

Hunter-Central Coast Renewable Energy Zone project

Newsletter January 2026



About the Hunter-Central Coast Renewable Energy Zone network infrastructure upgrades

The Hunter-Central Coast Renewable Energy Zone (HCC REZ) network infrastructure project will build powerlines, substations and supporting infrastructure to transfer power generated by renewable energy generators to local homes and businesses.

The new infrastructure is expected to be operational by 2028 and will deliver an extra 1 gigawatt (GW) of network transfer capacity for the generation of clean energy.

The project includes:

- building two new substations
- upgrades to 85km of powerlines between Kurri Kurri and Muswellbrook
- upgrades to existing infrastructure.

Project update

In December 2024, EnergyCo appointed Ausgrid as the preferred network operator following a competitive tender. In April – July 2025 we exhibited the draft Review of Environmental Factors (REF), our environmental planning document and sought feedback from the community and stakeholders.

After reviewing the REF under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, the project was approved to move into construction. The final REF can be found at ausgrid.com.au/HCCREZ.

In December 2025, we received final approval from EnergyCo to proceed with the construction of the project, which is to commence in January 2026.

This is a major milestone for the energy transition in NSW as it will be the first REZ in Australia to upgrade existing distribution poles and wires, meaning the work will be completed with minimal impacts on surrounding communities and the environment.

We will continue to consult with landowners about potential impacts on their land and thank the community for their patience during this project.

What does this mean for the community?

From January 2026, those living and working along the HCC REZ line will see:



More Ausgrid workers and contractors around our existing subtransmission lines



Drones undertaking survey work



An increase in local construction jobs



Opportunities for local businesses to get involved with the project



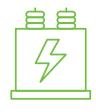
Engagement opportunities for First Nations communities

The Hunter-Central Coast Renewable Energy Zone Network Infrastructure at a glance

1
1GW
network transfer capacity



85km
upgrade of existing subtransmission powerlines



2
new substations



2
upgrades to existing substations



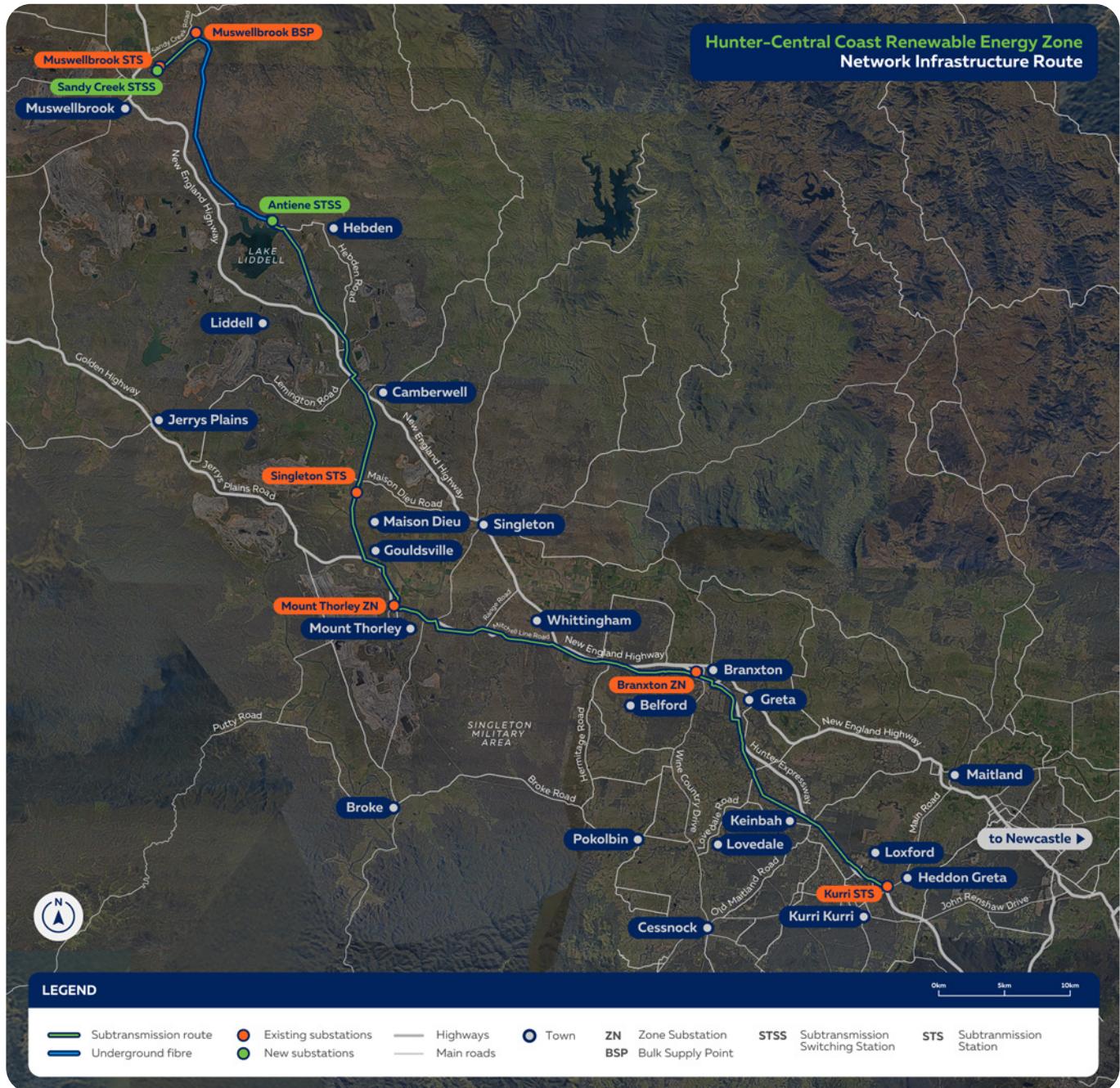
18km
new underground optic fibre communications cable



