



Accommodation and Employment Strategy

Calala Battery Energy Storage System

Equis Energy Pty Ltd

09 May 2025

→ The Power of Commitment



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Acknowledgement of Country

GHD acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the land, water and sky throughout Australia on which we do business. We recognise their strength, diversity, resilience and deep connections to Country. We pay our respects to Elders of the past, present and future, as they hold the memories, knowledges and spirit of Australia. GHD is committed to learning from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the work we do.



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Key abbreviations and acronyms

Term	Definition
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ABN	Australian Business Number
AES	Accommodation and Employment Strategy
BESS	Battery Energy Storage System
DIDO	Drive-in/ Drive-out
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EOI	Expression of Interest
FIFO	Fly-in/ Fly-out
LGA	Local Government Area
NSW	New South Wales
REZ	Renewable Energy Zone
SEARs	Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements
SSD	State significant development

1. Introduction

The Trustee for Equis Energy (Australia) Ngumi 4 Holding Trust (Equis) has approval for a standalone Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and underground 330 kilovolt (kV) transmission cable connecting to the existing Transgrid Tamworth 330 kV substation (the Project).

The primary project address is 474 Calala Lane, Calala, NSW 2340 (the project site) and is further described in Section 1.2. The project site is shown in Figure 2.1.

The Calala BESS Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was prepared by Mecone (2023) in accordance with the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs), issued on 30 January 2023. An amendment report was prepared in May 2024 by Mecone (2024), and the project was approved on 28 June 2024 as per Development Consent State Significant Development (SSD) 52786213.

1.1 Purpose of this strategy

The purpose of this Accommodation and Employment Strategy (AES) is to outline the proposed approach and objectives for the management of impacts and opportunities related to accommodation and employment associated with the construction and operation of the Calala BESS project.

This AES has been prepared to respond to Schedule 2 Part B36 of the Development Consent for the Calala BESS (SSD 52786213). A compliance matrix for this AES and Schedule 2 Part B36 is shown in Table 1.1. This AES will be provided to the Planning Secretary prior to commencement of construction and implemented.

Table 1.1 Schedule 2 Part B36 condition

Condition of consent	Strategy section
<i>Prior to commencing construction, the Applicant must prepare an Accommodation and Employment Strategy for the development. This strategy must:</i>	
<i>(a) be prepared in consultation with Council and informed by consultation with local accommodation and employment service providers;</i>	Section 5
<i>(b) propose measures to ensure there is sufficient accommodation for the workforce associated with the development;</i>	Section 7
<i>(c) consider the cumulative impacts associated with other State significant development projects in the area;</i>	Section 3
<i>(d) investigate options for prioritising the employment of local workers and use of local businesses during the construction and operation of the development, where feasible;</i>	Section 6.2 and 6.4
<i>(e) give consideration to strategies that leave a positive community legacy and maximise local economic contribution; and</i>	Section 6.6 and 7.4
<i>(f) include a program to monitor and review the effectiveness of the strategy over the life of the development, including regular monitoring and review during construction, upgrading and decommissioning.</i>	Section 8
<i>The Applicant must provide a copy of the Accommodation and Employment Strategy to the Planning Secretary prior to commencement of construction, and implement the plan throughout construction.</i>	

1.2 Staged submission of this plan

In accordance with Condition C3 (a-c) of the consent (SSD 52786213), the Applicant has elected to stage the submission of the AES. Staging was approved on 4 March 2025.

The AES will be staged as follows:

- Stage 1: Construction of the Project
- Stage 2: Operations
- Stage 3: Decommissioning of the Project at end of life

This AES is for Stage 1 Construction and Stage 2 Operation. The AES will be updated as necessary prior to the commencement of decommissioning or upgrading. Consultation with the relevant stakeholders has commenced for Stage 1 and 2. All later stages of the AES will also include necessary consultation with the relevant stakeholders. Each staged revision of the AES will be provided to the Secretary, prior to the commencement of each stage.

1.3 Scope and limitations

This report has been prepared by GHD for Equis and may only be used and relied on by Equis for the purpose agreed between GHD and Equis as set out in Section 1.1 of this report.

GHD otherwise disclaims responsibility to any person other than Equis arising in connection with this report. GHD also excludes implied warranties and conditions, to the extent legally permissible.

The services undertaken by GHD in connection with preparing this report were limited to those specifically detailed in the report and are subject to the scope limitations set out in the report.

The opinions, conclusions and any recommendations in this report are based on conditions encountered and information reviewed at the date of preparation of the report. GHD has no responsibility or obligation to update this report to account for events or changes occurring subsequent to the date that the report was prepared.

The opinions, conclusions and any recommendations in this report are based on assumptions made by GHD described in this report. GHD disclaims liability arising from any of the assumptions being incorrect.

GHD has prepared this report on the basis of information provided by Equis and others who provided information to GHD (including Government authorities), which GHD has not independently verified or checked beyond the agreed scope of work. GHD does not accept liability in connection with such unverified information, including errors and omissions in the report which were caused by errors or omissions in that information.

1.4 Roles and responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities relevant to this AES are outlined in Table 1.2.

Table 1.2 *Roles and responsibilities*

Role	Responsibility
Principal (Equis)	The Principal is responsible for the overall implementation of the AES. Key responsibilities include: – Reviewing and endorsing the AES as required. – Maintaining compliance with relevant legislation, conditions of approval and any licences. – Report to regulatory authorities where appropriate. – Responding to community complaints and enquiries. – Liaison with stakeholder agencies and community groups where required.
Primary Contractor (Project Manager)	The Primary Contractor is responsible for ensuring its obligations outlined in the AES are implemented and maintained throughout the construction and operation phase in accordance with the relevant requirements of the development consent.
Community Liaison	Responsible for consultation with stakeholders and monitoring as required by this AES and reporting.

1.5 Document structure

This AES is structured as follows:

- Section 1: provides an introduction to the strategy and a description of the conditions of consent.
- Section 2: provides an overview of the project, including a description of the project construction and operation activities, workforce requirements and timeframes.
- Section 3: outlines other major projects in the region.
- Section 4: describes the social and economic profile of the regional area.
- Section 5: outlines stakeholder consultation undertaken to inform this strategy.
- Section 6: details the opportunities, challenges and constraints for local employment and procurement and outlines actions to manage employment requirements.
- Section 7: details the opportunities, challenges and constraints for local accommodation and outlines actions to manage accommodation requirements.
- Section 8: outlines the monitoring and reporting measures for implementation of the AES.
- Section 9: provides a list of references used throughout this strategy.

2. Project description

2.1 Overview

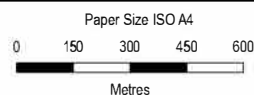
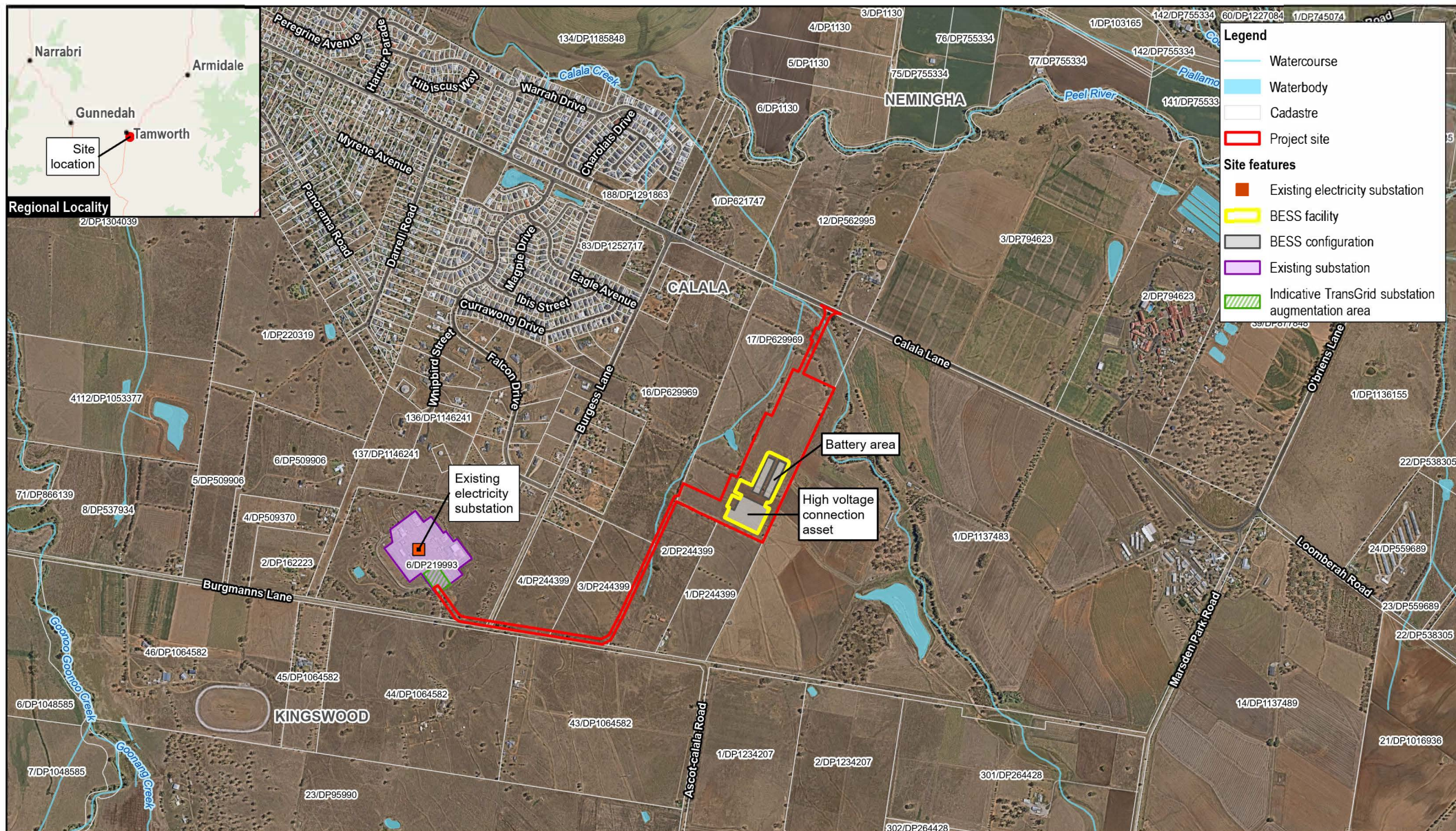
The project site is located approximately 6.5 km southeast of Tamworth. The project is located at 474 Calala Lane, Calala, NSW 2340 (Lot 17 DP629969) with ancillary works included on portions of Lot 16 DP629969, Lot 3 DP244399, Lot 4 DP244399, and Lot 6 DP219993. The footprint of the BESS occupies approximately 8.9 hectares. The site locality is shown in Figure 2.1.

The Transgrid Tamworth 330 kV Substation is located approximately 1 km to the southwest of the BESS site. The proposed transmission line runs along the southern boundary of Lots 16 and 17 in DP629969, the eastern and southern boundary of Lot 3 in DP244399, the southern boundary of Lot 4 in DP244399, and the southeastern portion of Lot 6 in DP219993 to the Transgrid Tamworth 330 kV Substation.

The site is zoned RU4 Primary Production Small Lots under *Tamworth Regional Local Environmental Plan 2010* (Tamworth LEP 2010).

The development involves construction of a standalone BESS with storage capacity of up to 300 megawatts (MW) and connection to Transgrid's Tamworth 330 kV substation via underground transmission cable and ancillary works. The project includes:

- Installation of battery enclosure transformers and auxiliary components.
- 33/330 kV switchyard.
- Underground transmission cable connection between the project and the nearby Transgrid Tamworth 330 kV substation.
- Transgrid's Tamworth 330 kV substation augmentation and ancillary works.
- Ancillary elements including:
 - Site access from Calala Lane
 - Internal access roads, associated maintenance and parking
 - Control room and staff amenities
 - Warehouse, stormwater and fire management infrastructure
 - Utilities
 - Signage, fencing and security systems
 - Noise attenuation walls
 - Landscaping and site rehabilitation works



Map Projection: Transverse Mercator
 Horizontal Datum: GDA2020
 Grid: GDA2020 MGA Zone 56



Equis Energy (Australia) Projects (Ngumi 4) Pty Ltd
 Calala Battery Energy Storage System
 Environmental Management Strategy

Project No. 12646506
 Revision No. 1
 Date 21/03/2025

Site locality

FIGURE 1.1

2.2 Stage 1 construction

2.2.1 Construction timeframe

Construction of the project is anticipated to take approximately 18 months. It is anticipated that construction would commence in Q2 2025. The works will occur as per the following indicative steps (with some potential overlap):

- Site establishment
- Delivery of BESS infrastructure
- Installation of BESS infrastructure
- Transmission cable construction
- Testing and commissioning

The peak construction period is assumed to last for approximately four months, involving:

- Peak traffic generation is approximately a two-month period as described in the Amendment Report Appendix I – Transport letter (Stantec, 2024).
- Daily construction worker numbers peak over a four month period between month three and six.

