



WHAT IS THE PROJECT?

Spark Renewables is proposing to develop the Wattle Creek Solar Farm Project on the University's Arthursleigh property held by the University of Sydney, east of Big Hill, situated in the Upper Lachlan Shire Council Local Government Area (LGA) in NSW, approximately 15 kilometres (km) northwest of Marulan. The location is adjacent to the Wingecarribee Shire LGA (to the east) and Goulburn Mulwaree Council LGA (to the south).

Spark Renewables was selected by the University of Sydney to investigate and develop a hybrid renewable energy facility on the University's property which includes:



A hybrid solar farm with generation capacity of up to 265 MW combined with a 100 MW battery energy storage system (BESS).




A standalone BESS with 350 MW capacity


Each of the two components are being assessed under separate approval processes but will share infrastructure and a proposed research test bed facility.

The Project responds directly to the energy policy of the Commonwealth and NSW governments, moving toward net zero energy generation and supporting the increased development and utilisation of renewable energy. As a large energy generation and storage system, the Project will also deliver direct benefits to the electricity grid, improving system strength and reliability.


Key project components




Approximately 490,000 PV modules will be mounted on single axis tracking systems within the development footprint. The solar farm will also include power conversion units, a cable network and internal access tracks.




A BESS with 100 MW capacity electrically isolated with its own transformers and metering infrastructure.



On-site collector substation to connect the solar farm to the electricity transmission network via Marulan Substation.

