe we can become a world leader in renewable energy. We have the audacity to operate globally, imagining, designing and implementing competitive, effective energy solutions.



Esprit de corps

We are loyal to each other and form a close-knit team. We are proud of our company, our goals and our accomplishments.

Table 1: Principles and practice

Value & Principle	In practice
Integrity <i>Mutual Respect</i>	We provide a space for genuine dialogue where people can participate in respectful discussions.
Integrity <i>Transparency</i>	We demystify the development process for local stakeholders and clearly communicate which points, when and to what extent they are able to influence decisions. We are transparent about how and why decisions are made.
Integrity <i>Inclusiveness</i>	We reach out to involve key stakeholders and the local community so they can play a part in decisions that affect them. We provide a range of opportunities and avenues for ongoing and meaningful dialogue, allowing for detailed and timely discussions.

Commitment <i>Responsiveness</i>	We communicate well and are responsive to emerging issues, concerns and ideas. We provide timely information and ensure people have time to digest information, understand the project and make informed decisions.
Commitment <i>Mutual Benefit</i>	We seek shared outcomes of mutual benefit for the local host community over the long term.
Audacity <i>Innovation</i>	We deliver engagement beyond regulatory conditions and compliance. We are open to and pursue bold and creative ideas and solutions tailored to and driven by the local context of the project.
Esprit de corps <i>Relationship building</i>	We build and nurture long term local relationships and make meaningful links with local leaders and organisations. We provide many avenues for interaction across the project lifecycle.
Esprit de corps <i>Celebration</i>	We value and celebrate community; our own and those of the communities we work with. We enjoy celebrating our successes together.

1.3 Themes

As a company that frequently engages with stakeholders, Neoen is well versed in best practice engagement practices and emerging trends. Table 2 below shows several of the key themes we utilise to shape our engagement approach.

Table 2: Engagement Themes

 Cultivating advocates from within the community	 Good understanding of the social context & work to meet stakeholder expectations	 Community involved in decisions around siting, project design & operations	 Community engagement that starts early, builds trust & provides opportunities for participation	 Focus on creating a legacy for community
 Building trust and long-term relationships	 Informed by best practice & exploring opportunities to go beyond	 Ensure genuine benefits flow to host community & co-development of benefit-sharing outcomes	 Meaningful effort to achieve local and social procurement through project lifecycle	

1.4 Objectives

1. Engagement follows a transparent and open approach throughout all stages of the development of CSF and ensures 'no surprises' for stakeholders and community.
2. First Nations community engagement and consultation will be incorporated to maximise long-term benefits to the Wiradjuri people.
3. Engagement seeks to uncover and interrogate the expectations and preferences of stakeholders from an early stage to ensure these are then reflected in the Project's design and approach to operation.
4. Regular, consistent and considered consultation provides stakeholders and community with accurate, timely and factual information – encouraging positive perceptions and trust in CSF and in Neoen.
5. Community and stakeholder concerns are managed in a professional, respectful way, establishing and preserving the Project's Social Licence to Operate.
6. Where possible, identify opportunities to partner with community stakeholders in the co-design and delivery of equitable, lasting community benefits – including procurement, employment, training, benefit-sharing and support for key social groups.

2. PROJECT CONTEXT

2.1 Context Narrative

The Culcairn Solar Farm is a 350 MWac solar farm & battery storage project designed to improve New South Wales's energy security, reduce consumer power prices and facilitate greater uptake of renewable energy.

The location of the project in New South Wales has been chosen to meet several criteria to design a project that achieves competitive pricing for the end consumer in a strong part of the network. Some of the criteria taken into account are the following:

- solar irradiance
- site topography
- limited vegetation
- proximity to a strong, reliable part of the transmission network
- availability to connect additional capacity on this part of the network.

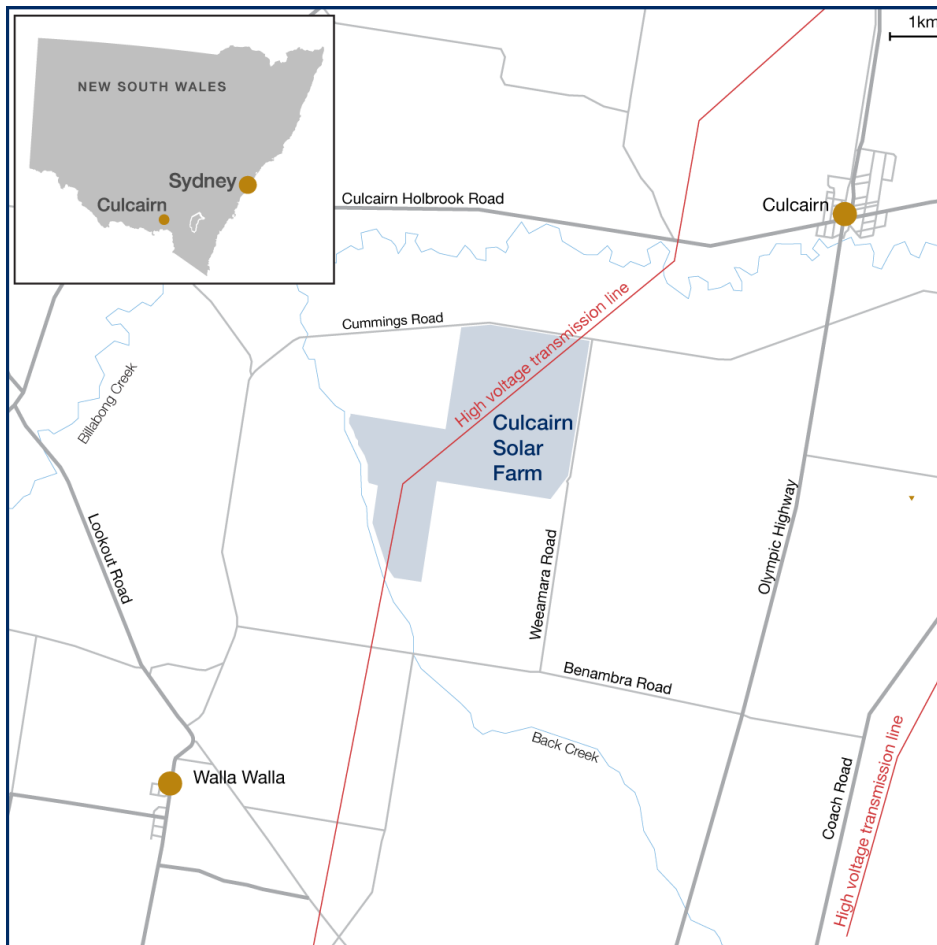
2.2 Community Overview

The broad community of CSF includes the towns of Culcairn (5 km to the northeast) and Walla Walla (8 km to the southwest). Culcairn is located between the major regional centres of Albury (50 km to the North, population 56,093) and Wagga Wagga (80 km to the South, population 67,609).

At the time of the 2021 Census, Culcairn had a population of 1,483 people, representing 13.3% of the Greater Hume Shire LGA. Walla Walla had a population of 811, representing about 7.3% of the LGA. Traditional grain farming and sheep farming account for a significant part of the local economies.

In Culcairn, about 5.4% of the population identifies as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. The number of people in Walla Walla who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander is relatively small, representing 3.7% of the population.

Figure 1: Culcairn Solar Farm area



2.3 Greater Hume Shire region

Greater Hume Shire is the Local Government Authority for the project. It was formed in 2004 when three former shires (Culcairn, parts of Holbrook and Hume) were amalgamated. In 2021, there were 11,157 people living in the shire (ABS Census).

Greater Hume has nine Councillors who were elected in October 2024 and are listed below:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|------------|
| - Tony Quinn, Mayor | East Ward |
| - Annette Schilg, Deputy Mayor | North Ward |
| - Brian Liston | North Ward |
| - Matt Hicks | West Ward |
| - Ashley Lindner | West Ward |
| - Ben Hooper | North Ward |
| - Jenny O'Neill | South Ward |
| - Lea Parker | East Ward |
| - Kerry Morton | East Ward |

The Greater Hume Shire voted to formally object to the Jindera Solar Farm on 6 November 2019, to the Walla Walla Solar Farm on 20 November 2019, and the Culcairn Solar Farm on 20 February 2020.

The recognised Traditional Owners in the Greater Hume Shire are the Wiradjuri people. 3.4% of the Greater Hume Shire LGA population identifies as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people.

Culcairn is located in the Albury electorate of NSW. Albury electorate comprises the city of Albury and the surrounding rural councils. The electorate covers 19,686 square kms in southern NSW.

The previous MP is Greg Aplin of the Liberal Party, who was first elected in 2003 with a safe margin of 27%. He announced his retirement in 2018 and his successor Justin Clancy was elected in March 2019.

Culcairn is in the Federal electorate of Farrer, held by Liberal MP Sussan Ley, who won the seat in 2001. The seat is considered secure for non-Labor parties, alternating between the Liberal Party and the National Party since 1949.

The Farrer electorate includes large-scale irrigation areas (around Deniliquin, Griffith and Wentworth) and produces dairy products, sheep and cattle, orchard and vine crops, apples and rice. Other major agricultural products include wool, cotton, wheat and cereals. Many industries are based on the processing of agricultural products, such as the newsprint mill at Albury and the largest rice mill in the southern hemisphere at Deniliquin. Other industries include mineral sand mining, tourism and agricultural service industries.

2.3.1 Cumulative impacts

The NSW Social Impact Assessment Guideline suggests that a social impact is a consequence experienced by people due to changes associated with a State significant resource project. This can include impacts on way of life, community, access to and use of infrastructure, services and facilities, culture, health and wellbeing, surroundings, personal and property rights, decision-making system and fears and aspirations.

Cumulative impacts are the successive, incremental, and combined impacts (both positive and negative) of activities on society, the economy and the environment and the Guideline suggests they can arise in three main ways:

- ‘Spatial’ impacts are those that occur over the same area. For example, trucks from multiple operations may produce a cumulative noise impact along a common haulage route.
- ‘Temporal’ impacts are those that vary over time. For example, the construction of multiple large projects over the same timeframe may produce a spike in temporary workers in an area, creating a short-term cumulative shortage of accommodation.
- ‘Linked’ impacts involve more complex interactions, such as where an impact triggers another or where a single activity has multiple impact.

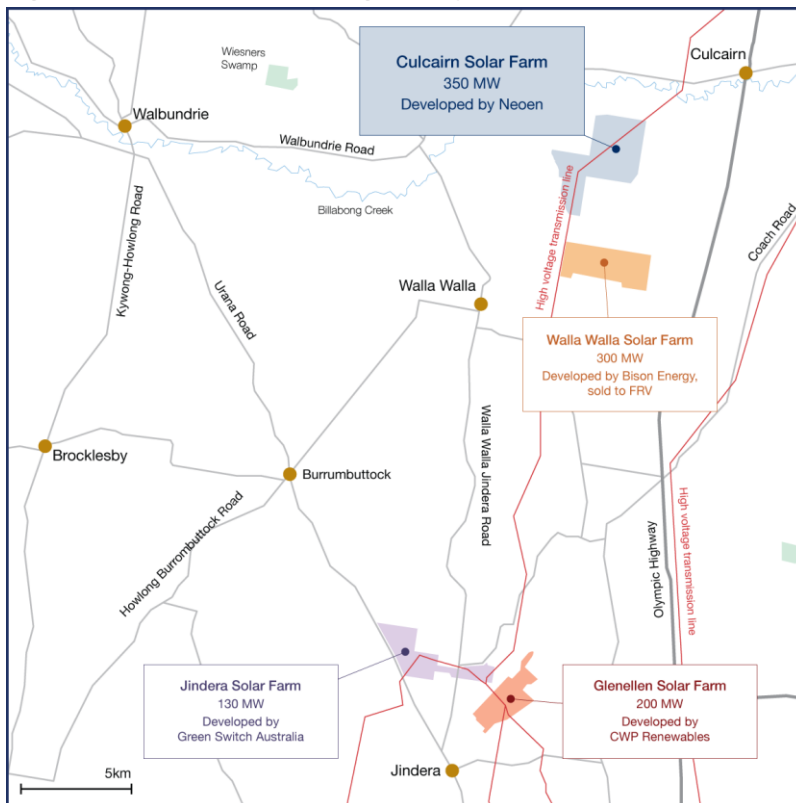
Social impacts can also be perceived, for example if a community or individual perceives changes as detrimental.

CSF will be one of four large-scale renewable energy projects in the Greater Hume Shire and as a result, cumulative impacts are possible. Other projects located nearby include:

- Glenellen Solar Farm: a 200 MW solar farm developed by CWP Renewables, to the north of Jindera. The project was approved in December 2023 and Neoen understands the project start of construction is imminent.
- Jindera Solar Farm: a 130 MW solar farm developed by GreenSwitch Australia. Development approval was granted December 2020, and a modification was approved in 2023. Neoen understands the project start of construction is imminent.
- Walla Walla Solar Farm: a 300 MW solar farm developed by Bison Energy, and recently purchased by FRV. Development approval was granted November 2020, with consolidated consent granted August 2022 after modification determination. Construction of the project is in its final stages.

The map below identifies the four projects in the Greater Hume Shire. It was developed by Neoen in response to confusion in the community and amongst local stakeholders about which project was which. The high-voltage transmission lines, which the solar farms intend to connect into, are shown in red.

Figure 2 Greater Hume Shire region projects



There are some key cumulative impacts that are likely in this project, including:

- Supply chain impacts and construction labour demand/ local workforce shortages from multiple construction projects in regional NSW (Snowy 2.0, Inland rail, Energy Connect, Humalink)
- Construction impacts from solar farm construction in the area, particularly if construction periods overlap with different projects – increased traffic movement, safety concerns, construction noise etc.
- Accommodation impacts from high demand for housing workers across multiple projects, consequent impact on tourism accommodation
- Impacts on local business capacity where larger projects entice workers with larger budgets
- Impacts on way of life and temporary changes to community life e.g., changes to quiet rural amenity of host and neighbouring landholders' properties, anxiety about future changes to rural landscape

Through considered project delivery, many of the anticipated cumulative impacts of concurrent solar farm development can be avoided, or minimised. Strategies may include:

- Opportunities for better coordination of training, skills and workforce development to reduce the labour supply risks, improve regional economic outcomes and job quality.
- Engagement with industry to provide opportunity for students to develop workforce skills
- Implementation of Accommodation strategy to address housing pressures
- Consultation with other solar farm developers to understand project phasing
- Mitigation strategies including early screening and
- Transport planning e.g. bus or car sharing to minimise vehicle movement, etc.
- Ongoing consultation throughout Construction and into operations to ensure those with genuine concerns are given opportunity to raise them, and solutions are offered where practical.

Neoen will work closely with regional partners to address cumulative impacts identified in the community. Further discussion of construction labour demand is addressed in the related IAPP. Section 5 of the CCS outlines some of the strategies that Neoen will implement on CSF in response to specific concerns.

3. PROJECT STAKEHOLDERS

CSF Stakeholders are progressively included in the CSF Stakeholder Register, where a process of ranking and recording of interests and preferences provides clear guidance on the level of influence and interest each stakeholder is likely to have, informing how Neoen should engage. The stakeholder register continues to be broadened over time as engaged stakeholders provide further recommendations on who to engage and in direct response to social risks identified by the project team during project planning.

The following table is a complete list of stakeholders and priority needs.

Table 3: Culcairn community stakeholders and needs

Stakeholder Group	Overview	Objectives – Needs based approach	Activities
Host Landowners	Residents who are hosting solar infrastructure on their land.	Ongoing communication and discussions as project progresses. Contribution to the project's progress, ability to provide local knowledge, advice and input. Involvement in development of Community Benefit Sharing Scheme.	One-on-one meetings Landowner updates & dinners Letterbox drops Invitations & involvement in community events
Near neighbours	Residents owning land adjacent to the project site have the potential to be affected by the visual impact of the solar, the noise and heavy vehicle traffic associated with the construction phase	To create and maintain a close connection with direct adjacent neighbours of Culcairn Solar Farm. To keep neighbours informed about the project from early in the project planning process and provide opportunities to raise issues and provide feedback. To ensure that neighbours share in the benefits of the project.	Benefit-sharing: One-on-one engagement Invitation to be provided a private photomontage Letterbox drop project updates Community Information Sessions Invitation to community events Adjacent landholders to be offered a Construction Disruption Payment to mitigate potential impacts associated with the construction phase.
Neighbourhood (Culcairn and Walla Walla)	The local community / people living within the Culcairn township adjacent to the project.	To keep neighbours informed about the project from early in the project planning phase. To provide opportunities to raise issues and provide feedback.	Letterbox drop project updates Community information sessions Invitation to community events
Council including Councillors, CEO Planning Team	We will work with the Greater Hume Shire Council to shape the Community Engagement Strategy and Benefit Sharing Program.	To ensure a positive and collaborative relationship with the LGA that can support the long-term goals of the community.	One-on-one engagement Project briefings & updates Community information sessions Regular meetings

		Evidence of compliance with DA conditions.	
State MP	Justin Clancy	To ensure the local member is kept updated about the project and its progress. To seek input and advice in relation to community priorities	Project briefing in person by Head of Development Invitation to community events
Federal MP	Sussan Ley	To ensure the local member is kept updated about the project and its progress. To seek input and advice in relation to community priorities.	Project update in person by Head of Development Invitation to community events
Traditional Owners – First Nations community	Registered Traditional Owners and identified First Nations representatives from the local community.	To ensure Neoen is engaging with local First Nations groups beyond planning requirements, such as employment, training and opportunities to work on country.	Invitation to co-design Industry and Aboriginal Participation Plan Invitation to community events
RFS	Local volunteers representing the Country Fire Authority	To ensure project activities abide by safety and regulatory requirements.	Provide indicative design plans and updates on the project to prepare for any local fire and emergency safety requirements
Schools, TAFEs and Universities	Culcairn Public School Billabong High School St Joseph's Primary Walla Walla Public School St Paul's College Albury TAFE	To ensure organisations are updated on education and vocational opportunities associated with the project. To use the opportunity of a local renewable project to dovetail relevant & practical educational content into the syllabus.	Information and project updates provided and invitation to future networking engagement Opportunities for site visits for local schools.
Business groups / industry stakeholders	We will seek to engage and collaborate with local businesses and business networks around what opportunities may be available such as sourcing for the solar farm development.	To ensure Neoen is creating opportunities for local businesses to participate in the development of local renewable energy projects.	Pre-construction local business expression of interest Invitation to Local Employment & Supplier Networking session
Solar farm opponents	We will seek to identify those issues that are of concern to local solar farm opponents.	To be accessible, help to address concerns proactively, and to have a	Complaints process implemented and transparent.

		best practice complaints system in place.	
Advocacy groups	Sustainability Groups Community Energy Groups	Discussion on community energy and zero emissions targets. Potential for partnerships.	Update / presentation on project Invitations to community events
Community organisations	Culcairn & Walla Walla Development Committees	To understand the Project and be able to update their members. To participate in / benefit from Community Benefit Sharing Scheme.	Update/presentation on project including the Community Benefit Sharing Scheme Invitations to community events
Employment providers	For detailed plan see Industry and Aboriginal Participation Plan	To ensure Neoen is creating opportunities for local businesses to participate in the development of local renewable energy projects.	Pre-construction local business expression of interest Invitation to Local Employment & Supplier Networking session
Natural resource management groups	Landcare and other local groups that are involved in local conservation projects	To ensure local NRM knowledge and resourcing is available to the project. To distribute information to members	Update/presentation on project Invitations to community events
Media	Local and regional print, electronic and social media	To understand the Project and be able to update their readers / viewers.	Update on the project and invitations to community information sessions

Neoen have also created and maintains a comprehensive stakeholder register document for internal use.

