

# Stakeholder Engagement Plan



## Spicers Creek Wind Farm

3 December 2024



Final

**Revision Control**

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**Document Review**

Document to be reviewed and updated every 12 months or as required by the project team.

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# 1 Overview

Squadron Energy (SQE) is committed to genuine, proactive and meaningful engagement with the community, developing long-term relationships and maintaining open lines of communication.

## 1.1 About Squadron Energy

Squadron Energy is the leading renewable energy company that develops, operates and owns renewable energy assets in Australia. It will be the biggest single contributor to helping Australia meet its 2030 target of 82% renewable energy.

We are 100% Australian owned and have 1.1 gigawatts (GW) of renewable energy in operation and 900MW under construction. We work with local communities and our customers to lead the transition to Australia's clean energy future, using our proven experience and expertise across the project lifecycle.

## 1.2 Purpose of this plan

This Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) has been developed for the Spicers Creek Wind Farm (SCWF). It outlines SQE's understanding of the communities surrounding the project and our approach to community and stakeholder engagement. The plan also outlines the potential impacts and provides examples of opportunities that could be developed in consultation with local partners and communities depending on need.

### 1.2.1 Key Terms

The abbreviations for key terminology used in this SEP are listed in Table 1.

**Table 1: Key terminology**

Term	Description
AEMO	Australian Energy Market Operator
CEC	Clean Energy Council
CWO	Central West Orana
DPE / DPHI	Department of Planning & Environment <i>[now Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI)]</i>
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EnergyCo	Energy Corporation of NSW
IAP2	International Association of Public Participation
LALC	Local Aboriginal Land Council
LGA	Local Government Area
REZ	Renewable Energy Zone
SCWF	Spicers Creek Wind Farm
SEARs	Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements
SEP	Stakeholder Engagement Plan
SIA	Social Impact Assessment

Term	Description
SQE	Squadron Energy
SSD	State Significant Development
VPA	Voluntary Planning Agreement

### 1.3 Our approach to stakeholder and community engagement

Stakeholders vary and may include host and neighbouring landowners, local communities, community interest groups, First Nations groups, government representatives, industry groups, and media. Our approach is multi-faceted, to ensure comprehensive stakeholder and community engagement across all groups, utilising the skills of our various teams. Landowners and hosts will most likely be engaging directly with project teams. Broader stakeholder groups may be engaging with a wider group of staff with expertise, including First Nations engagement, government relations, media and communications and community engagement.

We begin our engagement process by undertaking robust stakeholder mapping and analysis to understand the needs of the community and build relationships from project inception.

This allows us to work collaboratively with communities and stakeholders to identify impacts, mitigate these, and also identify mutually beneficial legacy opportunities in areas where we locate our projects.

### 1.4 Our Values

SQE's values underpin and guide our work.

**Table 2: Squadron Energy's values**

Value	
Humility	Frugality
Courage and Determination	Generating Ideas
Empowerment	Integrity
Enthusiasm	Safety
Family	Stretch Targets

### 1.5 Enquiries and complaints

Throughout the project lifecycle, stakeholders and members of the community have the opportunity to contact SQE via a project-specific email address and phone number.

**Senior Project Manager:** Trish McDonald

**Email:** [spicerscreekwind@squadronenergy.com](mailto:spicerscreekwind@squadronenergy.com)

**Phone:** [1800 095 754](tel:1800095754)

The project team will respond to and resolve all complaints and enquiries as soon as possible. SQE tracks complaints, enquiries and action items. Our [complaints management procedure](#) outlines how we will manage any complaints.

## 1.6 Government and Industry Guidelines

This plan has been prepared considering the following:

- International Association for Public Participation (IAP2), (2018), Spectrum of Engagement (currently under review)
- United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP), (September 2007)
- Department of Planning, Infrastructure and Environment (DPIE), (February 2023), Social Impact Assessment Guideline for State Significant Projects
- Department of Planning, Infrastructure and Environment (DPIE), (March 2024), Undertaking Engagement Guidelines for State Significant Projects
- Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI), (November 2024), Wind Energy Guideline: Guidance for State Significant Wind Energy Development

The focus of our engagement adheres to guidelines from two key organisations - the Clean Energy Council, and the International Association of Public Participation.

### 1.6.1 Clean Energy Council

The Clean Energy Council has prepared Community Engagement Guidelines (CEC, 2018) which outline four principles which underpin best practice community engagement. In addition to incorporating our company values in our engagement with the community, SQE is committed to these best practice principles of openness, inclusiveness, responsiveness, and accountability.

We also reference CEC's document; A Guide to Benefit Sharing Options for Renewable Energy Projects. SQE is also a signatory to the CEC's Best Practice Charter for Renewable Energy Developments. The Best Practice Charter is a set of voluntary commitments by Clean Energy Council members to engage respectfully with the communities in which they plan and operate projects, to be sensitive to environmental and cultural values and to make a positive contribution to the regions in which they operate.

### 1.6.2 International Association of Public Participation

Our approach to engagement is also informed by the Public Participation Spectrum developed by the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2). The IAP2 Spectrum outlines levels of engagement to suit varying degrees of impacts in the community.