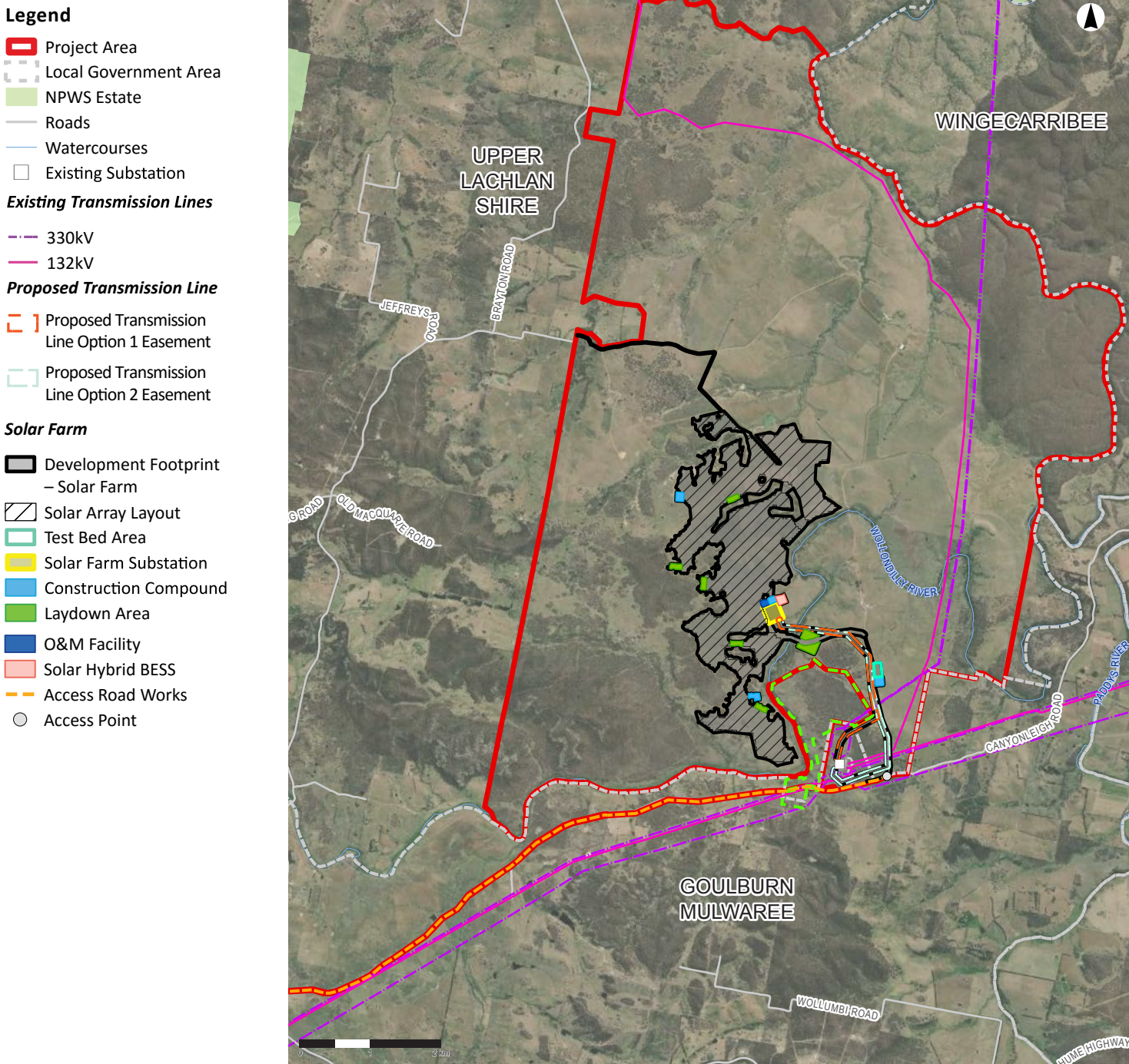


Two overhead transmission line options are being investigated, to allow for optionality during the assessment process and greater flexibility in the connection design.



A research Test-Bed Facility – comprising of a 2 ha hard stand area, demountable buildings, security fencing, parking, 200 kilovolt amps (kVa) power supply and 100 kVa dummy load (simulated electrical load for testing purposes).

If approved, the Wattle Creek Solar Farm could generate up to 265 MW of electricity from the sun, providing enough clean, reliable energy to power around 55,000 households per year while offsetting the emissions of around 290,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide.



WHY IS THE PROJECT NEEDED?

The NSW Government is actively seeking investment in renewable energy generation as part of its strategic initiatives to meet the States future energy needs and replace aging coal fired energy production. This efficient transition is essential for delivering electricity across NSW at a cost-effective rate to consumers.

Various government strategies, plans and policies such as the NSW Transmission Infrastructure Strategy and NSW Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap, identify the importance of renewable energy technology in providing an effective and economical way to deliver affordable, clean energy to NSW energy consumers.


NSW has a strong pipeline of renewable energy projects which have the potential to contribute to achieving the current transition targets. However, significant investment is required from the private sector to achieve sufficient renewable energy supply to support


NSW's transition to renewable energy and the retirement of the existing fossil fuel generated supply.


The Project aligns with local and regional strategies to deliver diversification in local economies, yield supplementary income for associated landowners, develop employment opportunities across both construction and operational phases, contribute to regional investment, offer indirect employment to local service providers throughout the Project's lifecycle, and offer benefits to the local community through the execution of a community benefit fund (or similar). Furthermore, the Project prioritises the preservation of areas with high environmental value. Spark Renewables have sought to align the Project with community priorities and local strategic plans.


BENEFITS OF THE PROJECT INCLUDE





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Renewable energy supply to assist with fulfilling the current obligations under State and Federal renewable energy targets.
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Providing for cleaner reliable electricity generation, assisting with meeting current load demand while reducing greenhouse gas emissions and the impacts of climate change.
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Supporting local businesses, regional and Australian economy as part of the energy transition.
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Creating generational employment and training opportunities for those currently active in workforce and those emerging.
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Indirect benefits to local services through the construction and operation phases.
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Provide ongoing financial assistance through benefit sharing that provide direct benefit to the local community, with a focus on:

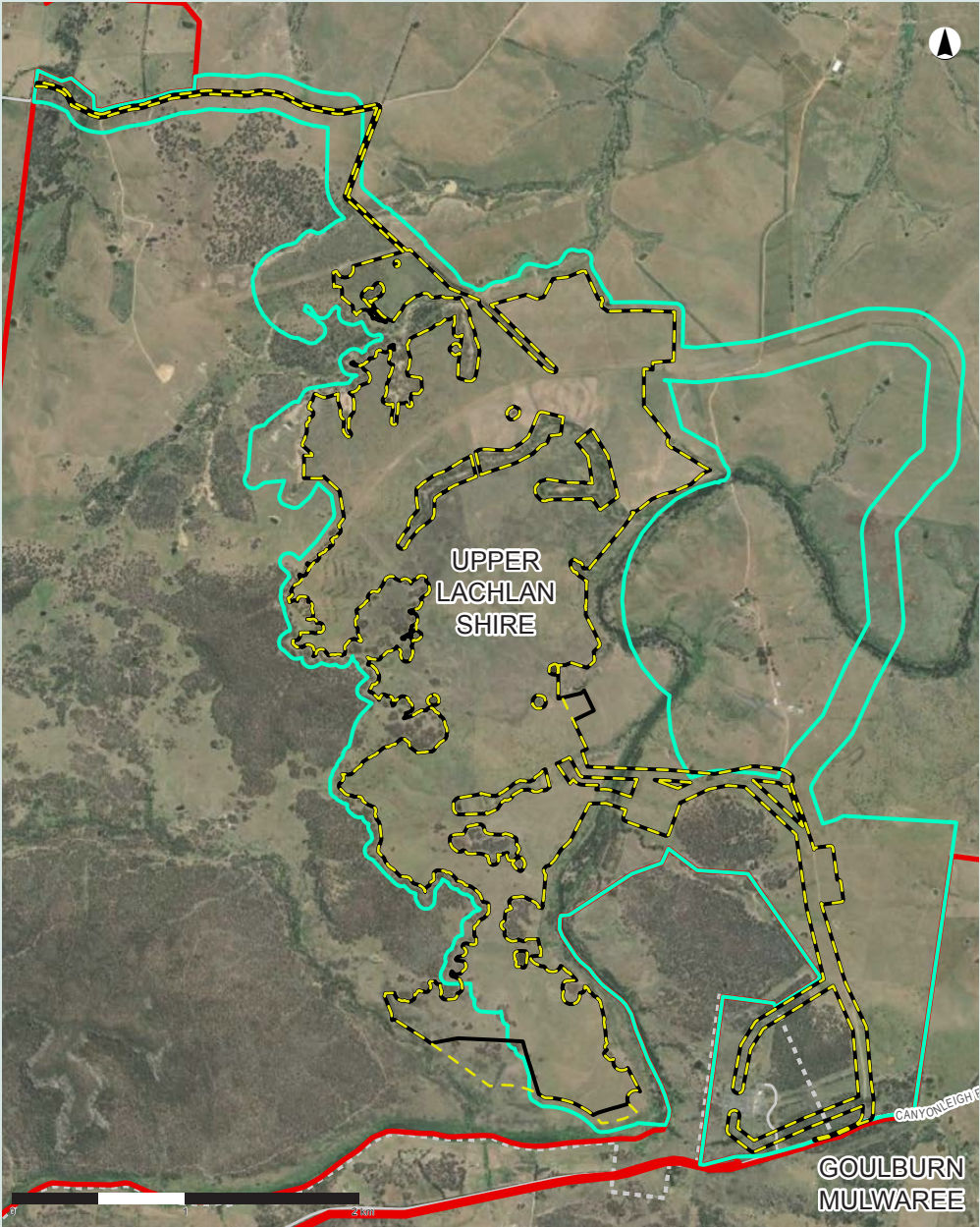
 - skills,
 - training and education,
 - community energy,
 - local heritage,
 - enhancement of the environment.

WHAT PROJECT ALTERNATIVES WERE INVESTIGATED?











Spark Renewables initially investigated the inclusion of a wind farm component within the Project Area. Spark Renewables is not proceeding with the wind farm component following detailed on site wind monitoring and initial community engagement and is focused on developing the solar and BESS components.

Spark Renewables has taken the approach of avoid in the first instance, and if that is not possible, seek to reduce, offset or mitigate the impacts. The Project has been continuously refined during development as preliminary findings were made available through the technical assessments, allowing for Project design modifications to mitigate identified constraints.



Refinements to the conceptual design of the Project have sought to:

-  Refine the extent of the Development Footprint to maximise the utilisation of previously cleared land, reducing additional impact to vegetation and/or impact habitat for flora and fauna species.
-  Avoid impacts to Aboriginal Heritage and sensitive landforms where possible.
-  Place siting in proximity to the existing electricity transmission infrastructure to reduce impact associated with transmission easements as far as practicable.
-  Minimise visual impacts to nearby residences through reduction of the Development Footprint.
-  Addition of energy storage capability adjacent to the proposed separate BESS to maximise the ability to share infrastructure and connection.
-  Application of minimum 10 metres separation between proposed infrastructure and vegetation to minimise potential of bushfire risk.
-  Minimise infrastructure and assets within flood prone land.
-  Maintain a minimum setback of 30 metres from the high bank of the Wollondilly River.

PLANNING AND APPROVALS PROCESS



The Wattle Creek Solar Farm and Wattle Creek BESS Projects are being assessed under two separate approval processes but will share project related infrastructure including the switching site substation, overhead high voltage transmission line, internal electrical reticulation, temporary construction facilities, permanent operation facilities, project access and a research test bed facility.

The Project requires approval under the NSW environmental and planning legislation. Under NSW Planning legislation, the Project is State Significant Development and requires approval under Part 4 of the NSW *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act). The EIS prepared for the Project describes the Project, its impacts (both positive and negative), how the impacts are proposed to be managed, mitigated and offset, the benefits and the justification.

The *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) is the primary environmental and planning regulatory instrument relevant to the Project at the Commonwealth level. Under the EPBC Act, approval from the Commonwealth Minister for the Environment and Water is required for any action that may have a significant impact on Matters of National Environmental Significance (MNES).

