MINUTES

Marulan Gas Fired Power Project

Community Reference Group Meeting 2

Date	**Wednesday, 25 June 2025**	Time	**4pm-6pm**
Date	Wednesday, 24 September 2025	Time: 5-7pm	
Venue	Meridian Café, George Street, Marulan		
Attendees	Deborah Palmer (DP), CRG Chairperson Christie Charlin (ChC), Community Representative Dakota Gow (DG), Community Representative (online) Tony Mulvihill (TM), Community Representative Geoff Kettle (GK), Stakeholder Representative	Cath Russell (CR), NSW Engagement Lead, EnergyAustralia Ian Black (IB), Project Director, EnergyAustralia	
Invited	Goulburn Mulwaree Council | Upper Lachlan Shire Council | Wendy Tuckerman Office (MP)		
Observers	Amanda Jones – Project Approvals Lead Simon Pilkington – Projects Engineer Matt Poole – Project Manager		
Apologies	Carlos Charlin (CaC), Community Representative Alessandro Donagh-De Marchi (ADDM), Community Representative		

MINUTES

Marulan Gas Fired Power Project

Community Reference Group Meeting 2

Item	Discussion Point
1.	**Welcome and Acknowledgement of Country** The Independent Chairperson opened the meeting, welcomed all attendees, and provided an Acknowledgement of Country. The Chair acknowledged the Traditional Custodians of the land on which the meeting took place, recognised their continuing connection to land, water, and community, and paid respects to Elders past, present, and emerging.
2.	**Apologies** Carlos Charlin (CaC), Community Representative Alessandro Donagh-De Marchi (ADDM), Community Representative
3.	**Introductions** Each member introduced themselves. Matt Poole provided a short overview of his role on the project as Project Manager. The Chairperson thanked the members for their ongoing participation in the CRG.
4.	**Project snapshot** EnergyAustralia provided a snapshot on the Marulan Gas Fired Power Station project. Key points included: • The station is proposed to be located on EnergyAustralia-owned land at Canyonleigh Road, close to existing gas, water, and electrical infrastructure. • The site has been identified for development since 2009 and is declared Critical State Significant Infrastructure. • A project extension has been granted from October 2024 to October 2026. • The new deadline is late 2026 for completion of the Modification Report, which will include updated environmental studies. Key timings are: • July–August 2025: Preparation and submission of the Scoping Report to modernise the original approval made to the NSW Government. • September–October 2025: NSW Government confirmed the October 2024 direction remains current; no further direction required and EnergyAustralia can proceed with preparing the Modification Report as outlined in the Scoping Report. • Late 2026: Submission of the Modification Report with updated methodologies and technical assessments.
5.	**Actions arising form the previous meeting** Action 1: Ongoing updates provided to local councils (Goulburn Mulwaree, Upper Lachlan Shire, Wingecarribee Shire) and local MPs. ONGOING

Action 2: A coordination group has been established by Goulburn Mulwaree Council to address cumulative project impacts (roads, waste management, etc.). ONGOING

Action 3: Terms of Reference circulated (19 August 2025). CLOSED

Action 4: Key information on the 2024 ISP circulated. CLOSED

Action 5: Scoping Report requirements shared with CRG members (20 August 2025). CLOSED

Action 6: Updated air and noise modelling studies are underway. PENDING

Action 7: Visualisations of the proposed plant (stack height, night lighting) are being developed. PENDING

Action 8: Information on pipeline easement acquisition rights pending NSW Government guidelines. PENDING

Action 9: Conservation status of Yellow Box-Gum Woodland updated in Scoping Report. CLOSED

Action 10: Queensland study examples on air quality and energy infrastructure circulated. CLOSED

Action 11: Summary of government discussions included in Scoping Report. CLOSED

Action 12: Environmental study outcomes to be shared with councils/agencies as appropriate (e.g. Canyonleigh Road flood study). ONGOING

Action 13: Targeted engagement undertaken (pop-ups, Facebook, noticeboards, newsletter, project website). ONGOING

Action 14: Mobile coverage raised as a potential community benefit. NOTED

Action 15: Site visit to Tallawarra Power Station completed with six attendees. CLOSED

6. **Understanding EnergyAustralia's project decision making**

EnergyAustralia outlined its "Capital Stewardship" governance model, which is a standard approach for managing major projects. The process ensures that decisions are made carefully, risks are controlled, and value is created and preserved at each stage of the project.

Phased approach

- Appraise and Select:
    - These early stages focus on assessing opportunities, building understanding of the market, and shaping the project scope.
    - Teams are small, spending is relatively low, and interfaces are simpler.
    - This is when there is the greatest flexibility and opportunity to add value, as changes can be made more easily and at lower cost.