2.2.2 Construction working hours

Construction works are to be undertaken during standard working hours (unless with prior written approval from the Planning Secretary):

- Weekdays: 7:00 am to 6:00 pm
- Saturday: 8:00 am to 1:00 pm
- Sundays and public holidays: no work

The following activities may be carried out outside the hours specified above:

- Commissioning activities that are inaudible at non-associated residences.
- The delivery or dispatch of materials as requested by the NSW Police or other public authorities for safety reasons.
- Emergency work to avoid the loss of life, property or prevent material harm to the environment.

2.2.3 Construction workforce

The Project will result in up to 170 employment opportunities during construction including on-site and offsite employment. It is anticipated that the construction workforce for the Project will peak at 85 people. The construction workforce is expected to grow as the Project progresses, with a ramp-up period peaking in month three, as shown in Figure 2.2. The construction workforce is expected to begin to taper off in month seven, with construction expected to be completed in month 18.

Key jobs during construction would include project managers, civil workers and electrical workers as outlined in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1 *Indicative timing for construction workforce*

Type of work	Indicative timing
Project management	1 – 18 months
Civil works	1 – 9 months
Electrical works	10 – 18 months

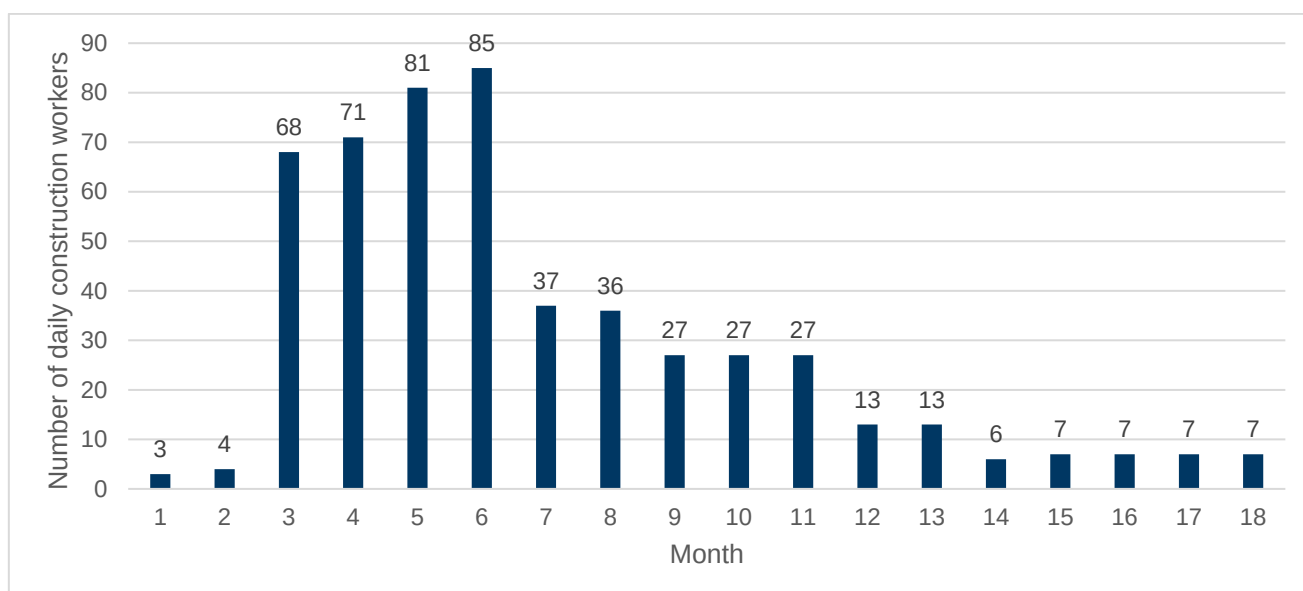


Figure 2.2 Indicative number of daily construction workers required

2.2.4 Construction equipment and materials

The following equipment used during construction is anticipated to include:

- Earth-moving equipment for civil works
- Diesel generators
- Trucks and cranes
- Smaller handheld power tools

General construction materials would be transported to the site from nearby towns and regional centres, including Tamworth. This would include:

- Aggregate for BESS area
- Sand for burying of cables
- Concrete for the foundations
- Water for dust suppression (depending on weather conditions), vehicle washdown and drinking water

2.3 Stage 2 operation

Upon completion of construction and connection to the Transgrid Tamworth 330 kV substation, the project will commence operation (Stage 2). The BESS will be operated remotely for its 25-year lifespan. During the operational phase, routine operations, servicing and maintenance will likely be required on an occasional basis. This could include:

- Routine visual inspections and general maintenance
- Site security
- Replacement of equipment and infrastructure, as required

Depending on the service provider, these personnel may be locally employed and comprise of approximately one operation and maintenance employee on site at any given time.

Maintenance activities will be undertaken during standard working hours (unless emergency works are urgently required):

- Weekdays: 7:00 am to 6:00 pm
- Saturday: 8:00 am to 1:00 pm
- Sundays and public holidays: no work

There may be potential for the Project to be upgraded to extend the operational life, however, any extension will be subject to appropriate approvals.

3. Interaction with other projects

Development Consent Schedule 2 Condition B36 (c), requires the consideration of cumulative impacts associated with other approved or proposed SSD projects in the area. A search of the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure Major Projects website was conducted in October 2024 for major infrastructure projects in Tamworth and surrounding local government areas such as Gunnedah, Walcha, Uralla and Liverpool Plains. Following feedback received during consultation with Tamworth Regional Council on the draft of this AES, an additional search was conducted during March 2025.

The projects identified were screened in relation to their potential for cumulative social impacts with the project, based on their nature, size, and proximity to the project site. Projects considered more likely to result in cumulative impacts are summarised in Table 3.1. The projects have been grouped according to the following categories:

- Ongoing construction projects – these projects have been approved and construction has commenced. Construction of these projects may be ongoing, and may overlap with construction of Calala BESS.
- Approved projects with unknown construction timing – these projects have been approved, and construction may commence prior to or during construction of Calala BESS.
- Projects which have not received Development Approval – these projects have not yet been approved.

A full list of approved or proposed SSD projects in the area is provided in Appendix C.

Table 3.1 Other projects in the study area as of March 2025

Project name	Proponent	Location (LGA)	Status and estimated timing	Description	Potential impact
Ongoing construction projects					
New England Solar Farm	ACEN Australia Pty Ltd	Uralla Shire	Approved 09/03/2020 with modifications 26/05/2023. Stage 2 construction ongoing.	The New England Solar Farm is being constructed 6 km east of Uralla and 19 km south of Armidale. Stage 1 of the project is complete and operational, Stage 2 construction began 1 March 2024. The project EIS estimated stage 2 would take 20 months to complete. According to the post-approval AES, Stage 2 peak workforce will be approximately 450 people. ACEN are prioritising accommodating the non-local workforce (approx. 50%) within short-term local temporary accommodation in Uralla, Armidale and Walcha with 225 rooms required at peak.	Construction may be ongoing and may overlap with Calala BESS construction commencement.
Baiada Integrated Poultry Processing Facility	Baiada (Tamworth) Pty Ltd	Tamworth Regional	Approved 18/12/2020. Construction commenced 26/05/2023.	The Baiada Integrated Poultry Processing Facility is being constructed 7.5 km north-west of Tamworth. According to the NSW Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) Assessment report, the project will generate 323 construction jobs and 667 new operational jobs. No workforce accommodation information is provided in the EIS or any post-approval documents.	

Project name	Proponent	Location (LGA)	Status and estimated timing	Description	Potential impact
Queensland-Hunter Gas Pipeline	Santos	Gunnedah Shire	Approved 11/02/2009, modified 17/10/2019. Construction commenced 14/12/2023.	The Queensland-Hunter gas pipeline is an 833 km pipeline between the Newcastle area and Wallumbilla, QLD area. This includes the Gunnedah Shire LGA. Construction of Stage 1 commenced on 14 December 2023. The 2008 Environmental Assessment estimated 600 jobs would be created during construction, and workers would be housed in temporary accommodation camps. No accommodation strategy or monitoring requirements were imposed in the initial or modified development consent.	
Approved projects with unknown construction timing					
Tamworth Solar Farm	Tamworth Solar Farm Pty Ltd	Tamworth Regional	Project approved November 2020. Construction timing TBC, post approval plans are not visible.	Tamworth Solar Farm Pty Ltd proposes to develop a solar farm near Somerton, approximately 25 m west of Tamworth. Construction is estimated to take approximately 12 months and require a peak workforce of up to 200 people.	Project is approved and construction may commence prior to or during Calala BESS construction.
Hills of Gold Wind Farm	Wind Energy Partners	Tamworth Regional	Project approved September 2024. Construction timing TBC.	The Hills of Gold Wind Farm project will be located approximately 60 km south-east of Tamworth. The EIS indicates that the project is expected to require a workforce of up to 416 people. Construction is estimated to take approximately 18-24 months.	
Middlebrook Solar Farm	Middlebrook Solar Farm Pty Ltd as trustee for the MSF Project Trust	Tamworth Regional	Project approved 11/11/2024. Construction timing TBC, post-approval plans not visible.	The Middlebrook Solar Farm site is located 22 km south of Tamworth. Approximately 400 workers will be required during the peak construction period, which is estimated to be 18 months. The applicant is to provide an Accommodation and Employment Strategy as one of the Development Consent conditions.	
Thunderbolt Wind Farm	Neoen Australia Pty Ltd	Tamworth Regional	Project approved 08/5/2024. Construction timing TBC.	The Thunderbolt Energy Hub will comprise wind and solar energy generation infrastructure and be located 47 km north-east of Tamworth, in the Kentucky area of NSW. The project's EIS estimated creation of 495 full time jobs during the 18-24 month construction phase. Development Consent conditions require an Accommodation and Employment Strategy; however this is not visible at the time of writing.	

Project name	Proponent	Location (LGA)	Status and estimated timing	Description	Potential impact
Oxley Solar Farm	Oxley Solar Development Pty Ltd	Armidale Regional	Approved 11/12/2023. Construction TBC.	Oxley Solar Farm will be built 14 km south-east of Armidale. According to the EIS, approximately 300 workers will be required during the peak construction period, which is 6-9 months of a total 12-18 month construction period. No post-approval documents are visible, and construction timeframes are unclear – development was originally expected to begin during 2023 however has not commenced at the time of writing.	
Tilbuster Solar Farm Tilbuster 2 Solar Farm	ENERPARC AUSTRALIA PTY LTD	Armidale Regional	Tilbuster 1 Approved 03/03/2022. Tilbuster 2 SEARs issued 18/04/2024. Construction TBC.	Located approximately 17 km north of Armidale, Tilbuster Solar Farm was approved during 2022. SEARs were issued for a second, adjacent solar farm during 2024. According to the Tilbuster 1 EIS, construction is expected to last 12 months with a 3-4 month peak period. 250 workers are expected to be required, with 50% from non-local areas. Construction timing is TBC – no post approval documents are available for Tilbuster 1, and no scoping report available for Tilbuster 2.	
Projects which have not received Development Approval					
Kingswood BESS	Iberdrola Australia Development Pty Ltd	Tamworth Regional	Project currently responding to submissions. Construction estimated to start Q2 2025.	The Kingswood BESS project will be located approximately 10 km south-east of Tamworth. The EIS indicates that the project is expected to require a workforce of up to 100 people. Construction is estimated to start in Q2 2025 and take approximately 12-15 months. However, at the time of writing this Strategy, this Project is still to be approved.	Indicative timing has been provided however projects are yet to be approved.
Winterbourne Wind Farm	Winterbourne Wind Pty Ltd	Walcha	Currently responding to submissions (Amendment Report). Construction timing TBC, estimated Q3 2026.	The Winterbourne Wind Farm project will be located approximate 6.5 km north-east from Walcha and 90 km north-east from Tamworth. The EIS Amendment report indicates that the project is expected to require a peak workforce of 390 people. Construction is estimated in the EIS Amendment report to take approximately 52 months. However, at the time of writing this Strategy, this Project is still to be approved.	

Project name	Proponent	Location (LGA)	Status and estimated timing	Description	Potential impact
Lambruk Solar Farm	Venn Energy Pty Ltd	Tamworth Regional	SEARs issued 21/03/2024. Construction proposed to begin 2025.	The Lambruk Solar Farm is proposed to be developed 15 km south of Tamworth. The scoping report indicated construction is intended to begin during 2025, however an EIS is still being prepared. The construction period will take approximately 24 months and will require approximately 250 workers during peak periods.	
Hillview Solar Farm	ACE Power	Uralla Shire	SEARs issued 26/07/2024. Construction timing estimated 2027-8.	Hillview Solar Farm will be located 11 km south-east of Uralla. The scoping report estimated construction will begin late 2027-early 2028 and take approximately 24 months. The proposal includes a 200-bed accommodation facility to house construction workers. The total construction workforce is expected to peak at approximately 300.	
Armidale BESS	Valent Energy	Armidale Regional	Under assessment 06/03/2025. Construction planned to begin late 2025.	The Armidale BESS is proposed to be built 5 km east of Armidale. Construction is expected to take up to 24 months and have a peak workforce of up to 100 workers. The EIS Amendment Report plans construction to commence in late 2025; however the project is yet to be approved.	
Oven Mountain Pumped Hydro Energy Storage	OMPS Pty Ltd	Armidale Regional	Under assessment 22/08/2024. Construction expected to commence late 2025.	According to the Project Amendment Report, the Oven Mountain Pumped Hydro Energy Storage project will be located "approximately half-way" between Armidale and Kempsey, along the Macleay River. Construction is expected to require over 600 workers during peak periods, and have a duration of 4-5 years. 30-50 workers will be required during operation. Three mobile camps will provide accommodation for non-local workers, however it is expected this will be supplemented with other local accommodation. Construction is expected to commence during late 2025, however the project is still pending development consent.	
Armidale East BESS	FRV Services Australia	Armidale Regional	SEARs issued 22/12/2023. Construction TBC, initially planned early 2026.	The Armidale East BESS is proposed 18 km east of Armidale. According to the project scoping report, construction is estimated to take 18 months and commence in Q1 2026, although the project is yet to complete an EIS. No workforce estimation was provided in the scoping reports, however impact on local accommodation was identified as a potential scoping impact.	