The Project was referred under the EPBC Act to the Minister via the Commonwealth Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) and was determined to be a controlled action. The Project will be assessed under the Assessment Bilateral Agreement between the Commonwealth and NSW Governments which provides for a single environmental assessment process.

ENGAGEMENT WITH POTENTIALLY AFFECTED PEOPLE AND OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES

PRE-LODGE

APPLICATION

Environmental Impact Assessment Phase

Social Impact Assessment Activities and Outputs

SCOPING

Preliminary assessment studies commence

Scoping Report lodged with NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure

NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure issues project specific Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs)

Engagement with local landholders and key stakeholders

EIS PREPARATION

Refinement of plans and preparation of assessment studies

Lodgement of DA supported by the EIS including SIA

WE ARE HERE

Continue engagement with local landholders and key stakeholders

Preparation of Social Impact Assessment

PUBLIC EXHIBITION

NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure places EIS on public exhibition

RESPONDING TO SUBMISSIONS

Preparation of Submissions Report that explains how submissions have been addressed

ASSESSMENT

NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure assesses the Project and provides its findings to the consent authority

DETERMINATION

Consent authority decides whether to approve or refuse the Project, including conditions of consent if approved

POST APPROVAL

NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure regulates Project to ensure compliance with the conditions of consent

Implementation of mitigation and enhancement measures and monitoring and management framework

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Spark Renewables is committed to engagement with all relevant stakeholders and to undertaking genuine and meaningful engagement with the community as part of planning and assessing the Project. This includes a focus on developing long-term relationships and maintaining open lines of communication. Since March 2023, Spark Renewables has met with landholders, community groups, service providers, Aboriginal groups, local councils, and government agencies to build relationships with the local and broader community and to understand stakeholder needs.

A community and stakeholder engagement program (CSEP) was implemented for the Project to gain input from the

community and other stakeholders and understand their perspectives on the Project.

Engagement mechanisms such as community newsletters, drop-in sessions, personal meetings, interviews, online surveys and a website were used to engage with the community.

This ongoing engagement has resulted in changes to the Project design and has assisted in development of management and mitigation measures proposed for the Project. This engagement has further informed the design of the Project and has been ongoing throughout the assessment process, and if the Project is approved, the engagement will be ongoing during the life of the Project.


ASSESSMENT OF IMPACTS


The Project has been designed through a comprehensive process that incorporated the findings of environmental studies, community and stakeholder feedback and engineering design considerations. Spark Renewables has engaged with stakeholders throughout the Project planning and assessment process and has designed the Project to avoid impact as far as practicable.




NOISE AND VIBRATION




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Noise and vibration associated with both the construction and operation of the Project has been assessed as part of the EIS.
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The noise modelling results indicate that standard construction noise mitigation measures will be required to minimise the potential construction noise impacts at residences surrounding the Project Area. No receivers were predicted to be highly noise affected.
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Operational noise levels are predicted to comply with the relevant criteria at all residential receivers surrounding the Project Area
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Increased traffic noise during construction may be noticeable for nearest receivers along Canyonleigh Road. Whereas noise mitigation options for traffic impacts are limited, Spark Renewables will offer Disruption Payments to residents located between the Brayton Road and the Project Area entrance along Canyonleigh Road during construction to address traffic and noise disruptions.
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Spark Renewables has committed to the development and implementation of appropriate noise and vibration management, mitigation and monitoring measures.



The disturbance area associated with the Project largely comprises areas that have previously been disturbed and historically cleared for agricultural purposes.

Overall, the Project area features a mix of exotic pasture, native grasslands, scattered paddock trees, and intact woodland. Over half of the disturbance area is comprised of land which has minimal biodiversity value and is unlikely to provide suitable habitat for threatened flora and fauna species. This land has no native over storey or mid storey cover (uppermost and middle layers of vegetation, consisting of the tallest and median height trees forming a canopy) and met the definition of non-native vegetation.

One Threatened Ecological Community (TEC) being White Box - Yellow Box - Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Derived Native Grassland critically endangered ecological community, was recorded in the disturbance area and two threatened flora, and four threatened fauna species were recorded within the Project Area during surveys. The Project will not fragment any areas of high-quality TEC, due to the existing fragmentation of remnant vegetation from historical and current agricultural land use in the Project Area and surrounds. Any fragmentation

associated with the Project will occur through the removal of areas of highly degraded native pasture vegetation and scattered trees. The retained areas will remain connected to other vegetation communities, both within the Project Area and the adjoining landscape.