- Define, Execute and Operate:
    - These stages involve more detailed design, delivery, and ultimately operation of the project.
    - They are more complex and expensive, making changes harder to implement.
    - The emphasis here is on maintaining discipline, managing risks, and protecting the value created in the early phases.

Gates and checkpoints

At each stage, the project must pass through formal "Gates" and "Check Points". These include independent reviews ("cold-eye reviews") that assess whether:

- The project has enough definition and clarity to proceed,
- Risks are being managed appropriately, and
- The expected value remains robust and achievable.

Only when these criteria are met does the project move forward into the next phase.

It was outlined this process is designed to ensure that planning approvals, environmental requirements, market considerations, stakeholder input, and governance standards are all properly addressed before committing more resources to the project.

Key questions and discussion points from the CRG included:

Final investment decision

- Members asked when the project will need to pass its Final Investment Decision (FID).
- The project team confirmed that the decision is linked to the completion of environmental and planning approvals, with the Modification Report due by late 2026. Timing of the FID will align with these approvals and broader energy market considerations.

Truck movements for large equipment

- Questions were raised about how large equipment, including the proposed stacks, would be transported to the site once the project is approved.
- The project team explained that heavy haulage routes and logistics will be addressed in detail as part of the Transport and Traffic Studies currently underway.
- Members asked what notice would be provided to the community and whether equipment would be moved at night. The project team advised that movement of large plant items would require coordination with councils and road authorities, and that

advance notice to the community would be provided. The timing of any oversized transport movements (including the potential for night-time travel) will depend on safety and regulatory requirements.

Battery Project timing

- The CRG asked about the timing of the nearby battery renewable energy project.
- It was noted that this is a separate project, but its timing and impacts are relevant to broader cumulative effects in the Marulan area.

Vegetation studies

- Members enquired about the vegetation studies underway.
- The project team advised that year-long biodiversity surveys are in progress, including mapping of vegetation communities and identification of threatened species. Specific studies are being carried out to ensure that any Critically Endangered Ecological Communities (such as Yellow Box–Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland) are appropriately assessed and managed.

Council-led cumulative impacts group

- Questions were asked about the group that Goulburn Mulwaree Council is establishing to consider cumulative impacts from multiple projects in the Marulan area.
- The project team confirmed that the group has been formed to look at a range of impacts, including roads and waste management.
- Members asked who would chair the meetings. It was noted that Council will chair this group, and EnergyAustralia will provide updates as required

7. **Engagement update and what we've heard**

EnergyAustralia provided an update on recent and ongoing engagement activities. The project team has continued to use a mix of communication channels including face-to-face pop-ups, newsletters, local noticeboards, social media, and a dedicated project website. A site visit to the Tallawarra Power Station was also undertaken in July, giving community members the chance to see how a gas-fired power station can operate alongside local communities and the environment.

Key feedback themes

Feedback gathered to date has been mapped against the main areas of community interest. On slide 18, "dots" under each subheading indicate the current level of interest in the issue based on consultation feedback. Importantly, the project team noted that the level of interest may change as the project progresses. Areas discussed include:

- Energy type and demand
- Visual

- Access, road and traffic
- Water
- More consultation
- Air
- Accommodation
- Property valuation
- Greater commitment
- Noise
- Managing biodiversity
- Cumulative impact.

A document was also distributed called “Managing Tullawarra with the Community”. This will be posted on the website and sent to all CRG members.

8. **Scoping Report**

EnergyAustralia presented an update on the Scoping Report, which has been prepared as the first step in modernising the project’s original approval. The Scoping Report sets the scope for the environmental and technical studies that will feed into the Modification Report, due by late 2026.

Purpose

- The Scoping Report identifies the key issues and assessment requirements for the project.
- It provides a framework for the detailed technical studies that will follow, ensuring these studies are aligned with current NSW Government requirements and modern environmental standards.
- It also outlines stakeholder and community input, which will continue to be a focus through the Modification Report stage.
- The Scoping Report is publicly available for download.

Technical studies underway

- Biodiversity: A year-long biodiversity program is underway to capture seasonal variations and ensure key species are assessed. Community members are invited to nominate species of particular concern or interest.
- Flooding: Updated flooding studies are nearing completion to assess the potential impacts of the project and inform mitigation measures.
- Transport Routes: Studies are being conducted to assess traffic and transport implications, particularly construction vehicle movements and local road impacts.
- Other studies: Air quality, noise, and other technical assessments are being developed and will be shared once complete.

