
From: Amanda Bowman
Sent: Saturday, 17 May 2025 10:29 AM
To: Portfolio Committee 4
Subject: Attention: Frances Arguelles
Attachments: ACEREZ Meeting 23.07.24.docx; Energy Co Flyer 15Jan25.pdf; ACEREZ 08112024 Mandy and Jim Bowman1 (3).pdf; ACEREZ 15112024 Mandy and Jim Bowman 2 (1).pdf; Notes to ACEREZ CEO.docx; ACEREZ Monthly Construction Email Update - March 2025.pdf; ACEREZ 030325 Mandy and Jim Bowman (1).pdf; Trees different Angle.jpg; Trees being Removed.jpg; Trees Riverbed.jpg; Talbragar River Bridge 5.12.2010.JPG; Merotherie Aug22flood.jpg; Leo Nott Bridge 2022.jpg; Talbragar River foreground Cainbil Creek further away 5.12.2010.JPG; Talbragar River crossing Leo Nott Bridge 5.12.2010.JPG; Insurance Council of Australia Farm Insurance and Energy Infrastructure.pdf

Good morning Frances,

It was so nice to meet you and the members of the Committee that attended our property 'Merotherie' on Thursday afternoon. As per our conversation please find attached the notes I used for my presentation and copies of the photos I presented. Also attached is a flyer from the Insurance Council of Australia. Also I have sent various minutes from ACEREZ and Energy Co asking ongoing questions about Public Liability Insurance.

Notes re Energy Co Flyer 15Jan2025 – you will note on the map the entrance to the camp site is along the Merotherie Road from the Golden Highway to Birriwa Bus Route South, then enter the construction site off Birriwa Bus Route South. The trucks are now entering through the gates off Merotherie Road and the northern end of the construction site (where we mentioned to the Committee the endangered grass was located). You will note on the ACEREZ Monthly Construction Update Dated March 2025 the entrance to the site has been altered to include the gates at the northern end of the Site. You will also note how the site looked when construction first started, then what you observed on Thursday during your visit.

On 12th May 2025, Jim and I met with the outgoing CEO of ACEREZ (Trevor Armstrong) and met the new CEO (Steve Masters) – attached our concerns.

I look forward to further correspondence with you regarding this matter.

Kind regards

Amanda Bowman

Concerns and Questions

1. Trespassing on Private Property – this has already occurred! Policing of traffic on local roads. It is not up to the landholders to police the traffic movement – GPS in vehicles?
2. Fire Risk – our property has the hub and workers camp on south eastern side and Solar project on western side. How will you reduce fire risk? Will there be fire fighting access for RFS and will you have crews on site and trained to put out bush fires? Evacuation plan for Camp – will this impact the local people that already have their evacuation plans in place?
3. There will be 1700 people living within 6kms of our home (twice the population of Dunedoo). Mobile Phone service – impact on local community – needs to be upgraded to handle volume
4. There is already a lack of Emergency Services in this area...we will need further Police, Ambulance, Doctors, Nursing staff – how will that be addressed?
5. Alcohol free? Drug and alcohol testing? Safety to our children and the families living in close proximity to the Hub and Camp
6. Water Access for Hub and camp?
7. Waste Disposal? Sewerage, grey water, land fill rubbish, recycle rubbish?
8. Animal safety – on property and local roads? These local roads are part of our day to day running of the property. LLS stock permits (animals have right of way)? Will be greatly impacted by the amount of traffic and people. Road safety for local people with increase in traffic?
9. Golden Highway – this is the main road from South Australia, Western NSW to Newcastle. Property on both sides of the road – we need flashing lights and signs for stock crossing and machinery movement. Yards on northern side of Golden Highway to reduce stock movement on Merotherie Road & Golden Highway
10. Upkeep on local roads? Process for upgrading the Merotherie Road across the 1.7km flood plain – will the Merotherie Road be closed for a period of time and how long? Flood plain mentioned on numerous occasions in submissions etc.....here are a few photos! Our family has been moving stock over the flood plain and around the property since 1822 when first settled.
11. Will the hub and camp be 24hour operational? Lights, generators, noise level? Motor bike track is on the other side of the proposed hub and we can hear the bikes here at the house.
12. Insurance? We live in an area that is Agricultural land and when all this infrastructure is up and running it will be industrial – how will that work?
13. Update our security system – who will pay for this?
14. Trees – trees need to be planted on the Hub & Camp site all around our boundary to give us privacy.
15. This whole CWREZ must be looked at as one, not lots of little projects!

