

Caring for Country and Community



Clean Energy

BIG
Yarnin

Help us shape the Northern Peninsula Area's energy future – and reduce the communities' reliance on fossil fuels.

We're working to improve the security and sustainability of our isolated electricity networks. This journey will see us introduce clean, renewable energy into the power supply for Seisia, New Mapoon, Bamaga, Injinoo and Umagico, along with large batteries to store the energy generated for use when needed.

It's about Caring for Country and, at the same time, ensuring our First Nations and remote communities share in the benefits of clean, reliable and affordable energy into the future.

Transitioning to renewable energy will future-proof the communities' energy supply. Reducing the current reliance on fossil fuels – on diesel generation – is a big positive for the environment. It can also provide economic and other community benefits by supporting rooftop solar, as well as further electrification and energy efficiency measures.

As we progress, it is important that the community is part of the conversation. The transition will require community support, as well as a significant investment, to put in place the right solutions.

To find out more, don't hesitate to contact Towie (Tommy Sebasio), in our community engagement team, on 0428 000 736 or email us: NetworkProjectEngagement@energyq.com.au

The nearby Thursday Island wind turbines represent the history and the future of renewable energy. Since 1997, they have saved over five million litres of diesel and, with the recent major refurbishment, can now generate clean energy for years to come.



UPDATED
July 2025

Finding future solutions

In 2021 an Expression of Interest was made for technical providers to explore the options for scaling up the transition to renewables to decarbonise the energy supplies throughout our isolated communities.

This led to eight companies visiting communities across the Cape and Torres Strait and completing detailed feasibility studies of potential solutions. The solutions explored included solar, wind, battery storage, hydrogen storage, alternate renewable generation sources and biodiesel.

This work was the foundation for a detailed assessment of the options available to decarbonise the Northern Peninsula Area's (NPA) power supply, and the concept designs for the renewable energy investment outlined here. The proposal for the NPA is to establish a centralised solar and energy storage system to transition all five communities to renewable energy.

About the renewable energy project

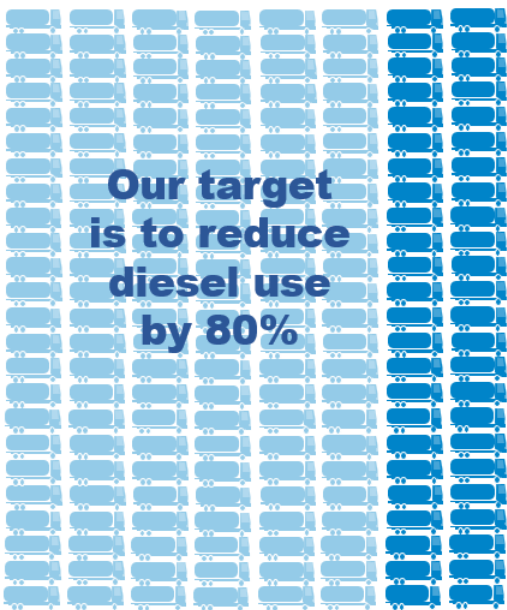
Solar farm and utility-scale battery

Working towards a renewable energy solution will take time, so we are proposing to invest in stages. The first stage is working with the Traditional Owners, community and council to find an appropriate parcel of land. Then stage two could see part of the proposed 19MW solar farm and 12MVA/28Wh battery energy storage system installed during 2028 to 2030.

The project will also include switchboards and control buildings, and dedicated powerlines to feed the clean energy into the existing Bamaga Power Station site. From here the electricity generated will supply Seisia, New Mapoon, Bamaga, Injinoo and Umagico through the existing electricity network.

The full investment, once the ultimate target is reached, will reduce diesel use by over five million litres a year, saving 9,755 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO₂-e) emissions. It's a great win for the environment. With less reliance on fossil fuels being transported into and used in the community, it will also improve the resilience and security of the power supply.

Saving 3.6 million litres of diesel each year



Northern Area Peninsula	
Renewable Energy goal	Ultimate target 80%
Proposed Scope	19MW solar farm 12MVA/28MWh battery
Diesel / emissions savings	3.6 million litres 9,755tCO ₂ -e



Land use consultation

We have been talking with Traditional Owners (including the Ipima Ikaya Aboriginal Corporation), the NPA Regional Council, and other stakeholders about the different sites that could potentially be used for the renewable energy site.

The photo below shows the location proposed for the new solar farm and battery. The land parcel is between the wastewater treatment plant and Airport Road is currently believed to be the most appropriate location for the solar farm.