The concurrent and/or consecutive construction of these projects has the potential to result in the following cumulative impacts relevant to this AES:

- Competition for suppliers
- Competition for skilled and unskilled labour
- Reduced availability of short-term accommodation and overall housing availability and affordability

Cumulative demand for short-term accommodation has been raised as a key issue by Tamworth Shire Council during consultation (refer to section 5). Of the projects reviewed in Table 3.1, those which are most likely to result in cumulative demand for short-term accommodation include the projects which have been approved and have commenced construction (three projects), and those which have been approved but construction timing is unknown (six projects). Projects which have not yet been approved are considered unlikely to overlap with Calala BESS construction timing.

Of the total of nine projects that are most likely to interact with Calala BESS:

- One project that has commenced construction is located in Tamworth LGA.
- Two projects that have commenced construction are located outside of Tamworth LGA, one of these will use temporary workforce accommodation facilities and is therefore not expected to impact demand for short-term accommodation.
- Four projects that have been approved are located in Tamworth LGA, however timing of construction commencement is unknown. Of these, two require project-specific AESs to manage demand for short-term accommodation.
- Two projects that have been approved are located outside of Tamworth LGA, however construction timing is unknown.

Overall, the review indicates there may be eight SSD projects occurring in Tamworth or neighbouring LGAs which could theoretically interact with the Calala BESS and lead to cumulative demand for short-term accommodation. However, the estimated construction commencement dates of these projects is not publicly available. It is therefore difficult to ascertain the level of potential interaction or cumulative impact with construction of the Calala BESS.

The potential for the construction workers for these projects to also require accommodation in the Tamworth LGA and surrounding areas is discussed further in Section 7.

4. Social and economic profile

This section provides a summary of the social and economic characteristics for Tamworth Local Government Area (LGA).

4.1 Location context

The Project site is location within the Tamworth Regional LGA, in the New England Renewable Energy Zone (REZ). Tamworth is the closest and largest town to the project site. Table 4.1 outlines towns within a 60 minute driving distance to the project site.

Table 4.1 Towns proximal to the project site

Town	LGA	Distance from project site	Drive time to project site
Tamworth	Tamworth Regional	8 km	10 minutes
Kootingal	Tamworth Regional	16 km	15 minutes
Bendemeer	Tamworth Regional	40 km	30 minutes
Manilla	Tamworth Regional	50 km	40 minutes
Nundle	Tamworth Regional	55 km	40 minutes
Quirindi	Liverpool Plains Shire	65 km	50 minutes
Gunnedah	Gunnedah Shire	80 km	60 minutes
Uralla	Uralla Shire	85 km	60 minutes
Walcha	Walcha	90 km	60 minutes
Murrurundi	Upper Hunter Shire	90 km	60 minutes

4.2 Population and demography

As of the 2021 Census, the total population of Tamworth Regional LGA was 63,070 people. The median age in Tamworth Regional LGA was 39 years, which was consistent with NSW. The largest age cohort in Tamworth Regional LGA is 50 to 64 years, which makes up 18.1% of the total population. The LGA also has a higher proportion of residents aged over 65 years (19.9% compared to 17.6%). Despite this, Tamworth Regional LGA has a slightly higher proportion of young people compared to NSW, with 24.4% of its population aged under 18 years, compared to 21.7% in NSW.

Tamworth Regional LGA has a higher Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander population compared to NSW, with 12.7% of its residents identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, compared to 3.4% in NSW. Tamworth Regional LGA is less culturally diverse overall, with 5.8% of the population speaking a language other than English at home, compared to 26.6% in NSW.

Table 4.2 presents a summary of key socio-economic indicators of Tamworth Regional LGA and NSW.

Table 4.2 Population summary, Tamworth Regional LGA and NSW, 2021

Metric	Tamworth Regional LGA	New South Wales
Total population	63,070	8,072,163
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander population	8,032	278,043
% of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander population	12.7%	3.4%
Median age	39 years	39 years
Under 18 years	24.4%	21.7%
Over 65 years	19.9%	17.6%

Source: (ABS, 2022)

4.3 Economy and employment

Figure 4.1 shows the top five industries of employment in Tamworth Regional LGA compared to NSW. The top industry of employment in Tamworth Regional LGA was health care and social assistance (17.1%). The manufacturing industry is notably higher in Tamworth Regional LGA (8.6%) compared to NSW (5.5%), indicating a strong local industrial presence. 8.1% of people in Tamworth Regional LGA work in the construction industry, which was similar to NSW (8.6%).

Industry	Tamworth Regional LGA	NSW
Health Care and Social Assistance	17.1%	14.4%
Retail Trade	10.0%	9.0%
Education and Training	9.6%	8.7%
Manufacturing	8.6%	5.5%
Construction	8.1%	8.6%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	3.6%	8.9%

Figure 4.1 Industry of Employment, 2021

Source: (ABS, 2022)

There is a high proportion of people who both live and work in the Tamworth Regional LGA (90.1%). This compares to 6.0% of people who live in Tamworth Regional LGA and work outside the region, and 3.9% who have no fixed place of work.

4.3.1 Unemployment

Unemployment rates in Tamworth Regional LGA have generally been higher on average compared to NSW over the past decade, as shown in Figure 4.2. Since 2020, unemployment rates in Tamworth Regional LGA have on average been lower than NSW. Following a peak in unemployment in 2022 (5.8%), the unemployment rate in Tamworth Regional LGA has dropped to an all-time low of 2.4% in 2023 which was lower than NSW (3.2%).

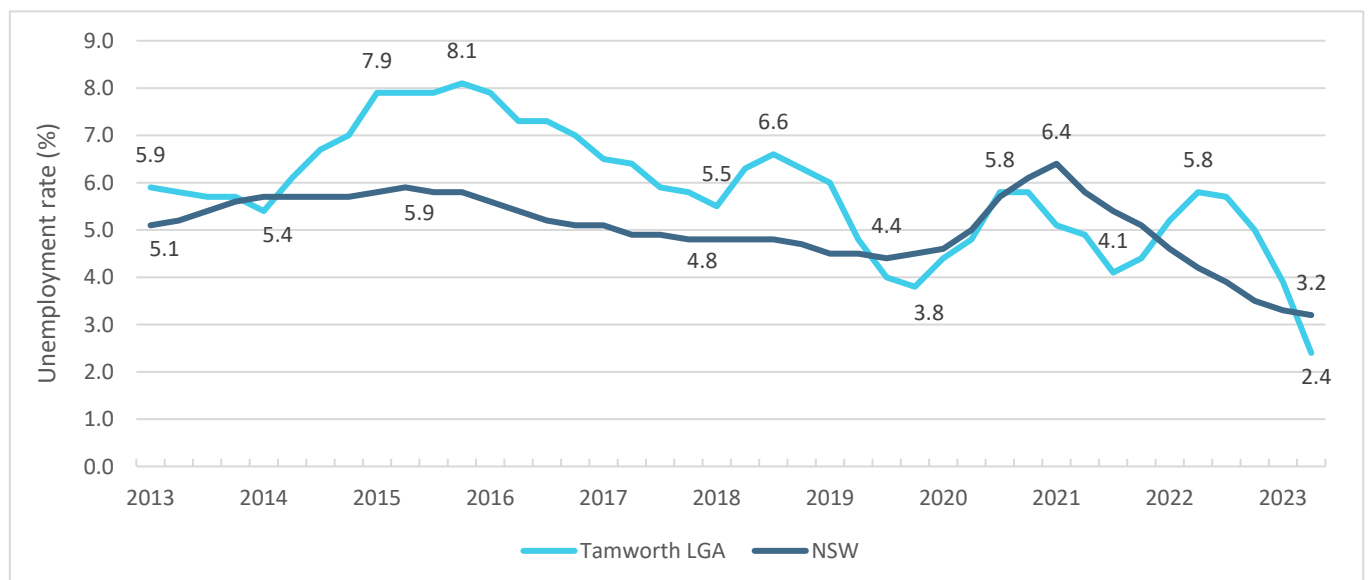


Figure 4.2 Unemployment rates in Tamworth LGA and NSW, 2013-2023

Source: (Jobs and Skills Australia, 2024)

4.3.2 Tourism and visitor economy

In 2022/23, tourism sales in Tamworth totalled \$485.6 million with a total value add of \$231.4 million. The tourism industry in Tamworth Regional LGA directly employed over 1,400 people and indirectly employed over 1,000 people in 2022/23 (economy.id, 2024).

Tamworth hosts over 200 events and festivals annually with the largest being the Tamworth Country Music Festival. The Tamworth Country Music Festival is a ten-day event that contributes \$60 million in economic benefits to the region, which is equivalent to 20% of Tamworth region's visitor economy (Tamworth Regional Council, 2022).

Tamworth Country Music Festival is one of five flagship events identified by Destination Tamworth (Tamworth Region, 2025). These annual events are the most likely to attract visitors to the region and increase demand for short-stay accommodation. The flagship events and indicative timings are summarised below:

- Tamworth Country Music Festival: January
- Tamworth Taste Festival: April
- Hats Off to Country: July
- National Thunder: September
- Fiesta La Peel: October

A full list of events in Tamworth and surrounding regions is provided in Appendix B.

In the five years leading up to 2023, there were 6,262,561 domestic overnight visitors to Tamworth Regional LGA. Those visiting friends and relatives accounted for 35.9%, while those on holiday accounted for 29.5% of all visitors. The average length of stay by domestic overnight visitors was 2.7 days. Between 2021/22 and 2022/23 the percentage of domestic overnight visitors to Tamworth Regional LGA grew by 31% (economy.id, 2024).

4.4 Housing and accommodation

At the time of the 2021 Census, there were 27,640 private dwellings in Tamworth Regional LGA. Of this, 91.1% were occupied, which is a similar occupancy rate to NSW (90.6%). The median rent in Tamworth Regional LGA for a flat/unit in December 2023 was \$310 per week, \$340 less than the NSW average (\$650). The median rent for a house in Tamworth Regional LGA in December 2023 was \$420, which is \$200 less than the NSW average (\$620). The median sale price for all dwellings in Tamworth Regional LGA was \$510,000 which was lower compared to \$875,000 in NSW (DJC, 2024).

As detailed in Table 4.3, the majority of housing in Tamworth Regional LGA consists of detached houses (88.1%). There was a low proportion of apartment style dwellings in Tamworth Regional LGA (1.8%) compared to NSW (21.7%), which is typical for regional areas where housing is predominantly made up of separate homes.

Table 4.3 Dwelling type

Dwelling type	Tamworth Regional LGA	New South Wales
Separate house	88.1%	65.6%
Semi-detached, terrace house, townhouse	9.1%	11.7%
Flat, unit or apartment	1.8%	21.7%
Other dwellings	0.5%	0.7%

Source: (ABS, 2022)

In 2021, the proportion of houses owned (fully or with a mortgage) in Tamworth Regional LGA was similar to that of NSW (64.9% and 64.0%, respectively), as shown in Table 4.4. There was also a similar proportion of people who rented in Tamworth Regional LGA (31.1%) compared to NSW (32.6%).

Table 4.4 Dwelling Tenure

Dwelling tenure	Tamworth Regional LGA	New South Wales
Owned (fully or with mortgage)	64.9%	64.0%
Rented (total)	31.1%	32.6%
Other tenure type	2.3%	1.9%
Tenure type not stated	1.8%	1.5%

Source: (ABS, 2022)

4.5 Housing affordability and availability

As of June 2023, Tamworth Regional LGA had a Rental Affordability Index of 126 out of 200, indicating that rental housing is moderately affordable compared to average rental households in NSW (SGS Economics and Planning, 2023). A score above 120 is considered acceptable, above 150 is considered affordable and below 100 is considered unaffordable.

According to local listings in October 2024, there were 336 houses and 19 units for sale in Tamworth, and 108 houses and 30 units available for rent (REA, 2024). In the first quarter of 2024, the average time a property remained on the market dropped by 4.3%, reaching a record low of just 22 days (PRD Real Estate, 2024). As of September 2024, the rental vacancy rate in Tamworth Regional LGA was 1.4% (Figure 4.3). This, combined with high occupancy rates and the quick turnover of properties, indicates a competitive market with high demand and moderate to low housing supply in the region.