If you cannot answer these questions today, please send an email to us with the answers before too long and well before construction begins.

Central-West Orana Transmission Project



The Central-West Orana Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) Transmission Project will build new high-capacity transmission lines, energy hubs and supporting infrastructure to transfer power generated by solar and wind projects to electricity consumers. The new infrastructure is expected to be operational by 2028 and will initially unlock up to 4.5 gigawatts of new network capacity.

ACEREZ, a partnership of ACCIONA, COBRA and Endeavour Energy, has been appointed by EnergyCo as the preferred network operator to design, build, finance, operate and maintain the Central-West Orana REZ Transmission Project.

Monthly construction update – March 2025

Pre-construction minor works start in Merotherie

ACEREZ started Pre-construction minor works at the Merotherie site on 7 February 2025 in preparation for the establishment of the temporary workforce accommodation and site offices. Construction of energy hub and transmission line infrastructure is expected to start around mid-year.

Work in February included:

- Deliveries of plant and equipment
- Ground clearing of the construction site
- Bulk earthworks to level and compact the site ready for construction
- Delivery and installation of granular base layer
- Preparation for the installation of site utilities
- Bore water investigative drilling
- Installation of traffic cameras at the intersection of Merotherie Road and Golden Highway to monitor road usage as required under the Project's planning approval



Pre-construction minor works at Merotherie

Work in March and April:

- Deliveries, ground clearing and earthworks continue
- An upgrade of the Merotherie Road-Golden Highway intersection is planned to start in late March/early April. We'll let the community know about the upgrade and temporary traffic changes before work starts

Work hours

The work listed above is permitted to take place between **6am and 6pm, seven days a week**. These activities are permitted under the Project's planning approval to take place outside of standard work hours (Monday to Friday 7am to 6pm, Saturday 8am to 1pm). Noise levels have been modelled and are unlikely to affect residents. We'll continue to monitor noise to ensure we are compliant.

Work area map



Community engagement events

ACEREZ will be attending events including agriculture shows and market days across the region this month to provide information on the project and the opportunities it will bring.

We're here to listen and get your feedback as we deliver the transmission network infrastructure to power homes and businesses in NSW for generations to come.

Come and visit us at events in Gulgong, Wellington, Coolah, Cassilis and Dunedoo.

Gulgong pop-up

Friday 21 March, 12 pm – 2 pm

Gulgong Community Hall, 112 Herbert Street, Gulgong

Wellington Rotary Markets

Saturday 22 March, 8 am – 1 pm

Cameron Park, Wellington

Coolah pop-up

Friday 28 March, 12 pm – 2 pm

Youth Community Centre, 10-12 Binnia Street, Coolah

Cassilis pop-up

Friday 28 March, 4 pm – 6 pm

Community Centre, 24 Buccleugh Street, Cassilis

Dunedoo Show

Saturday 29 March

Dunedoo Showground, Wargundy Street, Dunedoo

For details of upcoming community events near you, please visit our website at:

acerez.com.au/community



24/7 Community Information Line 1800 298 379



cwo.community@acerez-acjv.com.au



PO Box 19 Dunedoo 2844



www.acerez.com.au



ACERES
the future of renewable energy

Pre-construction minor works for Merotherie site

Central-West Orana Renewable Energy Zone

15 January 2025

EnergyCo is delivering the Central-West Orana Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) to provide a clean, affordable and reliable power supply for energy consumers across NSW.

