

# Oven Mountain Pumped Hydro Project

## Oven Mountain EIS, **Response to Submissions** and **Amendment Report** community updates

### Introduction

As part of the planning approval process, the Oven Mountain Pumped Hydro Project (the project) submitted an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to the NSW Planning Department in 2023.

The EIS for the project was placed on public exhibition from 19 September - 20 October 2023.

The exhibition of the EIS by the NSW Planning Department was an opportunity for interested community members to have a say about our proposed project.

The project received 90 submissions in total.

**90** submissions were received in total, which included:

- 62** submissions from the community
- 17** from government agencies
- 11** submissions from organisations

The project responded to this feedback in a **Response to Submissions Report** and an **Amendment Report** that outlines the proposed changes to the project and the required assessments of the proposed changes. Both reports are available on the NSW's Government planning portal.



# Closing the loop

We appreciate the submissions made by those interested in the project and we wanted to provide an opportunity for the local communities of Kempsey,

Bellbrook, Willawarrin, Armidale and surrounds to meet with us to hear how we responded to the submissions and the amendments made.

**To do this we held a series of drop-in style sessions with our project team.**



The flyer features the allintaenergy logo and the OVEN MOUNTAIN PUMPED HYDRO STORAGE logo at the top. The main heading is 'Project update drop-in sessions'. Below this, it describes the project's location and development stage, and invites the public to drop-in sessions. It lists three sessions: Kempsey (two sessions on Oct 8), Willawarrin (Oct 9), and Armidale (Oct 10). Each session includes the date, time, and location. At the bottom, contact information is provided: phone number 1800 518 194, website www.ompshydro.com, and email info@ompshydro.com. An illustration of a person with a question mark is also present.

**Project update drop-in sessions**

The **Oven Mountain Pumped Hydro project** – located between Armidale and Kempsey – has reached an advanced stage of the development and approvals process.

Please join us at a drop-in session if you'd like to learn more about the project, its progress or benefits, or to provide feedback.

You're welcome to come at any time.

**Kempsey (2 sessions)**

**Tues 8 October, 2024**  
**12pm – 2pm & 5:30pm – 7:30pm**  
Kempsey Tafe,  
Block K, Room 1,  
58 Sea Street

**Armidale**

**Thurs 10 October, 2024**  
**10am – 1pm**  
Armidale Business Centre,  
(Cinders Lane)

**Willawarrin**

**Wed 9 October, 2024**  
**10am – 1pm**  
Willawarrin Community Hall,  
24-26 Main Street

For more information,  
please contact us:

1800 518 194

[www.ompshydro.com](http://www.ompshydro.com)

[info@ompshydro.com](mailto:info@ompshydro.com)

## Session 3 - Willawarrin:

In Willawarrin we had representation from Save our Macleay River, community hall committee members, representatives from the Thunggutti Local Aboriginal Land Council and members of the public.

Themes raised and discussed separate from the amendments proposed were;

- understanding the project timelines
- road and traffic management through Willawarrin
- opportunities for employment
- water management
- leaching and leachate management
- community benefit sharing
- questions about pumped hydro technology
- how the project proposes to manage the risks of bushfire
- how the pumped hydroelectricity finds its way into the grid, and
- ways to improve our communication and ways to share information more broadly - *thank you!*

## Session 4 - Armidale:

In Armidale we had representation from education providers, community organisations, local businesses, job ready services, local media, and interested community members.

Themes raised and discussed separate from the amendments proposed were;

- coordination of employment opportunities
- understanding the project timelines
- community benefit sharing, and
- biodiversity management.

## Sessions 1 and 2 - Kempsey:

In Kempsey we had representation from Save our Macleay River, newly elected Councillors, near neighbours from Bellbrook, representatives from the Dunghutti community, the Industry Capability Network, local media and members of the public.

Themes raised and discussed separate from the amendments proposed were;

- understanding the project timelines
- opportunities for employment and to supply goods and services to the project
- cultural heritage protection
- water management
- questions about pumped hydro technology, and
- the upgrade of the transmission line known as line 965.

# How we've communicated and engaged



**eNewsletters with project updates and invitation to local events, sent to stakeholders on our growing database**



**Sharing information on our social media channels**



**Individual meetings for interest and focus groups**

## Communication and engagement objectives

Communication and engagement objectives for consultation and engagement for the project are to:

- Ensure external stakeholders are clearly identified, and their specific needs are understood.
- Ensure all stakeholders understand and are aware of the project.
- Ensure the social licence to operate (reputation and trust) is built and maintained through the engagement of external stakeholders.
- Engagement and communication activities are transparent, equitable and accessible.
- Relationships are built with stakeholders to ensure effective dialogue with the project team.
- Stakeholders are aware of the project and the approvals required and understand the studies, environmental approvals and design development process.
- Involve the community in negotiable decision points to build strong relationships and trust.
- Build relationships with stakeholders such as community groups and landowners to proactively listen to concerns.



# Engagement approach and methodology

We're committed to engaging with local communities openly and in a collaborative manner.

We'll operate in accordance with the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Core Principles.

The project will continue to work to address issues of concern to the community and interest groups from project planning through to operations.

To do this we ensure there is;

- a record-keeping process for stakeholder and community interactions

- an inclusive and transparent approach to our interaction with community members and key stakeholders
- opportunities for community members and stakeholders to provide feedback
- consideration of potential risks and issues, to ensure we work with the local community to achieve the best possible outcomes
- clear record keeping and tracking of all commitments
- clear communication of and adherence to the Alinta Energy Complaint Management Handling Process, and
- handling enquiries and complaints in a timely manner.



## Next steps

The Planning Department will now complete its assessment of the Response to Submissions and Amendment Report in accordance with Government legislation, policies and guidelines and will provide an assessment report for the Minister to consider when deciding on the project approval.

The Planning Department will publish the decision online and will give public notice of the reasons for the decision and how community views were taken into account in making their decision.

To access reports we've submitted to the NSW Government as part of the planning process, please visit: [www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/projects/oven-mountain-pumped-hydro-energy-storage](http://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/projects/oven-mountain-pumped-hydro-energy-storage).



For more information visit [www.ompshydro.com](http://www.ompshydro.com)  
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or call 1800 518 194.