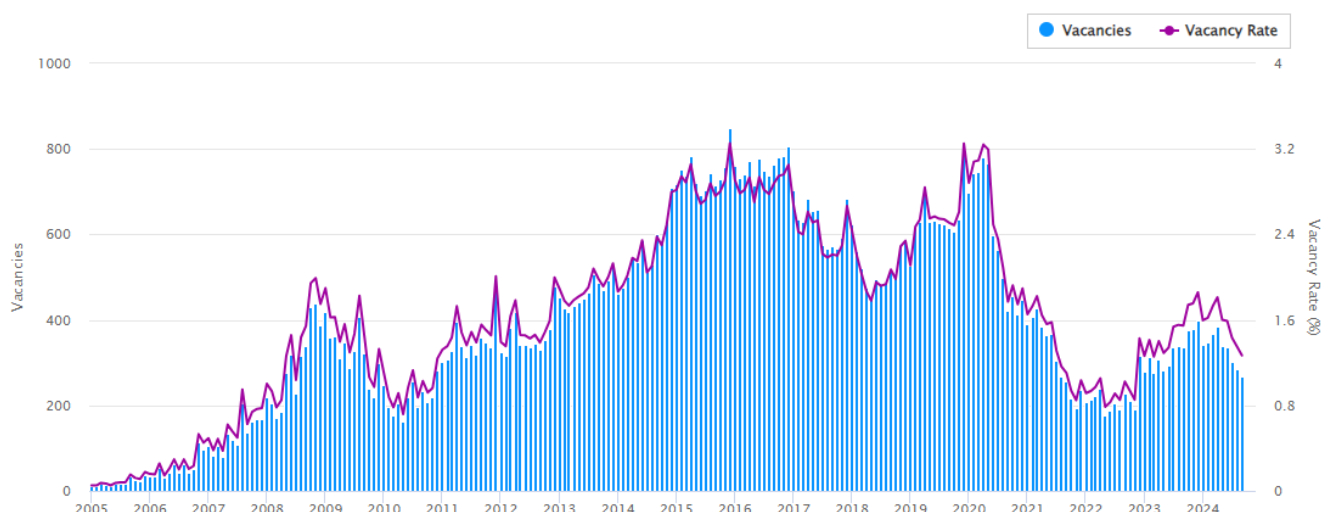


Figure 4.3 Residential vacancy rate, Tamworth 2005-2024

Source: (SQM Research, 2024)

4.6 Education and training

At the time of the 2021 Census, 41.2% of the Tamworth Regional LGA population aged 15 years and over reported having completed year 12 as their highest level of secondary education, which was lower than NSW (58.9%). There was a higher proportion of the population in Tamworth Regional LGA whose highest level of educational attainment was year 10 (30.6%) compared to NSW (19.7%) as shown in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5 *Highest level of secondary schooling completed, 2021*

Highest level of secondary schooling completed	Tamworth Regional LGA	New South Wales
Completion of Year 12 (or equivalent)	41.2%	58.9%
Year 11 or equivalent	6.7%	4.9%
Year 10 or equivalent	30.6%	19.7%
Year 9 or equivalent	8.0%	4.7%
Year 8 or below	4.7%	3.7%
Did not go to school	0.4%	1.2%
Not stated	8.4%	6.9%

Source: (ABS, 2022)

Table 4.6 provides a breakdown of the highest level of post-secondary school education. Of people aged 15 years and over in Tamworth Regional LGA, 51.6% had a certificate level education, which was higher than NSW (32.3%). However, the proportion of people with a Bachelor's degree was lower compared to NSW (22% and 32.9% respectively).

Table 4.6 *Highest level of post-secondary school qualifications achieved, 2021*

Highest level of post-secondary qualifications received	Tamworth Regional LGA	New South Wales
Postgraduate degree	5.4%	13.1%
Graduate diploma and Graduate Certificate	3.6%	3.7%
Bachelor degree	22.0%	32.9%
Advance diploma and diploma level	16.3%	16.7%
Certificate level total	51.6%	32.3%
Inadequately described	1.2%	1.3%

Source: (ABS, 2022)

5. Stakeholder consultation

Targeted consultation with key local stakeholders was undertaken to inform the strategy. Interviews were undertaken via teleconferencing facilities between 3 October and 30 October 2024. A total of nine stakeholders were contacted via email and telephone to seek their interest in participating. A total of four interviews were scheduled and conducted during the consultation period. A summary of consultation activities is provided in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1 Summary of consultation activities

Stakeholder	Consultation timing	No. of attendees	Focus of consultation
Tamworth Chamber of Commerce	October 2024, via MS Teams	4	- Challenges and opportunities related to employment in Tamworth, including opportunities for local businesses and managing economic impacts. - Challenges for short-term accommodation availability in Tamworth.
Destination Tamworth	October 2024, via MS Teams	3	- Understanding tourism and the visitor economy in Tamworth. - Current challenges regarding tourist accommodation. - Opportunities for local tourism providers and potential management and mitigation measures.
Tamworth Regional Council	October 2024, via MS Teams	2	- Understanding cumulative impacts from other projects in the region. - Current challenges regarding housing and accommodation. - Understanding tourism and the visitor economy. - Current opportunities and challenges regarding employment and local procurement.
Local employment service providers	October 2024, via telephone	4	- Understanding services provided. - Current challenges in the local labour market. - Opportunities for local employees and businesses.
Tamworth Regional Council	February 2024, via email	N/A	- Draft Accommodation and Employment Strategy provided for Council review. - Feedback incorporated and recorded in Table 5.3.

Table 5.2 presents a high-level summary of key findings identified through stakeholder consultation which have been categorised into key themes.

Table 5.2 Summary of consultation findings

Key issue	Description	Where addressed in this Strategy
Local employment and procurement	- Tamworth currently has record low unemployment rates, with construction being one of these sectors. Most people who are looking for work find work quickly due to high demand. - Tamworth has a large Aboriginal population (12.7%) which should be considered for local employment opportunities. - There is not a huge FIFO or DIDO workforce that come into Tamworth for work, however there are a number of DIDO workers who leave Tamworth to work in surrounding areas.	Sections 4.3 and 6

Key issue	Description	Where addressed in this Strategy
	– There are several local businesses who would be interested in supplying the project's construction. It would be viewed positively and 'go a long way' with the community if the project could focus on smaller trades in Tamworth. – Transport to and from site each day can be a significant barrier for sustaining employment particularly for underrepresented groups. – Several employment service agencies stated they had strong existing community and business networks with the capacity to link the development with local workers, employment seekers and businesses. – Skilled workers such as engineers, heavy vehicle machinery drivers, excavation and earthworks and plant operators are in short supply across the region. – There is difficulty for some employees to have all required training and qualifications. However, there is opportunity for employers to work with employees to train on the job.	
Short-term accommodation	– There are several projects being constructed at the same time in Tamworth and surrounding areas, which has led to a shortage of accommodation options in the area. – Concern that use of local tourist accommodation by construction workers leads to lack of availability for tourists, which has a negative impact on the local tourism and events industry. However, acknowledgement that accommodation providers benefit from long term bookings by construction contractors. – Occupancy rates are currently below 1%. – 85 workers at any given time should not impact short-term accommodation too much if the workforce can be separated throughout the region.	Sections 4.4 and 7
Impacts to economy	– Concern about impacts to the broader Tamworth economy due to use of accommodation by construction workers rather than tourists, as workers do not contribute as much to the town's economy as tourists typically would. – Consider pausing construction of the project during the Tamworth Country Music festival to ensure accommodation is available for tourists and minimise risks to the economy.	Sections 4.3 and 6

5.1 Draft AES consultation

A draft version of this Strategy was provided to Tamworth Regional Council in February 2025. Council provided feedback on the draft Strategy via email on 24 February 2025. A summary of comments from Council and responses is provided in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3 Summary of Tamworth Regional Council feedback on draft Strategy

Key issue	Comments	Where addressed in this Strategy
Cumulative impacts	Non-Renewable Projects Non-Renewable projects have not been considered which will also place strain on short term accommodation. Ensuring monitoring doesn't just include cumulative impact from projects listed in the AES – should include the below, and any new major projects. – Construction of Baiada Integrated Poultry Processing Facility State Significant Development. Construction completion tabled for 2026. This development alone states net increase of 682 jobs. (SSD-9394). – Chaffey dam upgrade (SSI-5039). – Queensland-Hunter Gas Pipeline (MP06_0286).	List of SSD / SSI projects updated. Potentially concurrent projects listed in Section 3, Table 3.1. Full list of projects Appendix C, Table C.1. Note: Chaffey Dam Upgrade has been excluded as that project was completed in 2016.

Key issue	Comments	Where addressed in this Strategy
	Renewable Projects Section 3 of the AES leaves out a considerable number of projects in the local area. New England REZ – CSIRO research indicate the construction jobs peaks at 6000-7000 jobs (2027-28) driven largely by wind and transmission construction. Green below is what has been included (Section 3, Table 3.1 of AES), Red are projects that have not been considered. Whilst Council acknowledges that the status of some of the projects identified red below are unknown, you are requested to ensure monitoring doesn't just include cumulative impacts from those projects only listed in the AES. [table excluded for brevity]	
Local events	List of events (Table B.2 in Appendix B) is lacking a lot of major events for the local area e.g. equine & Livestock, Sporting, Entertainment, Expos. Some of the major events in the region include but are not limited to Table 2 below. [table excluded for brevity]	List of events updated Appendix B, Table B.1. Flagship events noted in Section 16.
Monitoring and Reporting	Section 8, Monitoring and Reporting. Recommending that frequency and scope of monitoring be increased to satisfy B36f. "...at least once every six months" is far less than council has observed in similar projects. Common monitoring frequency observed in other projects AES have been <u>monthly prior to, and during, the construction phase and quarterly thereafter.</u> Recommended Section 8 looks more like the below: Prior to and during construction, the AES would be reviewed <u>monthly</u> to assess the effectiveness of steps taken to encourage local employment and secure sufficient accommodation for the workforce, and quarterly thereafter. During construction, the Equis and the Primary contractor will be required to detail the following in their monthly reports: – Whether there is sufficient accommodation available for the Projects non-local workforce (Condition B36b). – Whether there are any cumulative employment or accommodation impacts arising from competing demands of other State Significant Developments in the region (Condition B36c). – Whether there is sufficient workforce available to service the Project, including identifying the proportion of local workers who are engaged on the Project (Condition B36d). – Any feedback or complaints from stakeholders in relation to the project. If the requirements of this AES are not being met, the AES will be reviewed. If complaints are received relating to accommodation and employment matters, Equis and Primary contractor would consider whether changes are required to the AES. It is intended that Equis and Primary contractor will continue to engage with Tamworth Regional Council during the pre-construction phase and throughout construction regarding in relation to this strategy. In particular, Equis and Primary Contractor will liaise with Tamworth Regional Council regarding the Accommodation options that are being explored with respect to planning and approval requirements.	Section 8 Noted. A review of AES for similar projects elsewhere in NSW (including Tamworth and surrounding LGAs) indicates a high level of variation in the frequency and requirements for monitoring. Monthly monitoring and six-monthly reporting frequencies have been adopted. Condition B36b has been satisfied in Section 7 of this AES. Issues arising from cumulative demand will be captured by feedback from stakeholders in relation to the project (e.g. Council, accommodation providers). Responses to this feedback will be taken through the actions set out in the Action plans at Table 6.3 and Table 7.5, and further considered through periodic reviews of the AES.

6. Employment strategy

This section outlines the local employment and business landscape in Tamworth Regional LGA, highlighting potential opportunities as well as key challenges and constraints. It also presents recommended actions to enhance local employment and business benefits while addressing potential impacts.

6.1 Purpose and objective

The main objective of the Employment Strategy for the Calala BESS is to propose measures that will be adopted by Equis and the primary contractor, as required, to prioritise the employment of local businesses and workers, where feasible, and to support a positive legacy for local communities.

This Employment Strategy identifies the following:

- The current employment and business profile in Tamworth.
- Opportunities for local employment and local business procurement.
- Key challenges and constraints related to employment and business procurement for the project.
- Actions and measures that would be employed to meet the needs of the project and encourage local employment and business participation.

6.2 Local employment and business profile

As detailed in Section 2.2.3, the project will generate up to 170 direct employee opportunities including on-site and offsite employment during construction (with a maximum of 85 personnel on-site at any one time) and up to seven employee opportunities during the operational phase (up to 25 years).

The employment benefits as a result of the project are likely to extend through the local supply chain, which would include fuel supply, vehicle hire and servicing, accommodation providers (e.g. hotels/motels), cafés, restaurants and pubs, catering and cleaning companies, tradespersons, tool and equipment suppliers and other businesses.

It is estimated that almost 75% of jobs in renewable energy over the next 15 years are likely to be available for the following occupations: labourers, trades and technicians and professionals, with electricians, electrical trade assistants, mechanical trades and technicians, finance, business, legal and planning professions, and administrative staff (Briggs, Rutovitz, Dominish, & Nagrath, 2020).

As shown in Table 6.1, there were 3,817 people employed as labourers and 3,495 people employed as technician and trade workers who worked in the Tamworth Regional LGA in 2021. The number of workers in these occupations has also increased since 2016 by 265 and 166 people respectively. This indicates that there is a base of qualified workers in the region. However, as highlighted during consultation to inform the AES (Section 5), skills shortages particularly among technician and trade workers are prevalent across the region, and unemployment in Tamworth Regional LGA is at an all-time low (2.4%).