4. SUMMARY OF ENGAGEMENT TO DATE

4.1 Initial Engagement: Q3 2018 to Q2 2019

After identifying the site for the Culcairn Solar Farm in the first half of 2018, Neoen started engaging with the host landholders and the Greater Hume Shire.

Once the site was secured, consultation started with neighbours of the project site. Adjacent Landowners and those within 3 km of the project site were contacted with an invitation to meet for the first time in November 2018. Initial meetings were held on 8 and 9 November 2018 and 27 and 28 November 2018.

Landowners met were informed about the project and were given the following information:

- Presentation of Neoen
- Presentation of the development process of a solar farm in NSW
- Potential land considered for the development
- Discussions on the concerns raised by the landowners
- The contact email address of the project.

A presentation leaflet on solar development and Neoen, a 2-page information leaflet on the project and a feedback form were provided to neighbours to allow for and encourage early feedback on the project.

During the meetings in November, landowners raised several questions and concerns. Among others, the main concerns raised were the following:

- Development of a solar farm on agricultural land
- Local economic impact of a solar farm during its operations compared to normal agricultural operations of the land
- Visual amenity and effect on adjacent property values
- Heat effect of solar farms and impact on neighbouring farming operations
- Health impacts of a solar farm
- Bush fire risk management
- Weed and vegetation management.

When possible, at that stage of the development, Neoen provided initial answers to those concerns.

In order to plan this first on-going early-stage consultation, neighbours were informed by phone or email and were offered the possibility to provide feedback through a face-to-face meeting or by phone when a face-to-face meeting couldn't be held directly.

Around the same time, Neoen engaged with the local branch of NSW Farmers and took part in a branch meeting on 28 November 2018 on Solar Farm Developments on Agricultural Land with TransGrid, the Department of Planning and Environment (DPIE) and NSW Farmers.

Additionally, a letter of information was sent in December 2018 to the Federal Member for the Farrer Electorate and to the Member of Parliament of NSW for the Albury electorate. APA (gas pipeline owner) was contacted by email in July 2018 and the Council was consulted in February, October and November 2018 and March 2019.

An additional opportunity to meet was given in April 2019 before Neoen held the community drop-in session in Culcairn, and an update of the project was provided by email or post mail to neighbours within 3 km of the proposed project site informing them that the Scoping Report had been lodged to the DPIE.

On 16 May 2019, Neoen held a Community Drop-in Session at the Culcairn Bowling Club on Olympic Highway. This session was advertised in the Border Mail, and in the two local newsletters of Walla Walla and Culcairn. The Neoen team was available to meet and answer questions from 2 to 8 pm. The main outline of the project was presented, with the information presented as posters (attached as Appendix 2) and made available as A4-sized printed materials for people to take-away. Over 100 people attended the session.

Contact numbers, project email address, and project website were shared with the community to allow them to access ongoing information on the project. Feedback surveys were also available to fill in.

Many local community members attended the session with genuine questions about the project. A small but vocal opposition group attended and made it difficult for people to feel comfortable to ask questions. Several community members reported feeling intimidated by those loudly opposing the project and requested a follow up meeting to raise concerns and ask questions that were not answered.

Following this first phase of community engagement on the project, Neoen took the time to gather the feedback and adjust the design of its second phase of community engagement.

4.2 First Nations Engagement

Neoen engaged Wiradjuri man, Mark Saddler, to participate in and support the development of the Cultural Heritage Management Plan and assessment during the early stages of project development. Mark runs a Wagga Wagga based cultural education business and has continued to stay in touch and help the local landholders understand some of the First Nations cultural history of their area, also visiting the Walla Walla historical society to share information.

During 2020, Neoen supported the host landholders to meet Mark Saddler and to visit their property to help them relocate First Nations artefacts that were identified on their property. Another host landholder has also identified an important scarred tree on his property (known as a 'ring tree') and has taken steps to protect this important cultural relic.

During the development of the CSF IAPP, organisations that represent First Nations people in the region were first identified. Early consultation with Albury and District Local Aboriginal Land Council (Albury LALC) and Riverina Murray Regional Alliance (RMRA) helped us in understanding the local context and identify First Nations organisations and businesses. Meetings were subsequently held with First Nations businesses (via Supply Nation), education/training providers and employment agencies. Conversations with First Nations organisations and businesses identified key issues in the region as far as work readiness, the need to focus on pre-apprenticeship training, cultural safety and support, and further funding for First Nations businesses to offer these services.

First Nations consultation and networking is detailed further in the CSF IAPP.

4.3 Intensive Engagement: Q3 2019 to Q2 2020

The Community Drop-in Session in May 2019 attracted a small number of vocal objectors. Feedback from some community members indicated that they had been unable to engage in meaningful conversations and were unable to get adequate responses to their concerns due to the circumstances of the meeting. Reports were subsequently received of considerable concern and emotion, and that some community members felt intimidated by those with opposing views.

In response to this and intent on continuing to provide meaningful opportunities for public engagement and consultation, Neoen recruited two local community engagement specialists to provide strategic input and support for the next phase of community engagement.

The newly formed community engagement team (two Neoen staff along with two local specialists) developed a tailored, intensive approach that primarily focused on 'kitchen table' conversations. This low-key method avoided opportunities for public protest, enabling more personalised and respectful conversations to occur, and reducing the risks and perceived risks of voicing views in public.

The meetings were framed as confidential, based on listening and information sharing (rather than positional) and an opportunity for residents to voice their concerns and have input to the development of the proposed Community Benefit Sharing Scheme. The information needs were met iteratively, for example in the first conversations there was confusion about which projects were which and being proposed by which

company; there were rumours that all four projects belonged to the same company. In response, Neoen developed a regional map which showed where the four projects were located, their size and the different companies (see Figure 2).

While many of these early conversations were with supporters of the project, over the ensuing weeks, interviews were held with people holding a wider range of views or concerns. For many, it was their first opportunity to speak with someone who could answer some of the questions they had about the project.

This phase of the community consultation was conceptualised as involving three stakeholder groups;

- immediate neighbours
- the wider community
- the local business community.

Between mid-August and October 2019, over 130 kitchen table discussions were conducted with residents of Walla Walla and Culcairn, and with some of the wider Shire. The majority of these were held in private homes with family members; a smaller number were with neighbours, friends or in business settings. A small number were by phone where respondents could not schedule a meeting or felt their concerns could be captured by a brief conversation. All of those who had left their details on feedback forms at the Community Drop-in Session were contacted.

Most meetings were held in private homes as many community members were willing to contribute to the discussion and address their concerns but were unwilling to be seen discussing the project in public. There were mixed views about the solar farm in the community consultation, of those interviewed the majority indicated support for the solar farm, while almost all the immediate neighbours objected to the solar farm.

During this time, Neoen also presented to Councillors of the Greater Hume Council as well as the Culcairn Development Committee. Conversations were held with some members of the Walla Walla Development Committee independently, including the Chairperson, but efforts to present at a committee meeting were prevented by the difficult political environment in Walla Walla. Information was instead provided to all committee members via the Chairperson, with an invitation for further meetings if questions were raised.

4.4 Approvals Engagement: Q3 2020 to Q4 2021

In response to enquiries and to provide community members with the opportunity to see for themselves, a bus trip to visit Neoen's nearby Numurkah Solar Farm was held in September 2019, with invitations extended to all community members. Approximately 20 people participated in this tour, most identified as supporters of the project, but a few were opponents who wished to see a solar farm in operation. The bus was hired from a Walla Walla bus company, with catering provided by a Culcairn coffee shop.

Neighbour face-to-face meetings were conducted at individuals request, meeting them at their homes or other locations on 30 and 31 January 2020. Face-to-face meetings were also held with the local community, industry groups and the Greater Hume Shire Council on these days, as well as on 19 February. An onsite fire management workshop was held at Numurkah Solar Farm in March 2020, as per council requirements, which included representatives from local groups such as the Culcairn Fire Station, NSW Rural Fire Service, Fire Rescue NSW, Greater Hume Shire Council.

With the introduction of travel restrictions, in person consultation had to move to online communication and meetings for the remainder of the year. Periodic updates were sent to various stakeholders, including project bulletins sent every other month to those interested in the community. Two online industry workshops were planned to provide information to local contractors and businesses about the business opportunities of the CSF. Both sessions were cancelled due to low registration numbers, with many local businesses not comfortable in an online style of engagement. The community was also welcomed to request (by phone or email) a meeting online with the Community Liaison Officer and/or the Neoen project manager, and during this time engagement was done by phone. Communication was also kept up online with the Greater Hume Shire Council, in which terms of the Voluntary Planning Agreement (VPA) were finalised and agreed upon.

Between COVID-19 related lockdowns, the Community Liaison Officer regularly attended a local Culcairn café on a Tuesday morning where locals could drop by for a project update or to ask any questions. This café functioned as a hub, with information posted on the walls to inform the local community of the project status.

Upon determination in March 2021, letters were sent to the State and Federal MPs in May 2021 and electronic project bulletins were sent to the community, which have been sent with any significant project milestone, since then.

4.5 Post-Approvals Consultation: Q1 2022 to Q4 2023

Post DA Approval, the focus of recent consultation has shifted towards industry and understanding how CSF can best support community and regional economic development. The outcomes of this consultation and networks created are detailed further in the CSF IAPP.

It became evident early on in this consultation that workforce shortages would be an issue in the region, considering the scale of projects in the development pipeline. Neoen also prefers to source labour from local regions, in order to bring the most benefit to the surrounding regional communities. Because of this, consultation was done with the idea of creating a network of organisations that CSF could work with to develop the workforce and capacity of the surrounding communities and broader region.

The community engagement team reached out and met with a range of organisations and regional development groups in order to discuss possible partnerships to support both the construction of CSF and regional economic development. Employment and training agencies were consulted, as well as Aboriginal organisations that help prepare and support individuals through the employment process. These Aboriginal organisations were also able to provide understanding as to the capacity of Aboriginal groups in the region, in order to set realistic Aboriginal participation goals.

Meetings with agencies and organisations began in August 2022, with in-person meetings held on 6 and 7 September 2022. Meetings continued online into October 2022. Neoen has continued to engage with the community and work with these organisations throughout the development and construction of Culcairn Solar Farm.

For more details, refer to the CSF IAPP.

In August 2023, a new Community Liaison Officer has been appointed, as CSF has been ramping up towards construction. They will work closely with the Neoen Project Manager to keep the community updated and be on-site to engage with the EPC, landholders, and neighbours.

4.6 Construction Community and First Nations Consultation: Q1 2024 to Q4 2024

Neoen selected Bouygues Construction Australia, the project's Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) contractor, in December 2023 and started early construction works on site in March 2024. Construction disruption payments were made to 13 neighbours prior to the start of construction. The community booklet (refer to Appendix E) was updated to reflect information relevant to this next stage of the project and shared with the project's stakeholders in parallel to the start of construction.

A Local Employment & Supplier Networking Session to best communicate upcoming work opportunities for local jobseekers, contractors and suppliers was organised at the Culcairn Bowling Club on 7 March 2024. Neoen had placed advertisements in the Border Mail (https://digital-print-edition.austcommunitymedia.com.au/BMM/2024/03/02/3dissue/index.html?_gl=1*1pomuig*_ga*NTY0NDQw

[NTg5LjE3MDA3MTA2Mzc.*_ga_7PC84FGF0J*MTcwOTUxNjc0MC4zMy4xLjE3MDk1MTY3NTAuNTAuMC4w](https://culcairnsolarfarm.com.au/2024/02/20/supplier-networking-session-march-7-2024/)) leading up to the Session to encourage maximum attendance from interested jobseekers and suppliers in the region, and also published a news post on the project's website (<https://culcairnsolarfarm.com.au/2024/02/20/supplier-networking-session-march-7-2024/>). On the day, the construction team including our EPC contractor provided a presentation to explain the types of work and supplier opportunities expected to arise from and during the construction period, and shared contact information of the relevant team members conducting the local recruitment process. Printed booklets with this information were also available to the attendees to take away. The Session was well attended and covered by the Border Mail on 8 March 2024 (refer to Appendix F) included an interview with a Neoen representative who shared about the Community Benefit Sharing Scheme.

Newsletters were also prepared and sent to the project community in January and March 2024, and an email update on construction was sent to neighbours in June 2024 (please refer to Appendix G). In addition, regular communication has been made with close neighbours to update them on the construction progress.

In May 2024, Neoen appointed Ruth Davys, a Traditional Owner Wiradjuri woman, as the project's local Indigenous Participation Officer to ensure genuine collaboration and outcomes could be achieved for the First Nations communities across the project's construction stage. She is working under the guidance of Neoen's Indigenous Participation Advisor, Julie-ann Lambourne, and submitting monthly reports on our First Nations engagement. In parallel to the First Nations artefacts salvage and relocation works, Neoen and Ruth Davys worked closely with Wiradjuri Elders and Traditional Owners to produce a 'Welcome to Country' induction video that is being showed to anyone recruited to work on our solar farm construction site. The purpose of this video is to ensure that the onsite team understands and respects the cultural importance of the lands on which CSF is being built. A copy of this video is also available publicly on the project website with permissions from Wiradjuri Elders. We also organised a 'Welcome to Country' awareness session for the construction team on 11 September 2024 which included a smoking ceremony and keynotes from Wiradjuri Elders. A document summarising the salvage works and referring staff to the Unexpected Finds Protocol was also developed, shared with the onsite team and is included as Appendix H of this strategy.

Figure 3: Wiradjuri Welcome to Country session organised at CSF construction site on 11 September 2024



A First Nations employment session was organised on 22 October 2024 in Albury to ensure we could encourage and share about work opportunities in a targeted manner to interested First Nations businesses and jobseekers in the region. Flyers to share about this session were developed and distributed by Ruth Davys. Ruth's work alongside Spinifex Recruiting and Bouygues Construction Australia, has allowed 24 First Nations people to be currently employed full-time on our solar farm.

Another example of a recent partnership and initiative that Neoen is working on for and with the First Nations people on CSF is the co-design and delivery of a customised training program called 'Caring for Ngurambang' (meaning Country in Wiradjuri). This initiative is being delivered in partnership with the Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT) and with the Wiradjuri Elders, who have consented to and are being consulted as the Cultural Authority. The aim is to deliver a 3–4-week course in early-2025 that can:

- upskill and train a small cohort of First Nations individuals from the Wiradjuri community (Traditional Owners of the lands on which the Culcairn Solar Farm is being constructed), with knowledge and skills required to identify and assess sites with significant Cultural heritage/relevance (artefacts, designs, wooden artefacts and mythological beings), and record them (where applicable) in the Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System (AHIMS) database
- learn from existing Cultural practices and knowledge within the Wiradjuri community
- Improve current capabilities on becoming a 'Registered Aboriginal Party' with the NSW Government
- provide training and mentoring opportunities for learners to pursue roles such as an Indigenous Ranger, Cultural Heritage Monitor and others in the government, industry or private sector.
- combine a mix of guest lectures, classroom learning, field study and mentoring and introduce them employment pathways that can lead to work opportunities.

CIT has indicated that they would be interested in developing the model to be replicable and investigate the opportunity to expand this course through the TAFE network once it has been delivered, currently targeted for mid-2025. The content of this training program is being developed as a direct response to feedback received by Neoen from consulting closely with the Wiradjuri Elders and to address the learning needs of the Wiradjuri people in Albury.

4.6 Enquiries and Complaints

A Community Enquiries and Complaints Register was initiated in the post DA phase through the Project's website to record details of neighbour and stakeholder engagement and record any concerns or issues raised. One complaint has been received to date through the Register from neighbours Sharon and Stephen Feuerherdt (Receiver 24) on 23 October 2024 in relation to dust suppression in the vicinity of their property. This complaint was dealt promptly with by the Neoen Construction Project Manager.

An Employment Register has also been established to capture interest from local and state-based suppliers and personnel interested in working on the project. This register is shared with the EPC contractor and is expected to be maintained collaboratively between Neoen and the EPC Contractor as a living register of local workers and suppliers interested in employment with CSF, including for the upcoming construction of the BESS.

See Appendix B for the CSF Enquiries and Complaints Procedure.

5. RESPONSE TO COMMUNITY CONCERNS

This section is focused on summarising the concerns expressed by members of the community throughout the engagement and consultation process, and how the project design and plans have responded to these concerns.