For more information visit yoursay.ausgrid.com.au/HCCREZ

Route map

The map below outlines the route and proximity of new infrastructure spanning 85km from Kurri Kurri to Muswellbrook.



We are
here

KEY PROJECT DATES

Mid 2025

- Review of Environmental Factors (REF) on public display

Mid - Late 2025

- Detailed design and early works
- Review of Environmental Factors finalised

Late 2025

- AER determination
- Deed signing with EnergyCo (AER approval)

Early 2026

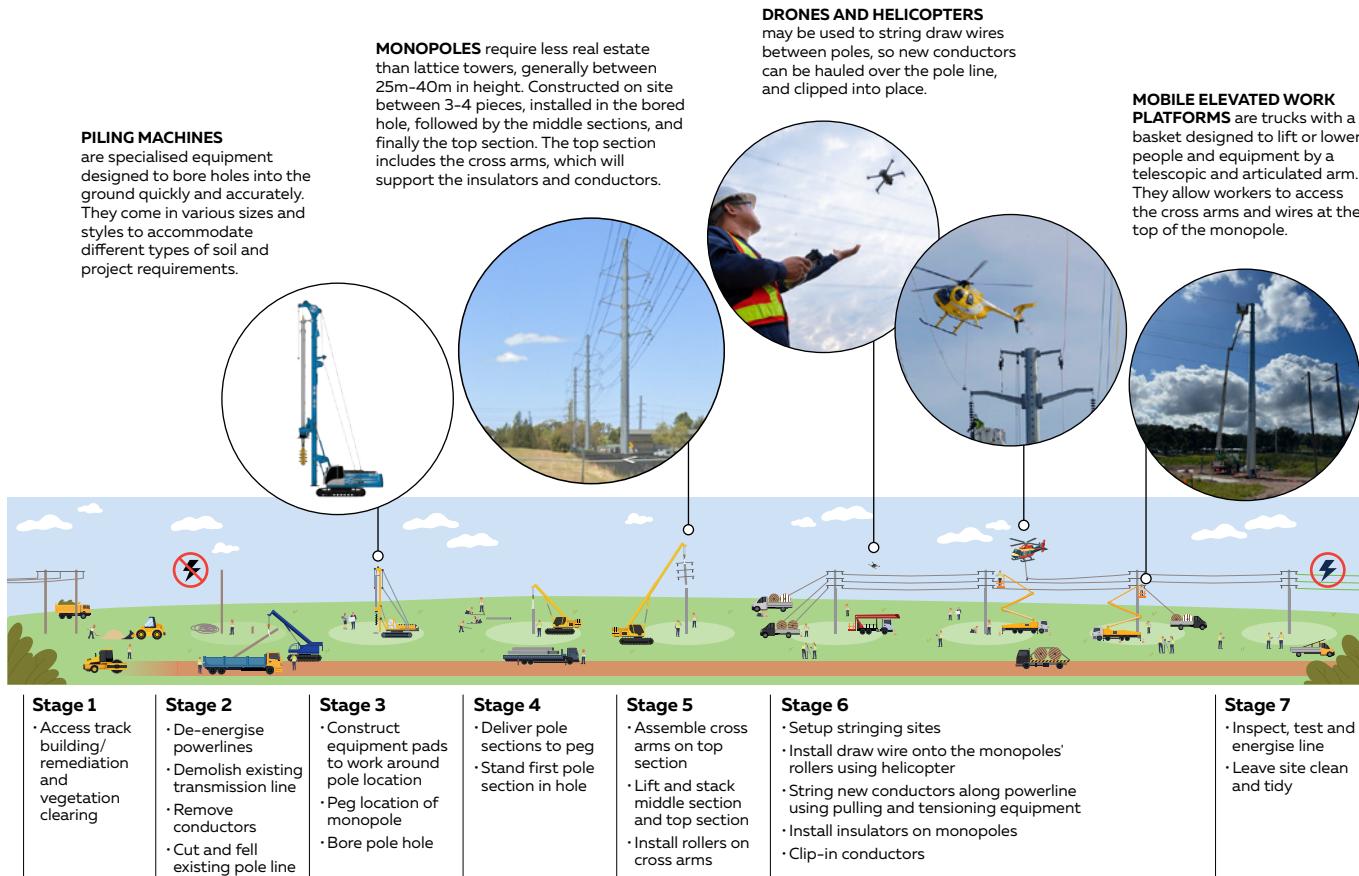
- Start of subtransmission line and substation construction works