Table 6.1 Occupation of local workers in Tamworth Regional LGA, 2021

Occupation	Number	Change from 2016
Professionals	5,088	+479
Labourers	3,817	+265
Community and personal service workers	3,557	+822
Technicians and trades workers	3,495	+166
Managers	3,475	+159

Source: (economy.id, 2024)

Population growth and the growing economy in Tamworth has driven significant demand in the construction sector. It is expected that this will continue to be a strong source of economic growth and sustainability for the region (Tamworth Regional Council, 2022).

As shown in Table 6.2, there was a total of 6,031 businesses operating in the Tamworth Regional LGA. Construction was the second largest industry, with 1,066 registered businesses representing 17.7% of all businesses operating in Tamworth Regional LGA in 2023. In 2022/23, the construction industry in Tamworth Regional LGA generated \$263.1 million in value add, \$17.7 million more than the previous year (economy.id, 2024). This indicates a strong and growing construction industry in the region.

Table 6.2 *Registered businesses in Tamworth Regional LGA, 2023*

Industry	Number	Change from 2020-2023
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	1,567	+160
Construction	1,066	+160
Rental, hiring and real estate services	455	+29
Transport, postal and warehousing	395	+19
Professional, scientific and technical services	387	+55

Source: (economy.id, 2024)

A review of the Supply Nation Indigenous Business directory identified several locally and regionally operated, majority Aboriginal-owned businesses that could supply goods and/or services for the project. There are 10 Aboriginal businesses located in Tamworth which offer a range of goods and services, including electrical services, civil and industrial construction, transportation and logistics, project management, and equipment hire. Additionally, five Aboriginal businesses in Gunnedah were identified as potential suppliers of goods and services for the project (Supply Nation, 2024).

6.3 Local employment opportunities

As outlined in Section 2.2.3, the project is expected to result in a total of 170 employment opportunities over the 18 month construction period. It is anticipated that a maximum of approximately 85 construction personnel would be required on site during peak construction.

Of this, it is estimated by Equis that up to 10% of workers employed by the primary contractor could consist of local residents such as those who reside in Tamworth Regional LGA and surrounding areas. This is equivalent to approximately eight to 10 workers over the entire construction period. The remaining 90% of the construction workforce will likely be sourced from outside the region, including NSW and nationally, if required.

Engagement with local workers will include seeking expressions of interest from local job seekers by registering their interest via the Equis online engagement hub.

The types of labour and skills required for construction of the project include:

- Project management
- Civil works
- Electrical works

Operation of the project will be undertaken remotely. However, as detailed in Section 2.3 the project will require ongoing employment during the operational phase through maintenance, monitoring and repairs associated with BESS operations. It is estimated that a total of seven full time jobs would be required during operation of the proposed development.

Depending on the service provider, these personnel may be locally employed.

Training for some of the specialised roles, particularly those during operation, could be undertaken locally to upskill residents to fill these roles.

6.4 Local business and procurement opportunities

The definition of 'local' is assumed to mean Australia and New Zealand. Equis has approached several pre-qualified and experienced domestic vendors to provide the necessary goods and/or service provisions required to successfully fulfil the Project obligations. However, supplier selection is driven by many factors including quality, safety, availability, track record, experience, price, etc.

The location of resources has not been confirmed at this stage; however, the construction contractor will seek to secure up to 10% of its resources from Tamworth Regional LGA and surrounding areas on a best endeavours basis. The remaining 90% will likely be sourced from outside the region including NSW and nationally, if required.

Equis will establish an Expression of Interest (EOI) register for local businesses and people looking for employment and embed transparent selection criteria for subcontractors which prioritises organisations based in the Tamworth Regional LGA (Tier 1) and surrounding areas (Tier 2).

There are also opportunities for Equis and the primary contractor to engage local Indigenous businesses. As highlighted in Section 6.2, there are 10 Indigenous businesses located in Tamworth and five in Gunnedah which offer relevant goods and services.

Local engagement will include seeking expressions of interest from local businesses and service providers by registering their interest via the online engagement hub.

6.5 Key employment challenges and constraints

The following employment challenges and constraints have been identified based on findings from the review of other projects (Section 3), socio-economic profile (Section 4) and consultation (Section 5):

- The unemployment rate for the region is at an all-time low at 2.4% compared to NSW (3.2%), which means the potential opportunities for local employment are limited.
- Several projects are likely to be constructed either concurrently or consecutively to the Calala BESS project including several other BESS projects and renewable energy projects such as solar and wind. Cumulatively, these projects are likely to generate higher demand for local suppliers and workers.
- Skills shortages, particularly among technicians and trade workers, are prevalent across the region. Equis estimates that up to 10% of the workforce (8-10 employees) could consist of local residents; however, this is dependent on changes in the wider labour market and the availability of skilled workers at the time of construction.

6.6 Action plan

Actions have been developed to achieve the employment objectives of this AES as per consent condition B36, which includes investigating options to prioritise employment of local workers and use of local businesses, whilst maximising local economic contribution and leaving a positive community legacy.

Table 6.3 *Actions to manage employment requirements*

Action	Timing	Responsibility	Compliance record
Implement an AES in accordance with Schedule 2 Part B36 of the Development Consent for the Calala BESS (SSD 52786213).	Prior to and during construction	Equis Primary contractor	This AES.
Establish an Expression of Interest (EOI) register for local businesses and people looking for employment.	Prior to construction	Equis Primary contractor	Documentation of EOIs received.
Map work packages and supply chain opportunities and proactively identify local businesses with relevant capabilities. This may be supported through engagement with Tamworth Business Chamber.	Prior to construction	Equis Primary contractor	Documentation of workforce and supply chain modelling.
Conduct desktop assessment through Supply Nation and seek advice on Indigenous businesses through the Primary Contractors internal Vendor and Performance Registers.	Prior to construction	Primary contractor	Documentation of Supply Nation assessment. Proportion of subcontractors demonstrating majority Indigenous ownership and/or employment.
Engage with local employment agencies to identify opportunities and pathways for local workers and tap into the candidate pool to determine suitable labour, trade, or skills particularly for jobseekers that face barriers and are from under-represented groups.	Prior to construction	Primary contractor	Maintain a register of engagement with stakeholders.
Establish transparent selection criteria for subcontractors that prioritises organisation based in the Tamworth Regional LGA (Tier 1) and surrounding areas (Tier 2). Target up to 10% of subcontractors from these regions across the Project on a best endeavours basis.	Prior to and during construction	Primary contractor	Documented selection criteria.

7. Accommodation strategy

This section details the accommodation options within the Tamworth Regional LGA and surrounding areas, highlighting prioritised accommodation options as well as key challenges and constraints. It also presents recommended actions to enhance local accommodation benefits and mitigate potential negative impacts resulting from non-resident construction workers on local accommodation supply.

7.1 Purpose and objective

The main objective of the Accommodation Strategy for the Calala BESS is to propose measures that will be adopted by the Principal (Equis) and the primary contractor, as required, to ensure that there is sufficient accommodation available for the construction and operation workforce associated with the project and to minimise impacts to the local community.

This Accommodation Strategy identifies the following:

- Accommodation options available within Tamworth and surrounding areas.
- Prioritisation of accommodation options to minimise impacts.
- Key challenges and constraints related to accommodation for the Project.
- Actions and measures that would be employed to ensure sufficient accommodation and mitigate potential negative impacts.

7.2 Local accommodation profile

The following review of local accommodation options is based on a peak construction workforce of up to 85 workers. It is estimated that around 10% of the labour force, or approximately eight to 10 workers, would be sourced from Tamworth and surrounding areas. Although Equis and the primary contractor will seek to employ local residents where possible, for the purpose of the accommodation strategy, it is assumed that accommodation will be required for a maximum of 85 non-resident workers during peak construction.

Table 7.1 identifies towns with accommodation options within a 60 minute drive of the project site.

Table 7.1 Accommodation options near project site

Tier	Town	Approximate distance from project site
1 Within 20-minute drive	Tamworth	8 km north-west, 10-minute drive
	Kootingal	16 km north-east, 15-minute drive
2 20–40-minute drive	Bendemeer	40 km north-east, 30-minute drive
	Manilla	50 km, north-west, 40-minute drive
	Nundle	55 km south-east, 40-minute drive
3 40–60-minute drive	Quirindi	65 km south-west, 50-minute drive
	Gunnedah	80 km west, 60-minute drive
	Uralla	85 km north-east, 60-minute drive
	Walcha	90 km north-east, 60-minute drive
	Murrurundi	90 km south, 60-minute drive

A variety of accommodation types have been considered in this review including:

- **Temporary workers accommodation** – this includes purpose built temporary workers accommodation designed to house workers who need it for the life of a project or on a seasonal basis.
- **Short-term accommodation** – this includes self-catered houses, motel, hotels, serviced apartments and caravan and holiday parks.
- **Long-term accommodation** – this includes rental properties and properties that are available for purchase.

7.2.1 Temporary workers accommodation

There are no temporary workers accommodation facilities located in Tamworth Regional LGA.

7.2.2 Short-term accommodation

A review of short-term accommodation providers in the Tamworth Regional LGA was conducted in October 2024 to understand the supply of accommodation options available in locations within a one hour drive of the project site. Table 7.2 provides an overview of the short-term accommodation options in Tamworth and surrounding areas. A more detailed list of accommodation providers is provided in Appendix A.

Table 7.2 Short-term accommodation options

Accommodation type	Total number of beds available					
	Tamworth LGA	Gunnedah LGA	Liverpool Plains LGA	Walcha LGA	Uralla LGA	Upper Hunter LGA
Hotel/motel	2,828	181	69	92	41	43
Apartment/unit	95	-	-	6	-	-
Caravan/holiday park	1,319	13	-	34	11	-
Self-catered house (available via Airbnb)	226	38	1	7	19	9
Cottage	226	-	-	2	6	-
Other	362	166	-	-	-	-
Total	5,056	398	70	141	77	52

Source: (Destination Tamworth, 2024), (Booking.com, 2024) and (Airbnb, 2024)

An influx of workers requiring accommodation for the construction of the project may place undue pressure on local short-term accommodation and have adverse flow-on effects. For instance, construction workers may reduce the availability of short-term accommodation for other visitors during peak tourist periods, such as school holidays and during major festivals and annual events.

Since the construction period is expected to run over an 18 month timeframe, it can be assumed that the project will overlap with all annual festivals and events in Tamworth. Peak occupancy periods for short-term accommodation typically coincide with school holidays, big sporting events, and major festivals and events such as the Tamworth Country Music Festival. As highlighted in Section 4.3.2, Tamworth hosts over 200 events and festivals annually.

Appendix B provides an indicative list of festivals and events in Tamworth over the next 12 months.

During stakeholder consultation (Section 5), it was highlighted that tourist accommodation facilities in Tamworth are almost completely utilised and at capacity during large annual festivals and events. Stakeholders recommended the project either avoid using tourist accommodation during these times and use accommodation outside the region to ensure availability in town for tourists.

7.2.3 Long-term accommodation

There is currently moderate to low rental availability in Tamworth Regional LGA and surrounding areas with the exception of Uralla as shown in Table 7.3.

Table 7.3 Rental accommodation availability

	Total private dwellings	Occupied private dwellings	Rental stock available (Sep 2024)	Rental vacancy rate (Sep 2024)
Tamworth	27,640	91.1%	267	1.3%
Gunnedah	5,821	88.0%	18	1.4%
Quirindi	3,686	86.1%	6	1.4%
Walcha	1,629	78.8%	0	0%
Uralla	2,746	88.4%	11	3.7%

Source: (ABS, 2022) and (SQM Research, 2024)

As noted in Section 4.4, separate houses are the most common type of dwelling in the Tamworth Regional LGA, with the majority being three to four bedroom homes. As of December 2023, the median rent for a house in Tamworth Regional LGA was \$420, while for a unit it was \$310. In October 2024, there were approximately 108 houses and 30 units were available for rent in the Tamworth Regional LGA.

In October 2024, a review of properties for sale in Tamworth Regional LGA identified a total of 336 houses and 19 units for sale. In December 2023, the median sale price was \$510,000 for a house and \$415,000 for a unit in Tamworth Regional LGA.

7.3 Prioritising accommodation options

The preferred option for accommodating the construction workforce is to utilise existing accommodation in Tamworth and surrounding areas. The reasons for this approach include:

- Minimising daily travel times for construction site workers.
- Maximise accessibility to local businesses and services in Tamworth that may be used by the construction workforce (e.g. cafes, restaurants, pubs, supermarkets, vehicle hire, retail stores, and service stations etc.).
- Maximise local economic benefits resulting from the project's construction.

Table 7.4 outlines the prioritisation of local accommodation options for the construction workforce based on location and type.

Table 7.4 Accommodation prioritisation

Priority	Accommodation type	Location	Approximate total number of beds
1	Local short-term accommodation (e.g. hotels/motels and caravan parks) located within 20 minute drive of the project.	Tamworth and Kootingal	3,470
2	Local short-term accommodation (e.g. hotels/motels and caravan parks) located within 20 to 40 minute drive of the project.	Bendemeer, Manilla and Nundle	499
3	Local short-term accommodation (e.g. hotels/motels and caravan parks) located within 1 hour drive of the project.	Quirindi, Gunnedah, Uralla, Walcha and Murrurundi	490
4	Rental accommodation	Tamworth	approx. 130 properties available
5	Purchase accommodation	Tamworth	approx. 350 properties available
Total			4,459

The review of available beds shows there is a total of 3,470 in Tamworth and Kootingal, and 989 beds available in surrounding areas. The number of beds available in these areas fluctuate depending on local events (Appendix B), and other projects in the area that may also require accommodation for workers (Section 3).