5.1 Summary of Concerns & Responses

The following provides a summary of key themes raised during deliberative and ongoing engagement:

<p>Theme 1: Changes to the agricultural landscape</p>	<p>Loss of productive agricultural land, heat island effect</p> <p>While many respondents expressed a belief in the importance of renewable energy (many have solar installed on their home and/or farm), they registered an objection to the proposed project due to its location on what they described as productive agricultural land. This was particularly common amongst neighbours to the project and was the single concern expressed most often across all respondent groups.</p>
<p>Response to Theme 1</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – It is possible for agriculture to continue under the solar panels, with sheep being grazed on all 5 of Neoen's operating solar farms in NSW and VIC with early indications showing there is the potential for up to 80% carrying capacity under solar panels, increasing during drought conditions. – Neoen will provide opportunities for local landowners to use the land under solar panels for sheep grazing and will explore other opportunities for combined land use, as per advice from local agronomists, farmers, researchers and Landcare. – In response to this concern Neoen, commissioned an expert review into the benefits and opportunities of combining agriculture with solar or 'agrisolar' and is implementing changes to standard practice during design, development, construction and operation phases of its solar farms to plan for best practice in agrisolar. – The potential for agrisolar was captured in a short community information video, made in August 2019, about the experience of a local farmer at Dubbo Solar Farm which identified the co-benefits of combining grazing with solar in an accessible way. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uO3k9EdZjml. The video highlights an unexpected benefit during periods of drought where the productivity of the land was found to increase due to the dripping of dew and moisture along the edge of the solar panels resulting in strips of green growth. This video was widely shared on social media, with Greater Hume Shire Council members, at community meetings, at a recent Renewables & Agriculture Forum in Wagga Wagga, and with registered members of the community via email. – Neoen commissioned consultancy group DC McMahon Pty Ltd to undertake an independent soil test to test the indicative quality attributes of the soil and to also mitigate the risks associated with soil erosion during the construction and operation of the project. It was found that the fertility of the soil was generally low to moderate quality, with sandy and pale sub-surfaces found that generally do not retain fertilisers well. Allowing for multiple and diverse uses of the land via the development of the project and continued grazing opportunities will help supplement the low-moderate fertility. – Neoen's response to the uppermost community concern about the loss of productive agricultural land has been considered and comprehensive. The intention has been to seek to understand and then to communicate the existing knowledge around the possibilities and opportunities for combining agriculture with solar and then to take an active role in leading the industry towards advancing our understanding of how to maximise combined land use productivity. – The Independent Panel of experts created for the Shepparton Solar Farm concluded in 2018 that any potential temperature increase within the solar array will be marginal, however, any solar array should be separated 30 metres from any neighbouring property boundary, which will be included in the Project design. 	

Theme 2: Biodiversity Impacts

Impacts on landscape connectivity and habitat trees

This was one of the most common concerns raised across all groups. It was referenced by the majority of neighbours, particularly those that have spent considerable time revegetating their properties. More specific issues, such as impacts of construction on particular species, were raised by neighbours, and community members involved in Landcare or environmental-based community groups.

Response to Theme 2

- Neoen's design team is continuously optimising the site layout with consideration to the vegetation and land constraints. The northern most section of the project was dropped before DA submission due to its higher biodiversity impact. This exercise will continue into detailed design, seeking to minimise the disturbances to trees, species and biodiversity found on site.
- An ecologist was engaged by Neoen to determine the impact to biodiversity due to the proposed project development. Since some vegetation clearance must occur, Neoen is required to offset this impact and gain approval from the NSW Department of Environment, Energy and Science, in compliance with the Biodiversity Conservation Regulation 2017.
- Where hollow bearing trees must be removed from the site (old trees that are dead but provide hollows and important habitat for wildlife) Neoen intends to re-locate them to nearby swamp or riparian areas where they can be retained as habitat for wildlife, preferably in a vertical position.
- Connectivity is very limited throughout the existing development site, consisting of a highly cleared landscape. The main connectivity corridors for threatened species would occur along the vegetated Back Creek and Billabong Creek. These vegetated creek lines have been avoided by the development footprint.
- Retaining the vegetation along Back Creek in the development site will maintain connectivity across the landscape to facilitate movement in an east-west direction. This creek line also connects to the remnant roadside vegetation that would be retained. Due to the highly cleared and fragmented landscape within the development site the proposal is not likely to disrupt the movement of any threatened species.
- Vegetation screening is proposed to screen views of the proposal from nearby dwellings with a sufficiently wide buffer using a mixture of native vegetation and other specific mitigation measures to effectively screen the project from visual receivers, which will minimise the impacts to near neighbours.
- There will be a 30m buffer zone between the edge of the panels and the site boundary

Theme 3: Community Risks

Fire risk, decline in property values, construction, weed management, decommissioning

Anxiety about the unknown risks was common across all groups interviewed. Neighbours and farmers were more likely to raise concerns about immediate risks to their farms, such as fire risk, livestock impacts and weed management. Community members were more likely to focus on the longer-term risks: what economic impacts will this project bring and who will clean up the solar farm infrastructure once it comes to the end of its operational life.

Response to Theme 3

- Neoen will have its own insurance policy in place to provide coverage in the unlikely event that solar farm equipment is damaged by fire.

- A Bush Fire Management Plan will include procedures to deal with a fire on site, and normally requires water to be kept on site for that specific purpose. In line with requirements from RFS, surrounding the panels will be 10 m of cleared vegetation to prevent the spread of fire around the panel arrays.
- Neoen have found that property values have not declined in areas of proximity to their existing renewable energy projects, such as Coleambally where anecdotal evidence suggests prices have risen. This has been confirmed at Culcairn where property adjacent to the proposed solar farm has recently been sold at above market rates.
- Independent studies into the potential impact of renewable energy project developments on property prices have been conducted by the NSW Valuer-General (2009) and Urbis (2016) which conclude that there is insufficient evidence to suggest that renewable energy projects can be linked to adverse impacts on property prices.
- Neoen will consult and communicate with neighbours about how construction will impact on the land and identify areas of concern with neighbours.
- During the project development, Neoen as land manager will comply with the general biosecurity duties under the Biosecurity Act through management of on-site weeds and pests.
- Prior to commencement of each phase, a Weed Management Procedure would be developed as part of the Biodiversity Management Plan for the proposal to prevent and minimise the spread of weeds.
- Neoen is a committed project custodian and will establish circular procurement initiatives with its supply partners to ensure that best practices in recycling and waste management are followed throughout the life of the project. This is particularly the case for solar PV and battery modules, done in partnership with the original manufacturers and where possible, local recycling agencies.
- Recyclable materials are expected to constitute a large proportion of the waste generated, including timber pallets used to transport the solar panel modules. Components such as batteries and solar panels will be recycled (typically by the manufacturer) when they reach the end of their operational life.

Theme 4: Economic impacts and opportunities

Local opportunities for sheep grazing and impacts on local businesses

Neighbours and community members that object to the project expressed a high level of cynicism and expressed concerns about local economic opportunities that will flow from the solar farm, perceiving that the benefits would occur solely during the construction period. Council members and staff were also concerned that the overall economic impact on the shire would be negative. Business respondents were more aware of the wider opportunities offered by the solar farm, including the potential for developing new skills and expertise, while concerned that their capacity may preclude them from some opportunities. There was a view expressed widely that the local community would miss out on many of the economic opportunities and that the workforce would be employed from outside the region.

Response to Theme 4

- Neoen will provide opportunities for local landowners to use the land under solar panels for sheep grazing and communicate with neighbours regarding other opportunities for combined land use (as per advice from local agronomists, farmers, researchers and Landcare).
- In response to concerns raised by neighbours and the Greater Hume Shire Council that there would be an overall negative economic impact on the region, Neoen commissioned an expert Economic Impact Assessment for the project, which highlighted that significant participation

opportunities for businesses and workers located within the region will be available in a direct and auxiliary (accommodation, retail) perspective.

- No net job losses are expected, with the project replacing existing agricultural employment associated with the subject land (for both direct and indirect jobs). In addition, opportunities to continue sheep grazing will be available across the site.
- In response to this concern, Neoen developed and shared a community information video in September 2019 about the local economic and community benefits that Numurkah Solar Farm brought to the surrounding Shepparton area to demonstrate how another nearby project brought benefits and did not create disturbances within the economy or community.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Odxl0ZLvavE>.
- The ABC's 7.30 report on Numurkah in October 2019 also demonstrated how Neoen's approach is designed to maximise the opportunities, benefits and outcomes for local businesses.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zrKZK5j5b2k>
- Neoen have developed a job and supplier registry to be able to communicate opportunities at each stage of the process.
- Neoen are developing an Industry and Aboriginal Participation Plan to maximise the local business opportunities on the project to ensure adequate lead-in time for local businesses to be able to build their capacities, and prepare the workforce for the opportunities.
- Neoen will continue to meet with local businesses, industry bodies, regional economic development networks to share information and prepare for the construction period.

6. COMMUNITY BENEFIT SHARING

To ensure both short and long-term benefits flow through to the community as a result of the establishment and operation of Culcairn Solar Farm, we have established a Community Benefit-Sharing Program (CBSP).

The CBSP is designed to deliver benefits to key stakeholders in the community in a way that aims to meet their needs and aspirations. Specifically, our objectives are to:

- deliver significant and meaningful improvements to the community surrounding the Culcairn Solar Farm;
- ensure a wide range of different stakeholder groups benefit from Culcairn Solar Farm;
- empower the community to shape the design and implementation of the different initiatives;
- build support for renewable energy in the Greater Hume Shire.

The majority of initiatives will be delivered operations phase, with the first VPA payment made ahead of construction start. In alignment with Neoen's organisational vision, it is important that the benefit be a true benefit and be tailored to meet each distinct communities' need.

6.1 Scope of the CBSP

Initiatives and programs under the CBSP are broad, showing how community benefits have been considered as part of the many different streams of work being delivered as part of the Project. For transparency, some exclusions are necessary.

This CBSP does not include:

- required activities under our permit conditions such as for visual screening
- host landowner payments
- the value of local jobs and investment.

However, it is worth noting that these activities will all deliver significant value to the community.

The dollar value for the Culcairn Solar Farm Community Benefit Sharing Program is \$300,000 per annum for the lifetime of the project, including \$150,000 for the Community Benefit Fund, and \$150,000 for the Voluntary Planning Agreement, for, a total estimated figure of \$9.2 million.

Neoen has entered into a Voluntary Planning Agreement with the Greater Hume Shire. The sum is \$150,000 annually (CPI indexed) for the lifetime of the project. This proposal has been agreed upon with Council, who have indicated they would allocate it towards improving roads. The first VPA construction payment has been made to Greater Hume Shire Council in January 2024. Neoen has also made a good faith offer to Council on the 19 December 2024 to make an additional one-off construction disruption payment to Council at the start of the BESS construction.

Neoen have a number of mechanisms to enable benefits to be shared in a meaningful and equitable way. Community input has been sought into these options (and other local ideas canvassed) through an interactive poster at the community information session, via the community feedback survey and through kitchen table discussions.

The final program will be a mix of 2 benefit-sharing mechanisms from the following list:

- Community Benefit Fund (including First Nations initiatives)
- Neighbour construction disruption payments

6.2 Program outline

Neoen considered it imperative that CSF Social Benefits were tailored to local circumstances, culture and need. Additionally, given Neoen's intent to be a long-term business owner in the area the benefits will ideally bring lasting benefit to the local area.

Formal and informal methods were used to collect community and stakeholder views on specific benefit sharing approaches they considered to be appropriate, proportional and effective. These methods include:

- Landholder interviews
- Stakeholder meetings
- Community drop-in sessions and surveys
- Feedback forms
- Informal engagement through phone calls

Table 4 provides a summary of the responses received.

Table 4: Community input into benefit sharing options

Option	Support	Comments
 Community Benefit Fund	<p>Majority support – most people interviewed supported this idea.</p> <p>Some opponents see this as a form of ‘buying-out’.</p>	<p>Nearly 100% expressed concern that if this fund was managed by Greater Hume Shire the funds would be distributed across the Shire, rather than to Culcairn and Walla Walla.</p> <p>The delivery model is considered critical. Preferred delivery model for delivery (95%) is through the Culcairn and Walla Walla Development Committees, which both have a high level of community trust.</p> <p>In Culcairn, the positive impact on Henty from the Bendigo Bank is referenced a lot in conversation. The potential impact of a community benefit fund is often likened to this model.</p> <p>A long list of potential organisations that could seek funding include footy and netball clubs, gardening club, bowls club, art projects etc. Also, a lot of interest in accessing funding to enhance public buildings and create public space projects e.g. Town hall equipment for events, attracting businesses to town, tourism information precinct.</p> <p>A formal application process is seen as fair.</p> <p>A common question was asked about how this would support the farmers/neighbours that will bear the impact of the project.</p>
 Lower energy bills through solar and/or storage subsidies	<p>Medium support</p>	<p>Many people already have solar and are not interested in further subsidies, although many see good sense in offering subsidies for solar, rather than discounted electricity bills.</p>
 Lower energy bills through retail offer	<p>High level of support initially, but not if it means there is no Community Benefit Fund.</p>	<p>Most people are initially very supportive of discounted electricity bills, but common questions are:</p> <p>How much discount would be offered to each household?</p> <p>Will all properties receive the same discount?</p>

		<p>How would this impact on a community fund of \$150k per annum?</p> <p>How would this incentivise energy efficiency?</p> <p>Does this include local businesses?</p> <p>Would we have to change retailer to access this discount?</p> <p>Once people discuss the issues, the majority express the view that community benefit is a higher priority than household discounts (as it provides a genuine community legacy). There was still support for a discount but not at the cost to community.</p>
 <p>Other - Support of local art & tourism</p>	Medium support	<p>Broad support for these initiatives, more so with town residents.</p> <p>Seen as one part of the community benefit fund.</p> <p>Concerns raised, primarily by farmers, that the money could easily disappear into town assets that the farming community only minimally benefit from.</p>
 <p>Other - Agribusiness grant fund</p>	High support	<p>One idea from a young farmer in Walla Walla is that Neoen consider establishing an annual grants program specifically to support agriculture in the area. He suggested this could be framed as a start-up grant for agribusiness ventures (e.g. \$10k) to help farmers diversify their income and/or implement sustainable practices.</p> <p>Other people consulted have agreed this was a great idea for rural and farming communities of Culcairn and Walla Walla.</p>

After community consultation, the lower energy bills through solar and/or storage subsidies and lower energy bills through retail offer initiatives will not be looked into further by Neoen. Since many people in the community already have rooftop solar, they would not be interested in further subsidies but would see discounted electricity bills as a more attractive initiative. After discussion on lower energy bills, though, the question around administration involved in carrying out the initiative and possible loss of community benefit funds were a concern. The majority then expressed the view that community benefit is a higher priority than household discounts as it supports the long-term legacy of the community.

Further, Neoen has recently developed a 'Sustainability Framework' to advance responsible and sustainable commercial, environmental and social practices across its global enterprises. Specifically, this Framework encourages and supports initiatives to develop local economies by promoting renewable energy, facilitating access to electricity and supporting local economic development projects. This Framework will also be referenced in development of the CSF social benefit approach.

6.3 Program Initiatives

Near Neighbour Construction Disruption Payment

As the stakeholder group most likely to be impacted by the CSF project, a Construction Disruption Payment was established to provide a significant financial benefit to nearby neighbours. These funds have been provided to neighbours adjacent to the Project prior to construction start and are not linked to an impact occurring.

A budget of \$250,00 has been provided to near neighbours. Acceptance of funding is unconditional and does not limit neighbours from registering complaints. Neighbours adjacent to the Project or on the traffic route have received a one-off construction disruption payment of \$15,000 at the start of construction. Those along the traffic route as well as adjacent to the Project site have been offered the same amount, \$15,000.

Community Benefit Fund

Neoen is proposing an annual Community Benefit Fund for CSF for the purpose of delivering tailored community benefits to Culcairn and the immediate local region.

Neoen will commit \$150,000 per year for the life of the solar farm to the Community Benefit Fund to be administered and distributed by an entity to be decided. During the development of the Culcairn Solar Farm, two local development committees were consulted extensively about the CBF.

1. Culcairn Development Committee
2. Walla Walla Development Committee

With responsibility for local initiatives across the two key communities of Culcairn and Walla Walla, both committees are keen to be involved in shaping the structure and delivery of funds through the Community Benefit Fund. Their input has informed Neoen's approach to CBF development, understanding that local communities want to see funding used strategically, rather than distributed through a community grants model. Members of both development committees have expressed an interest in being represented on a CBF advisory committee to provide advice and input to how funds are distributed in their community. The proposed model for Culcairn will consist in setting up a Local Advisory Committee comprising members from both Committees, as well as the community and a Neoen representative. This will be set up in 2025-2026 to align with the launch of the fund once the farm becomes operational.

While the final terms and the administration will be co-developed with the community, funded projects for other Community Benefit Funds usually align with at least one of our community growth focus areas. It is intended that there will also be an agribusiness component in the fund.

In addition to the \$150,000 per year Community Benefit Fund, an additional one off \$50,000 has been set aside to commission an artwork.

First Nations Benefit Sharing

Through the development of the CSF Industry and Aboriginal Participation Plan (IAPP), relationships have been established with First Nations organisations to facilitate the achievement of First Nations participation targets and explore how Culcairn Solar Farm may support First Nations initiatives in the region. These include Albury & District Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC) and the Riverina Murray Regional Alliance (RMRA).

There are a growing number of Aboriginal businesses operating across the region and many are keen to see a collaborative approach to ensure training, education and employment opportunities are provided through the construction and operations of the CSF.

Within the CBF, there is the potential to allocate a portion of the funds to First Nations community initiatives.

Contribution to Greater Hume Shire

The less direct component of the Community Benefit Sharing Plan is a significant proposed contribution to the wider Greater Hume Shire by means of a Voluntary Planning Agreement (VPA), which Council have indicated they would allocate to building and maintaining roads.

Neoen have proposed a total VPA of \$5 million (based on a 2% inflation rate) which it proposes to contribute at a rate of \$150,000 per annum (CPI index linked) over 26 years once construction commences.

The first VPA construction payment has been made to Greater Hume Shire Council in January 2024. Neoen has also made a good faith offer to Council on the 19 December 2024 to make an additional one-off construction disruption payment to Council at the start of the BESS construction

Above & Beyond Environmental / Biodiversity Initiative

For every project, Neoen partners with a local or regional environmental group and invests in an Above & Beyond environmental or biodiversity initiative specific to the project region.

For the Culcairn Solar Farm environmental community, early discussions included initiatives such as regeneration along areas of the Billabong Creek. The partnership and details of the initiative will continue to be developed, and indicative one-off \$25,000 has been set aside for the project.

Support for local jobseekers & businesses

Neoen have developed a related Industry and Aboriginal Participation Plan (IAPP) to maximise the jobseeker and business opportunities on the CSF project.

The CSF IAPP combines aspects of a Local Industry Development plan, Social Procurement Plan, and Aboriginal Participation Plan. This will see Neoen and its EPC contractor utilise their spending power to cultivate and deliver genuine social benefits within the community. Initiatives will specifically focus on the development and uplift of the following socio groups:

- First Nations communities
- Underrepresented groups
- Learning individuals and workers
- Apprentices, pre-apprentices, trainees and cadets

Given the project's environmental credentials, the Project will also apply a close focus to environmentally sustainable outcomes that can stem from social procurement and socially responsible business practices. All of these aspects are discussed further in the CSF IAPP.

Additionally, Neoen has developed promotional videos to provide 'shared wisdom' from suppliers to its other solar farms. These videos have been distributed locally, giving local community and suppliers valuable intelligence on what to expect when tendering, working and living nearby to a Neoen Solar Farm.

6.5 Implementation

Ongoing delivery of the CBSP will have oversight from the Head of Engagement and Project Manager. As a priority, community stakeholders will continue to be involved in the design and implementation of suitable social benefit program approaches so that genuine value is provided to the host community throughout construction and operations.