CRG

- CRG members have received copies of the Scoping Report and were asked to review and provide feedback. Hard copies were distributed in August 2025.
- The project team asked whether CRG members would like a "deep dive" session on draft technical reports at the next meeting. There was interest for deep dives on transport and traffic, air quality and vegetation communities.

A community member raised a concern that gates were being left open by consultants undertaking on-the-ground studies, which had resulted in cattle straying onto neighbouring properties. The project team noted the feedback and confirmed that this matter would be followed up with contractors to ensure property access protocols are observed.

9. **Worker's accommodation**

EnergyAustralia provided an update on planning for construction workforce accommodation for approximately 350 workers. The project will require a temporary workforce during peak construction periods, and options are being considered to ensure impacts on the community are well managed.

Sites being considered are either

- Within Marulan township: Several potential accommodation sites in and around Marulan are being investigated.
- Near the project site: Land closer to the Canyonleigh Road project area is also being assessed for suitability.

Discussion amongst the CRG members included considerations and trade-offs for each of the broad two options. These included:

Accommodation within Marulan

- Pros:
    - Supports the local economy by increasing demand for local services, shops, and businesses.
    - Provides easier access for workers to community facilities (e.g. recreation, health services, shops).
    - May strengthen connections between the project workforce and the community.
- Cons:
    - Increased pressure on local infrastructure, parking, and services.
    - Potential impacts if a large temporary workforce is housed in town.
    - Higher visibility of the workforce presence in the community.

Accommodation near the project site

- Pros:

- Minimises daily travel on local roads, reducing traffic and safety risks.
- Reduces the visibility of workforce impacts within Marulan itself.
- Easier to manage workforce logistics with proximity to the construction site.

- Cons:
  - Fewer opportunities for local businesses to benefit directly from worker spending.
  - Less integration between the workforce and the community.
  - Potential environmental and amenity impacts associated with establishing a temporary camp.

EnergyAustralia suggested that temporary accommodation established for the construction workforce could potentially be repurposed after the project. This could provide a legacy benefit to the community, for example through conversion into general housing or aged care accommodation. The CRG noted this suggestion and agreed it may be worth further exploration as part of community benefit sharing discussions.

A suggestion was made to explore whether a site near the project area could be used in relation to the project. EnergyAustralia advised that discussions have already taken place regarding potential opportunities. The site has also been considered as a possible option for laydown areas during construction.

10. **Exploring water options**

The CRG had a detailed discussion on the water needed for the project and the options on where this can be sought.

EnergyAustralia presented on the project's water requirements and the options under consideration. The proposed Marulan Gas Fired Power Station is expected to require approximately 140 million litres of water each year for operation. The project team emphasised that water is a precious resource, and the station will be designed to use it as efficiently as possible, with the ability to reduce use during droughts and to reuse water wherever feasible.

Options under investigation

There are 4 viable options being considered.

Option 1 – Wastewater pipeline

- Water would be sourced from the proposed Marulan Wastewater Treatment Plant under a commercial arrangement with Goulburn Mulwaree Council.
- Water would be piped to the project site using existing easements where possible, minimising the need for truck movements.
- Pros: Drought-proof, reliable supply, potential community benefit by supporting approval and operation of the new wastewater plant, and reduced traffic impacts.
- Cons: Requires upfront investment in pipeline infrastructure.

Option 2 – Wastewater trucking

- Water would be transported by truck from the Mittagong Wastewater Treatment Plant (Wingecarribee Council) or the proposed Marulan Wastewater Treatment Plant (Goulburn Mulwaree Council).
- Pros: Provides a drought-proof supply without the need to build a pipeline initially.
- Cons: Could require daily truck movements, increasing traffic on local roads, creating noise, dust, and safety impacts for nearby communities.

Option 3 – Combination: Site water + wastewater trucking

- Water would be sourced from rainfall capture and groundwater bores on site, supplemented with recycled water delivered by truck.
- Pros: Reduces truck movements compared with Option 2, uses natural site-based water sources.
- Cons: Less drought-proof; during dry periods, trucking demand would increase significantly.

Option 4 – Combination: Site water + wastewater + river licence

- Water would be sourced from rainfall and groundwater at the site, supplemented by a small, licensed allocation from the Wollondilly River (approx. 100 ML of the 5,111 ML available), with additional wastewater from treatment plants to provide drought-proofing.
- Pros: Reduces trucking further, provides operational flexibility, partly drought-proof, uses an undersubscribed water allocation.
- Cons: Involves drawing from a natural water source, which may raise environmental and community concerns about river use.

EnergyAustralia noted they will be discussing these options with the community in October 2025 following feedback from the CRG.