Mid 2028

- Commission and move into operation and maintenance phase

Construction stages

Construction will typically be completed in stages as seen in the infographic below. Information about when and where these activities will occur, and what to expect during construction will be provided to surrounding community well in advance of this work.



Construction update

We have appointed three key contractors for the project – Genus, John Holland Group, and ServiceStream.



Genus – Reconstruction of approximately 85km of subtransmission lines between Kurri Kurri and Muswellbrook.



John Holland Group – Construction of two new substations, Sandy Creek and Antiene. This includes all civil, electrical and commissioning works.



ServiceStream – Work will include the design and contract of approximately 18km of fibre cable, requiring a diverse communication link.

You may receive notifications directly from these contractors when works are happening on or near your land, or where there may be other construction impacts from the work.



Interested in learning about potential business or supply opportunities?

As this project develops in the Hunter and Central Coast regions, it opens new business opportunities and supply chain needs. Businesses can register their capabilities through our ICN Gateway page. By registering, businesses can showcase their products and services to be a part of the project's supply chain.

If you're interested to know more about the project and opportunities, head to our website ausgrid.com.au/HCCREZ

Our team out and about

Connecting with Community BBQ

On Tuesday 11 November we hosted a BBQ in Muswellbrook, creating a space for First Nations community members to come together to explore opportunities linked to local renewable energy projects.

The day sparked many valuable conversations about job pathways, training, and the projects shaping our community's future.

Cattle Dog Muster

Since 2023, we've proudly sponsored and joined the Great Cattle Dog Muster in Muswellbrook. It's always a great chance to connect with the community—sharing career opportunities through our apprentice and graduate programs, highlighting other recruitment pathways, and talking about farm and electrical safety.

We also discussed local projects, including the Hunter-Central Coast Renewable Energy Zone, and how they're shaping the region's energy future.

For more information on when we will be in your area, please get in touch. Our contact details are below.



Support from local organisations Youth Express, Joblink Plus, Wils and INDI Connect at our community BBQ in Muswellbrook



The local Ausgrid team at the The Great Cattle Dog Muster

Contact the Hunter-Central Coast Renewable Energy Zone project team

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Sign up to receive newsletters and updates direct to your inbox.



EnergyCo

Ausgrid is the network operator delivering the subtransmission network for the NSW Government's Hunter-Central Coast Renewable Energy Zone.

energyco.nsw.gov.au/HCC-REZ