Ongoing engagement will seek to confirm community degree of satisfaction with the CCS & BSP and the value of Neoen's contributions within the region.

7. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN

The following plan outlines recommended measures for delivering ongoing, consistent engagement for each remaining stage of the CSF Project.

Measures have been designed in consideration of the expectations of all stakeholders engaged to date and aim to specifically mitigate social impacts and ongoing stakeholder concerns.

Table 5: Pre-construction phase engagement timeframe

PRE-CONSTRUCTION					
Activity	Description / Format / Tools / Resources	Target Stakeholders	Purpose	Timeframe	Responsibility
Stakeholder mapping	Revisit Project Stakeholder list and update. Confirm relationships and level of influence / interest measures are current.	Project Team	Inform	COMPLETE	Community Liaison Officer Project Manager
Traditional Owners	Engage further with Traditional Owners for purposes of sharing details of detailed planning outcomes on cultural heritage. Investigate options for delivery of works via RAP employment arms (e.g. landscaping, civils, etc.).	Traditional Owners	Collaborate	Ongoing	Community Liaison Officer Indigenous Participation Officer
Re-initiation briefings	Re-engage with key stakeholders to confirm expectations and concerns – update in register. Utilise these meetings to consult on shared benefit preferences and provide update on project approach and timing.	Council MPs	Involve	Ongoing	Community Liaison Officer Project Manager
Landholder engagement	Re-engage with host landholders to address any emerging issues or concerns, update on timelines and seek input to community engagement	Landholders	Involve	Ongoing	Community Liaison Officer Project Manager
Agrisolar	Consultation with host landholders for agrisolar including fencing and other requirements	Landholders	Collaborate	Ongoing	Project Manager

Neighbour consultation	Engage with near neighbours specifically in lead up to construction and utilise these meetings for the purpose of establishing neighbour payments	Adjacent neighbours	Involve	Ongoing	Community Liaison Officer Project Manager
Neighbour meetings	Meeting/s for Culcairn neighbours to provide updates on project in lead up to construction	Neighbours	Involve	Ongoing	Community Liaison Officer Project Manager
E-newsletter	Produce further editions of e-newsletter to provide update on Project timing and approach. Invite feedback and offer further opportunities to engage	Adjacent neighbours Culcairn community Key stakeholders	Involve	Ongoing	Community Liaison Officer
E-database	Include promotion of website function for subscription to email updates and stakeholder comms as required.	All	Inform	Ongoing	Community Liaison Officer
Website	Update project website to include recent information on planning and pre-construction works, include relevant planning documents as required.	All	Inform	Ongoing	Project Manager
Project Fact sheet	Update Project Fact Sheet, provide during stakeholder and neighbour meetings or as required.	All	Inform	Ongoing	Project Manager
Local business community information session	Host and run an information session for local businesses to find out about supply packages and provide support to tailor tenders. Potentially coordinate in conjunction with Council.	Local businesses (suppliers)	Collaborate	Refer to IAPP	Project Manager Community Liaison Officer
Media	Set up media monitoring to track coverage of project construction and development.	All	Inform	Ongoing	Project Manager
Stakeholder Register	Maintain Stakeholder Register.	Project Team	Inform	Ongoing	Community Liaison Officer

					Project Manager
Enquiries and Complaints Register	Maintain Enquiries and Complaints register. Include current Enquiries and Complaints Procedure on project website. Monitor 1800 Project number.	Project Team	Inform	Ongoing	Project Manager
Local Investment Impact	Assessment of direct/indirect economic investment and employment metrics for ongoing use in communicating the positive impact of the project	Project Team	Inform	Ongoing	Project Manager
Agency engagement	Facilitate required meetings with local agencies for purposes of compiling remaining technical studies and reports prior to construction.	Regulatory Authorities EPA	Involve	Ongoing	Project Manager
EPC Input	Host pre-tender workshops for potential EPCs to understand Neoen social procurement requirements. Prepare a 'Community Context' fact sheet for EPC contractor and subcontractor to ensure they are informed of local community, context and key issues.	EPC	Inform	Ongoing	Project Manager
Social procurement	Initiate engagement with key stakeholders to identify opportunities the project can offer to NSW First Nations communities and underrepresented groups.	Community groups, local businesses and networks	Collaborate	Refer to IAPP	Community Liaison Officer
Special interest groups	Continue to engage with relevant groups to provide updates and identify any opportunities for collaboration.	Community energy groups Landcare	Involve	Ongoing	Community Liaison Officer

		Community organisations Advocacy groups			
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Table 6: Construction phase engagement timeframe

CONSTRUCTION					
Activity	Description / Format / Tools/Resources	Target Stakeholders	Purpose	Timeframe	Responsibility
Start of construction media	Issue proactive media release to mark start of construction. Highlight local benefits and local employment targets, approach and outcomes.	Media	Inform	COMPLETE	Community Liaison Officer Project Manager
Start of construction event	Host event for Landholders to mark start of construction. Introduce Project Manager and EPC and invite feedback on planned approach to monitor for new issues/concerns.	Neighbours	Involve	COMPLETE	Project Manager
Key stakeholder meetings	Further meetings with key stakeholders to introduce Construction Manager and EPC where necessary. Invite feedback on planned approach to monitor for new issues/concerns.	Council MPs Regulatory Authorities Local community groups	Involve	COMPLETE	Community Liaison Officer Project Manager EPC
Site signage	Provide informative site signage in addition to minimum compliance signage. This will include contact details for the community.	All	Inform	COMPLETE	Project Manager EPC
Community Benefit Fund	Establish Community Benefit Fund Advisory Committee via local advertising and newsletter coverage and host first meeting. Provide and agree on Terms of Reference.	Council Neighbours Culcairn Community General community	Empower	Q1 2026	Project Manager

Building capacity for local employment	Continue discussions, face to face introductions with key employment and economic representatives to establish best means of supporting local hire objectives with EPC.	Local suppliers Local workers	Inform	Refer to IAPP	Project Manager Community Liaison Officer
Social procurement	Continue engagement with key stakeholders to engage organisations that work directly to offer opportunities to Aboriginal Individuals and underrepresented groups.	Traditional Owners/ Aboriginal Businesses Local NFP Employment agencies Schools	Collaborate	Refer to IAPP	Community Liaison Officer
Community e-newsletter	Continue production of community e-newsletter and provide updates on construction as required. Deliver to neighbours within 3 km and email to key stakeholders and community database.	Neighbours Key stakeholders	Inform	Ongoing	Project Manager
Transport route engagement	Consider additional stakeholders impacted by transport route, site deliveries and commence targeted engagement in advance of transport occurring.	Transport route residents Australia Post local service	Involve	Ongoing	Project Manager
Neighbours	Continue close engagement with neighbours to inform of project progress, timings and monitor for issues as they arise. Implement use of construction amenity fund as required to mitigate impacts.	Neighbours	Collaborate	Ongoing	Community Liaison Officer
Agrisolar	Continue to consult with host landholders on agrisolar design requirements, including site design, fencing etc. Incorporate on-site meetings to assess progress and identify any operational issues.	Landholders	Collaborate	Q1 2026	Project Manager

Emergency Services	Continue to engage with RFS and other emergency services to ensure project supports local emergency response.	Emergency services	Inform	Ongoing	Project Manager
Ongoing media and community outreach	Continue to provide factual, informative media stories to local paper for the purposes of updating community/stakeholders on project achievements and deliverables against social benefit and local procurement plans.	Media Culcairn community Greater Hume Shire LGA	Inform	Ongoing	Community Liaison Officer
Enquiries and Complaints Register	Maintain Enquiries and Complaints register and respond in line with procedure. Monitor 1800 Project number and website enquiries. Periodically report feedback from this process to Construction team to adjust approach / engagement plans if required.	Project Team	Inform	Ongoing	Project Manager
Resident drop-in session	Consider hosting onsite or nearby resident drop-in session for community members to meet with the Construction team and participate in an informal update / discussion on ongoing works onsite.	Neighbours Culcairn community	Involve	Ongoing	Project Manager
Key stakeholder tours	Provide an in-person experience of solar farm construction by providing key stakeholder site tours, hosted by Neoen and EPC. Utilise initiative as opportunity for media if appropriate.	Council MPs Chamber of Commerce Community groups	Involve	TBC	Project Manager
Community engagement monitoring and review	Periodically monitor / assess quality, timeliness and reach of engagement initiatives. Confirm engagement	Project Team	Inform	Ongoing	Community Liaison Officer

	plan is meeting proposed objectives.				
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Table 7: Operations phase engagement timeframe

OPERATIONS					
Activity	Description / Format / Tools/Resources	Target Stakeholders	Purpose	Timeframe	Responsibility
Start of operations media/event	Consider running start of commercial operations event and media announcement. Invite key stakeholders, neighbours as opportunity to share the outcomes delivered by the Project to date.	Media Neighbours Council MPs Special interest groups Project Team	Inform	COD	Community Liaison Officer Project Manager
Project Fact Sheet	Redevelop Project Fact Sheet to suit operations and use for distribution in hard copy during school visits, tours and the website.	All	Inform	COD	Project Manager
E-newsletter	Final edition of the e-newsletter to detail approach to asset management and to support transition into operations.	Neighbours Culcairn community	Inform	COD	Project Manager
Neighbour relations	Maintain relations with immediate neighbours via direct communications, involvement in wider community activities and provision of an annual onsite event. Utilise neighbour communications for early identification of issues and risks (i.e. noise).	Neighbours	Involve	Ongoing	Project Manager
Enquiries and Complaints Register	Ongoing implementation of formal Enquiries and Complaints Procedure to ensure ongoing best-practice management of community contacts. Maintain 1800 Project number.	All	Involve	Ongoing	Project Manager
Incident Response Procedure	Specific communications and engagement input to incident management to	All	Inform	Ongoing	Project Manager

	ensure community and stakeholder perspective included (i.e. media management, neighbour notifications).				
Community outreach	Provision of site tours, speaking engagements, and/or the Learning Hub to relevant groups including MPs, Councils, Business Authorities and Schools.	Culcairn community Greater Hume Shire LGA	Involve	Ongoing	Project Manager
Community Benefit Fund	Implement annual community grants commitment each year, to run for the life of the asset. Implementation includes planning, activation (advertising and stakeholder comms), media, and liaison with social benefit partners in collaboration with the Grants Committee.	Neighbours Council Culcairn community Greater Hume Shire LGA	Empower	Ongoing	Project Manager
Council and Emergency Services meeting	Maintain periodical meetings with the Council Mayor and General Manager (Council, quarterly). Maintain annual site meetings with CFA prior to bushfire season.	Emergency Services Council	Collaborate	Ongoing	Project Manager
Website	Maintain the existing CSF website and update with relevant operations, news and community news as required. Maintain as primary source of detailed project information.	All	Inform	Ongoing	Project Manager
Industry advocacy	Proactively identify opportunities to promote CSF Operations to broader energy industry (i.e. conferences, memberships).	Energy industry	Involve / collaborate	Ongoing	Project Manager

Table 8: Decommissioning phase engagement

DECOMMISSIONING

As part of the responsible management of all assets, Neoen develops a Decommissioning and Rehabilitation Plan in the Project's later years. The DA requires this within 3 years of the commencement of

operation. Engagement with neighbours and key stakeholders remains a key activity prior to and through this phase.

An engagement plan will be developed alongside the CSF Decommissioning Plan and will include the following essentials:

- Continuation of the Enquiries and Complaints Procedure, 1800 number and website
- Collaboration with Council and key community groups to forward-plan for any impacts to the socio/economic status of the region
- Informative communications on the approach to decommissioning, timing, impacts and mitigation of environmental concerns
- A structured approach to ensure the site can return to full grazing / agricultural land use, in close cooperation with landholders
- Support for onsite personnel to transition to other employment in the area
- Support for community groups and grant recipients to sustain partnership programs and initiatives.

8. REPORTING & EVALUATION

Neoen is committed to continually improving its approach to engaging with the community and how it works to shape mutually beneficial plans and initiatives.

Evaluation is not a stand-alone or isolated process. Evaluation is an integral and on-going component of every communication and engagement activity. Evaluation is also a vital element for forward planning and can provide a strategic basis for decisions about issues, including the allocation of resources.

Evaluation and monitoring will be used to guide the ongoing delivery of community engagement and the overall development of CSF.

8.1 Objectives of monitoring and evaluation

The key objectives of monitoring and evaluation are to:

1. Measure anecdotal levels of community and stakeholder support for CSF and the project team with the view to improving this over time and / or changing the engagement approach if key issues emerge.
2. Verify that stakeholders and community members are provided with regular and diverse opportunities to be involved (or empowered) in planning, delivery and assessment of community benefits and outcomes.
3. Monitor the number of complaints made in relation to the CSF project and Project Team efficacy in responding to these in an efficient, timely manner.
4. Evaluate the measurable benefits of any community benefits or formal community engagement initiatives.

The following table provides details of monitoring and evaluation methods that will be utilised by the CSF Project Team.

Table 9: Monitoring & evaluation methods

OBJECTIVE	HOW MEASURED?	METRIC/S	WHO
Measure anecdotal levels of support. Adjust engagement approach in response to issues if monitoring shows these to be emerging.	Progressively evaluate delivery of Community Engagement Strategy to plan.	>80% of community engagement strategy initiatives delivered to plan.	Community Liaison Officer
	Collate total number of local media articles and evaluate percentage of positive coverage.	>60% positive media appearing in local/state media.	Community Liaison Officer
	Provide forms at events, briefings and via web.	>60% positive feedback forms.	Community Liaison Officer
Verify that stakeholders and community members are provided with regular and diverse opportunities to be involved (or empowered) in planning,	Track involvement / frequency of key stakeholders in specified engagement activities.	Number of key stakeholders (High Interest, High Impact) considered involved ¹ in CSF engagement initiatives	Community Liaison Officer

¹ Involved – as per IAP2 Spectrum definition of level of engagement.

OBJECTIVE	HOW MEASURED?	METRIC/S	WHO
delivery and assessment of community benefits and outcomes.	Monitoring unique use of website forms.	Number of unique uses of website forms.	Community Liaison Officer
	Measurement of specific feedback relating to perceptions of involvement (feedback forms, face to face interaction, etc).	Stakeholders self-report increased level of involvement in CSF outcomes, or generally as an outcome of engagement.	Community Liaison Officer
Monitor the number of complaints made, specifically the number of complaints that are escalated to third parties, and Project Team efficacy in responding to these in an efficient, timely manner.	Track register of enquiries and complaints received.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <5 unique complaints made to CSF per quarter. – <2 unique complaints escalated to third parties per 6 months. – >90% complaints and enquiries satisfactorily resolved within agreed timeframe. 	Project Manager
Evaluate the measurable benefits of any community benefits or formal community engagement initiatives	Unique number of quality initiatives delivered either as partnerships or via Grant funding.	Number and dollar value of initiatives delivered to local community that deliver improved outcomes.	Community Liaison Officer
	Measurable benefits or outcomes delivered as a direct result of the CSF Community Fund.	Target outcomes delivered as a result of community funding (e.g. new scholarships offered, training places provided, environmental gains realised, etc.)	CBF Advisory Committee
	Evidence Community partnerships or investments lead to long term 'legacy' improvements for host community.	Number of initiatives that provide longer-term outcomes (e.g. establish new infrastructure, provide long-term skills development, set up new social enterprises etc.)	Community Liaison Officer

APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TOOLKIT

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES BY PROJECT STAGE



APPENDIX B: ENQUIRIES & COMPLAINTS

The following process has been developed in accordance with the Australian / New Zealand Standard Guidelines for complaint management in organisations and in consideration of recommendations from publications by the Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner:

The process for managing complaints and concerns raised by community members involves several key steps including receiving, registering, investigating, responding to and addressing complaints stakeholders.

Table 10: Complaint lodging contact details

Project website	culcairnsolarfarm.com.au
Telephone number (toll-free)	1800 966 122
E-mail	contact@culcairnsolarfarm.com.au
Mail	GPO Box 1950 Canberra, ACT 2601

The contact details in the above table will be published on the project's public website, alongside an outline of the complaints and investigation process. This information will also be made available in community consultations that occur in the lead up to construction commencement, and at any community consultation that is held during the construction period.

Step 1: Receive and register a complaint

Contact is received from community members and may be received through the following methods: verbally either in person or via telephone or in written form via electronic mail and/or via the website.

It may be an inquiry, a concern or a complaint. If it is an inquiry or a concern we will respond directly to this and simply record this interaction in the stakeholder register.

If it is a complaint then the following procedure is followed:

Upon the receipt of a complaint, a set of standardised information will be collected, recorded and filed to ensure an efficient and standardised process.

The following information will be collected from community members:

- The complainant's name and address;
- A unique reference number is to be communicated to the complainant;
- Any applicable turbine or monitoring mast reference number; and
- The complainant's concerns including date, time, prevailing conditions and description of the complaint.

This information must then be recorded in the relevant project's Complaints Register.

Step 2: Acknowledging complaints

A non-urgent complaint will be acknowledged by the responsible Project Manager within 3 business days of the complaint being submitted. If it's an urgent complaint then a response will be provided within 24 hours. This acknowledgement will be made via phone or email with any written correspondence dated and kept on file.

The acknowledgement will include:

- A summary of the complaint, with a reference number provided;
- The opportunity to clarify issues or a request for further information if required;
- The proposed investigation approach; and
- An estimated timeframe in which the stakeholder can expect to receive a response.

Where a complaint can be easily resolved or is better categorised as a request by a stakeholder for additional information, it may be appropriate for the Project Manager to immediately respond to the stakeholder.

Step 3: Investigating complaints

The Project Manager is responsible for ensuring all complaints are investigated and that all reasonable attempts to seek a resolution are made. The investigation may be delegated to an appropriate Neoen staff member. Accurate records of the investigation must be maintained including records of meetings, discussions and activities.

The investigation may involve:

- Site visits, particularly in the instance of reported property damage;
- Consultation with Neoen staff or contractors, including senior management when required;
- Acquiring monitoring data and evidence (e.g. for noise or dust complaints); and
- Contacting external stakeholders.

Step 4: Responding to stakeholder/complainant

Following the investigation, the results, including details of the findings and proposed resolution, will be clearly explained to the complainant. In most circumstances, it will be at this stage that the complainant will determine if the resolution is satisfactory.

Step 5: Closing the complaint

If the process has been concluded appropriately then the Project Manager will close the complaint and make a file-note to this effect in the Complaints Register. Formal written correspondence must also be issued to the complainant confirming that the complaint has been closed.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the investigation and resolution then the complainant has a right of review. This will be undertaken by the Project Manager to ensure that the complaint process has been properly followed.