The CRG discussed:

- The need to balance operational reliability, environmental responsibility, and community impacts.
- How water is used in the project including:
    - Cooling: Some water is used to help manage heat generated during the combustion and power generation process.
    - Emissions Control: Water may be used in systems that reduce or manage emissions from the stacks, ensuring compliance with environmental standards.
    - General Operations: Smaller volumes of water are required for site services such as dust suppression, firefighting systems, cleaning, and amenities for workers.

- It was noted that the proposed Marulan station will be designed to minimise water use, with flexibility to reduce demand during drought periods and an emphasis on using recycled water where possible.
- EnergyAustralia explained that "scale-up" refers to the process of concentrating minerals and salts in water as it is reused multiple times within the plant (for example in cooling or emissions control systems). Over time, this build-up can cause scaling on equipment and pipes, reducing efficiency. To manage this, a small portion of the water is "blown down" (removed) and replaced with fresher water. The use of evaporation ponds was also discussed where the blowdown water is stored and allowed to evaporate naturally. This process reduces the volume of liquid that requires disposal and leaves behind solid salts or residues that can then be managed safely.
- Reuse of wastewater was highlighted as a sustainable approach with potential co-benefits for the Marulan community.
- Traffic impacts from trucking were identified as a key consideration for Options 2 and 3. It was noted traffic is already a key issue identified by the community and this will increase should Options 2 or 3 be pursued.
- The use of Wollondilly River allocations was noted as a viable option based on publicly available water data, though it would require further discussion with stakeholders.
- Using infographics to help explain to the community the 4 options.
- The facility is designed to run on natural gas, small quantities of diesel may be used for auxiliary purposes such as start-up, commissioning, or emergency backup. Diesel use would not be part of regular operations and would be subject to environmental and safety controls.
- Members asked how lessons from Kurri Kurri are being applied to the Marulan proposal. EnergyAustralia acknowledged the concerns and advised that while each project is different, the Marulan project is being planned with updated environmental and technical studies, clear governance processes, and a focus on transparency through the CRG and other engagement activities.

11. **Any other business**

- The CRG discussed and agreed to change the agenda to include a section upfront on "What we are hearing and key questions" from the Community and Stakeholder representatives.
- The CRG asked how many stacks will be delivered as part of the Marulan Gas Fired Power Station project. EnergyAustralia advised that the proposed design includes two stacks. Visualisations showing stack height and lighting impacts are being prepared and will be shared with the CRG once available.
- The CRG asked how heat from the stacks would be treated and whether this could affect the local environment. EnergyAustralia explained that the heat is dispersed into the atmosphere through controlled release. The stacks are designed and

modelled to ensure emissions, including heat plumes, meet regulatory standards and do not pose risks to community safety or the environment. Air quality and dispersion modelling will be provided as part of the technical studies in the Modification Report.

- The CRG asked whether studies will be undertaken to assess the potential impacts of the stacks on birdlife. EnergyAustralia confirmed that biodiversity studies are currently underway as part of the upcoming Modification Report – however a specific study on the stacks and impacts to birdlife is not currently in scope.
- The CRG were invited to send through any additional questions out of session to the Chairperson.

12. **Next meeting**

- 26 November 2025

MINUTES

Marulan Gas Fired Power Project

Community Reference Group Meeting 2

No.	Originated	Action Item	Responsibility
Previous actions			
1	M1 A1	Keep local councils and local MP informed by providing CRG meeting notes and project updates.	EnergyAustralia
2	M1 A2	Provide updates to CRG on the potential establishment of a project coordination group to coordinate energy projects in the Marulan area.	EnergyAustralia
3	M1 A6	Provide updated air quality modelling and noise modelling to CRG.	EnergyAustralia
4	M1 A7	Provide visualisations of the proposed plant, including stack height and night-time lighting impacts.	EnergyAustralia
5	M1 A8	Provide further information on acquisition rights for the pipeline easement (EnergyAustralia or State Government).	EnergyAustralia
6	M1 A12	Share outcomes of EnergyAustralia's environmental studies and data with councils and other agencies.	EnergyAustralia
7	M1 A13	Continue targeted community engagement via local Facebook groups, noticeboards, and community newsletters.	EnergyAustralia
New actions			
8	M2	Change the agenda to include a section upfront on "What we are hearing and key questions" from the Community and Stakeholder representatives.	Chairperson
9	M2	Share "Managing Tullawarra with the community" with the CRG members and post on the EnergyAustralia website.	EnergyAustralia
10	M2	Update the local Facebook page to address questions about traffic movements for the delivery of large plant following project approval.	EnergyAustralia
11	M2	Follow up with contractors to ensure property access protocols are observed to ensure gates are being shut after the completion of on the ground studies.	EnergyAustralia
12	M2		