7.4 Key accommodation challenges and constraints

The following accommodation challenges and constraints have been identified based on findings from the review of other projects (Section 3), socio-economic profile (Section 4) and consultation (Section 5):

- Tamworth hosts a range of festivals and other events each year, which contributes to high utilisation of short-term accommodation.
- There are several projects currently being constructed in Tamworth and surrounds, which is contributing to a shortage of accommodation which, according to consultation, is leading to lack of availability for tourists.
- There is potential for other major projects to be constructed either concurrently or consecutively to the Calala BESS project. Cumulatively, these projects may generate higher demand for local and regional accommodation, however the timing of construction for these projects is largely unknown at the time of preparing this AES.
- Some local stakeholders are concerned that use of short term accommodation for construction workers may negatively affect the local tourism and events industry, with occupancy rates currently at less than 1%. It was acknowledged that accommodation providers benefit from longer bookings by construction projects, however these large bookings can reduce availability for short-notice bookings by other visitors.

7.5 Action plan

Actions have been developed to achieve the accommodation objectives of the AES as per consent condition B36, which includes ensuring there is sufficient accommodation for the workforce, whilst maximising local economic contribution from the project and leaving a positive legacy.

Table 7.5 *Actions to manage accommodation requirements*

Action	Timing	Responsibility	Compliance record
Establish an Expression of Interest (EOI) for local accommodation providers to register their interest in providing accommodation services for the project.	Prior to and during construction	Equis	Documentation of EOIs
Provide a register of local accommodation options and contact details to the primary contractor. Update the register with new providers and updated information received through EOI process.	Prior to and during construction	Equis	Appendix A
Engage with local accommodation providers, Destination Tamworth, and Tamworth Regional Council to share information about construction timing, workforce estimates and accommodation requirements.	Prior to construction	Equis	Establish a register of engagement with stakeholders.
Review the Tamworth event calendar to consider timing of major events when booking short term accommodation for construction workers –consider avoiding peak times in Tamworth (e.g. January) and consider booking accommodation outside of Tamworth (e.g. in priority 2 and 3 locations) during these periods if practical. Liaise with short-term accommodation providers to manage peak accommodation timing.	Prior to and during construction	Primary contractor	Establish a register of worker and accommodation forecasts and location of accommodation for workers. Refer to Appendix B.
Establish and maintain a register of forecast worker accommodation requirements and accommodation options, to encourage accommodation sharing or clustering particularly for workers on short-term contracts.	Prior to construction	Primary contractor	Establish a register of worker and accommodation forecasts and location of accommodation for workers.
Consider hiring shuttle bus services where practical from local providers to transport workers from their accommodation to the project site. Incentivise carpooling or ride sharing by construction employees.	During construction	Primary contractor	Travel Management Plan

8. Monitoring and reporting

The effectiveness of this AES will be monitored and reviewed during construction, upgrading and decommissioning as relevant. In the lead-up to construction, the AES will be further reviewed prior to construction commencing to account for any changes in the construction schedule or shifts in employment and accommodation needs.

During the construction phase, ongoing monitoring and review of the effectiveness of the AES will be undertaken in accordance with Schedule 2 Part B36 (f) of the condition of consent. The applicant will monitor the effectiveness of the AES on a monthly basis prior to and during construction.

During construction, Equis and the primary contractor will be responsible for reporting on the following at least every six months:

- Whether there is sufficient accommodation availability (including forward-looking bookings) for the project's non-local workforce.
- Whether there is sufficient workforce available to service the project, including identifying the proportion of local workers who are engaged on the project.
- Any feedback or complaints from stakeholders in relation to the project.

Equis will continue to engage with Tamworth Regional Council during the pre-construction and construction phase to share information about construction timing, workforce estimates and accommodation requirements, and how this AES is being implemented.

Where necessary, adjustments to the AES may be made to ensure the objectives of providing sufficient local accommodation and prioritising local employment and procurement are met. These reporting outcomes will also be shared with DPHI and Tamworth Regional Council upon request.

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Appendices

Appendix A

**List of short-term accommodation
providers**

Table A.1 *List of accommodation providers*

Accommodation type	Name	Town	LGA	Bed capacity
Hotel/motel	Powerhouse Rydges Tamworth	Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	170
Hotel/motel	Ibis Styles Tamworth	Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	216
Hotel/motel	Redhill Tamworth Motor Inn & Conference Centre	Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	166
Hotel/motel	Quest Tamworth	Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	160
Hotel/motel	Best Western Sanctuary Inn	Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	140
Hotel/motel	Mercure Hotel Tamworth	Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	120
Hotel/motel	Motel 359	Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	110
Hotel/motel	CH Boutique Hotel	Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	103
Hotel/motel	Best Western Plus All Settlers Motor Inn	South Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	86
Hotel/motel	Tamworth City Motel	Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	86
Hotel/motel	Country Capital Motel Tamworth	Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	82
Hotel/motel	Tamworth Motor Inn & Cabins	Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	80
Hotel/motel	City Sider Motor Inn	Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	76
Hotel/motel	Cadman Motor Inn and Apartments	Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	61
Hotel/motel	Rex Guest House	Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	73
Hotel/motel	Golden Guitar Motor Inn	Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	67
Hotel/motel	Golf Links Motel	Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	64
Hotel/motel	McNevins Tamworth Motel	Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	60
Hotel/motel	Stockman's Motel	Kingswood	Tamworth LGA	54
Hotel/motel	Quality Inn Ashby House Tamworth	Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	52
Hotel/motel	Econo Lodge Savannah Park Motor Inn	Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	50
Hotel/motel	Stagecoach Inn Motel Tamworth	Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	48
Hotel/motel	Abraham Lincoln	Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	46
Hotel/motel	Colonial Inn Tamworth	Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	46
Hotel/motel	Town & Country Motor Inn	Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	45
Hotel/motel	Tamworth Lodge Motel	Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	43
Hotel/motel	Manilla Motel	Manilla	Tamworth LGA	41
Hotel/motel	Tamworth Central Motel	Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	40
Hotel/motel	Edward Parry Motel	Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	39
Hotel/motel	Golden Grain Motor Inn	Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	38
Hotel/motel	Bendemeer Hotel	Bendemeer	Tamworth LGA	35
Hotel/motel	Kootingal Landview Motel	Kootingal	Tamworth LGA	33
Hotel/motel	Motel Grande	Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	33
Hotel/motel	Tamwell Motel	Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	32
Hotel/motel	Roydons Motor Inn	Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	31
Hotel/motel	Tamworth Budget Motel	Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	30
Hotel/motel	Peel Inn Nundle	Nundle	Tamworth LGA	29
Hotel/motel	Almond Inn Motel	Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	27

Accommodation type	Name	Town	LGA	Bed capacity
Hotel/motel	Barraba Motel	Barraba	Tamworth LGA	25
Hotel/motel	Kootingal Hotel	Kootingal	Tamworth LGA	22
Hotel/motel	The Playhouse Hotel	Barraba	Tamworth LGA	22
Hotel/motel	Commercial Hotel Barraba	Barraba	Tamworth LGA	20
Hotel/motel	The Royal Hotel	Manilla	Tamworth LGA	20
Hotel/motel	Nundle Accommodation	Nundle	Tamworth LGA	14
Hotel/motel	Plumes On The Green	Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	11
Hotel/motel	The Retreat at Froog-Moore Park	Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	10
Hotel/motel	Birches Bed and Breakfast at Nundle	Nundle	Tamworth LGA	6
Hotel/motel	Oasis Hotel Motel Tamworth	Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	35
Hotel/motel	Tamworth Exclusive B and B	East Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	4
Apartment/unit	Studio 367	Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	4
Apartment/unit	Roseville Apartments	Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	55
Apartment/unit	Amberoo Apartments Tamworth	Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	24
Apartment/unit	The Duck Inn Apartments	Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	12
Apartment/unit	The Bungalows on Fitzroy	Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	n/a
Caravan/ holiday park	Reflections Holiday Parks Lake Keepit	Rushes Creek	Tamworth LGA	56
Caravan/ holiday park	Fossickers Tourist Park	Nundle	Tamworth LGA	64
Caravan/ holiday park	Manilla Rivergums Caravan Park	Manilla	Tamworth LGA	150
Caravan/ holiday park	City Lights Caravan Park	Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	200
Caravan/ holiday park	Paradise Tourist Park	Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	200
Caravan/ holiday park	Barraba Caravan Park	Barraba	Tamworth LGA	150
Caravan/ holiday park	Tamworth North Holiday Park	Nemingha	Tamworth LGA	168
Caravan/ holiday park	Kootingal Kourt Caravan Park	Kootingal	Tamworth LGA	106
Caravan/ holiday park	Manilla Ski Gardens Caravan Park	Manilla	Tamworth LGA	100
Caravan/ holiday park	Austin Tourist Park	Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	85
Caravan/ holiday park	Bendemeer Tourist Park	Bendemeer	Tamworth LGA	40
Cottage	River Glen Cottages	Nundle	Tamworth LGA	2
Cottage	DAG Sheep Station	Nundle	Tamworth LGA	150
Cottage	Goonoo Goonoo Station	Timbumburi	Tamworth LGA	62
Cottage	Bywondah Retreat B & B	Ogunbil	Tamworth LGA	12
Camp ground (other)	Hillside Farm Stay	Nemingha	Tamworth LGA	250
Camp ground (other)	Warrabah Campground, Manilla	Manilla	Tamworth LGA	38
Camp ground (other)	Gum Hole campground and picnic area	Warrabah	Tamworth LGA	36
Camp ground (other)	Manilla Paragliding, Cabins & Camping	Manilla	Tamworth LGA	n/a
Camp ground (other)	Bendemeer Camping Ground	Bendemeer	Tamworth LGA	n/a
Cabin (other)	Muluerindie Cabin	Warrabah	Tamworth LGA	6
Cabin (other)	Ambleside Bed and Breakfast Cabins	Manilla	Tamworth LGA	26
Other	Riverside Stay Bendemeer	Bendemeer	Tamworth LGA	6
Self-catered house	Gold Mine Guesthouse	Nundle	Tamworth LGA	15

Accommodation type	Name	Town	LGA	Bed capacity
Self-catered house	Jenkins Street Guesthouse	Nundle	Tamworth LGA	12
Self-catered house	Andy's Guesthouse	Barraba	Tamworth LGA	6
Self-catered house	Sheffield Bed & Breakfast - Tamworth Equine Stayover	Kingswood	Tamworth LGA	6
Self-catered house	CBD Accommodation Tamworth	North Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	7
Self-catered house	The Barn at 417	Nundle	Tamworth LGA	5
Self-catered house	Tamworth Country Escape	Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	3
Self-catered house	Coastal Hamptons in the Country	Hillvue	Tamworth LGA	6
Self-catered house	Kumbogie Cabin	Daruka	Tamworth LGA	1
Self-catered house	Mountain View Cottage	Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	3
Self-catered house	Chimes on Church	West Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	4
Self-catered house	Denne Street Bungalow	West Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	4
Self-catered house	The Heights unit	Hillvue	Tamworth LGA	2
Self-catered house	Grans Lodge	West Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	1
Self-catered house	Carthage Cottage	North Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	4
Self-catered house	Rural Paradise - Cottage in Timbumburi	Timbumburi	Tamworth LGA	4
Self-catered house	Marayin Hut. Serene Log Cabin	Daruka	Tamworth LGA	3
Self-catered house	The 1888 Cottage	North Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	2
Self-catered house	Kurrajong Lodge	Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	4
Self-catered house	Griffin Cottage	East Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	3
Self-catered house	The Barn	Kootingal	Tamworth LGA	1
Self-catered house	Tranquillity in Tamworth	West Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	3
Self-catered house	Studio Daruka	North Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	1
Self-catered house	Cute Cottage on Mathews	West Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	4
Self-catered house	Runway – Home in Westdale	Westdale	Tamworth LGA	3
Self-catered house	Short Stays on Ebs - Cottage in West	West Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	5
Self-catered house	Dew Drop Inn	East Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	1
Self-catered house	Zest – Home in West Tamworth	West Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	2
Self-catered house	Griffin House Tamworth	North Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	2
Self-catered house	Villa in Calala – Tamworth's Hidden Gem	Calala	Tamworth LGA	2
Self-catered house	Tranquil Retreat – East Tamworth Home	East Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	4
Self-catered house	Peaceful Cabin – 164 Royal Oaks	East Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	1
Self-catered house	King's Park	West Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	3
Self-catered house	The Pool House	Calala	Tamworth LGA	2
Self-catered house	Arch Park – Cottage in Taminda	Taminda	Tamworth LGA	2
Self-catered house	Annleigh	South Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	2
Self-catered house	Views on Crown	West Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	4
Self-catered house	Hillvue Hideaway	Hillvue	Tamworth LGA	2
Self-catered house	Country Sunsets in East Tamworth – Rental Unit	East Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	2
Self-catered house	Bounty on Bligh	North Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	2