If a complainant is not satisfied with Neoen's investigation and proposed resolution, the complainant will be advised by Neoen that they have the right to contact a number of other bodies such as Greater Hume Shire or the National Wind Farm Commissioner or seek legal advice. Neoen will provide complainants with the relevant contact details, as seen in Table 11 below.

Table 11: Alternative complaint contacts

Alternative Contact	Email / number
Greater Hume Shire Council	mail@greaterhume.nsw.gov.au
Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner	aeic@aeic.gov.au
Legal Aid NSW (Riverina Murray - Albury)	02 6020 7200

Step 6: Recording and registering the complaint

Upon the closing of a complaint, the following information will be updated in the Complaints Register with the additional following details:

- The process of investigation that was undertaken to resolve the complaint;
- What the proposed resolution was;
- Whether this was accepted and how it was implemented;
- Whether or not the complaint has been resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant; and
- The reason why the complaint was closed.

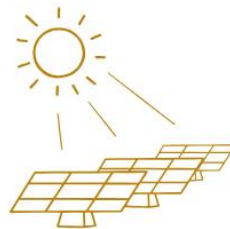
APPENDIX C: PROJECT WEBSITE



OVERVIEW

The Culcairn Solar Farm is a 440 MWp renewable electricity project comprising solar arrays and battery storage. The project is now in construction near the town of Culcairn, New South Wales.

ABOUT



SOLAR

Solar farms are quiet, with the same solar panels you would place on your roof – there are just more of them.

FAQ



BATTERY

Battery storage allows us to store the wind and solar energy and provide it to the grid whenever it's needed.

FAQ

APPENDIX D: CONDITIONS OF CONSENT MATRIX

This CCS & BSP has been prepared to fulfill the requirements of Schedule 2, Condition 13 of the development consent for the Culcairn Solar Farm. A compliance matrix for this CCS and Schedule 2, Condition 13 is presented below. This CCS & BSP will be implemented through the construction and operation phases of the project.

Schedule	Condition	Relevant section of this CCS
2	13. Prior to commencing construction, the Applicant must prepare a Community Communication Strategy to provide mechanisms to facilitate communication between the Applicant, and the community (including adjoining affected landowners) during construction. This strategy must:	
	a) Identify landowners for potentially impacted residences including but not limited to R09, R17, R19, R24 and R33;	Section 3 Section 4.1
	b) Ensure that the landowners identified in (a) are consulted during construction;	Section 4.6
	c) Set out procedures and mechanisms for the regular distribution of information to wider community;	Section 7
	d) Establish a public liaison officer(s) to engage with the local community; and	Section 4.5
	e) Set out procedures and mechanisms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through which the community can discuss or provide feedback to the Applicant Through which the Applicant will respond to enquiries or feedback from the community; and To resolve any issues and mediate any disputes that may arise in relation to the construction of the development. 	Appendix B
	The Applicant must implement the Community Communication Strategy for the duration of Construction.	

APPENDIX E: COMMUNITY BOOKLET

CULCAIRN

SOLAR FARM



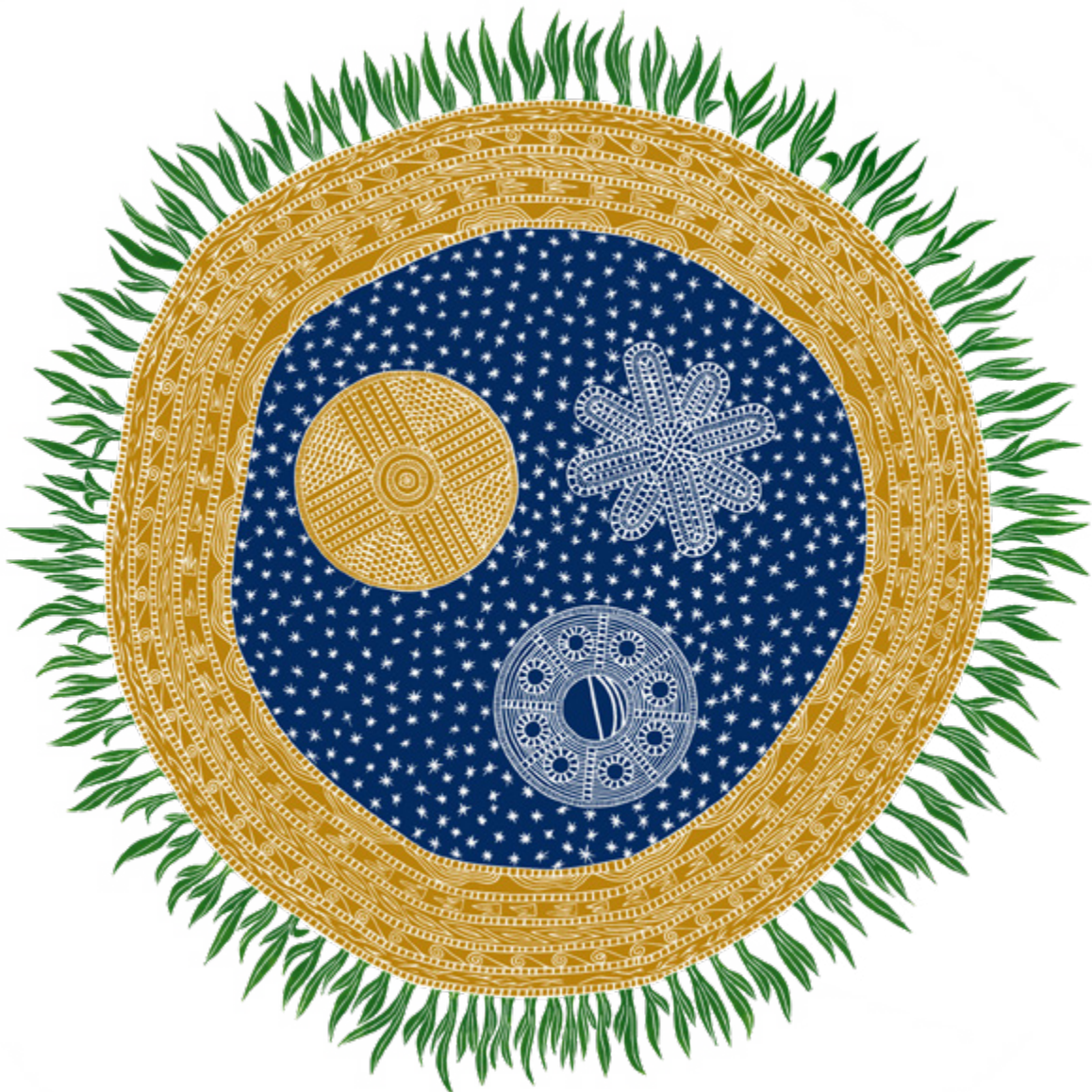
Community Information Booklet

Construction

NEOEN

Acknowledgement of Country

Neoen acknowledges the Wiradjuri people, Traditional Owners of the land on which Culcairn Solar Farm will harvest and store the energy of the sun. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present.



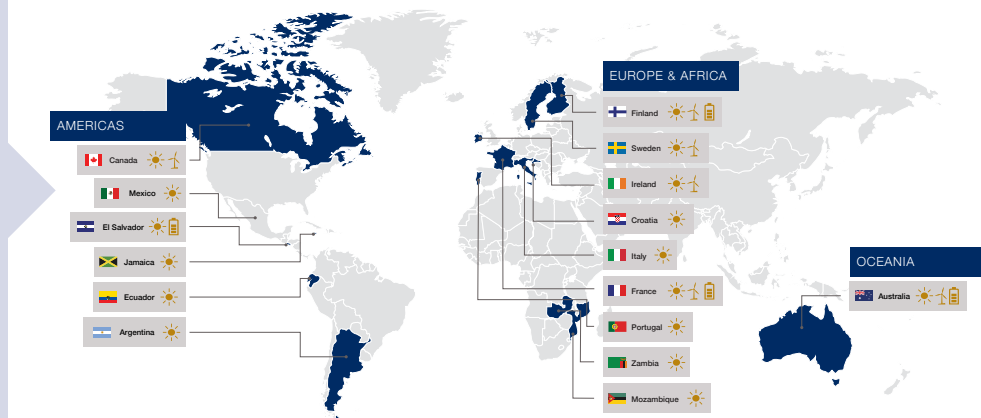


GLOBALLY

The company is head quartered in Paris, France, and has seven Australian offices in Brisbane, Sydney, Canberra, Melbourne, Hobart, Adelaide and Perth.

We operate across renewable energy technologies including solar, wind and storage in Europe, the Americas, Africa, and Australia.

Neoen's total capacity in operation and under construction is over 8 GW and we are aiming for 10 GW by the end of 2030.



LOCALLY

Neoen Australia began operations in 2012. Over the last twelve years, the company has initiated the development of over 3.75 GW of solar, storage and wind projects through organic growth, local partnerships and strategic acquisitions.

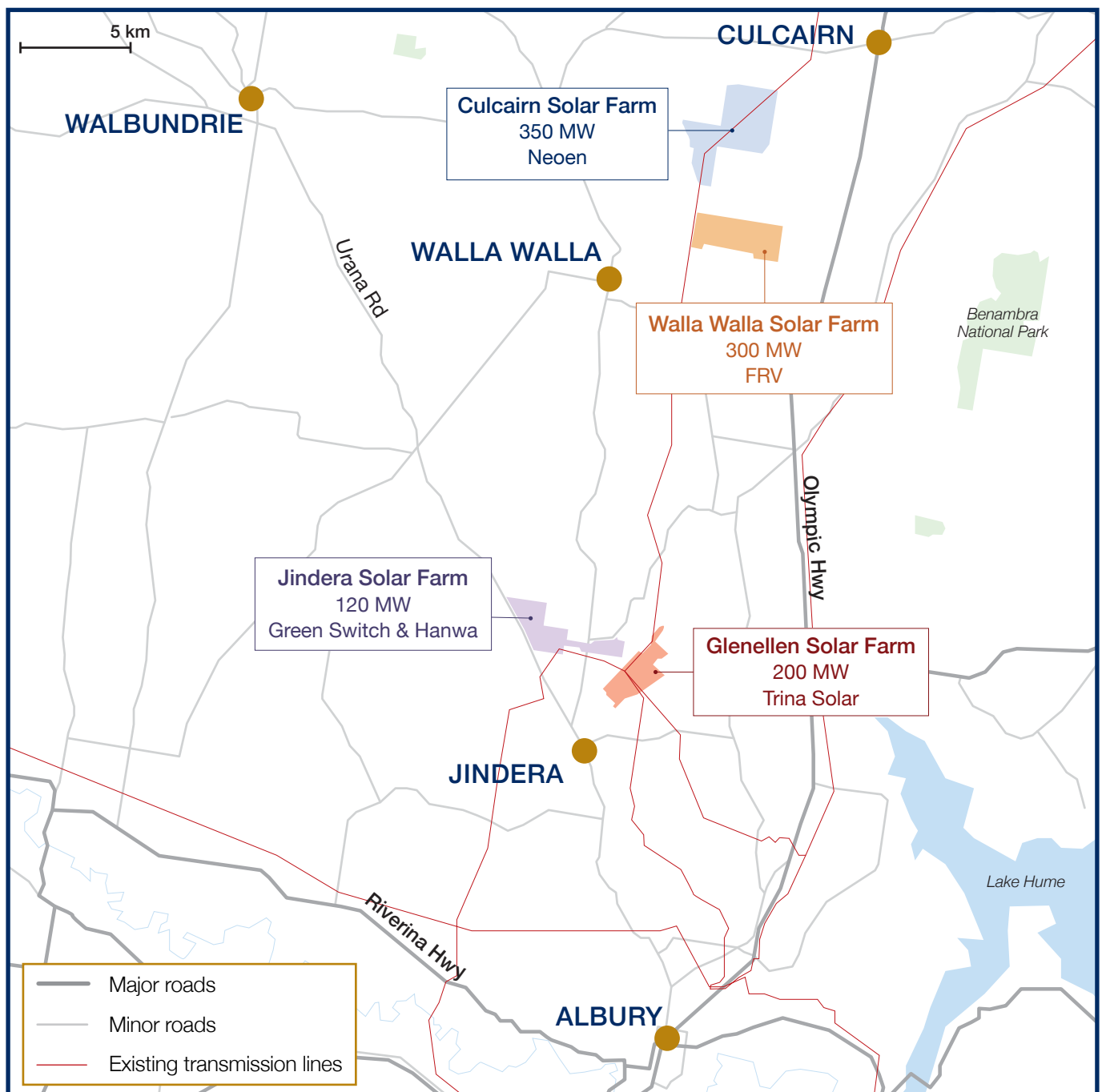


Neoen produces clean energy from renewable sources such as sunlight and wind using mature, tried and tested technologies. We are also leaders in energy storage.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Culcairn Solar Farm is a 440 MWp (350 MW AC) renewable electricity project comprising solar arrays near the town of Culcairn, New South Wales.

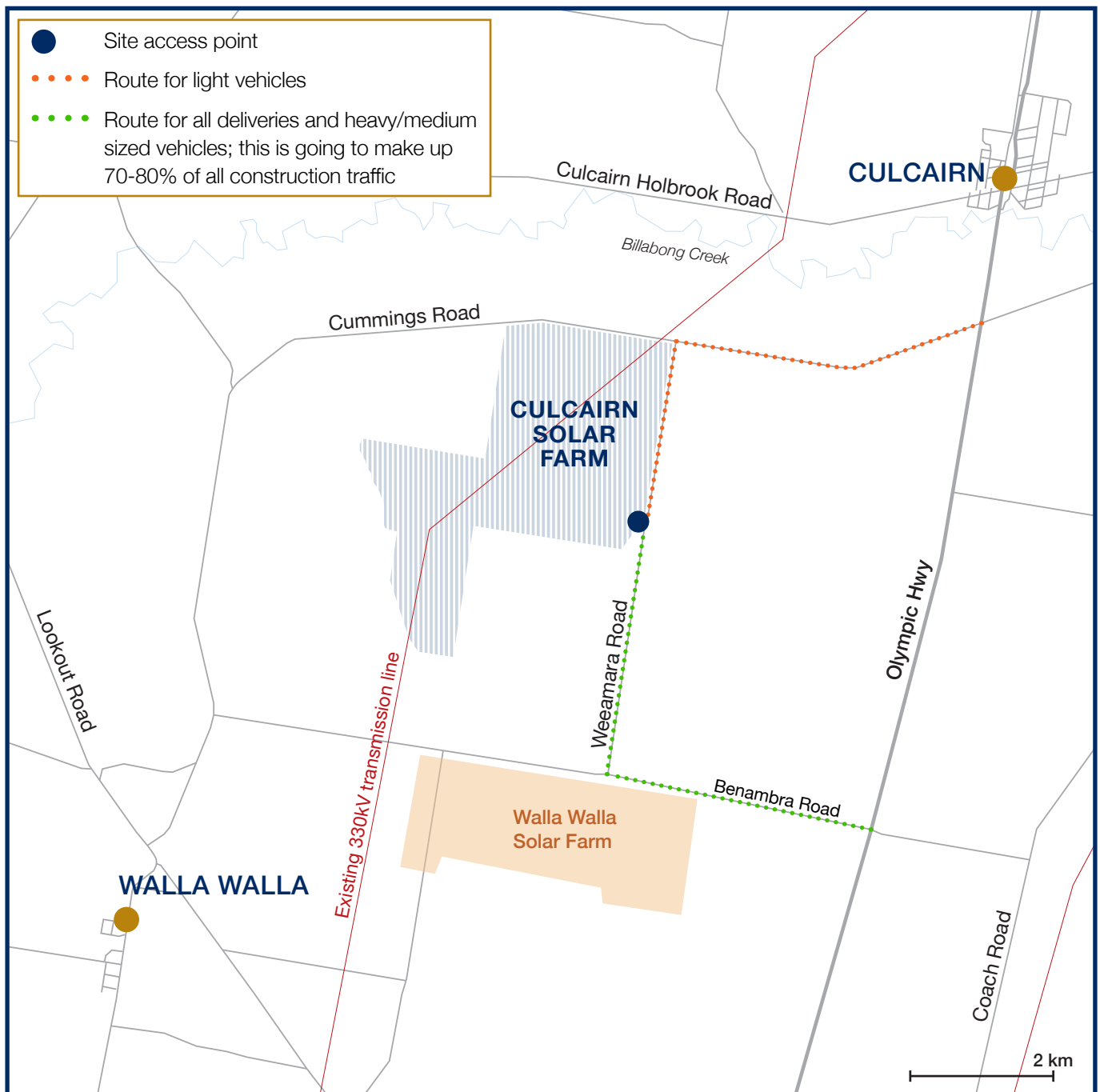
The Culcairn Solar Farm is located in the South East Riverina Region of New South Wales, approximately 45km north of Albury and 70km south of Wagga Wagga.



TRANSPORT ROUTE

The Project will be overbuilt (440MWp), in order to maximize the hours of the day in which 350MW can be exported to the electricity grid.

The 350 MW project will span across 1,000 hectares of land and connect into the on-site 330kV TransGrid Electricity Line.



OUR TEAM



Developers, Owners & Operators

Benjamin Benfredj, Construction Manager

contact@culcairnsolarfarm.com.au

1800 966 122

Tim Paramore, Community Liaison Officer

tim.paramore.ext@neoen.com

04288 686 370



Engineering, Procurement & Construction (EPC) Contractor

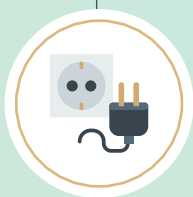
Overall control of the site, managing deliveries of equipment and design.

Mathieu Potier, Project Manager

Daisy Franz, Community Relations

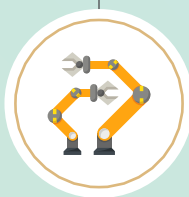
culcairnsolar@bouygues-construction.com

0435 534 371



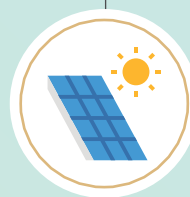
Electrical Subcontractor

Electrical installation of AC and DC cable systems and PV module cables.



Civil Subcontractor

Site establishment, road and drainage works.