Figure 1: IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation (currently under review)

		Increasing impact on the decision				
		Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Public participation goal		To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
Promise to the public		We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision. We will seek your feedback on drafts and proposals.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work together with you to formulate solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

## 1.7 Stakeholder Engagement Objectives

Squadron Energy is committed to undertaking genuine and meaningful community and stakeholder engagement and consultation for the project. Success is critical to earning and maintaining social licence within the community. The communication and engagement objectives for SCWF are to:

- seek feedback from the local community regarding the proposed project and integrate this feedback into the project planning and design as far as possible
- keep the community informed about the project, its likely impacts, and likely benefits, through the provision of early, accurate and timely information
- understand the potential social impact of the project to inform and implement mitigation measures
- provide multiple opportunities and mechanisms for meaningful engagement with all stakeholders
- ensure that the team developing the project fully understands the local context, including any local impacts that it may have or opportunities that it could provide; and
- enable a smooth transition from the development to delivery and operational phases, maintaining community links and information.

# 2 The Project

## 2.1 Project context

SCWF is classified as State Significant Development (SSD). As part of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Project, a Social Impact Assessment (SIA) has been prepared in accordance with the SIA Guidelines (DPE, 2023) and associated Technical Supplement which sets mandatory requirements for SIAs conducted in NSW. SCWF was approved by the NSW Independent Planning Commission in October 2024.

### 2.1.1 Central-West Orana Renewable Energy Zone

The NSW Government has set out a plan (Electricity Strategy and Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap) to deliver a number of Renewable Energy Zones (REZ) within NSW. These REZs will play a vital role in delivering affordable, reliable energy generation to help replace the State's existing power stations as they come to their scheduled end of operational life.

Energy Corporation of NSW (EnergyCo) is the statutory authority responsible for leading the delivery of REZs.

The Central-West Orana Renewable Energy Zone (CWO REZ) is the State's first REZ and was formally declared on 5 November 2021. The CWO REZ is approximately 20,000 square kilometres centred on Dubbo, Wellington and Dunedoo. It will unlock 3 gigawatts of new network capacity by the mid-2020s (EnergyCo, 2022).

A REZ involves the coordinated development of new grid infrastructure in energy-rich areas to connect multiple renewable energy generators (such as solar and wind farms) in the same location. The designation of a REZ is intended to result in the development of additional capacity for renewable electricity generation, producing low-cost power for NSW homeowners and business, driving down carbon emissions within the electricity generation sector, and creating job growth and employment opportunities through facilitating significant investment into the regions.

Further information, including interactive maps and project updates are available on EnergyCo's website <https://www.energyco.nsw.gov.au/cwo-rez>

## 2.2 Project site

The project site falls on the land of the Wiradjuri people and is within the Dubbo Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC) area. It is situated approximately 25 km northwest of Gulgong and 30 km northeast of Wellington, within the Central West region of NSW, in the State electorates of Dubbo and Barwon.

The majority of the project site is within the Dubbo Regional Council Local Government Area (LGA) to the west. It is also situated within the Warrumbungle Shire Council LGA to the northeast. Mid-Western Regional Council LGA neighbours the project to the southeast. SCWF is located on the northern side of Gollan Road, within the area bounded by the Golden Highway to the north, Saxa Road to the west and the current CWO REZ transmission corridor to the east. Dapper Nature Reserve adjoins the project site on the southern boundary.

The project site covers an area of approximately 176km<sup>2</sup> and the dominant land use is agriculture - cattle and sheep grazing with some cropping. The area is characterised by rural residences and other agricultural structures, and a small primary school is located to the southeast, outside the project site in Goolma.

The topography of the project site primarily features undulating terrain with ridgelines separating the intervening valleys, with elevation ranging from 360m Australian Height Datum (AHD) to 540m AHD.

