

# New England Solar

Renewable Energy from ACEN

## Project update, July 2023

### An update from the Project Director

Thank you to the Uralla community, landholders and First Nations partners. Through your support, New England Solar is one of country's largest solar projects and helping Australian transition to a clean energy future.

Stage 1 of ACEN Australia's New England Solar is now generating clean, renewable electricity into the National Electricity Market (NEM), and in the coming months, Stage 1 of the project will be complete. It's been an enormous amount of work to get to where we are. Together with our contracting partner GLC we've navigated a global pandemic coupled with an extended La Nina leading to extremely challenging weather conditions for the construction team who have executed the project safely.

#### But we understand that many of you are keen to know what happens next?

There is still plenty more to deliver as part of New England Solar which was approved by the NSW Government in 2020. We're now working on Stage 2 of the project, and we plan to be in construction next year. We have also been busy further defining the battery energy storage system.

We understand the importance of sharing in the benefits that the project offers, and I'm proud to say that we're investing more than \$5M in community funding into Uralla over the next 25 years, helping to build a thriving and resilient community. I'm particularly proud of the work already invested through the Uralla Grants Program being administered by the project's Community Reference Group. Additionally, around 80% of the construction peak workforce has been filled by personnel from within the New England region. We're looking forward to continuing to work with the Uralla community as we bring Stage 2 and the battery energy storage system to life.

It's been six years of planning, approvals, designs, procurement and now construction – and along the way we've had incredible support from the local community. Thank you. When New England Solar is complete, we'll be generating enough clean energy to power 250,000 homes. Something we could all feel proud of.

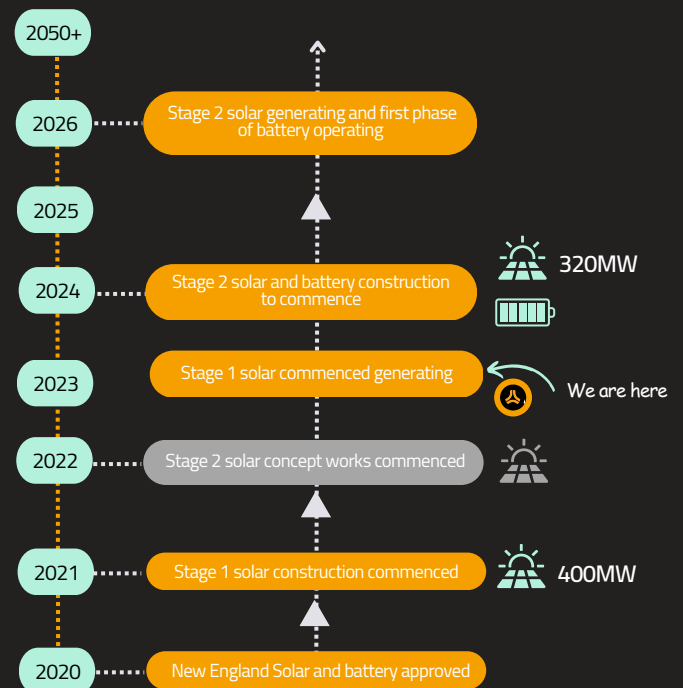
As always, if you have any concerns or simply want to know more, please reach out to the team using the contact points below.

Keep safe.

*Tim Greenaway*

Tim Greenaway  
New England Solar Project Director

### New England Solar timeline



### New England Renewable Energy Zone

NSW Government's EnergyCo has commenced consultation on the New England Renewable Energy Zone. For more information, visit [www.energyco.nsw.gov.au/contact](http://www.energyco.nsw.gov.au/contact) or call 1800 118 894

Although New England Solar is situated in the New England Renewable Energy Zone, power generation from the project is connected into TransGrid's existing transmission line. New England Solar is not reliant on any new infrastructure in the New England REZ, including works by Energy Co.

### Keep up to date

Register to get email updates

Keep an eye out for our regular updates in the Wordsworth

Visit [newenglandsolar.com.au](http://newenglandsolar.com.au)



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## Battery energy storage

Last year, you may recall we submitted an application to the NSW Government to modify the Development Consent for New England Solar. This modification was recently approved and now means planning for Stage 2 of New England Solar can move a step closer towards construction. The modification has two key purposes:



An additional 133 hectares to the New England Solar project area (7% of the existing project area) to provide greater design flexibility.

Some areas within the existing approved footprint had a number of constraints related to environment, heritage or general topography, so the additional land allows us to avoid these areas and optimise the site design



Increased battery energy storage, helping put downward pressure on electricity bills as the country transitions to a clean energy future.

The existing approval for New England Solar included a 400MWhr battery. This has now been increased to 2800MWhr battery - enough energy to supply 175,000 homes with on demand energy.

The location of the battery is within the existing approved New England Solar boundary, with the additional land for the larger battery currently being used as laydown areas for Stage 1 construction works. This area was chosen due to its proximity to the substation where it can connect to the electricity transmission network.

The state's ageing coal fired generators are due to close over the next 20 years, so large battery energy storage systems are critical in replacing that capacity with on demand energy. The New England Solar battery storage can charge using excess power generated from solar and wind; and discharge that energy when required. It will be a reliable and greener form of energy generation for NSW.

## NSW Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap

New England Solar has been awarded the first of the NSW Government's first Long Term Energy Service Agreements (LTESA), helping the state move closer towards reaching its 2030 goal of 12GW of renewable energy generation.

The LTESA provides ACEN Australia with a 20 year electricity floor price assurance for the renewable electricity generated at New England Solar. In return, we have opted in to a number of social licence commitments related to supply chain, innovation, employment, skills, and First Nations participation over the next 20+ years.

## Uralla Grants

As you may know, Uralla Grants is ACEN Australia's voluntary social investment contribution to support the Uralla community during the construction period of New England Solar Stage 1. With the support of the Uralla Grants Community Reference Group, ACEN Australia has invested \$200,000 since 2021 in grants to community groups, businesses, organisations during this construction period.

### What's next?

As part of the Development Consent for New England Solar, ACEN Australia has committed to contributing over \$5M in community contributions over the next 25 years. With construction of Stage 1 nearly complete and getting ready for full generation, we are currently working with members of the community to shape what this social investment program will look like so that it reflects the needs and aspirations of the Uralla community and into the future. We look forward to bringing you further information about the program in the coming months and how community groups and organisations can access funding moving forward.

To watch the videos on how the Uralla Grants program has helped community groups [click here](#), or go to YouTube and search for the ACEN Australia channel.