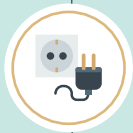
Mechanical Subcontractor

Mechanical installation of the PV panels and tracking system.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Engineering, Procurement & Construction (EPC) Contractor

Administration | Security | Waste Recycling | Health & Safety



Electrical Subcontractor

Electricians
Electricity installation
Electrical Trade Assistants



Civil Subcontractor

Loader
Excavator
Grader
Roller
Dump Truck
Watercarts
Concreters
Pipe Layers
General Labour



Mechanical Subcontractor

Pile driver
Forklift and/or Telehandler
Trucks
General Labour

SUPPLIER OPPORTUNITIES

Goods and services we expect to be procured:

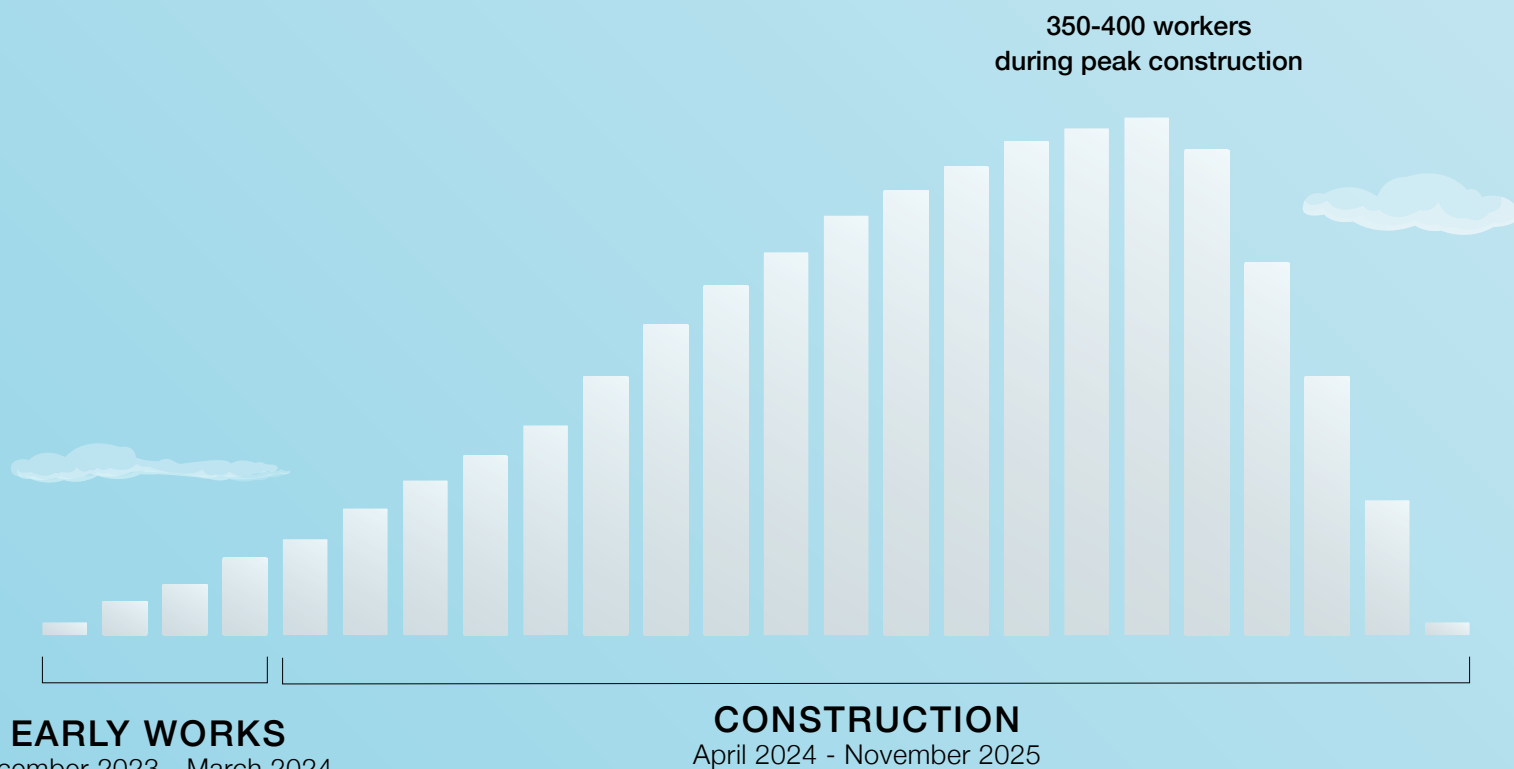
Accommodation	Fencing and Gates	Small Equipment Hire
Safety Products (Local)	Food and Catering Service	Transport (Minor)
Cleaners	Freight	Waste Management (Liquid)
Computer Network Support	Fuel	Waste Management (Solid)
Concrete Supply (Offsite Supply)	Material Testing	Water (Construction)
Concreters	Mechanical Fitter/Maintenance	Water (Potable)
Construction	Quarry Products	Welding & Engineering Fabrication
Crane (Minor Lifts)	Operation & Maintenance Facility	(Site Services)
Earthworks Plant (Wet and Dry Hire)	Septic Pump Out Services	



Anyone interested in working on the project, can register their interest via the **'work with us' page on the project website.**

If you have any questions about work opportunities, email culcairnsolar@bouygues-construction.com

WORKFORCE



The workforce is expected to fluctuate during project phases, and peak at around 400 workers during 2024-2025.

Workdays:

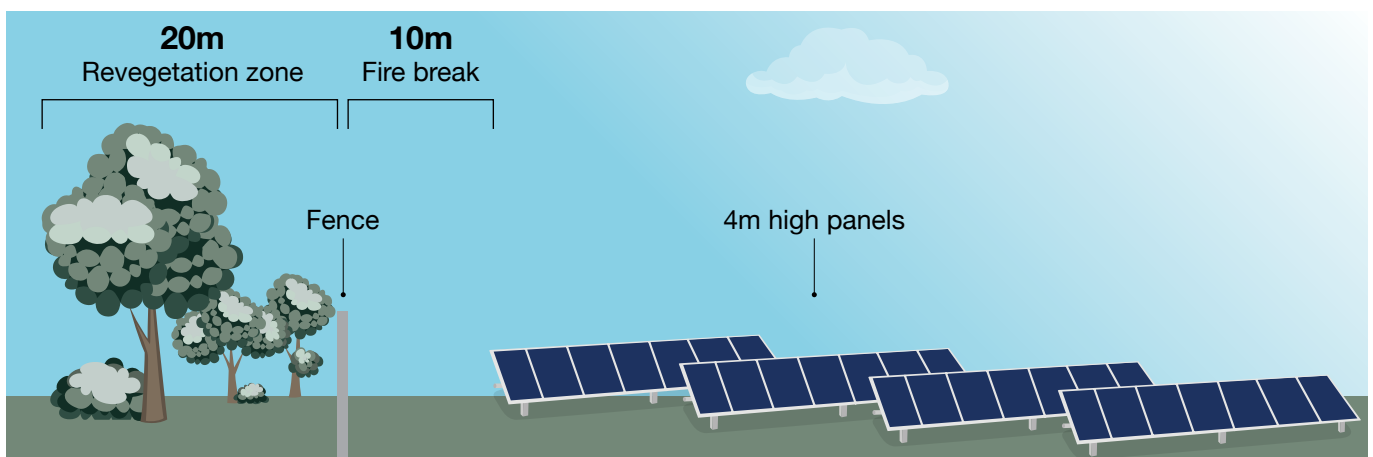
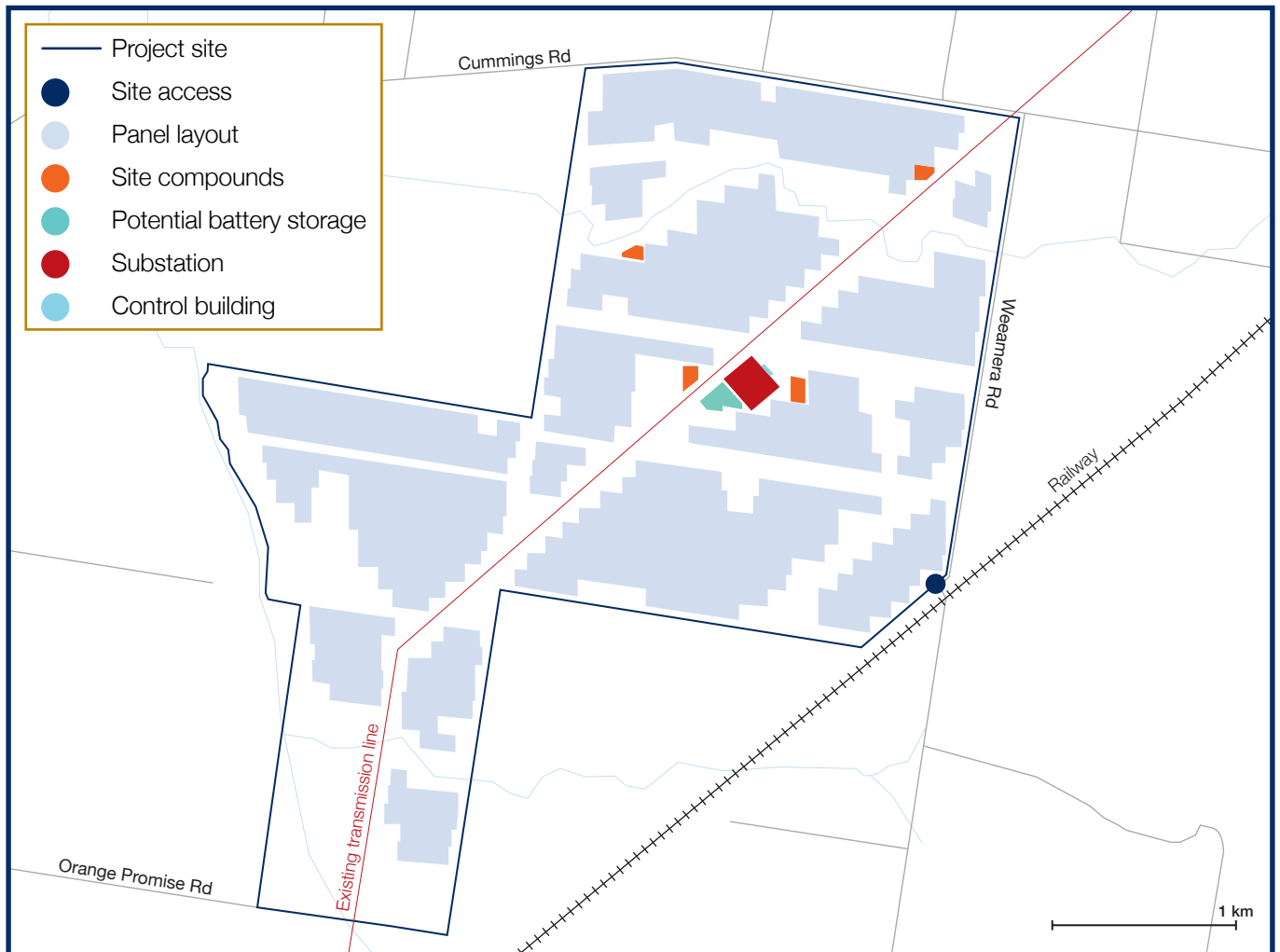
7:00am to 6:00pm Monday - Friday

8:00am to 1:00pm Saturdays

No work on Sundays or Public Holidays

Deliveries may occur outside these hours with approval from the NSW Department of Planning.


APPROVED LAYOUT & PROTECTION ZONE



WHAT TO EXPECT DU




- 1 Early works**
- Any required public road works
 - Contractors are tendering work packages
 - Establishment of the temporary construction compound
 - Site clearing and levelling commences
 - Tree planting

 ~4 months


CONSTRUCTION





Community:
We will provide regular community updates via email and newsletters.



- 2 Piling and substation works**
- Cable laying and inverter footings commence
 - More construction staff will be in town, local service economy will see increase
 - Commence civil works for substation bench

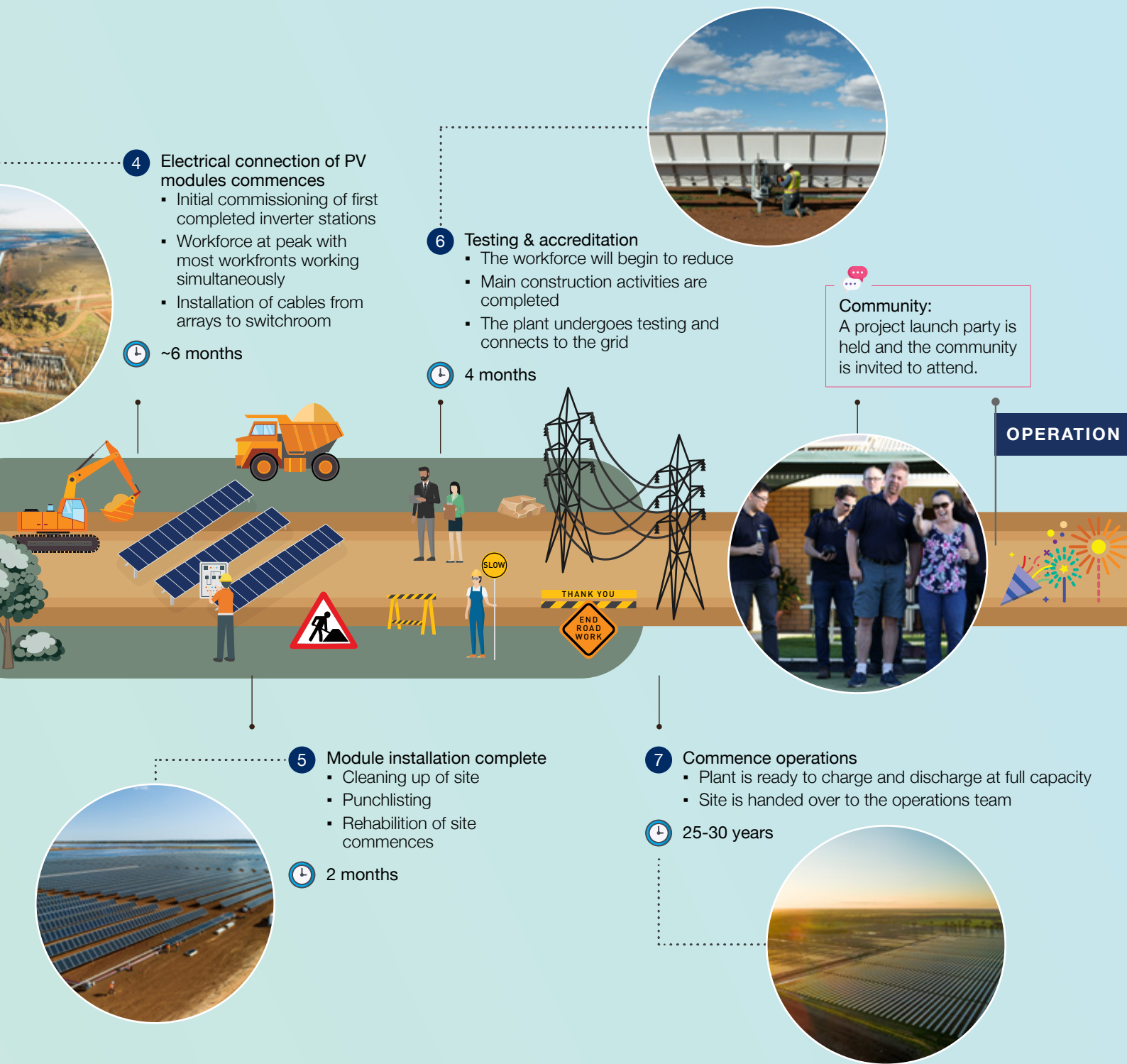
 ~5-6 months

- 3 Module and tracker installation**
- Inverter installation to follow
 - Construction force ramps up with many general labour roles for mechanical install of trackers and PV modules

 4 months



RING CONSTRUCTION



ECONOMIC BENEFITS



\$400-500 MILLION
INFRASTRUCTURE
INVESTMENT



350-400 JOBS
DURING
CONSTRUCTION



24 MONTHS
CONSTRUCTION
DURATION



5-10 JOBS
DURING
OPERATIONS

ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

ABILITY TO PRODUCE
895,000 MWh
PER YEAR WHICH IS EQUIVALENT TO:



DISPLACING
648,000 TONNES
OF CO₂ EMISSIONS

POWERING
155,000 HOMES

REMOVING
18,135 CARS
FROM THE ROAD

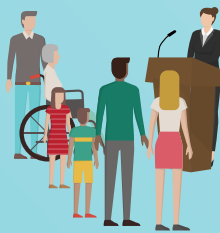
PLANTING
6,642,000 TREES

COMMUNITY BENEFITS



Construction disruption payment

Payment made to qualifying neighbours at the start of construction.



Community benefit fund

We allocate funds to local community projects such as sports, clubs, tourism and heritage via a yearly grants process.



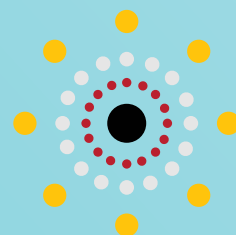
Voluntary contribution

Voluntary contribution paid to council in the Greater Hume Shire.



Tell us your ideas

To submit your ideas, please fill out our online survey via the **Your Feedback button** on our website:
culcairnsolarfarm.com.au/local-benefits



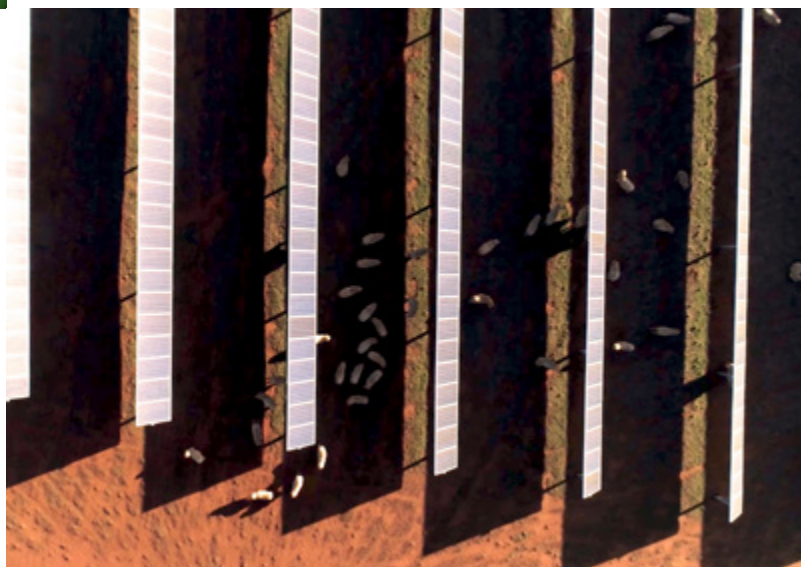
Neoen is committed to
First Nations participation
within the project.