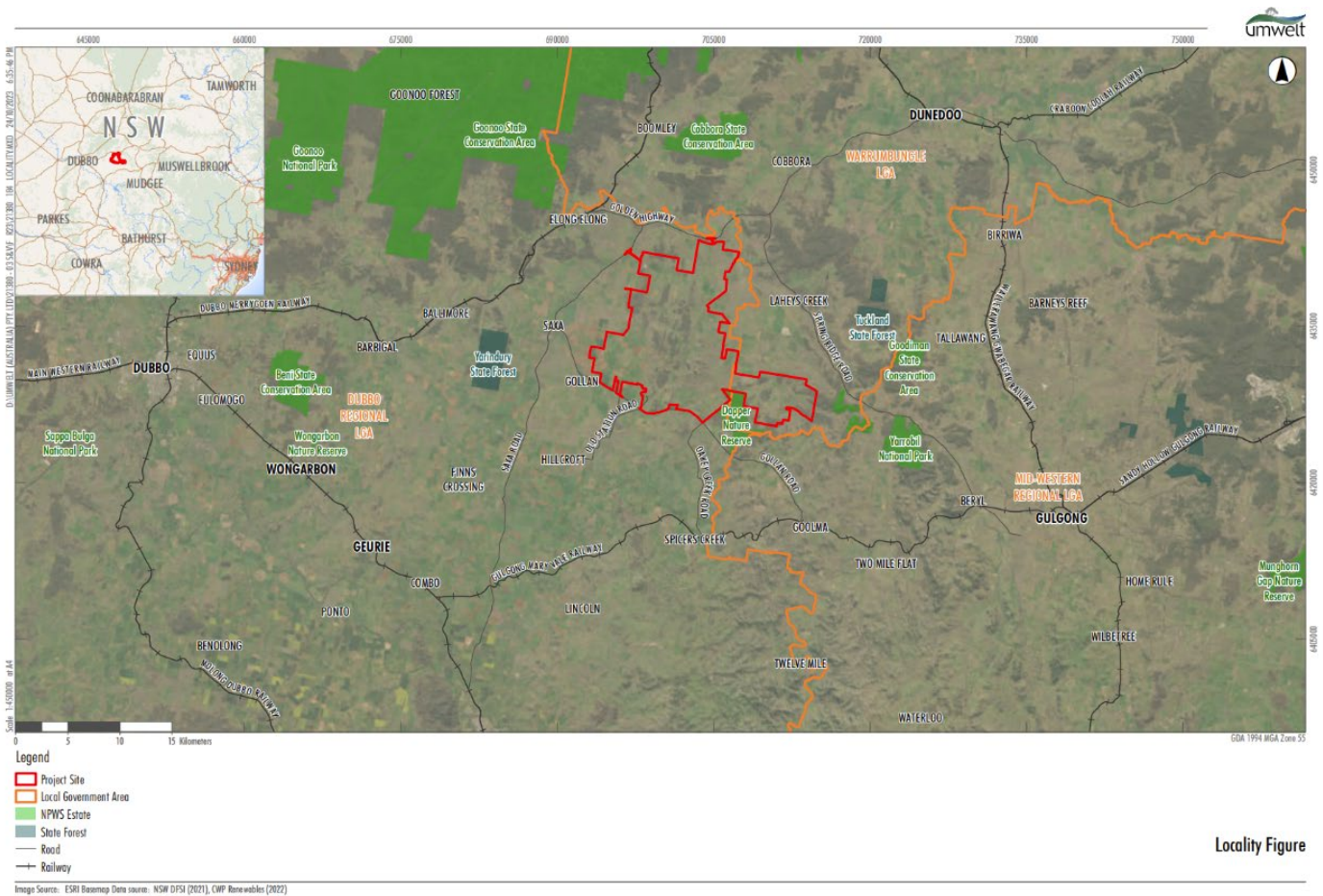
The location is well suited to wind generation due to a reliable wind resource, and low density of rural residential dwellings. The project is strategically located in an area identified by the NSW Government as suitable for renewable energy projects and will assist the NSW government in delivering on the objectives for the Electricity Strategy and the CWO REZ.

There are a number of approved and proposed renewable energy projects (wind, solar and battery storage) surrounding SCWF within the CWO REZ. The closest operating renewable energy project is Bodangora Wind Farm (operated by Iberdrola), approximately 10km southwest of SCWF. SQE's Uungula Wind Farm (approved and in construction) is approximately 30km south of SCWF.

The boundary of the project site in relation to towns, roads, landscape features and local government area boundaries is shown in Figure 2.



Figure 2: Project site map



## 2.3 Project overview

SCWF will generate renewable energy to supply to the people of NSW. The project will have a capacity of approximately 700 megawatts (MW), with the potential to power approximately 397,000 Australian homes.

SCWF has been designed through a comprehensive process that incorporates community and stakeholder feedback and the findings of environmental and social studies to maximise positive social, economic and environmental outcomes, while minimising adverse impacts.

The project includes the construction and operation of up to 117 wind turbines, battery storage and associated facilities including operation and maintenance buildings, roads, civil works, electrical infrastructure and temporary facilities for the construction phase.

The key features of the project include:

- 117 wind turbines with a tip height of up to 256 metres (m)
- electrical connections between the wind turbines and substations and battery storage consisting of a combination of underground cables and overhead powerlines
- substations and transmission connections to connect the turbines and battery storage to the proposed CWO REZ transmission line
- battery storage facility
- other associated infrastructure including access tracks, operation and maintenance buildings
- temporary construction facilities
- targeted road network upgrades to facilitate delivery of wind turbine components to the site as required.

### 2.3.1 Indicative project timeline

The timeframes for the milestones to date for SCWF, as well as the indicative timelines as the project moves through development are outlined in Table 3.

**Table 3: Indicative Project timeline**

Time	Milestone
2018	Project inception
2019	Commencement of initial landowner discussions
2021	Key preliminary constraint studies, community engagement and public announcement of project
2022	Project entered the NSW planning system, Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) issued, EIS and SIA preparation
2023	EIS submission and exhibition, preparation of Submissions Report
2024	State and Commonwealth project approval
2025	Detailed design and secondary approvals
2026	Construction expected to begin

## 2.4 Community overview

The communities nearest to SCWF consist of Goolma, Gollan, Elong Elong and Dunedoo. These communities are small and sparsely populated. The nearest regional centre is Dubbo, approximately 45 minutes drive. The land in the region is mostly rural agricultural land used for grain, sheep/cattle farming. The median age for these localities ranges from 40 to 54. The NSW median average age is 39.

16.6% of residents in the Dubbo Regional LGA identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, which is higher than the NSW average of 3.4%. The median income for the Dubbo Regional LGA is \$837, compared with \$813 in broader NSW.

**Table 4: State Suburb data 2021 Australian Census**

State Suburb	Goolma	Gollan	Elong Elong	Dunedoo
People (no.)	95	109	142	1097
Male (%)	57.9	52.8	43.3	49.5
Female (%)	43.2	47.2	56.7	50.5
Median Age	54	40	43	51
Aboriginal residence (no.)	-	9	14	97
Most common employment	-	Grain, sheep/cattle farming Sheep/beef farming Beef cattle farming (specialist)	Beef cattle farming (specialist)	Beef cattle farming (specialist) Sheep farming (specialist) Combined primary and secondary education

Source: ABS, Census 2021

Table 5 provides the 2021 Australian Census data for the Dubbo Regional Council and Warrumbungle Shire LGAs.