Spark Renewables has committed to the development and implementation of biodiversity management measures which will include pre-clearance and tree-felling procedures, non-inhibiting fauna fencing, traffic control, weed management, fencing and access control, erosion and sediment control and workforce education and training. Where impacts to biodiversity cannot be avoided, the NSW Biodiversity Assessment Process requires use of the NSW Government online credit calculator to generate the associated biodiversity credits, informed by the results of the biodiversity survey and associated area of impact.

The credits need to be offset by Spark Renewables prior to construction commencing. Spark Renewables is currently proposing to utilise a combination of different options to secure the biodiversity credits required to offset the residual impacts of the Project on biodiversity including utilising intact areas of native vegetation in the Project Area for offsetting.



ABORIGINAL CULTURAL HERITAGE



The Project Area is on the Gundungurra Nation within the Pejar Local Aboriginal Land Council (PLALC) and Gundungurra (LALC). An Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment (ACHA) was undertaken to assess the potential impact of the Project on Aboriginal cultural heritage in consultation with the Broken Hill Local Aboriginal Land Council and other Registered Aboriginal Parties. The ACHA included field survey and a test excavation program.

Survey and test excavation results:



A total of 30 newly recorded cultural heritage sites were identified within the Project Area during the surveys including 5 artefact scatters, 12 isolated artefacts and one scarred tree.



A total of 79 test pits were excavated across seven test zones within four landforms during the test excavation program. 25 stone artefacts were recovered from 13 test pits.

The Project Area is part of a broader landscape of cultural significance utilised for foraging activities, however, following European settlement, the use within the Project Area has mostly orientated toward agricultural practices. The Project Area contains archaeological sites that establish a link to traditional cultural activities.

In total 14 Aboriginal archaeological sites would be impacted by the Project, however all sites are assessed as being of low archaeological significance. For the sites within the transmission line easement, as much of the easement will remain undisturbed, there will only be partial impacts to many of these sites. These impacts will be primarily related to pole construction and access tracks which will only impact discrete areas.

Based on the synthesis of the evidence collected during field survey and test excavation, the ACHA recommends a program of staged salvage prior to construction impacts, with surface salvage occurring for artefacts within the Development Footprint. Spark Renewables will develop an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Management Plan (ACHMP) in consultation with the Registered Aboriginal Parties and relevant government agencies, to manage Aboriginal cultural heritage values during construction and operation of the Project.



The Project Area is comprised of the property known as the Arthursleigh Farm purchased by Thomas Holt in 1853 and remained in the family until acquired by the University of Sydney in 1979. The current use for the estate is as a working farm and research facility by the University of Sydney. Several historic buildings are located within the Project Area that appear on the non-statutory National Trust Register. This group of buildings are referred to as the Arthursleigh Group and include the homestead, woolshed, shearers quarters, and former staff quarters.

The Historic Heritage Assessment included a review of the documented heritage values for the area and survey of the Project Area to assess the likelihood, extent and nature of potential impacts on identified listed or unlisted items of heritage significance within the Project Area.

No heritage items or places listed on the Commonwealth, National or State Heritage lists are located within the Project Area as confirmed by the visual field inspection of the Project Area. Furthermore, no items listed on any Heritage and Conservation Registers (NSW State agency

heritage registers) of a Local Environmental Plan are located within the Project Area. The historic buildings associated with the Project Area were assessed as having moderate to high historic significance however; due to the distance from these buildings the Development Footprint and work will not have a detrimental impact on the identified heritage items.

The statement of significance and description for the Arthursleigh heritage sites does not identify any associated significant view, and it is unlikely that any views of the Project from the homestead building would contribute to the overall significance of the item. Whilst the Project would be visible from this heritage item, it would not change, or degrade, any identified significant views. Additionally, the immediate setting of this heritage item would not be subject to change as part of the Project and any visual impacts are likely to be minor and would not result in an adverse impact to the overall significance of the heritage item.

The Historic Heritage Assessment concluded that the Project would not have a significant impact on the heritage values of the Arthursleigh property associated with the Project Area, however Spark Renewables is committed to continue to implementing management and mitigation measures to ensure that historic values of the Project Area are retained.

TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT

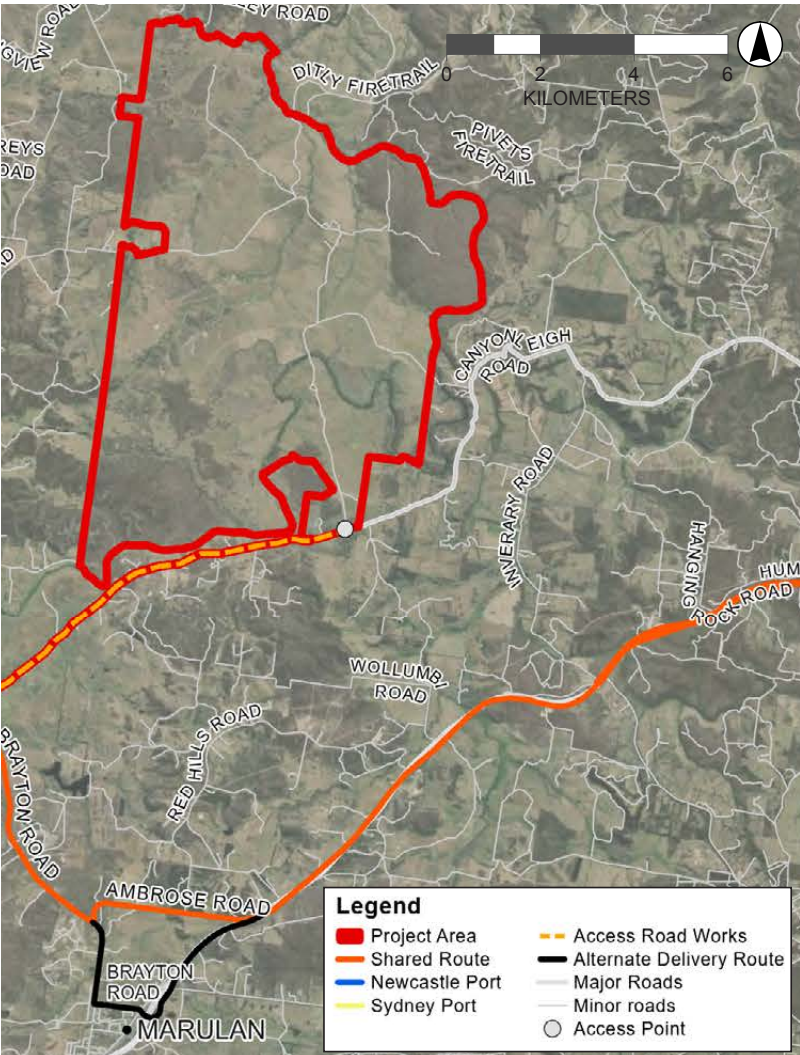


The Project Area will be accessed from Canyonleigh Road. Two transport route options from the Hume Highway to the Project Area have been considered (Red Hills Road/ Ambrose Road/Brayton Road or Brayton Road only). The main access to the Project Area is located on the southern boundary via Canyonleigh Road. A secondary access is also located on the eastern side of the Project Area via the existing access at Arthursleigh Road. This access would be utilised for emergency access/egress and alternate flood free access during construction and operation (if required).

The majority of components to construct the Project from either Port Botany in Sydney (approximately 128 km northeast of the Project Area) or Port Kembla south of Wollongong (approximately 76 km northeast of the Project Area) and transported to the Project Area by truck via the Hume Highway.

The Traffic Impact Assessment found that the existing road network and key intersections have high levels of service and significant spare capacity. Based on the low background volumes on Canyonleigh Road in the vicinity of the access to the Project Area, it is proposed that the access be upgraded generally in accordance with Council's rural access standard.

Spark Renewables has committed to the development and implementation of a detailed Traffic Management Plan which will address the required management and mitigation of potential traffic related impacts.





The potential for the Project to impact on both surface water and groundwater was assessed as part of the EIS. This included consideration of water supply, flooding and flows, water quality and interaction with groundwater.

The majority of water required to meet Project water demands would be imported and would most likely be sourced through a commercial arrangement with local suppliers.

Water supply:



Construction – Total water usage is estimate to be 11.6 megalitres (ML) over the 18-month construction period with an average daily demand of 30 kilo litres (kl) per day of raw water with 20 kl per day of potable water for construction personnel



Operation – Panel Cleaning and Maintenance 3 ML per year for the washing of PV arrays twice a year



Potable water demands will be minor and supplied by a small purification system or water tanker

Throughout the construction phase, appropriate erosion and sediment controls will be implemented and maintained. The Project Area is associated with a very low erosion hazard however, a detailed Erosion and Sediment Control Plan will be developed and included in a Construction Environmental Management Plan which will specify the locations of all necessary erosion and sediment Controls to achieve key principles of site management.

As the Project is located within the Sydney drinking water catchment and it must have a Neutral or Beneficial Effects (NorBE) rating on water quality. The water quality modelling indicates that NorBE criteria is achieved for all water quality characteristics, with the exception of mean annual total nitrogen concentrations. The impacts to receiving water quality downstream of the Project are expected to be negligible provided effective rehabilitation of Project Area disturbance is undertaken post-construction. However, refinement of the water quality model will be undertaken during the detailed design phase of the Project to ensure the model reflects the detailed design and to optimise the operational Project stormwater treatment train. Through detailed design and implementation of management measures, water quality impacts during the operational phase are expected to be negligible.