2017 PARKES TRIAL

Our first sheep grazing trial was conducted at Parkes Solar Farm in 2017 during a high rainfall and high produce year. It was a joint exercise between Neoen, local landowners and solar construction company Bouygues.

The 3 week trial involved 400 sheep within a 15 hectares zone to help reduce dry grass under the solar panels in order to manage grass fire hazard. It successfully showed that this combined land use had positive outcomes for farmers and solar operators.



2019 EXPERT REVIEW

By 2019, sheep grazing began on all five of our operating solar farms in NSW and VIC. These were assessed by an independent grazier expert to document existing practices and make recommendations on how to integrate grazing into each stage of the solar farm's lifecycle.



“No change to the grazing productivity potential is expected...compared to as if the land did not host panels...climate conditions are identical except that concentrated water occurs along the edges of the trackers with the potential of allowing for concentrated feed growth.”

– Phil Graham, Livestock Specialist

CULTURE WITH SOLAR



“There are no issues with sheep-grazing co-existing with solar farms. Providing you have the right breed of merino or merino-cross and get stock numbers right, you can reach at least 80% of normal stocking rates. It's an opportunity and a win-win for farmers and renewable energy producers.”

– Tom Warren, Farmer



2019 DUBBO AGRISOLAR

Tom Warren, host landowner at Dubbo Solar Hub has been grazing sheep on the land under the panels since 2018 and has learnt from this experience about how to make this work well.

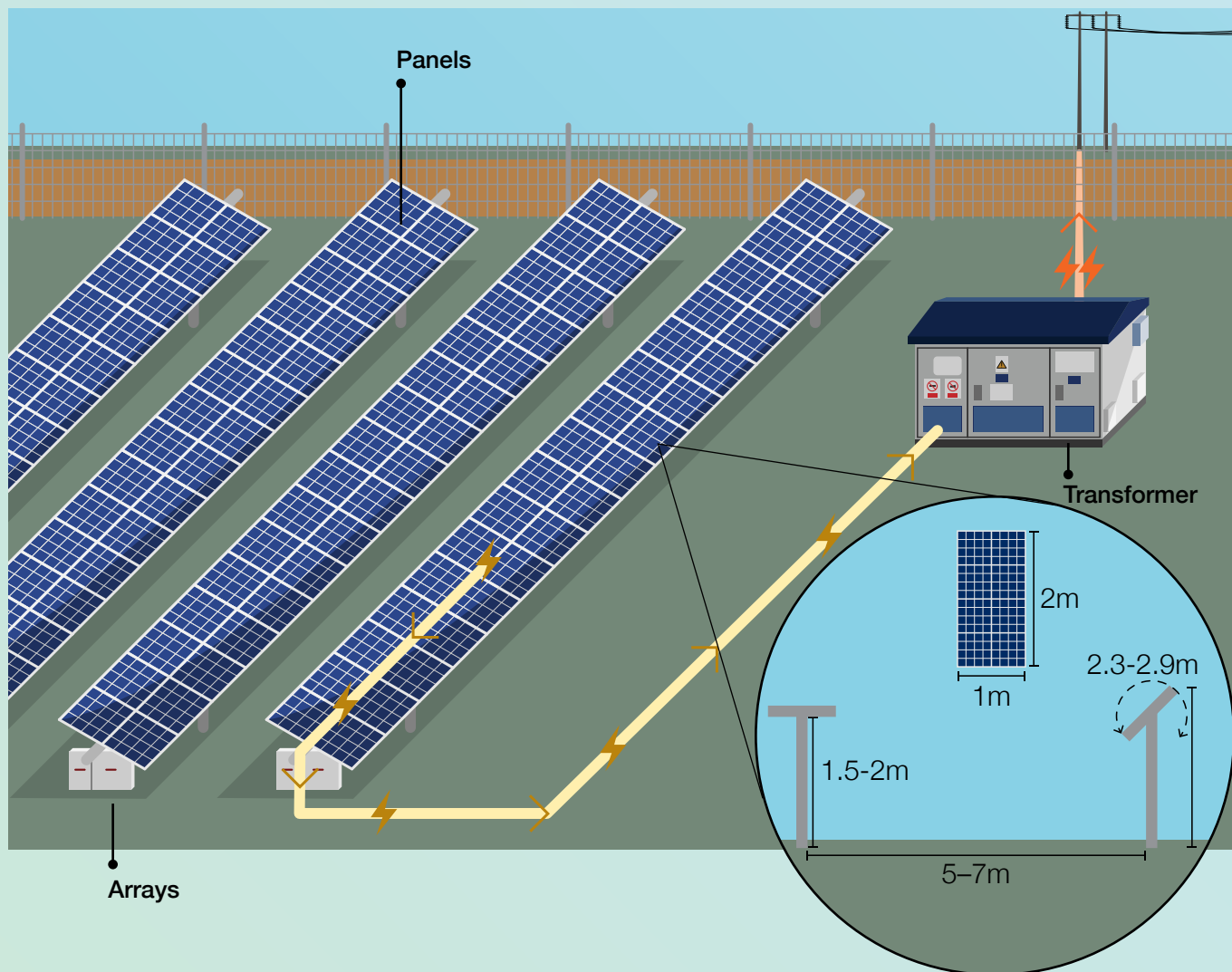
Watch his video interview at: dubbosolarhub.com.au/learn



2020-2023 INDUSTRY REPORT & RESEARCH

We led an initiative with the Clean Energy Council to bring together research, case studies and lessons from across the industry into a ground-breaking Agrisolar Report which was launched in March 2021. The report guides and informs farmers, solar farm operators and government to integrate agriculture and solar. We are also collaborating with Agriculture Victoria who have been researching microclimatic conditions and pasture species under solar panels at our Numurkah Solar Farm in Victoria.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



To learn more, watch a video from our [Learning Hub website](#):



Topics include “how can sunlight charge my phone?”
And “how can solar energy power the night?”

ABOUT SOLAR FARMS

Q1. How does solar generation work?

When a photon of light shines on a solar panel, it knocks electrons free on an electrical circuit and produces electricity. Inverters are then responsible for converting this electricity from DC to AC power that can be exported to the grid. The angle at which the light hits the panel relates to the amount of energy that can be harvested from it, which is why tracking systems help to optimise solar generation.

Q2. Why are you building a solar farm here?

This site has been selected owing to some key advantages:

- its high solar irradiance,
- topography of the land,
- limited vegetation and impact to biodiversity,
- proximity to the transmission network,
- and availability to connect more energy capacity in this part of the network.

Q3. What technology does Neoen use to build its solar farms?
Culcairn Solar Farm will use premium quality solar panels and other technologies provided by leading manufacturers, selected through a competitive process. All components come with long warranty periods; solar panels and inverters are generally warranted for 20 to 25 years.

Q4. What is the life cycle of a solar farm?
A solar farm will typically operate for between 25 and 30 years. Depending on the local environment, the panels can generate electricity for 30 years or more with only about 0.5% efficiency loss each year.

Q5. How high are solar panels?
Most solar panels are 1m x 2m in size. Arrays of solar panels are usually 30, 60 or 90 m long. Rows of panels are separated by 5 to 7m. However, this can vary from project to project. The top of the panels will be up to 4 metres from the ground.

Q6. How do you stop the solar facilities from impacting our landscape?
We acknowledge that solar facilities do impact the look of the surrounding area and we work with communities to ensure they have the lowest possible impact including planting trees which will eventually provide a screening. Overall, we consider that the immediate and long-term benefits which solar farms bring to communities are greater than the visual impact it may have.

Q7. Will the solar panels generate glare?
Photovoltaic panels are designed to reflect as little light as possible (generally around 2%) in order to maximise their efficiency. This is why solar farms are not considered reflective and have been installed at or near number of airports.

Q8. What will happen at the end of a solar farm's life?
At the end of a solar farm's operational life, Neoen either refurbishes and re-energises the project, or decommissions it. If Neoen decides to decommission this solar farm, we will convert the site back to grazing/agricultural land.

Q9. What is your recycling policy?
Neoen is a long-term owner and operator and a committed project custodian and will establish circular procurement initiatives with its project partners to follow best practices in recycling and waste management. Components such as solar panels will be recycled – typically by the manufacturer.

Q10. What steps have been taken to engage with the local community and stakeholders regarding the proposed solar farm? Have public consultations or information sessions been conducted?
We have been engaging with immediate neighbours and the community from early stages of the development process. We have engaged with the local branch of NSW Farmers, hosted a community drop-in session and been liaising directly with community members in small groups to respond to their questions. Before receiving approval on our Development Application, we also organised a bus trip for neighbours and interested community members to Neoen's Numurkah Solar Farm, and an on-site fire management workshop.

Q11. Will the project include any community investment or benefit-sharing initiatives to ensure the local community directly benefits from the solar farm's presence?

We believe in sharing the benefits of renewable energies with the communities we operate in. Neoen Projects have a community benefit sharing program. This will provide meaningful benefits to communities surrounding the Culcairn Solar Farm. We welcome feedback from the community on how this program can be executed. Please let us know your views by completing [the survey](#) on our project website.

CONSTRUCTION

Q12. During construction, what is the average number of vehicle movements daily? And how many may occur during peak construction?

A maximum limit of 100 heavy vehicle movements in a day will apply on Culcairn Solar Farm during construction. We anticipate reaching this limit only during the 2-3 month peak construction period, the traffic volume would be lower outside this time.

Q13. Are cables (overhead or underground) installed at the same time of any road upgrades?

No overhead or underground transmission lines need to be installed off-site since our solar farm will connect into the existing transmission network from a new on-site substation.

Q14. Where is the main site compound located?

The site entrance will be off Weeamera Road. A site office will be built near the middle of the solar farm.

Q15. What impact can be expected during construction?

Some of the changes that may be noticeable during construction relate to:

- Increased traffic on public roads (Weeamera and Benambra Roads)
- Traffic on-site and noise from piling works
- Upgrades to any access roads to ensure they can handle construction traffic.
- Increased dust due to civil works on-site

Q16. How will Neoen address the construction traffic impact and road upgrades?

Neoen carried out a detailed assessment of the access road's suitability and upgrade requirements including a survey of the road to accurately map out the existing road and where any upgrades or road widening may be required.

Neoen will comply with obligations set out in planning conditions relating to road upgrades and maintenance. This will be done in consultation with neighbouring landowner and regional councils. Neoen pays for any road upgrades or repairs caused by or for building its project. A traffic management plan has also been drafted in consultation with the Greater Hume Shire Council, Transport for NSW, and other relevant stakeholders in order to address the impacts from construction traffic.

ECONOMY

Q17. Do solar farms benefit the Australian/local economy?

Approximately 300-400 people will be employed locally during the construction phase and 5-10 people will be employed locally in full-time, permanent positions during the operations phase. Neoen, in collaboration with its project's engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) contractor, Bouygues Construction Australia, is accepting applications from local suppliers and jobseekers. Please share your resume and details to culcairnsolar@bouygues-construction.com.

Media reports also indicate that farmers can drought-proof their businesses through hosting solar as an additional income stream.

Q18. How much do renewables cost compared with other energy sources?

Wind and solar are the cheapest form of new energy production. The transitioning energy system needs a mix of wind, solar and storage and transmission.

Q19. Who pays for any transmission upgrades required?

Neoen pays for any transmission upgrades necessary to connect and operate the project in the electricity grid. This includes construction and maintenance costs for the life of the project.

Q20. Do solar farms result in a decrease in electricity prices?

Solar energy forms just one part of the Australian Energy Market Operator's (AEMO) move towards a zero-emission grid. Solar farms add to the supply side of the electricity supply-demand equation, which puts downward pressure on all electricity bills.

Q21. Does Neoen require government subsidies to build its projects?

Neoen does not require government subsidies to finance its projects. We finance our projects through a combination of our own equity and long-term bank loans. However, we sometimes enter into agreements with governments or businesses to sell the power generated by our projects.

Q22. Who assesses the projects?

All Neoen projects meet strict State and Federal Government regulations and are assessed under these regulations.

We work closely with governments to ensure we meet all legal requirements and exceed these requirements wherever possible.

Q23. Who is going to be liable for the removal of the plant and equipment should the company fail financially?

Neoen has a strong balance sheet with over \$1bn in cash and strong earnings, and listed on the European stock exchange. There is residual value in the infrastructure which will offset the cost of any decommissioning. The solar farm can be resold and operated by a third party.

ENVIRONMENT

Q24. Do solar farms impact on flora and fauna?

Neoen engages specialist consultants to undertake detailed flora and fauna surveys to determine the ecological attributes of the land.

On all of our projects, we aim to minimise the impact on flora and fauna by designing projects to be constructed outside areas of high conservation significance and adopting control measures during the construction process.

Other mitigation measures include preparing management plans, identifying 'no-go zones' within the project site and conducting pre-clearance surveys. Neoen also consults with government departments of environment and biodiversity throughout the development, construction and operational stages of projects, as well as local non-government organisations.

Q25. Do solar farms affect farm/domestic animals?

Neoen owns and operates the Coleambally, Dubbo, Griffith, and Parkes solar farms on multiple properties in New South Wales. We have sheep grazing on all of these solar farms. Sheep take a couple of days to get used to the site, and then are very comfortable with them – they use the shade from the solar arrays for shade during summer.

Q26. How is any potential fire risk managed?

There is a cleared vegetation zone around the edges of the solar farms to prevent fire propagation and vegetation levels are maintained according to regulations. Neoen ensures there is robust design and commissioning practices on its solar farms. This can be in the form of automatic fire suppression installation where appropriate, water storage on site for dedicated fire suppression. Engagement with local fire services is also an important element of bushfire preparedness.





Q27. Has there been any studies done on soil health and fertility under the solar farm panels?

A recent study commissioned by Agriculture Victoria studied soil conditions underneath a utility scale solar farm with single axis tracking. The study hypothesises that the installation of solar panels had no negative effects on soil or climate characteristics below/around the panels was largely supported and concluded the following:

- Analysis of the data revealed that only subtle differences in temperature and humidity are found within the panel array compared to outside, and that these differences only occur at certain times and conditions;
- Directly under the panels, cooler soil temperature was observed under the panel centre due to the shadow cast by the panel tracking the sun. This contrast only occurred during the summer months.

Q28. How much water is used to clean solar panels and is this an expensive process?

The expense of the cleaning process and the amount of water used can vary widely depending on the size of the solar farm, the local climate (rainfall received in the region) and the cleaning technology employed.

How can I find out more about solar farms and their impact on agricultural production?

The Clean Energy Council, industry association for the renewables sector, published the “Australian Guide to Agrisolar for Large-Scale Solar” in March 2021. You can learn more by reading [this guide on their website](#).

HEALTH & CULTURE

Q29. Are there any health risks associated with solar farms?

Solar panels are deployed on more than 25% of Australian homes and have been deployed for the past 10 to 15 years on people’s homes across the world. No health issues have been associated with solar panels and the Culcairn Solar Farm would use the same type of technology. High voltage infrastructure would remain along the existing transmission line and would not increase health risks.

Q30. Can solar farms’ noise affect local residents?

Solar farms create no noise during operations.

Q31. Will the project reduce air quality?

Monitoring of dust levels during construction is a basic requirement of each project. Dust generating activities are assessed during windy conditions and are stopped and rescheduled where adequate control of dust generation cannot be achieved.

Visual observation of machinery is undertaken during site inspections in addition to daily pre-start checks which ensure all machinery has appropriate emission control devices, is in good working order and is maintained correctly.

Q32. Is cultural heritage taken into consideration?

Neoen complies with all legislation, including laws regarding the protection of cultural heritage. A cultural heritage assessment forms part of initial studies as does consultation with local First Nations peoples to ensure cultural heritage is protected. The Traditional Owners of the land on which Culcairn Solar Farm will be located are the Wiradjuri people. Neoen has drafted a Cultural Heritage Management Plan in consultation with Wiradjuri representatives and will continue to work with them across the construction and operational stages.

CULCAIRN

SOLAR FARM



culcairnsolarfarm.com.au



Benjamin Benfredj, Construction Project Manager

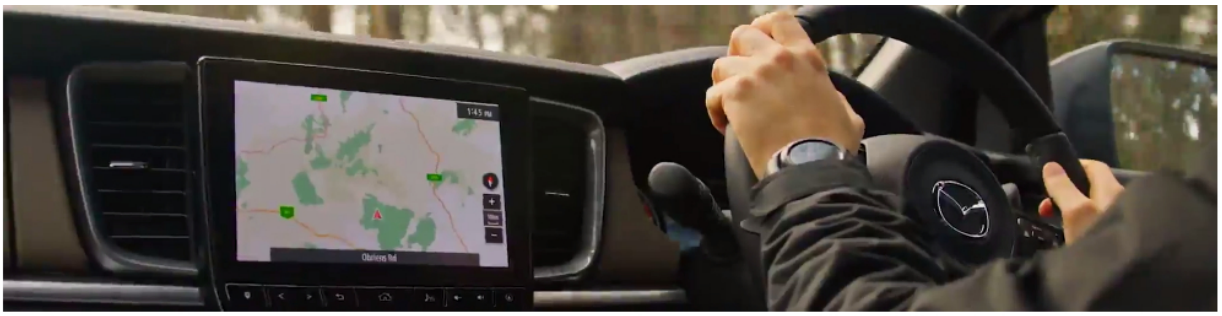


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APPENDIX F: BORDER MAIL
COVERING OF THE LOCAL CULCAIRN
EMPLOYMENT AND NETWORKING
SESSION



No blazing angst: Solar farm operator fronts community over massive project



By Ted Howes

Updated March 8 2024 - 2:42pm, first published 1:25pm

💬 0 Comments

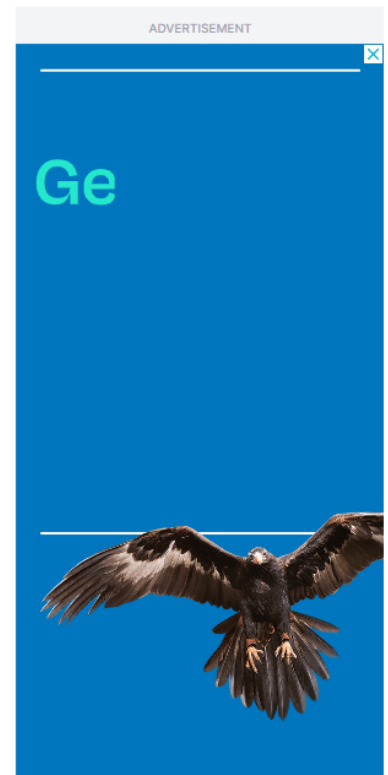


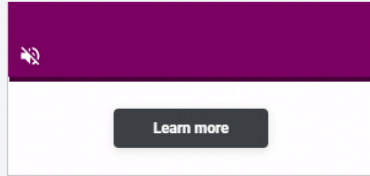
📷 About 60 people from Culcairn and surrounding districts attended the information, networking session at the bowling club there on Thursday afternoon. Pictures by Ted Howes

Protesters who have been telling solar farm developers to go to blazes were absent at a Culcairn community session to discuss the latest project on Thursday afternoon.