The closest township to the project is Dunedoo, within the Warrumbungle Shire LGA and is located at the junction of the Golden and Castlereagh Highways.

Table 5: Local Government Area data

LGA	Dubbo Regional	Warrumbungle Shire
People (no.)	54,911	9,225
Male (%)	49.4	50.0
Female (%)	50.6	50.0
Median Age	36	49
Aboriginal residence (no.)	9,101	917
Australian Born (%)	81.5	81.7

Source: ABS, Census 2021

## 3 Stakeholder identification and analysis

### 3.1 Stakeholder identification process

At the beginning of the project, we identify all stakeholders who would be affected and compile demographic insights about the local community. This enables us to gain a comprehensive understanding of the stakeholders and communities surrounding our projects. To gain this understanding, we research using census data and may undertake local community research to inform our understanding of local community characteristics. During this process, we also identify the following:

- relevant political representatives at all three levels of government
- local businesses and the types of industries in the area
- local print media publications
- other local publications such as community newsletters
- local radio and television media
- council list of community groups
- government offices present in the area
- emergency services nearest to the project
- sensitive receivers
- any significant historical or recurring events in the area.

SQE team members also frequently visit the area to understand the local community and confirm and expand on the information found during the project feasibility stage. The project team have been actively engaging with landholders since 2019.

### 3.2 Stakeholder overview

The key stakeholder groups identified for SCWF are listed in Table 6:

Table 6: Identified stakeholders

Stakeholder Group	Stakeholders
Host Landholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• landholders with the potential to host wind turbines and/or Project infrastructure</li> </ul>
Neighbouring landholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• neighbouring dwellings within 6 km of potential turbine locations</li> </ul>

Stakeholder Group	Stakeholders
<b>Communities within the Social Locality</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• local community:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Goolma</li> <li>- Gulgong</li> <li>- Dunedoo</li> <li>- Elong Elong</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Government - State</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crown Lands</li> <li>• Department of Finance, Services, and Innovation – Telco Authority</li> <li>• Department of Planning, Industry and Environment including:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Biodiversity, Conservation and Science Directorate (BCSD)</li> <li>- Energy Corporation</li> <li>- Water Group</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Department of Primary Industries – Agriculture and Fisheries (DPI)</li> <li>• Environment Protection Authority (EPA)</li> <li>• Fire and Rescue NSW</li> <li>• Heritage NSW</li> <li>• NSW Rural Fire Service</li> <li>• Regional NSW – Mining, Exploration and Geoscience (MEG)</li> <li>• Transport for NSW (Transport)</li> <li>• Energy Corporation</li> <li>• WaterNSW</li> <li>• NSW Energy Sector Board</li> </ul>
<b>Government - Federal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Airservices Australia</li> <li>• Bureau of Meteorology (BOM)</li> <li>• Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA)</li> <li>• Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW)</li> <li>• Department of Defence</li> <li>• Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO)</li> </ul>
<b>Local Council</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dubbo Regional Council</li> <li>• Warrumbungle Shire Council</li> <li>• Mid-Western Regional Council <i>[note: neighbouring Local Government Area]</i></li> </ul>
<b>Government - Elected Representatives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Federal Member for the Calare, Andrew Gee MP</li> <li>• Federal Member for the Parkes, Mark Coulton MP</li> <li>• NSW Member for Dubbo, Dugald Saunders MP</li> <li>• NSW Member for Barwon, Roy Butler MP</li> </ul>
<b>Community interest groups and community services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dunedoo Lions Club</li> <li>• Mid Macquarie Landcare</li> <li>• Wellington Lions Club</li> <li>• Geurie Lions Club</li> <li>• Central West Environment Group</li> <li>• Regional Development Australia, Orana</li> <li>• Rural Fire Service – Gollan, Elong Elong, Geurie</li> <li>• South Dubbo Rotary Club</li> </ul>
<b>Schools</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Goolma Public School</li> </ul>
<b>First Nations groups</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CWO REZ First Nations Working Group</li> <li>• NSW Aboriginal Land Council</li> <li>• Mudgee Land Council</li> </ul>

Stakeholder Group	Stakeholders
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wellington Land Council</li> <li>Dubbo Land Council</li> <li>Three Rivers Aboriginal Regional Assembly</li> <li>Wellington Aboriginal Action Party</li> <li>Registered Aboriginal Parties</li> </ul>
<b>Industry and local business</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wellington Business Chamber (not currently active)</li> <li>Gulgong Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>Dubbo Chamber of Commerce</li> </ul>
<b>Other stakeholders</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wellington Correctional Centre</li> <li>Orange Minerals (Exploration Licence holder, intersects project site)</li> <li>Monzonite Metals (Exploration Licence holder, intersects project site)</li> <li>Alkane Resources (Exploration Licence holder, adjacent to project site)</li> </ul>

### 3.3 First Nations engagement

SQE takes a place-based approach to engagement, understanding that different communities and regions have diverse cultural practices, histories and stories. We collaborate with First Nations stakeholders to identify opportunities and challenges during project planning and development.

