

An Australian first

Central-West Orana Pilot Renewable Energy Zone

Community Newsletter – December 2020



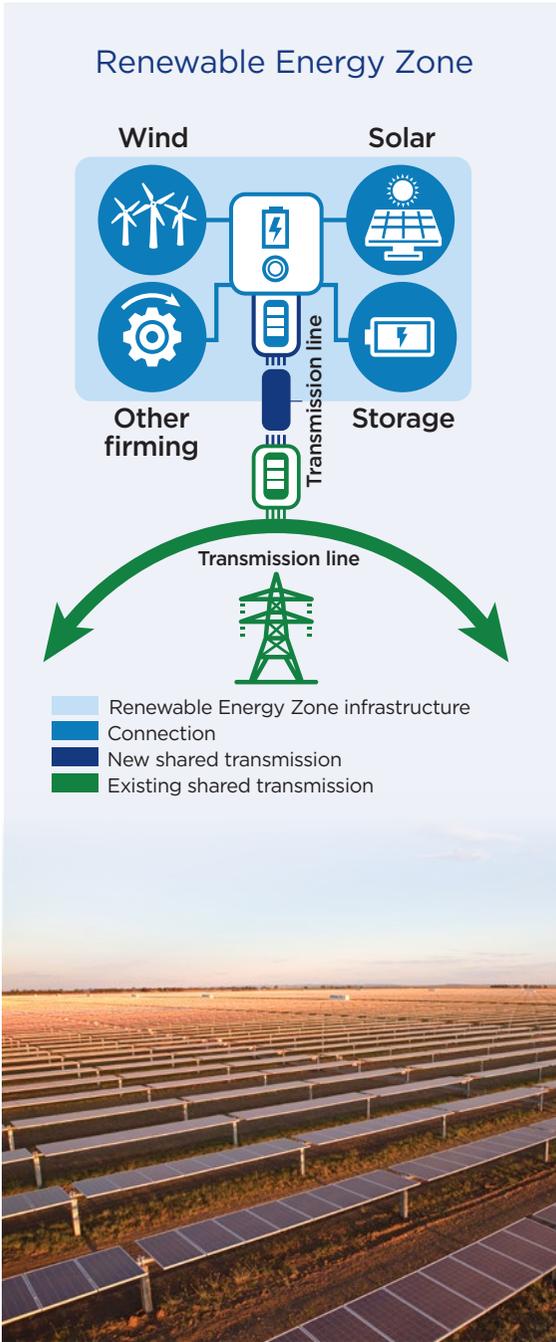
Welcome to the NSW Government's Central-West Orana Renewable Energy Zone project. This is the first newsletter to inform residents and the broader community of the project. The Government has chosen this region for Australia's first Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) because of its significant potential for energy infrastructure and regional development. There will be many opportunities to find out more and become involved over the coming months and years.

The 3,000 megawatt (MW) Central-West Orana REZ will bring renewable energy (such as wind and solar) together with energy storage (such as batteries) and connect them to the electricity network to deliver affordable, reliable and clean energy to homes, businesses and industries in NSW.

The Central-West Orana REZ will be the first REZ to be rolled out under the NSW Government's *Electricity Strategy* and *Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap*. Further REZs will also be developed in the New England, South-West, Hunter-Central Coast and Illawarra regions. The REZs will play a vital role in delivering affordable energy to help replace the State's existing power stations as they retire over the next 15 years. They will unlock a significant pipeline of new large-scale wind, solar and energy storage projects, supporting an estimated \$20.7 billion of private investment by 2030.

Planning is now underway so the Central-West Orana REZ can be 'shovel-ready' by the end of 2022. On-the-ground community engagement has started and will inform the REZ design and delivery, including how the economic benefits of the investment in the REZ can be shared with local communities.





Key features of the Central-West Orana REZ

- \$40 million direct NSW Government funding plus financial support from the Commonwealth Government
- Attracting around \$5.2 billion of private investment into the Central-West Orana region to 2030
- Expected to support around 3,900 peak construction jobs and 500 ongoing jobs
- Enough new capacity to power 1.4 million homes
- Shovel-ready by the end of 2022 after extensive consultation
- Priority project in the Australian Energy Market Operator's 2020 Integrated System Plan.