While the \$636 million, 1039-hectare Culcairn solar farm [initially caused angst when it was announced in March 2021](#), on March 7 townsfolk and farmers from the Riverina community seemed more curious about the 400-odd jobs being offered.

It is a stark contrast to a [Mint Renewables deal with two landowners to create a 400-megawatt battery energy storage system over the Border at Dederang](#).





Most locals at Thursday's forum voiced resignation – but support – for the 350 megawatt project.

Operator Neoen and its construction partner Bouygues Australia – which sealed a deal on December 23 to construct the massive solar farm – sent representatives to the Culcairn Bowling Club to tell locals about the 350–400 jobs that would be generated by the venture, both in construction and other areas.

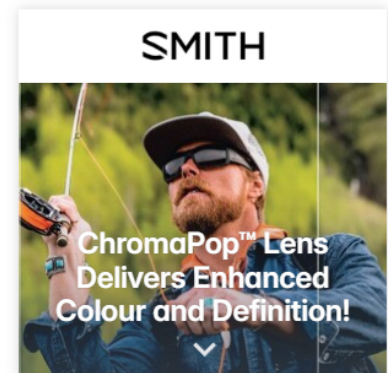


📹 About 60 people from Culcairn and surrounding districts attended the information, networking session at the bowling club there on Thursday afternoon. Picture by Ted Howes

Greater Hume mayor Tony Quinn did not attend the session but told *The Border Mail* before the forum he did not expect to hear any reports of "a hornets' nest being stirred up".



📺 WATCH: A new three megawatt solar farm is now powering the Wodonga Wastewater Treatment Plant with renewable energy.



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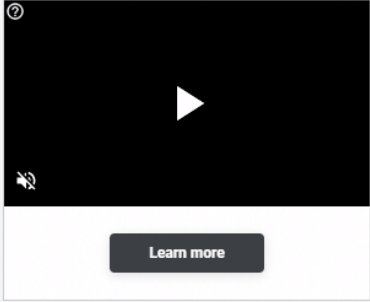
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"I've followed the process all the way along and it's now up to the community to engage with them," he said. "The agro around the anti-solar movement seems to have died down.

"The only problem with each of the solar farms is to get people to work for them, they pay terrific money, but the workforce is not about. I'm still a bit sceptical about renewable energy across the country, but if it works, well, it'll be great."

Culcairn Bowling Club bartender Marcus Simmons said he grew up in Culcairn and that it "was good to see something new happening here".

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Learn more



📷 Culcairn Bowling Club bartender Marcus Simmons, who has poured beers for locals for nine months at one two watering holes in the town, says he hears mostly positive talk about the solar farm project. Picture by Ted Howes

During the community consultation process, there were 81 supportive submission and 147 objections.

"I've worked here for nine months and this project is what everyone who comes in here talks about," Mr Simmons said.

"People are surprised because this is a big thing, not what you'd really expect in a small town, but most people are talking about opportunities now, I'm not really hearing negative things."

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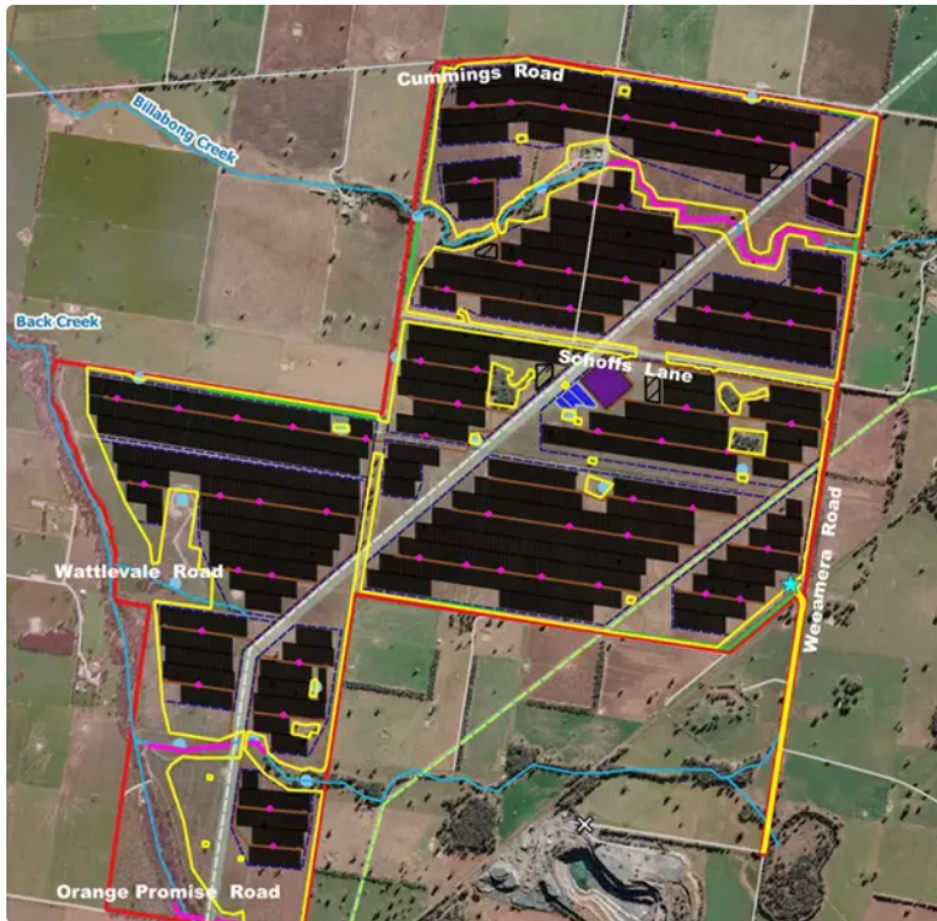
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"The talk is there's a lot of jobs on offer there, it's not just construction, so that's what is interesting a lot of people."



The proposed site of the solar farm south of Cummings Road. Picture supplied

Culcairn landowner Philip McCartney who has lived on a 550-hectare property with his partner for nine years, said his land didn't abut the boundary of the solar project.

"We're about three kilometres away, we're on the other side of the railway line, so we're not a direct neighbour," he said.

"I'm not a farmer, but my partner is and I understand how farmers can be concerned about primary agricultural land in taken up for solar farms. I completely understand that but I think it's a moot point because it's going ahead.

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📹 A representative from construction company Bouygues Australia addresses about 60 people at the information session at the Culcairn Bowling Club on Thursday. Picture by Ted Howes

"People agree in principle with the idea of having solar farms and green energy, but it's different when a major construction project is in your own backyard.

🗨 Start the conversation

Have your say.

Leave a comment below and let us know what you think.

Be the first to comment

"I'm not here to protest, just to find out a little bit more about what happens from here – I think we all have to take a pragmatic approach.

"Neoen are giving council \$150,000 a year and the local community \$150,000 a year, it's a done deal, so now we've got to make the most of it, we've just got to embrace that. That's a huge sum of money coming into the town."

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Former art teacher and wildlife lover Gavin Price-Jones, who lives in town, said it "makes perfect sense" for the nation to be powered by solar – but he's not a fan of windmills.





📷 Former art teacher Gavin Price-Jones, who lives in the township of Culcairn, says he's more concerned about the impact of wind farms on the environment than solar panels. Picture by Ted Howes

"The only thing I care about is the environment and I believe that renewables have got to be the way forward," Mr Price-Jones said. "I'm supportive of those and I believe solar farms are much less invasive than wind farms – so I'm behind this project."

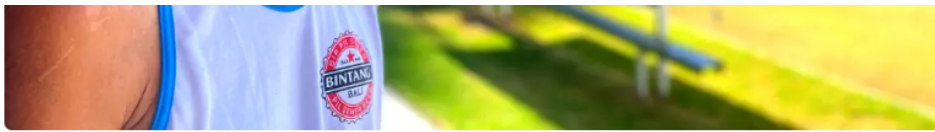
"We've got a hell of a lot of flat, open spaces where we could set up solar farms, where it's not necessarily invasive, so, unless it's financially restrictive in terms of supplying metro areas, why you wouldn't you have loads of solar farms in the west and rural NSW?"

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"I believe if they are intelligently placed then they won't create community unrest or any conflict."

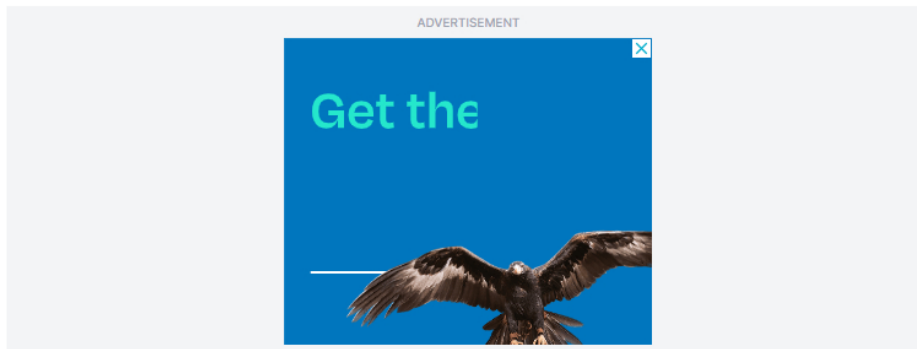




📷 Culcairn shearer Dave "Davo" Davidson reckons climate change "is a sham" but doesn't oppose the solar project. Picture by Ted Howes

Longtime Culcairn local Dave "Davo" Davidson, a shearer, said he was not opposed to harnessing the sun's power and didn't oppose the solar farm.

"I'm not opposed to any renewable energy but it's not going to replace coal-fired power stations or nuclear," he said. "The whole climate change agenda is a scam in my opinion, but, you know, each to their own."



"This project is OK, we may as well use the sun, it blazes away so why not but if China can have more than thousand coal-fired power stations and we can sell our coal overseas, then why can't we have it?"

Travellers Stefania Zvaznabar, from Chile, and Giovana Lo Monaco, from Argentina, travelled the short distance from Walla where they are temporarily employed to Culcairn after hearing about the session "on the grapevine".



📷 Travellers Stefania Zvaznabar, from Chile, and Giovana Lo Monaco, from Argentina, travelled from Walla Walla to Culcairn to "check out what was on offer" at the solar farm. Picture by Ted Howes

"We're just travelling around Australia and loving it, picking up work

where we can," Ms Zvaznabar said. "We heard about this got a lift up with some other friends who also wanted to see what kind of work is being offered."

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Ms Lo Monaco said they agreed working in waste management at the project would suit them both.

"We've both been to Sydney, but both of us like country towns more," she said. "And Culcairn is a great spot."

Neoen Australia NSW development team leader Emily Walker said the session was being conducted after a long period of community consultation and that the afternoon session was more about what the project was offering the community than addressing any objections.



Neoen Australia state leader NSW development Emily Walker said the information session was to show people exactly what to expect and what was on offer for the community in terms of job prospects and supply contracts. Picture by Ted Howes

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"Tonight is really about giving an opportunity for members of the

public who live near the project to come and find out what the 'final' project will look like," Ms Walker said.

"That is, from the basics, where it's going to be located to what the traffic management plan looks like, but primarily focused on opportunities for people to get involved in the project.

"So whether through that be through direct employment, or as a supplier to the project, there are slides from our construction contractor setting out exactly how many and what people they're looking for."

The commercial operations date for the project will be in April 2026.

Read More:

DARK DAY: The sad reality of finding another job or moving 860km to Adelaide



He's played in a grand final for Collingwood, now he'll play O and M



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Ted Howes

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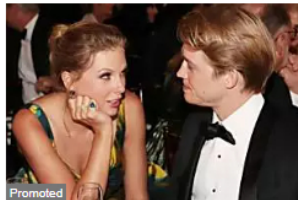
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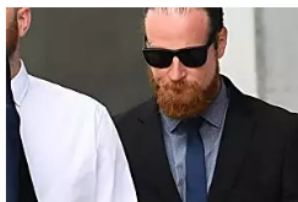
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APPENDIX G: PROJECT UPDATES & NEWSLETTERS

CULCAIRN

SOLAR FARM

Project Newsletter

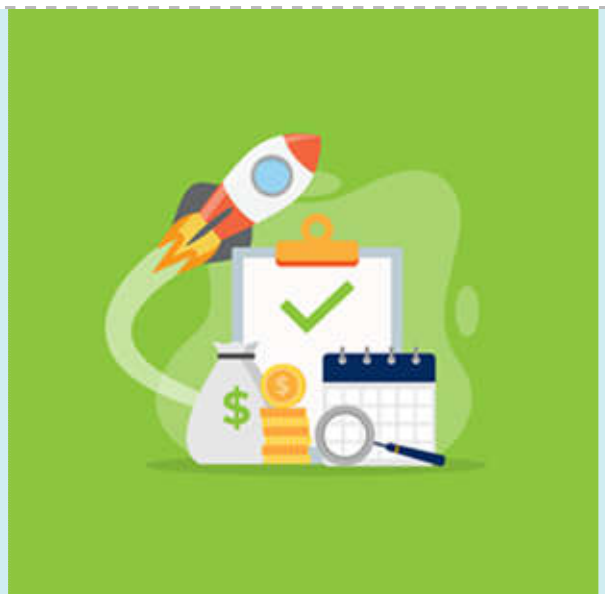
January 2024

Neoen has launched construction of the Culcairn Solar Farm and has appointed Bouygues Australia as the construction contractor. The project comprises of a 440 MWp / 350 MW ac solar farm. The project has the ability to provide clean, renewable power to New South Wales consumers and also provides benefits to the local community.

Selection of Contractor and start of Construction

Neoen has selected Bouygues Australia as the engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) contractor. At the end of December 2023, the notice to proceed was provided which signals the start of construction.

We will be hosting local employment and networking sessions where local job seekers and suppliers will have the opportunity to meet the contractor. These sessions will be held in the Culcairn region and are scheduled for **early April**. Information for these sessions and opportunities will be sent out shortly.





Construction Timeline

Before works can begin on site, about 1.4km of Council road requires upgrade. This upgrade of Weeamera Road is set to begin early February.

Once the upgrade is complete, site access and mobilization is set to begin in April, with civil works and piling on-site beginning in May.

Construction on-site is then expected to take around 16-18 months, with electrical testing and commissioning commencing mid-2025. The solar farm would be operational and exporting at full capacity in early 2026.

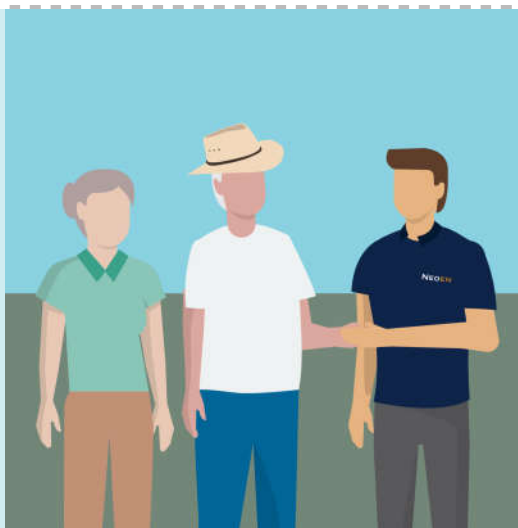
Community Outreach

Neoen has brought on a local Community Liaison Officer, Tim Paramore, to engage with and provide community updates around the commencement of construction of the solar farm.

Feel free to contact Tim if you have questions or could like to discuss the project.

Email: tim.paramore.ext@neoen.com

Phone: 04288 686 370





Industry and Aboriginal Participation Plan

An Industry and Aboriginal Participation Plan (IAPP) was developed for the Project. Local Aboriginal organizations as well as training and education providers in the region were consulted in the development of the plan.

By working with these organizations, we aim to support the growth and development of workers in the community as well as support local employment.

For more information, please contact:
contact@culcairnsolarfarm.com.au
1 800 966 122
www.culcairnsolarfarm.com.au

NEOEN

CULCAIRN

SOLAR FARM

Project Newsletter

March 2024

The Culcairn Solar Farm is a renewable electricity project comprising a 440 MWp solar farm in the early construction stage and a battery storage facility with Development Approval. It is located near the town of Culcairn, New South Wales.

Supplier Networking Session

Want to work with us on the Culcairn Solar Farm?

Please join us at the local supplier networking session and introduce yourself or your company !

Meet the construction team & find out about upcoming job opportunities.

Come along to our
**Community Info & Supplier
Networking Session**



Where: Culcairn Bowling Club

When: 7th March 2024, 4 PM - 7 PM

For more information, please contact:

Benjamin Benfredj

contact@culcairnsolarfarm.com.au

1 800 966 122

www.culcairnsolarfarm.com.au

APPENDIX H: SALVAGE WORKS SUMMARY AND UNEXPECTED FINDS PROTOCOL

Wiradjuri Culture & Heritage at Culcairn Solar Farm

The Traditional Owners of the land on which the Culcairn Solar Farm is being built are located are the Wiradjuri people.

Wiradjuri Country is the land of three rivers: Wambool (Macquarie), Kalare (Lachlan) and Murrumbidgee. The Wiradjuri Nation is geographically the largest Indigenous Nation in NSW and among the largest in terms of population.

The boundary of the Wiradjuri Nation extends from Coonabarabran in the north, straddling the Great Dividing Range, down to the Murray River and out to western NSW. Wiradjuri Country includes the townships of Dubbo, Condobolin, Orange, Bathurst, Wagga Wagga, Albury, Narrandera, and Griffith, all with a large presence of Wiradjuri people.

Wiradjuri people have occupied this land for thousands of years. Registered Aboriginal People (RAP's) have surveyed the Culcairn Solar Farm site and found artefact's confirming evidence of First Nations occupation.

As shown on these maps, many Cultural Heritage artefacts were recovered before construction started, and have been reburied in dedicated areas to avoid any damage.



Plate 47 from AFT1: dorsal side of relocated artefact

Plate 48 from AFT1: ventral side of relocated artefact

Plate 43 from 495094: relocated artefact ventral side



Plate 44 from 495094: relocated artefact dorsal side

Plate 51 from AFT2: quartz core

Plate 52 from AFT2: ventral side of crystal quartz angular fragment



Plate 75 from 497037: stone object located during the NGH (2020) ACHA

Plate 4-1 from 495094: relocated axe blank

Plate 52 from IF7: ventral side of relocated artefact