SQE has a dedicated First Nations engagement team. The First Nations engagement team members work with project teams to provide guidance on culturally sensitive engagement and to develop a tailored approach to engaging with First Nations Stakeholders.

SQE will engage with First Nations stakeholders in accordance with the relevant guidelines including:

- First Nations Guidelines: Central West Orana
- First Nations Guidelines, Increasing income and employment opportunities from electricity infrastructure projects (NSW Government, 2022)
- Guide to Investigating, Assessing and Reporting on Aboriginal Heritage in NSW (NSW Government, 2011)
- The Code of Practice for Archaeological Investigation of Aboriginal Objects in New South Wales (NSW Government, 2010) and,
- The Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Consultation Requirements for Proponents 2010 (NSW Government, 2010).

SQE:

- carries out detailed stakeholder mapping to understand all representative groups in the region.
- seeks to build relationships as early as possible with First Nations Stakeholders prior to any formal engagement and consultation process.
- is informed about cultural practices and protocols which may impact engagement methods and timelines; and
- engages comprehensively with indigenous communities as early as possible, in a way that is meaningful, suits the ways in which they want to be engaged and the frequency of that engagement.

As part of the Social Impact Assessment Process (SIA), SQE works with First Nations stakeholders to:

- apply relevant protocols for Aboriginal knowledge
- acknowledge and assess both tangible and intangible forms of cultural heritage
- engage traditional owners or custodians who can speak for Country
- allow Aboriginal decision-making processes to function effectively



- avoid conflict between engagement activities and cultural practices
- ensure that engagement is undertaken by people with appropriate skills and experience.

The SQE team released their Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan in April 2024. The plan includes multiple items that will review and measure SQE's engagement with First Nations stakeholders.

The SQE team released their [Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan](#) in April 2024. The plan includes multiple items that will review and measure SQE's engagement with First Nations stakeholders.

### 3.4 Stakeholder engagement activities

SQE has a dedicated Stakeholder Engagement and Community Relations team. These team members work with project teams to provide guidance on community and stakeholder engagement and to develop a tailored approach to engaging with communities and stakeholders.

Stakeholder engagement is ongoing during the lifecycle of the project and the project team will continue to engage with the community, regularly through face-to-face meetings, phone calls and emails.

Table 7 outlines a snap-shot of the key stakeholder engagement activity completed to date.

**Table 7: Stakeholder engagement activities**

Date	Engagement activities
September 2019 to May 2021	Landowner meetings to discuss wind farms, feasibility investigations, appropriate buffer distances and potential involvement in the wind farm
May 2021	Project website launch, community newsletter and community survey
May 2021	Community drop-in session at Goolma
July 2021	Launch community sponsorship program
August 2021	Ongoing landholder/neighbour meetings
September 2021	Community newsletter
October 2021	Installation of first wind monitoring mast
November 2021	Landholder/neighbour meetings to discuss proposed project layout
March 2022	Community newsletter
April 2022	Community drop-in sessions at Gollan and Goolma
May 2022	Community survey for SIA and EIS
June 2022	Sponsorship of 25 TAFE placements
August 2022	Community site visit for host landowners to Crudine Ridge Wind Farm (operational SQE wind site)
September 2022	Meetings with stakeholders to discuss education and training, housing and First Nations participation
October 2022	Community newsletter
Late 2022/early 2023	Social Impact Assessment engagement and community survey
February 2023	Community newsletter
February 2023	Stall at Dunedoo Show
February/March 2023	Community Drop-In Sessions at Gollan, Goolma and Dunedoo to discuss EIS results
April/May 2023	Ongoing discussions with hosts and neighbours
July/August 2023	Consultation during EIS exhibition

<b>November 2023</b>	Response to community and stakeholder submissions on the EIS through the Submissions Report
<b>April 2024</b>	Community newsletter
<b>June/July 2024</b>	Project updates
<b>August 2024</b>	IPC Public Meeting
<b>November 2024</b>	Project update - NSW project approval
<b>Indicative future activity:</b>	
Ongoing discussions with Councils, regulatory agencies, hosts, neighbours and local community on project status, timing and next steps.	
Announcements regarding benefit sharing program, construction commencement, contact details and issues associated with construction management plans.	

### 3.5 Stakeholder engagement by development stage

Table 83: Stakeholder engagement during development for key project stages

Project Stage	Engagement Objective	Engagement Activities	Target Stakeholders
<b>Site selection</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>identify local landholders within the potential project area</li> <li>introduce the project concept and obtain initial feedback about the prospect of a windfarm</li> <li>seek agreements regarding access for further project feasibility investigations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>phone calls</li> <li>face-to-face visits</li> <li>introductory letters</li> <li>gather contact details for future communications</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>potential host landowners</li> <li>potential neighbouring landowners</li> </ul>
<b>Project feasibility</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>engage with landholders about the proposed project area</li> <li>introduce the wind farm development process</li> <li>identify community values, potential constraints and opportunities in the project area to inform the design process</li> <li>identify and appropriately respond to community concerns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>face-to-face visits</li> <li>one-on-one meetings and visuals tools to help inform discussions</li> <li>email or letter updates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>potential host landowners</li> <li>potential neighbouring landowners</li> <li>local Councils</li> <li>Government-elected representatives</li> </ul>
<b>Planning and Approvals –</b> (Scoping Phase, EIS Phase)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>maintain communication channels for enquiries and information</li> <li>continue to proactively gather feedback to inform the project design</li> <li>identify and appropriately respond to community concerns</li> <li>keep communications flowing to update the community</li> <li>collect data and insights and prepare the Social Impact Assessment (SIA)</li> <li>inform community of a formal opportunity of to express their views on the proposed project</li> <li>educate community regarding outcomes of the EIS and technical studies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>as above for project feasibility phase, plus:</li> <li>establish and maintain project website</li> <li>community information sessions</li> <li>community surveys</li> <li>project briefings for local councils and government agencies</li> <li>exploration of community partnerships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>all stakeholder groups</li> </ul>