The flooding within the Project Area poses a relatively low risk to both infrastructure and human safety. Due to the minimal change to existing flood conditions as a result of the Project, specific flood management measures have been recommended to consider the results of the flood modelling conducted.

A groundwater risk assessment was undertaken for potential impacts to groundwater associated with the construction, operation and decommissioning phases of the Project. Generally, impacts to groundwater resources are not expected given the groundwater table is unlikely to be intercepted during Project construction. Further, the anticipated depth to groundwater within the Project Area means that any hydrocarbon/chemical spills are unlikely to infiltrate to the groundwater table, noting that appropriate spill management measures will be implemented during all phases of the Project.



SOIL AND AGRICULTURAL LAND USE



New land use of energy generation within the Project Area will co-exist with agricultural activities currently undertaken, and support future “agrisolar” activities. A new Test Bed for research programs in collaboration with the University of Sydney is also proposed to be part of the Project.

A land use conflict risk assessment (LUCRA) identified the following key potential land use conflict risks:

- traffic (during construction and decommissioning)
- land use change
- biosecurity

These issues have been subject to assessment as part of the EIS and Spark Renewables has committed to implement appropriate management and mitigation measures as part of the Project. With the implementation of these measures, the LUCRA found that these risks will be mitigated to low risks and that the potential impact of the Project on the surrounding land and land users will be minimal.

The temporary impacts on agriculture are considered a negligible impact in the context of the gross commodity values and land use coverage of the agricultural industries operating within the Upper Lachlan Shire LGA. Further, at the scale of the enterprises operating within the Project Area, impacts are considered offset as involved landowners would be financially compensated.



Electromagnetic Fields and Health

Electromagnetic fields (EMF) occurs wherever electricity is produced, transmitted or used, and is commonly found in everyday life in household electrical devices. In Australia, electrical devices and infrastructure such as transmission lines and substations, operate at a frequency of 50 Hz which falls within the Extremely Low Frequency (ELF) range of EMF (between 0 and 300 Hz).

EMF modelling completed for the Project transmission infrastructure showed that, in each scenario, magnetic field strength will be at least five times lower than the recommended upper safe limit for human exposure.



Bushfire Assessment

Bushfire risk can be appropriately managed through the implementation of a bushfire emergency management plan including Asset Projection Zones, access, water supply, construction management practices and evacuation procedures.



Preliminary Hazard Analysis

The Preliminary Hazard Analysis concluded that the Project is not potentially hazardous as defined under the State Environmental Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards) 2021 based on the materials to be stored, used and transported as part of the Project. The risk assessment undertaken to inform the Preliminary Hazard Analysis identified a number of hazard events involving Lithium-Ion Batteries and electrical transformers with the potential for harmful off-site impacts. Due to the central location of the proposed infrastructure and separation distances to surrounding residential receivers, the assessment indicates there would be no impact offsite. A range of technical and non-technical risk mitigation and management measures including rigorous design standards and maintenance practices are proposed to be implemented by Spark Renewables to manage and mitigate potential risk associated with the Project.



Contamination

An assessment was conducted to evaluate potential risks of contamination caused by the Project. The greatest risk of a contamination event within the Development Footprint is during the construction phase. Activities such as increased vehicle movements, improper waste handling, equipment installation, and soil disturbance could lead to potential spills or contamination involving hazardous materials. With mitigation measures in place contamination risks are considered minor and with the implementation of erosion and sediment control measures, impacts are anticipated to be effectively managed and kept to a minimal level.

ECONOMIC



The Economic Impact Assessment concludes the Project will provide the following:



Support approximately \$543 million in capital investment during the construction phase, of which approximately \$81 million (or 15%) is anticipated to be retained in the local LGAs.



Inject approximately \$4.4 million in new spending into the economy over the construction phase from construction workers relocating to the region, supporting approximately 15 full-time jobs in the service sector in local LGAs over this time.



Generation of approximately 250 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) positions in the national economy over the 18-month construction period (96 Direct FTE jobs and 154 Indirect FTE jobs). Once operational, approximately 20 FTE jobs will be supported by the Project (5 Direct FTE jobs and 15 Indirect FTE jobs).

AIR QUALITY



During construction, temporary dust particles and emissions may arise from activities like ground disturbance, civil construction, and plant or vehicle exhausts. These emissions will be localised and minor in the context of the overall Project Area. Appropriate dust reduction measures will be implemented to mitigate any potential air quality impacts.



“Spark Renewables believe that the community has the right to question and critique incoming projects. It is the developers’ responsibility to create robust risk management plans to address these concerns. The insights and local knowledge of the council and community are invaluable contributions to this process.”