Accommodation type	Name	Town	LGA	Bed capacity
Self-catered house	Family Retreat East Tamworth	East Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	4
Self-catered house	Katie's Place	North Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	4
Self-catered house	Rawson's - Five bedroom home	East Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	6
Self-catered house	Hillvue Lodge	Hillvue	Tamworth LGA	7
Self-catered house	The Gallery - Art Inspired Studio	Hillvue	Tamworth LGA	1
Self-catered house	Matilda Retreat	Hillvue	Tamworth LGA	5
Self-catered house	55 A Retreat East Tamworth	East Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	3
Self-catered house	Studio 367	Hillvue	Tamworth LGA	1
Self-catered house	Coco's Cottage	West Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	4
Self-catered house	Spacious Retreat – Home in East Tamworth	East Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	4
Self-catered house	Studio on Denne	West Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	1
Self-catered house	Ellessa – Home in South Tamworth	South Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	3
Self-catered house	The Retreat – Townhouse in Tamworth	Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	5
Self-catered house	Johnston and Friends	North Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	3
Self-catered house	123 Fitzroy	East Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	5
Self-catered house	Grey House Tamworth	East Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	9
Self-catered house	Little Chalkie's Guest Suite	East Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	2
Self-catered house	East Tamworth Charm	East Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	6
Self-catered house	Leafy Lodge	East Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	4
Self-catered house	Palo Retreat	Hillvue	Tamworth LGA	2
Self-catered house	Annleigh Unit	South Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	4
Self-catered house	Country Delighte Tamworth	West Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	2
Self-catered house	Quintet 1-155	North Tamworth	Tamworth LGA	2
Hotel/motel	Walcha Motel	Walcha	Walcha LGA	38
Hotel/motel	Walcha Road Hotel	Walcha	Walcha LGA	3
Hotel/motel	Walcha Royal Cafe & Accommodation	Walcha	Walcha LGA	11
Hotel/motel	New England Hotel-Motel	Walcha	Walcha LGA	30
Hotel/motel	Apsley Arms Hotel	Walcha	Walcha LGA	10
Apartment/ unit	Walcha Guesthouse	Walcha	Walcha LGA	4
Apartment/ unit	Anglea House Bed and Breakfast	Walcha	Walcha LGA	2
Caravan/ holiday park	Walcha Caravan park	Walcha	Walcha LGA	34
Cottage	Red Hill Cottage	Walcha	Walcha LGA	2
Self-catered house	Historic Homestead (Farm stay hosted by Vinnie)	Walcha	Walcha LGA	1
Self-catered house	Country Cottage (Farm stay hosted by Jai)	Walcha	Walcha LGA	2
Self-catered house	Plumtree Cottage	Walcha	Walcha LGA	4
Self-catered house	Cairnie Country Cottage	Walcha	Walcha LGA	1
Hotel/motel	Altona Motel	Uralla	Uralla LGA	20
Hotel/motel	The Bolt Inn	Uralla	Uralla LGA	13

Accommodation type	Name	Town	LGA	Bed capacity
Hotel/motel	Bushranger Motor Inn	Uralla	Uralla LGA	8
Caravan/ holiday park	Country Road Caravan Park	Uralla	Uralla LGA	11
Cottage	Aurelias Farm Bed and Breakfast	Uralla	Uralla LGA	6
Self-catered house	The Gatehouse Uralla	Uralla	Uralla LGA	3
Self-catered house	Unique solar house (guest suite hosted by Althea)	Uralla	Uralla LGA	1
Self-catered house	The Pomegranate studio	Uralla	Uralla LGA	1
Self-catered house	Eve Residence	Uralla	Uralla LGA	3
Self-catered house	Art Studio (home hosted by Sophie)	Uralla	Uralla LGA	3
Self-catered house	The Willmont	Uralla	Uralla LGA	1
Self-catered house	Barking Dog Gallery Bedsit	Uralla	Uralla LGA	1
Self-catered house	Hillview Airbnb	Uralla	Uralla LGA	3
Self-catered house	King's Cottage Uralla	Uralla	Uralla LGA	2
Self-catered house	The Bower Uralla	Uralla	Uralla LGA	1
Hotel/motel	Maynestay Motel	Gunnedah	Gunnedah LGA	15
Hotel/motel	Gunnedah Motor Inn	Gunnedah	Gunnedah LGA	20
Hotel/motel	Gunnedah Hotel	Gunnedah	Gunnedah LGA	27
Hotel/motel	Mackellar Motel Gunnedah	Gunnedah	Gunnedah LGA	30
Hotel/motel	Gunnedah Lodge Motel	Gunnedah	Gunnedah LGA	20
Hotel/motel	The Courthouse Hotel	Gunnedah	Gunnedah LGA	8
Hotel/motel	The Plains Motor Inn	Gunnedah	Gunnedah LGA	7
Hotel/motel	Billabong Motel Gunnedah	Gunnedah	Gunnedah LGA	54
Caravan/ holiday park	Gunnedah Tourist Caravan Park	Gunnedah	Gunnedah LGA	13
Self-catered house	Little Miss Chandos	Gunnedah	Gunnedah LGA	4
Self-catered house	The Osric self-contained guest suite	Gunnedah	Gunnedah LGA	1
Self-catered house	Pool House	Gunnedah	Gunnedah LGA	1
Self-catered house	Osric 2 - Private Guest Suite	Gunnedah	Gunnedah LGA	1
Self-catered house	Modern, homely two bedroom unit	Gunnedah	Gunnedah LGA	3
Self-catered house	The House - Gunnedah	Gunnedah	Gunnedah LGA	2
Self-catered house	Cheerful 5 Bedroom + office + pool and large deck	Gunnedah	Gunnedah LGA	5
Self-catered house	Sage House	Gunnedah	Gunnedah LGA	4
Self-catered house	Zanti's vibing shop top pad	Gunnedah	Gunnedah LGA	3
Self-catered house	Riverside Apartment	Gunnedah	Gunnedah LGA	2
Self-catered house	Central Townhouse	Gunnedah	Gunnedah LGA	3
Self-catered house	Alyn at Gunnedah	Gunnedah	Gunnedah LGA	1
Self-catered house	Greencroft	Gunnedah	Gunnedah LGA	6
Self-catered house	Two Bedroom Unit. Home away from home	Gunnedah	Gunnedah LGA	2
Dormitory (other)	Lake Keepit Sport & Rec Centre	Gunnedah	Gunnedah LGA	166
Hotel/motel	Best Western Quirindi RSL Motel	Quirindi	Liverpool Plains LGA	18

Accommodation type	Name	Town	LGA	Bed capacity
Hotel/motel	Quirindi Sunflower Motor Inn	Quirindi	Liverpool Plains LGA	19
Hotel/motel	Henrys Quirindi	Quirindi	Liverpool Plains LGA	32
Self-catered house	The Saddlery Guest Apartment	Quirindi	Liverpool Plains LGA	1
Hotel/motel	Motel Valley View Murrurundi	Murrurundi	Upper Hunter LGA	20
Hotel/motel	Murrurundi Motel	Murrurundi	Upper Hunter LGA	23
Self-catered house	132Mayne	Murrurundi	Upper Hunter LGA	2
Self-catered house	Murrurundi Cottage	Murrurundi	Upper Hunter LGA	2
Self-catered house	The Stables	Murrurundi	Upper Hunter LGA	1
Self-catered house	Rosebank B&B Historic Home	Murrurundi	Upper Hunter LGA	1
Self-catered house	Railway Master's House	Murrurundi	Upper Hunter LGA	3

Appendix B

List of events in the area

Table B.1 *Major events and festivals*

Location	Event	Indicative start date	Indicative end date
Tamworth	Fiesta La Peel	19-Oct-24	19-Oct-24
Uralla	Thunderbolt Festival	26-Oct-24	26-Oct-24
Tamworth	Tamworth Brewfest	23-Nov-24	23-Nov-24
QLD Schools	QLD School Holidays (Summer)	14-Dec-24	27-Jan-25
NSW Schools	NSW School Holidays (Summer)	23-Dec-24	6-Feb-25
Tamworth	Tamworth Country Music Festival	17-Jan-25	26-Jan-25
Tamworth	PRD Charity Ball	22-Jan-25	22-Jan-25
Tamworth	ABCRA National Finals Rodeo	23-Jan-25	25-Jan-25
Tamworth	Nutrien Classis Campdraft and Sale	31-Jan-25	9-Feb-25
Uralla	Uralla Show	8 Feb-25	8-Feb-25
Tamworth	NSW State Indoor Show Jumping Championships	20-Feb-25	23-Feb-25
Tamworth	Tamworth Agricultural Show	28-Feb-25	1-Mar-25
Barraba	Barraba Show	7-Mar-25	8-Mar-25
Tamworth	Country Championship (Horse Racing)	9-Mar-25	9-Mar-25
Tamworth	Australia's Greatest Horseman	11-Mar-25	16-Mar-25
Walcha	Walcha Show	14-Mar-25	15-Mar-25
Manilla	Manilla Show	14-Mar-25	16-Mar-25
Tamworth	Science and Engineering Challenge	18-Mar-25	21-Mar-25
Tamworth	Tamworth International Eventing	22-Mar-25	23-Mar-25
Tamworth	Australian Miniature Horse Society National Show	27-Mar-25	30-Mar-25
Tamworth	Regional League Netball	28-Mar-25	31-Mar-25
Uralla	Seasons of New England	29-Mar-25	29-Mar-25
Uralla	Uralla Lantern Parade	29-Mar-25	29-Mar-25
Tamworth	Tamworth Race Day	1-Apr-25	1-Apr-25
Tamworth	Australian Quarter Horse Association National Championship Show	3-Apr-25	13-Apr-25
Tamworth	Taste Festival	4-Apr-25	13-Apr-25
Gunnedah	Gunnedah Show	4-Apr-25	6-Apr-25
Tamworth	NSW Over 40 Cricket Championships	4-Apr-25	6-Apr-25
QLD Schools	QLD School Holidays (Autumn)	5-Apr-25	21-Apr-25
Tamworth	Academy Games	11-Apr-25	13-Apr-25
NSW Schools	NSW School Holidays (Autumn)	14-Apr-25	24-Apr-25
Tamworth	Independent Miniature Horse Registry Grand National	17-Apr-25	20-Apr-25
Tamworth	Paint Horse Association of Australia National Show	23-Apr-25	28-Apr-25
Tamworth	Tamworth Cup Day	24-Apr-25	24-Apr-25
Tamworth LGA	Tamworth Regional Heritage Festival	26-Apr-25	19-May-25
Uralla	New England Garden Festival	29-Apr-25	29-Apr-25
Tamworth	World Angus Expo	3-May-25	4-May-25
Nundle	The Great Nundle Dog Race	4-May-25	4-May-25
Tamworth	NSWRL Regional Magic Round	9-May-25	11-May-25

Location	Event	Indicative start date	Indicative end date
Tamworth	Australian Stock Horse Society National Show	10-May-25	15-May-25
Armidale	The Big Chill Festival	17-May-25	17-May-25
Tamworth	CHS Netball Championship	19-May-25	22-May-25
Tamworth	NCHA Futurity	25-May-25	8-Jun-25
Tamworth	RFSA Conference	30-May-25	1-Jun-25
Tamworth	Tamworth Eisteddfod	1-Jun-25	21-Jun-25
Tamworth	SRIXON NSW Mid-Amateur Championship	1-Jun-25	1-Jun-25
Tamworth	Tamworth Outdoor Living & Caravan Expo	27-Jun-25	29-Jun-25
QLD Schools	QLD School Holidays (Winter)	28-Jun-25	13-Jul-25
NSW Schools	NSW School Holidays (Winter)	7-Jul-25	18-Jul-25
Tamworth	Hats off to Country	11-Jul-25	13-Jul-25
Tamworth	NAIDOC Ball	12-Jul-25	12-Jul-25
Tamworth	Longyard Golf Cup	1-Aug-25	1-Aug-25
Tamworth	PCYC Ball	9-Aug-25	9-Aug-25
Tamworth	NSW State Dressage Championships	12-Aug-25	17-Aug-25
Gunnedah	Agquip 2025	19-Aug-25	21-Aug-25
Tamworth	North & North West Show Jumping Tamworth World Cup	27-Aug-25	31-Aug-25
Tamworth	Nutrien Masters Sale & Graduate Camp Draft	29-Aug-25	01-Sep-25
Tamworth	Business Awards	5-Sep-25	5-Sep-25
Tamworth	Stars of Tamworth	13-Sep-25	13-Sep-25
Tamworth	Australian Shooting, Hunting and Outdoor Expo	13-Sep-25	13-Sep-25
QLD Schools	QLD School Holidays (Spring)	20-Sep-25	6-Oct-25
Tamworth	Agility Dog Association of Australia (ADAA) National Grand Prix	26-Sep-25	29-Sep-25
Tamworth	Tamworth Barbeque Festival	27-Sep-25	29-Sep-25
NSW Schools	NSW School Holidays (Spring)	29-Sep-25	10-Oct-25
Tamworth	TBD Large Equine Event	3-Oct-25	5-Oct-25
Tamworth	Koori Knockout	4-Oct-25	6-Oct-25
Tamworth	White Elephant Ball	18-Oct-25	18-Oct-25
Tamworth	RSL Annual State Conference	24-Oct-25	26-Oct-25
Tamworth	PBR Tamworth Iron Cowboy	24-Oct-25	25-Oct-25
Armidale	New England Garden Festival	2-Nov-25	2-Nov-25
Tamworth	CAPERS (Creative Arts Public Education Regional Spectacular)	7-Nov-25	8-Nov-25
Tamworth	Australia Barrel Horse Association National Finals	12-Nov-25	16-Nov-25
Tamworth	Texas Star Performance Horses Camp draft	19-Nov-25	23-Nov-25
Tamworth	Australian National Working Equitation (ANWE) Championships	21-Nov-25	23-Nov-25
Tamworth	National Thunder Motorcycle Rally	TBC - 2025	TBC - 2025
QLD Schools	QLD School Holidays (Summer)	13-Dec-25	26-Jan-26
NSW Schools	NSW School Holidays (Summer)	22-Dec-25	2-Feb-26