Project Stage	Engagement Objective	Engagement Activities	Target Stakeholders
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>address community and stakeholder submissions on the EIS</li> <li>inform the community of the progress of the approvals process and outcomes</li> <li>educate community regarding the project-specific benefit sharing process</li> <li></li> </ul>		
<b>Construction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>reduce community concerns by open dialogue and continuing to acknowledge and respond to issues in a timely manner</li> <li>demonstrate commitment to the wellbeing of the community</li> <li>avoid, minimise, and remediate impacts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>as above for project feasibility phase, plus:</li> <li>maintain and update website</li> <li>complaints management mechanism</li> <li>community partnerships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>all stakeholder groups</li> </ul>
<b>Commissioning and operation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>be an active member of the community</li> <li>strengthen collaboration through partnerships</li> <li>build a sense of community pride in a well-run wind farm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>as above for construction phase, plus:</li> <li>Operational Community Engagement Plan</li> <li>evaluation of engagement and improvements as required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>all stakeholder groups</li> </ul>
<b>Decommissioning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>communicate decommissioning and rehabilitation process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>host landholder and neighbour briefings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>host landowners</li> <li>neighbours</li> <li>local Councils</li> <li>State and Commonwealth government agencies</li> <li>Community interest groups e.g., Landcare</li> <li>Aboriginal groups</li> </ul>

## 4 Potential issues and opportunities

The SCWF Team has been engaging with local landholders and stakeholders since 2019, seeking to build relationships and understand stakeholder perspectives and needs in the region through meetings with local landowners, neighbouring property owners, Councils, local service providers and relevant Government agencies. Feedback received during this ongoing engagement has been considered and used to inform the refinement of the project design and has assisted in development of management and mitigation measures.

### 4.1 Potential social impacts and benefits

A number of perceived impacts and benefits relating to the Project that have been raised throughout the engagement process and during the preparation of the Social Impact Assessment Scoping Report (Umwelt, 2022) and Social Impact Assessment (Umwelt, 2023).

Stakeholders were most concerned about:

- the potential disruption to existing farming practices
- incoming construction workforce causing strain on local services

- public safety due to increased traffic
- potential decline in property values.

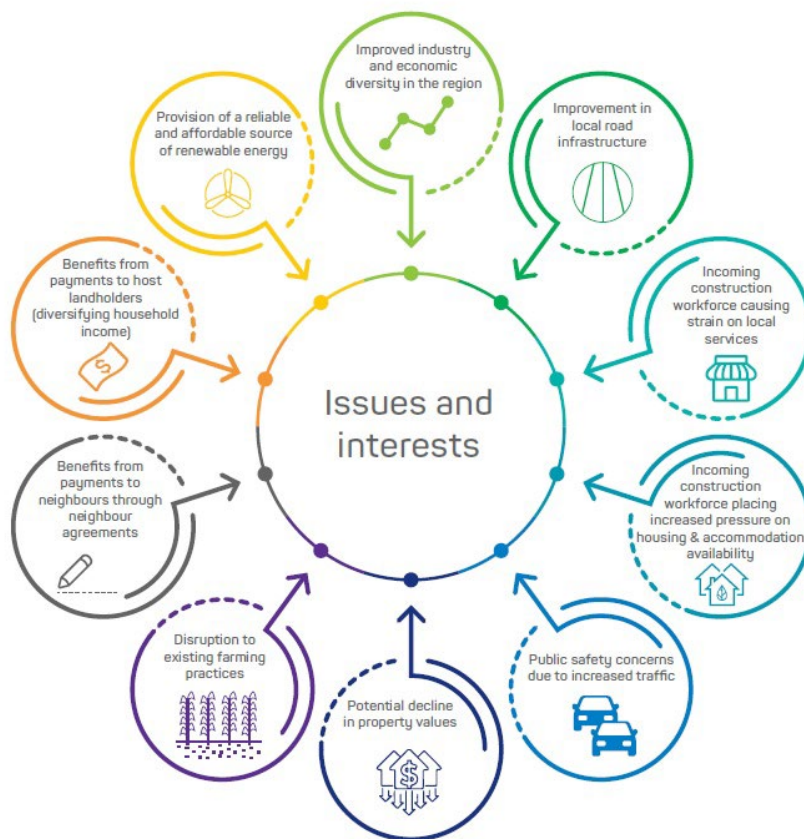
Potential visual impacts were also identified in the early stages of the project.

Perceived positive impacts associated with the project included:

- benefits from payments to host landholders as the most positive contribution
- improvements in local road infrastructure
- provision of a reliable and affordable source of renewable energy.

These issues are represented graphically in Figure 3.

**Figure 3: Potential social impacts and benefits from stakeholder engagement to date**



## 4.2 Potential mitigation measures and opportunities

The project will aim to minimise potential negative social impacts and enhance social benefits for the community. As part of the SIA prepared and submitted with the project EIS, a number of existing mitigation measures were identified, as well as some opportunities for additional measures. This list will be reviewed and updated as the project progresses.