A Social Impact Assessment (SIA) was undertaken to assess the likely social consequences of the Project and work with Spark Renewables to develop options to improve outcomes for people.

SIA involves understanding impacts from the perspectives of those involved in a personal, community, social or cultural sense through the engagement process.

During engagement stakeholders were most concerned about:



The loss of environmental values associated with the site



Potential decline in property values



Decreased social amenity as a result of visual impacts and noise impacts

Positive impacts associated with the Project included:



Community Benefit Sharing Program



Economy activity and employment opportunities during construction



Employment opportunities and supporting local businesses during operation of the Project

Spark Renewables is in the process of developing a Community Benefit Sharing Program with a number of stakeholders and has identified a number of initiatives in collaboration with relevant stakeholders that are currently being explored:

Spark Renewables has also committed to the development and implementation of:



Community and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy



Aboriginal Participation Plan; and



Accommodation and Employment Strategy

The SIA concludes that the identified negative social impacts of the Project can be reasonably mitigated or managed to reduce their significance, with positive impacts having the potential to be enhanced if appropriate strategies are put in place.

WASTE



Waste management as part of the Project will be carried out in accordance with relevant legislation and guidelines and based on the principles of the waste hierarchy (prevent, reduce, reuse, recycle, recover, dispose). Spark Renewables will develop and implement a waste management plan to guide management of waste.

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS



When viewed separately, the environmental, social, and economic effects associated with a Project may be limited or minor. However, when the impacts of numerous projects on the same recipients, communities, and surroundings are taken into account, the significance of the impacts may change (both positive and negative). Cumulative impacts also provide opportunities for greater collaboration and innovation to manage and mitigate.

A review of the nearby projects with the potential to result in cumulative impacts with, or as a result of, the Project was conducted along with input from the specialist assessments undertaken. Cumulative impacts related to social and economic impacts, visual, noise, land use and agriculture, water, biodiversity and Aboriginal cultural and non-Aboriginal Heritage. These were considered in the assessment and identified to be minimal when appropriate management and mitigation measures identified in the specialist assessments were implemented.



Potential landscape and visual impact associated with the Project has been assessed as part of the EIS.

The assessment found that the dominate landscape character of the area includes modified pastures predominately used for grazing with large areas of retained vegetation, interspersed vegetated hills and ridgelines. As a result of this vegetation and undulated topography, views towards the Project are limited.

Following detailed assessment, consultation and further refinement of the Project design (reduction of the proposed solar footprint to the southwest) the potential visual impact rating at all residences requiring detailed assessment was low.

Views of the Project from public view points are generally restricted to Canyonleigh Road on the southern side of the Project Area. Due to a combination of existing vegetation and topography impact to views from public viewpoints as a result of the Project are also minimised with a resulting low impact rating.

The assessment of potential glint and glare as a result of the proposed solar panels indicates there will not be any instances of unacceptable glare associated with the Project.







Mitigation including the retention of vegetation surrounding the proposed infrastructure, consideration of project design (including colour and height) and controlled lighting will be implemented to integrate the Project into the surrounding landscape.



PHOTOMONTAGE SHOWING VIEW OF PROPOSED SOLAR PANELS FROM CANYONLEIGH ROAD, DIRECTLY SOUTH OF THE PROJECT AREA





JUSTIFICATION FOR THE PROJECT

Potential justifications of public interest:

-  Located in a region with suitable climatic and physical conditions for large-scale solar energy generation.
-  Suitable terrain and topography to support large-scale solar energy infrastructure.
-  The Project can use existing transmission lines to transport electricity to the grid, reducing the need for new infrastructure and minimising associated construction and disturbances.
-  Positive economic outcomes and socio-cultural impacts without significant biophysical harm.
-  Creation of employment opportunities and benefits to the local and regional economy.
-  Spark Renewables has first and foremost sought to avoid impact, then reduce, manage and mitigate impacts.

The Project aligns with Ecologically Sustainable Development principles. Its impacts can be managed, mitigated, and offset. Additionally, the development will bring significant economic and environmental benefits, such as job creation in the Australian economy, and renewable energy generation in the National Electricity Market.

The Project would provide long-term, strategic benefits to the State of NSW, including:

-  Renewable energy supply to assist with fulfilling the current obligations under State and Federal renewable energy targets.
-  Providing for cleaner reliable electricity generation, assisting with meeting current load demand while reducing greenhouse gas emissions and the impacts of climate change.
-  Employment generation creating on average 96 direct jobs during the construction phase and 5 direct jobs nationally during the operational phase.
-  Indirect benefits to local services through the construction and operation phases.