



Project Update – December 2022

5 min read

COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

Lake Lyell Pumped Hydro Energy Storage

Welcome to the first Community Newsletter, giving more information on the proposed Lake Lyell Pumped Hydro project. We look forward to bringing you updates on this significant project as it progresses.

Helping NSW to net zero emissions by 2050

New South Wales is rapidly transitioning its energy supply to renewable energy, to reduce emissions and provide cleaner power for customers.

In line with this, EnergyAustralia is investigating the feasibility of pumped hydro energy storage on land it owns near Lithgow. This project will use water from purpose-built Lake Lyell reservoir to operate a hydro electric storage and generation facility – capable of supplying up to 335 megawatts (MW) of energy. That’s enough to power over 150,000¹ households or 70% of the Central West region.

This project is important as it will help ensure the reliability and security of our power supply as we transition to using more energy from variable renewable sources such as wind and solar. It will also play a large part in establishing Lithgow’s future as a renewable energy hub.



Where is the project at?

EnergyAustralia is currently in the early stages of investigating the feasibility of pumped hydro energy storage. There’s still a lot of work to do before we can consider applying for Planning Approval. The graphic below shows the many steps significant developments such as this go through – and where public

feedback can help shape the final project’s design.

Project site geological investigations have recently commenced. Technical and specialist studies are needed to assess any potential project impacts and to shape the project’s design.



¹ Based on a POE10 demand of 1.97kW for EnergyAustralia’s portfolio of NSW residential customers at 350MW of generation. Information current as at October 2021

As an established and responsible energy assets operator, EnergyAustralia is a signatory to the Clean Energy Council's Best Practice Charter for Renewable Energy. EnergyAustralia has committed to adhere to the 10 major principles outlined in the charter, engaging respectfully with communities in the area, being sensitive to environmental and cultural values and making a positive contribution to the region.

What we've heard

Earlier this year, EnergyAustralia held community information sessions in several local towns. We're grateful for the time and effort residents made to meet and talk with us.

We've heard via these sessions and other engagement activities how Lake Lyell is valued within the region for its biodiversity, visual attributes and recreational benefits.

As planning for the Lake Lyell pumped hydro project proceeds, we will continue to consult on how this project can best co-exist with public use and minimise potential visual and environmental impacts. It's important to note that development of a pumped hydro energy project is likely to extend the longevity of the Lake's operations. We are committed to maintaining it as a safe and publicly accessible facility.



Site activities

A geotechnical investigation program has commenced after receiving approval from Lithgow City Council to conduct this work. This program will assess the underlying geology of the area and inform the engineering design of the project. EnergyAustralia estimates these works will take 3-6 months, with approximately 20 workers investigating the suitability of the site for development on EnergyAustralia-owned land. This area is now closed to the public – for safety and environmental quality purposes.

Further information can be found on our project website.

Frequently asked questions

Isn't Lake Lyell a public asset?

Lake Lyell was purpose built in 1982 to supply water to the Mt Piper and Wallerawang power stations. Since taking ownership, EnergyAustralia continues to operate and maintain the lake and its infrastructure.

What effects will there be on recreational use of the lake and surrounding areas?

We know that Lake Lyell, Mt Walker and the surrounding areas are popular recreational locations for the community. We'd like that to continue. In consultation with the community, we are looking at ways to minimise environmental and social impacts, and identify opportunities as we refine the design.

Will there be opportunity for local employment?

Lithgow has deep experience in the electricity generation sector, so we are committed to working with local businesses and suppliers as a priority when sourcing labour, materials, goods and services.

Where can I access more information?

Information on this project is maintained on our website, lakelyellpumpedhydro.com.au. We'll also be hosting further drop-in days in the New Year to provide further information and access to our project team. As we're only in the early stages of project investigations, some details, like the design of the reservoir and water impacts are not yet known. We will continue to share this information with the community as we progress.

We're here to help

Got a question or want to provide feedback? Interested in having a member of our project team talk to your community group?

✉ community@energyaustralia.com.au

☎ 1800 574 947

🌐 lakelyellpumpedhydro.com.au



Supported by



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