Tables 9 and 10 summarise the main impacts and benefits identified by stakeholders during engagement for the Social Impact Assessment.

Table 9: SIA – key impacts and mitigation measures

Social impact category	Potential social impact	Existing and potential mitigation measures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Way of Life</b></li> <li>• <b>Livelihoods</b></li> <li>• <b>Accessibility</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• potential disruption to existing farming practices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• continued implementation of landholder and negotiated agreements</li> <li>• continue to consider landholder needs and activities in construction and operation</li> <li>• ongoing stakeholder engagement</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Accessibility</b></li> <li>• <b>Livelihoods</b></li> <li>• <b>Way of Life</b></li> <li>• <b>Community</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• incoming construction workforce causing strain on local services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• develop Employment and Accommodation Strategy.</li> <li>• continue to foster the use of local contractors and suppliers</li> <li>• promote training and upskilling opportunities in the local community</li> <li>• coordinate efforts and liaise with key stakeholders to coordinate provision of accommodation and other services or suppliers</li> <li>• Contribution to strategic projects through planning agreements with host councils</li> <li>• Working with EnergyCo on the access scheme payment framework and the contributions to community benefits (administered by EnergyCo)</li> <li>• collaboration with other renewable energy proponents</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Accessibility</b></li> <li>• <b>Surroundings</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• public safety due to increased traffic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• development and implementation a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), including traffic management measures</li> <li>• complete road upgrade works as identified by project traffic assessment</li> <li>• contribution to local road maintenance through planning agreements with local councils</li> <li>• develop detailed planning transport routes with public safety considerations and information disclosure, notifying residents, considering any sensitive user groups</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Way of life</b></li> <li>• <b>Livelihoods</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• potential decline in property values</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• further engagement and ongoing open, transparent, and accessible communication with host and proximal landholders, and broader community</li> <li>• community benefit sharing including ongoing targeted community sponsorship program and planning agreements with local councils</li> <li>• continued implementation of host and neighbour agreements</li> </ul>

Source: Spicers Creek Wind Farm Social Impact Assessment, (Umwelt, 2023).



**Table 40: SIA summary – key benefits and enhancement measures**

Social impact category	Potential social benefit	Existing and potential enhancement measures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Livelihoods</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• benefits from payments to host and proximal landholders providing the ability to diversify household income</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• continue open, transparent, and accessible communication regarding host landholder and negotiated agreements</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Accessibility</b></li> <li>• <b>Livelihoods</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• improvements in local road infrastructure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• indirect benefits to local infrastructure and services through the construction and operation phases, including through planning agreements with local councils</li> <li>• payment of network infrastructure access fees to EnergyCo for the CWO REZ which will include a component to fund further community benefits</li> <li>• continue to foster the use of local contractors and suppliers</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Accessibility</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provision of a reliable and affordable source of renewable energy</li> </ul>	

Source: Spicers Creek Wind Farm Social Impact Assessment, (Umwelt, 2023).

Further mitigation and management measures will be considered and implemented as SCWF progresses into construction and operations.

## 5 Community benefit sharing

As the ultimate owner and operator of our projects, SQE is committed to being a positive contributor to the communities where we work. We share the benefits of our projects by supporting communities over the long term. We do this through a range of opportunities such as community benefit funds, neighbour agreements, voluntary planning agreements, community sponsorships and grant initiatives.

We recognise that each community is different and through partnerships with Councils and local groups, and consultation and engagement with the community, we tailor benefits at each project to make a positive lasting contribution to each region.

As part of our stakeholder engagement process, we identify potential community benefit sharing opportunities based on community needs. We understand that each community is different, and not all community benefit sharing initiatives will be suitable. By engaging early, we can develop benefit sharing offerings alongside the community, resulting in better uptake and more community buy-in.

SQE strives to be an active participant in building community capacity at the local level and across our full project portfolio. We do this in many ways, as outlined in Table 11 with examples of SQE community benefit sharing for SCWF and across our projects.

**Table 11: Community benefit sharing initiatives**

<b>Community sponsorship program</b>	<p>Each of our projects has a community sponsorship program which provides funds or in-kind support to community organisations and events in the local project area. Local community groups are encouraged to apply for sponsorship via <a href="#">SQE's website</a>.</p> <p>Examples of SCWF sponsorships are in Table 12.</p>
<b>Voluntary Planning Agreements</b>	<p>We enter into voluntary planning agreements (VPAs) for our projects with local councils. A planning agreement can help deliver or fund public infrastructure, amenities, and services for the benefit of the public within the council areas in which we operate. It may include a community benefit fund component.</p> <p>In line with Dubbo Regional Council's Renewable Energy Benefit Framework and Warrumbungle Shire Council's Renewable Energy Benefit Policy, the total value of the</p>