Appendix C

State significant developments

Table C.1 State Significant Developments in proximity to Calala BESS (Current as of March 2025)

Project name	Proponent	Location (LGA)	Status and estimated timing	Description
Kingswood BESS	Iberdrola Australia Development Pty Ltd	Tamworth Regional	Project currently responding to submissions Construction to start Q2 2025	The Kingswood BESS project will be located approximately 10 km south-east of Tamworth. The EIS indicates that the project is expected to require a workforce of up to 100 people. Construction is estimated to start in Q2 2025 and take approximately 12-15 months. However, at the time of writing this Strategy, this Project is still to be approved.
Tamworth Battery Energy Storage System	Valent Energy Development Pty Ltd	Tamworth Regional	Project currently responding to submissions Construction timing TBC	The Tamworth BESS project will be located approximately 10 km south-east of Tamworth. The EIS indicates that the project is expected to require a workforce of up to 100 people during peak construction. Construction is estimated to take approximately 24 months. However, at the time of writing this Strategy, this Project is still to be approved.
Hills of Gold Wind Farm	Wind Energy Partners	Tamworth Regional	Project approved September 2024 Construction timing TBC	The Hills of Gold Wind Farm project will be located approximately 60 km south-east of Tamworth. The EIS indicates that the project is expected to require a workforce of up to 416 people. Construction is estimated to take approximately 18-24 months.
Tamworth Solar Farm	Tamworth Solar Farm Pty Ltd	Tamworth Regional	Project approved November 2020 Construction timing TBC, Post approval plans are not visible	Tamworth Solar Farm Pty Ltd proposes to develop a solar farm near Somerton, approximately 25 km west of Tamworth. Construction is estimated to take approximately 12 months and require a peak workforce of up to 200 people.
Gunnedah East BESS	Green Leap Pty Ltd	Gunnedah Shire	SEARs issued 19 January 2024	The Gunnedah East BESS project will be located 7.5 km east from Gunnedah and 65 km west of Tamworth. The Scoping Report indicates that the project is expected to require a peak workforce of up to 80 people during construction. Construction is estimated in the Scoping Report to take approximately 12 months. However, at the time of writing this Strategy, this Project is yet to prepare its EIS.
Winterbourne Wind Farm	Winterbourne Wind Pty Ltd	Walcha	Currently responding to submissions (Amendment Report) Construction timing TBC, estimated Q3 2026	The Winterbourne Wind Farm project will be located approximate 6.5 km north-east from Walcha and 90 km north-east from Tamworth. The EIS Amendment report indicates that the project is expected to require a peak workforce of 390 people. Construction is estimated in the EIS Amendment report to take approximately 52 months. However, at the time of writing this Strategy, this Project is still to be approved.

Project name	Proponent	Location (LGA)	Status and estimated timing	Description
Deeargee Solar	ACEN Australia Pty Ltd	Uralla Shire	SEARs issued 24 June 2024 Construction timing TBC	The Deeargee Solar project will be located approximately 12 km south-east from Uralla and approximately 95 km north-east from Tamworth. The Scoping Report indicates that the project is expected to require a peak workforce of 400 workers during construction. The Scoping Report identifies that a temporary workforce accommodation facility may be established for non-local construction employees. Construction is estimated in the Scoping report to take 24 months. However, at the time of writing this Strategy, this Project is yet to prepare its EIS.
Nottingham Park Solar Farm	EDF Renewables Australia Pty Ltd	Tamworth Regional	SEARs issued 27/06/2023. Construction timing TBC, initially planned for Q1 2024.	The proposed Nottingham Park Solar Farm will be located 23 km west of Tamworth, at Winton. The scoping report estimates a construction period of up to 24 months, and would generate 500 additional jobs during peak periods. The Scoping Report's social impact appendix identifies the influx of non-local construction workers as potentially leading to constrained availability of short-term accommodation and rental housing.
Middlebrook Solar Farm	Middlebrook Solar Farm Pty Ltd as trustee for the MSF Project Trust	Tamworth Regional	Project approved 11/11/2024. Construction timing TBC, post-approval plans not visible.	The Middlebrook Solar Farm site is located 22 km south of Tamworth. Approximately 400 workers will be required during the peak construction period, which is estimated to be 18 months. The applicant is to provide an Accommodation and Employment Strategy as one of the Development Consent conditions.
Lambruk Solar Farm	Venn Energy Pty Ltd	Tamworth Regional	SEARs issued 21/03/2024. Construction proposed to begin 2025.	The Lambruk Solar Farm is proposed to be developed 15 km south of Tamworth. The scoping report indicated construction is intended to begin during 2025, however an EIS is still being prepared. The construction period will take 24 months approximately and will require approximately 250 workers during peak periods.
New England REZ Transmission Project	Energy Corporation of NSW	Tamworth Regional	SEARs issued 5/09/2024.	This state-government led project aims to construct new transmission lines, four energy hubs and ancillary development to connect energy generation and storage projects in the New England REZ to the National Energy Market. The transmission lines will occupy a 350 km long corridor, Bayswater Power Station in Hunter Valley to north of Armidale. The corridor is located between Tamworth in the west and Walcha, Uralla and Armidale in the east. Four energy hubs will be located in the REZ, near Walcha, Uralla and Armidale. During the peak of construction, this project will create about 1,250 jobs however would vary depending on the stage of construction. The scoping report for the project indicates the project would be fully operational by 2033, and may require the establishment of workforce accommodation camps.

Project name	Proponent	Location (LGA)	Status and estimated timing	Description
Bendemeer Solar Farm	Athena Energy Australia (Holdings) Pty Ltd	Tamworth Regional	Request for further information regarding Response to Submissions issued 12/03/2024. Construction timing TBC.	Located 1.8 km east of Bendemeer village centre and 46 km north-east of Tamworth. A peak workforce of 307 is expected, with an annual average peak construction period of approximately 260. The total construction period is expected to be up to 18 months, with the peak construction period between months 6 to 12.
Thunderbolt Wind Farm	Neoen Australia Pty Ltd	Tamworth Regional	Project approved 08/5/2024. Construction timing TBC.	The Thunderbolt Energy Hub will comprise wind and solar energy generation infrastructure and be located 47 km north-east of Tamworth, in the Kentucky area of NSW. The project's EIS estimated creation of 495 full time jobs during the 18-24 month construction phase. Development consent conditions require an Accommodation and Employment Strategy; however this is not visible at the time of writing.
Dungowan Pumped Hydro Energy Storage	EDF Australia	Tamworth Regional	Pre-application	EDF energy is currently preparing a scoping report for the proposed Dungowan Pumped Hydro Energy storage project, 45 km south-west of Tamworth, near the existing Dungowan Dam.
Gunnedah Solar Farm	Photon Energy	Gunnedah Shire	Operational since 2022	Development consent was issued during 2019 and the site has been operational since 2022. No AES was required by the development consent. The development's EIS estimated an operational workforce maximum of 10 people.
Orange Grove Solar Farm	Orange Grove Sun Farm Pty Ltd	Gunnedah Shire	Approved 25/07/2019, status unknown.	Development consent for the Orange Grove Solar Farm was issued by NSW Department of Planning Infrastructure and Environment (DPIE) during July 2019. Since that time, no post-approval documents have been released, and construction has not begun. The project would be located 12km east of Gunnedah, construction would take approximately 9 months and require 100 workers.
Hillview Solar Farm	ACE Power	Uralla Shire	SEARs issued 26/07/2024. Construction timing estimated 2027-8.	Hillview Solar Farm will be located 11km south-east of Uralla. The scoping report estimated construction will begin late 2027-early 2028 and take approximately 24 months. The proposal includes a 200-bed accommodation facility to house construction workers. The total construction workforce is expected to peak at approximately 300.
Hillview Wind Farm	ACE Power	Uralla Shire	SEARs issued 20/12/2024	Hillview Wind Farm is proposed to be located 12 km east of Uralla. The project scoping report estimated a construction phase of 30 months, commencing in 2028. The peak construction workforce will be approximately 210, non-local staff will be housed in 100-bed accommodation facility developed as part of the project.

Project name	Proponent	Location (LGA)	Status and estimated timing	Description
New England Solar Farm	ACEN Australia Pty Ltd	Uralla Shire	Approved 09/03/2020 with modifications 26/05/2023. Stage 2 construction ongoing.	The New England Solar Farm is being constructed 6km east of Uralla and 19 km south of Armidale. Stage 1 of the project is complete and operational, Stage 2 construction began on 1 March 2024. The project EIS estimated stage 2 would take 20 months to complete. According to the post-approval AES, Stage 2 peak workforce will be approximately 450 people. ACEN are prioritising accommodating the non-local workforce (approx. 50%) within short-term local temporary accommodation in Uralla, Armidale and Walcha with 225 rooms required at peak.
Armidale BESS	Valent Energy	Armidale Regional	Under assessment 06/03/2025. Construction planned to begin late 2025	The Armidale BESS is proposed to be built 5km east of Armidale. Construction is expected to take up to 24 months and have a peak workforce of up to 100 workers. The EIS Amendment Report plans construction to commence in late 2025; however the project is yet to be approved.
Eathorpe BESS	Neoen	Armidale Regional	SEARs issued 17/11/2022	The Eathorpe BESS is proposed to be constructed approximately 6 km east of Armidale. Construction is expected to take 12-18 months with a peak workforce of up to 100 FTE. The project's scoping report anticipated construction commencing in 2025, but the applicant is yet to complete an EIS.
Oven Mountain Pumped Hydro Energy Storage	OMPS Pty Ltd	Armidale Regional	Under assessment 22/08/2024. Construction expected to commence late 2025.	According to the Project Amendment Report, the Oven Mountain Pumped Hydro Energy Storage project will be located "approximately half-way" between Armidale and Kempsey, along the Macleay River. Construction is expected to require over 600 workers during peak periods, and have a duration of 4-5 years. 30-50 workers will be required during operation. Three mobile camps will provide accommodation for non-local workers, however it is expected this will be supplemented with other local accommodation. Construction is expected to commence during late 2025, however the project is still pending development consent.
Tilbuster Solar Farm Tilbuster 2 Solar Farm	ENERPARC AUSTRALIA PTY LTD	Armidale Regional	Tilbuster 1 Approved 03/03/2022 Tilbuster 2 SEARs issued 18/04/2024. Construction TBC	Located approximately 17 km north of Armidale, Tilbuster Solar Farm was approved during 2022. SEARs were issued for a second, adjacent solar farm during 2024. According to the Tilbuster 1 EIS, construction is expected to last 12 months with a 3-4 month peak period. 250 workers are expected to be required, with 50% from non-local areas. Construction timing is TBC – no post approval documents are available for Tilbuster 1, and no scoping report available for Tilbuster 2.

Project name	Proponent	Location (LGA)	Status and estimated timing	Description
Armidale East BESS	FRV Services Australia	Armidale Regional	SEARs issued 22/12/2023. Construction TBC, initially planned early 2026.	The Armidale East BESS is proposed 18km east of Armidale. According to the project scoping report, construction is estimated to take 18 months and commence in Q1 2026, although the project is yet to complete an EIS. No workforce estimation was provided in the scoping reports, however impact on local accommodation was identified as a potential scoping impact.
Oxley Solar Farm	Oxley Solar Development Pty Ltd	Armidale Regional	Approved 11/12/2023. Construction TBC	Oxley Solar Farm will be built 14km south-east of Armidale. According to the EIS, approximately 300 workers will be required during the peak construction period, which is 6-9 months of a total 12-18 month construction period. No post-approval documents are visible, and construction timeframes are unclear – development was originally expected to begin during 2023 however has not commenced at the time of writing.
Metz Solar Farm	FRV Services Australia	Armidale Regional	Operations commenced 30/07/2022	The Metz Solar Farm has been operational since 2022. It is located 18km east of Armidale. According to the NSW DPE Assessment report, the site requires approximately 8 FTE jobs. An AES was not required as part of the Development Consent.
Baiada Integrated Poultry Processing Facility	Baiada (Tamworth) Pty Ltd	Tamworth Regional	Approved 18/12/2020. Construction commenced 26/05/2023.	The Baiada Integrated Poultry Processing Facility is being constructed 7.5 km north-west of Tamworth. According to the NSW DPE Assessment report, the project will generate 323 construction jobs and 667 new operational jobs. No workforce accommodation information is provided in the EIS or any post-approval documents.
Queensland-Hunter Gas Pipeline	Santos	Gunnedah Shire	Approved 11/02/2009, modified 17/10/2019. Construction commenced 14/12/2023	The Queensland-Hunter gas pipeline is an 833 km pipeline between the Newcastle area and Wallumbilla, QLD area. This includes the Gunnedah Shire LGA. Construction of Stage 1 commenced on 14 December 2023. The 2008 Environmental Assessment estimated 600 jobs would be created during construction, and workers would be housed in temporary accommodation camps. No accommodation strategy or monitoring requirements were imposed in the initial or modified development consent.



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