Delivering cheaper energy for New South Wales

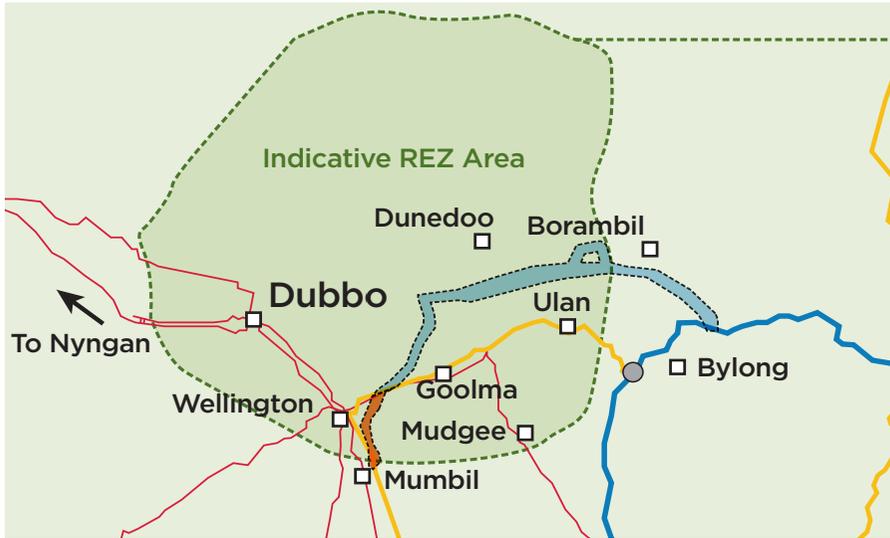
What is a Renewable Energy Zone?

REZs are the modern-day equivalent of traditional power stations. They combine low-cost renewable energy generation such as wind and solar, with back-up energy from storage such as batteries, and new grid infrastructure to deliver cheap, reliable and clean energy. REZs also provide opportunities for upfront planning, coordinated development and early community engagement, and have been recommended by the Australian Energy Market Operator and CSIRO.

Benefits of Renewable Energy Zones

Economic growth for the Central-West Orana region – supporting local jobs and investment, and attracting new industries to regional areas

- Cheaper and more reliable electricity** – improving the affordability and reliability of electricity for NSW consumers by increasing bulk supply and driving down wholesale electricity prices
- Drought proofing farms** – hosting solar panels or wind farms can give landowners an additional long-term, guaranteed income stream
- Coordinated strategic planning** – achieving a balance between land uses, reflecting local priorities and complementing existing economic activity and social values
- Community benefit sharing** – working with local stakeholders to ensure benefits are equitably shared with communities
- Co-located infrastructure** - creating opportunities for improved infrastructure such as telecommunications and roads.



Central-West Orana REZ

Existing high voltage power lines

500kV

330kV

132kV

REZ Transmission Study Corridor

Burrendong Extension

Wollar Substation

Location

The Central-West Orana REZ is indicatively located near Dubbo and Wellington, on the land of the Wiradjuri, Wailwan and Kamilaroi people. This is close to the existing high voltage transmission network and strong energy resources.

The first stage of the Central-West Orana REZ will be the development of new high-voltage transmission infrastructure (including power lines and substations) to connect REZ projects to the existing electricity network. This new infrastructure is referred to as the Central-West Orana REZ Transmission, and will be delivered by the NSW transmission planner, TransGrid.

The Government has worked closely with TransGrid to identify a REZ Transmission study corridor. This included environmental, technical, social and economic assessment – such as the presence of agricultural land. The study corridor

is approximately 180km long and generally between 3-6km wide. The final transmission easements will be 60m or 80m wide and will be informed by extensive consultation with local stakeholders and detailed environmental assessment.

Next steps

There will be many opportunities to have your say. TransGrid will begin consulting landowners in the study corridor and start field studies to support this project in the coming months. Feedback will help the Government and TransGrid plan the transmission infrastructure in a way that minimises impacts to the region. The Government is expected to run a competitive process for generation and storage projects in 2021 and will work closely with local councils, communities and other regional stakeholders over the coming years as the REZ progresses to construction and operation.

Having your say

Your feedback is crucial to ensure the REZ delivers meaningful, long term benefits to regional communities. Contact us directly to be part of our upcoming consultation activities or simply be kept informed. You can expect to receive future newsletters from us in the mail.

Getting in touch

The REZ team are here to help you. If you have any questions about the REZ, or would like further information:



Please send us an email at REZ@planning.nsw.gov.au



or call us on **1300 305 695**



You can also visit our website energy.nsw.gov.au/renewable-energy-zones

where you can find further information and subscribe to our project mailing list for regular updates.



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