	planning agreements for SCWF will be 1.5% of the Capital Investment Value (CIV) of the project to be constructed. Division of the funds will be between the Councils based on the number of turbines within each LGA, and in accordance with the objectives and community benefits outlined in the respective policies.
<b>Dubbo Advanced Wastewater Treatment Plant</b>	Recognising the importance of water security, SQE is working with Dubbo Regional Council through a public private partnership to build a new advanced wastewater treatment facility at Dubbo Sewerage Treatment Plant. SQE will fund the facility to deliver water security to the region and create legacy infrastructure for the wider community. The facility will treat up to 700 megalitres (ML) of water per year, with up to 250 ML per year being used for construction purposes.
<b>EnergyCo community benefit programs</b>	As part of the CWO REZ, the project will pay network infrastructure access fees to EnergyCo which will include a component to fund community benefit and employment programs.
<b>Telecommunications</b>	Reliable connectivity is a challenge for many rural and regional communities across Australia. Following a successful trial program at SCWF, we are now rolling out a connectivity improvement program for residents near our Ungula Wind Farm project. The program will boost network coverage through a fixed wireless network for landowners and neighbours, making stronger network coverage accessible at city-based prices. We are also piloting ag-tech grants as part of the program to enhance landowner's access to innovative agricultural technology to support their farming operations. We are looking at how we can roll out the program to our other wind farm projects where it's feasible, in consultation with nearby landowners and communities.
<b>Employment and business opportunities</b>	SCWF will contribute a net economic stimulus of around \$410 million over the 30 year operating life. It will generate 840 Full Time Equivalent construction jobs and 47 operational jobs (including both direct and indirect employment).  SQE has a dedicated Economic Development Facilitator based in Dubbo to assist with identifying and maximising the local benefits from SCWF, including reaching economic development and workforce targets and engaging local suppliers and businesses.
<b>Training and skills development</b>	Engaging with local communities allows us to identify opportunities for skills development. For example, SQE has collaborated with TAFE NSW to create and deliver a digital Microskill course: "Introduction to the wind energy industry." We provided subject matter experts to create the lessons, and the course is now available to people interested in upskilling or cross skilling into the renewable energy sector.
<b>First Nations employment</b>	SQE is leading the industry on First Nations employment, with a First Nations engagement team focusing on creating pathways to employment and business opportunities. At the Ungula Wind Farm, we are working with an industry partner to fund and deliver two trainee wind turbine technicians, providing them with more than 30 years of employment opportunity. Engagement with local First Nations communities can help us to identify opportunities for First Nations economic development, skills and employment.

## 5.1 Community Sponsorship Program

Since July 2021, SCWF has operated a community sponsorship program which provides funds or in-kind support to community organisations and events in the local area. The initiatives supported to by SCWF date include:

**Table 52: SCWF Community sponsorship funding examples**

Community Group	Application Details
<b>Geurie Lions Club</b>	Equipment for new catering van
<b>Goolma Amenities Committee</b>	New mower for grounds of community area in Goolma
<b>Spicers Creek Community Church Association</b>	Spicers Creek Community Church building
<b>Gollan Hall Committee</b>	Gollan Hall Community Christmas Events
<b>Tunes on the Turf Community Event</b>	Sponsorship of community event Dunedoo

Community Group	Application Details
Dunedoo Sports Club	Upgrade of bathrooms etc at Sports Club
Geurie Lions Club	Signwriting on catering van, including sponsor names
Gulgong Fishing Club	Contribution to fishlings to stock Macquarie River
Goolma Cricket Club	Contribution to player uniforms for three seasons
Wellington Golf Club	End of year function following flooding
Geurie Goats Rugby Club	Team sponsorship and support for special game day for mental health awareness
Dunedoo Central School	Contribution to Art for Youth event for primary and secondary students
Gulgong Arts Council	School holiday art, dance and photography program
Rural Women's Day	Guest speaker event in Dubbo
Dubbo Waratahs Sports Aboriginal Corporation	Point of sale devices for canteen facilities
Dunedoo Cricket Club	Upgrade of cricket pitch surface
Cudgegong Jump Club	Sponsorship of jump competition
Dunedoo Touch Football Association	Contribution to team uniforms
Dunedoo Junior League & Netball Association	Contribution to team uniforms
Dunedoo Central P&C	Outdoor furniture
Dunedoo Amateur Swimming Club	Shade sail and towels
Dunedoo Preschool Kindergarten	Fundraising prize

## 6 Review

This plan will be reviewed and updated annually to reflect the progress of SCWF, and stakeholder engagement activity completed throughout the year. It is not intended for this document to be static, as engagement activity is ongoing.

SQE is committed to continually reviewing and updating our engagement approach to ensure we build long-term and meaningful relationships with the communities that host our wind farms.

## 7 References

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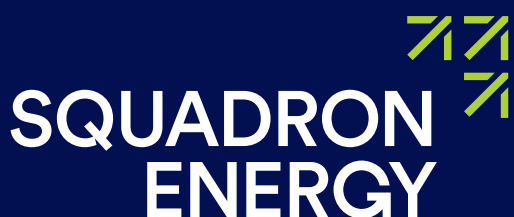
**Trish McDonald**  
**Senior Project Manager**  
1800 095 754  
[info@spicerscreekwindfarm.com.au](mailto:info@spicerscreekwindfarm.com.au)

Squadron Energy is Australia's leading renewable energy company. Proudly Australian owned, our mission is to be a driving force in Australia's transition to a clean energy future by providing green power to our customers.

We develop, operate and own renewable energy assets in Australia, with 1.1 gigawatts (GW) of renewable energy in operation and a development pipeline of 20GW.

With proven experience and expertise across the project lifecycle, we work with local communities and our customers to lead the transition to Australia's clean energy future.

Squadron Energy acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia. We pay our respects to Elders past, present, and emerging.



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