What are we doing?

ACERAZ, the preferred network operator for the Central-West Orana REZ transmission network, has established a temporary site office and parking spaces for a small team to utilise at the Merotherie site.

Site investigations are continuing at Merotherie in preparation for pre-construction minor works to commence.

ACERAZ will begin site preparations with the delivery of machinery and equipment.

Light and heavy vehicles will be used to access the site via Golden Highway, Merotherie Road and Birriwa Bus Route South. The number of vehicles is limited per day and in accordance with the project's planning approval.

Following site preparation, ground clearing will be carried out prior to ACERAZ commencing bulk earthworks to level and compact the site for the construction of the temporary workforce accommodation. This work will continue until late 2025.

ACERAZ will provide further notifications with detailed information about future works.

Future works will include:



Delivering construction machinery and equipment such as excavators, graders and rollers



Installing environmental controls such as fences, sediment and dust suppression, and noise monitoring equipment



Clearing, leveling and compacting the site for construction

Feel free to contact ACERAZ Community Information Line on **1800 298 379** or email cwo.community@acerez-acjv.com.au, if you have any questions or would like to provide feedback about the work.

More information can be found on [acerez.com.au](https://www.acerez.com.au).

Map of working areas



How will the work affect you?

EnergyCo and ACERZ are committed to minimising disruption to the community. Work will be carried out between 7am and 6pm, Monday to Friday, and 8am to 1pm, Saturdays. There will be no work conducted without notice outside of these hours or on Sundays.

Heavy and light vehicles, including equipment and traffic control, will be accessing the site via Golden Highway, Merotherie Road and Birriwa Bus Route South.

Traffic control will be in place with intermittent stopping and a reduced speed limit of 40km/hr in place close to the Merotherie site. This will only be in place during work hours and may affect travel times.

ACERZ will work closely with landholders to ensure access to private properties and bus routes are not impacted as all work will be contained within the Merotherie site boundary.

Motorists are advised to drive to the conditions, obey signs and traffic control and allow extra travel time during this work. For more information, please contact the EnergyCo project team.

Contact us



energyco.nsw.gov.au/cwo



cwo@energyco.nsw.gov.au



1800 032 101
(9am to 5pm, Monday-Friday)



Scan the QR code to learn more and register for updates.



If you need help understanding this information, contact the Translating and Interpreting Service on **131 450** and ask them to call **1800 032 101**.



Farm Insurance and Energy Infrastructure

The expansion of wind and solar farms across regional Australia presents a growing trend of landholders either hosting or neighbouring energy infrastructure.

The Insurance Council is aware of concerns raised by landholders about the impact these projects may potentially have on their public liability insurance. ICA members who provide farm insurance continue to offer coverage for liability risk based on an assessment of the individual circumstances of a specific farm landowner.

Current information indicates that insurers generally do not have specific concerns related to a property hosting transmission lines or neighbouring energy infrastructure, nor is this a primary driver of claims denial.

As with any insurance policy, a number of factors are considered by an insurer when offering coverage relating to the individual circumstances of the policyholder. Likewise, any subsequent claim under an insurance policy will be determined on the wording of the particular policy of the policyholder. Landholders with concerns as to how any energy infrastructure may impact their insurance coverage are encouraged to contact their insurance broker or insurer directly.

Early engagement

Landholders are encouraged to engage with their insurer or insurance broker to understand the implications for their insurance coverage before entering into any commercial agreement with a project operator.

It is important that agreements between landholders and project operators involving energy infrastructure clearly outline the insurance obligations of both parties.

Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner: Landholders hosting transmission lines

Whilst arrangements may differ across Australian states and territories, the Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner (Commissioner) has issued a guideline setting out matters that landholders should consider before entering into commercial agreements to host transmission infrastructure.¹

The guidance sets out the different agreements that may be entered into by a project operator with the landholder at different stages of an infrastructure project. These agreements set out the rights of both parties including the required insurances to be taken out by the parties.



Insurance Council
of Australia

Lease or easement agreements are entered into once a project is operational and the transmission lines have been constructed. These agreements generally provide that the project operator is responsible for the maintenance and insurance of their infrastructure and accept all liability associated with this. These agreements generally clearly set out the:

1. required insurances to be taken out by the project operator in respect of the landholder;
2. required insurances to be taken out by the landholder in respect of the project;
3. additional insurances that may be required to be taken out by (or for) neighbours to the project, such as increased public risk and liability insurance; and
4. responsibility for the costs and payment of the various insurances.

Agreements entered into with these terms demonstrate that the landholder is not responsible for insuring and maintaining the energy infrastructure, and that any damage to the infrastructure is appropriately covered by the project operator.

Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner: Landholders neighbouring to energy infrastructure

The Commissioner has also issued some observations and recommendations about matters that affect neighbours to large scale renewable energy and transmission projects. The Commissioner has highlighted that before a wind or solar farm is built, some project operators have negotiated a 'neighbour agreement' with neighbouring landholders. These agreements generally set out the rights of both parties and recognises the possible impacts of the project on the neighbour.

The Commissioner's guideline refers to the contents of a typical 'neighbour agreement' which may include reimbursement for any additional public liability insurance costs incurred by the neighbouring landholder due to the presence of the wind or solar farm.²

It would also be appropriate that a 'neighbour agreement' clearly sets out who is responsible in the instance of accidental damage by the landholder to the energy infrastructure. For example, the agreement should clearly outline whether the project operator will indemnify neighbouring landholders for reasonable, uninsurable risks relating to typical public liability cover.

A 'neighbour agreement' will usually make it clear that any damage to the neighbouring energy infrastructure is either appropriately covered by the project operator or that the neighbouring landholder has sufficient public liability coverage which may in part be provided by the project operator.

Independent advice

A landholder should obtain appropriate independent legal, financial, valuation and insurance advice before entering into any commercial agreement with a project operator. The information provided in this fact sheet is intended to provide general information and guidance and you should not use this information to replace advice by a professional.

Notes for CEO ACEREZ – 12th May 2025

1. Huge impact on access to our home – dust, traffic, tar after project is finished. Our stock do have the right of way on the Merotherie Road to the Golden Highway (and across it to our other paddocks). Also south to Fenella.
2. Flood Plain – 1.7km flood plain on Merotherie Road from Golden Highway to 300 metres past the Leo Nott Bridge. Huge impact with building up the Merotherie Road. Each flood has a different water course flow. Making a dam wall upstream as well.
3. Merotherie Road being changed from gravel road to tar (asphalt) – when there is a flood, it is a very real possibility that the tar will be washed downstream into our agriculture paddocks and impact stock, crops, machinery. Whose responsibility to remove tar from our land?
4. Security and biosecurity to our holding. Safety of our families, native fauna & flora, our stock and animals.
5. Two sides of the ACEREZ camp adjoin our property. 1200 people living with 3kms of our home (bigger than the town of Dunedoo). Also 650 people camp to be built nearby (ACEN).
6. Bush Fire danger.
7. Public Liability.
8. Transmission Lines, Energy Hub
9. Our whole life is being turned upside down by the CW Orana REZ with little to no compensation. We have been promised things, but nothing in writing.
10. Naming of the whole Project and Camp – Merotherie – we strongly object to using our property name.

Leo Nott Bridge 2022



Merotherie Aug22flood



Talbragar River Bridge 5.12.2010



Talbragar River crossing Leo Nott Bridge 5.12.2010



Talbragar River foreground Cainbil Creek further away 5.12.2010



Trees being Removed



Trees different Angle



Trees Riverbed