While the project still has further steps to undergo – including land surveys, further technical designs and costings – before our Board and Queensland Government financial approvals, we are consulting now to listen to feedback and gain support to go forward with this location.

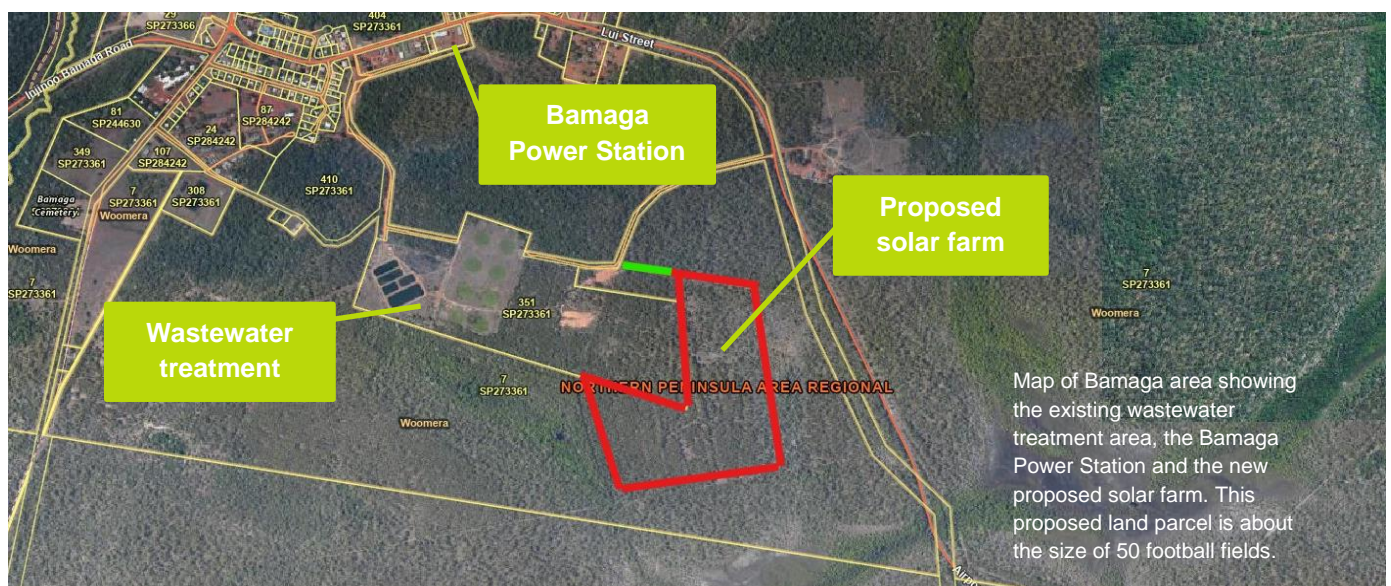
This includes presenting a formal Expression of Interest to the Council, as trustee of the land, for a commercial lease of the land, and negotiation of an Indigenous Land Use Agreement. Further discussions will also be needed to finalise the route for the connecting powerlines. We will then continue to engage through planning and construction.



We spoke with the community about the proposal in September 2024, and the benefits for the community, and the environment.



To reduce diesel use by 80%, the NPA will need a solar farm around the same size as the solar farm at Hughenden, which uses around 60 80 acres of land.

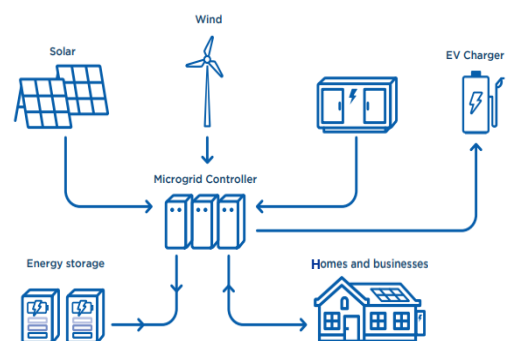


Map of Bamaga area showing the existing wastewater treatment area, the Bamaga Power Station and the new proposed solar farm. This proposed land parcel is about the size of 50 football fields.

Rooftop solar

This project will enable more rooftop solar to be connected across the community. The use of advanced controllers and dynamic connections will allow decentralised rooftop solar to integrate safely into the system.

We are also looking at the opportunity for Ergon Energy Network to invest in rooftop solar, as well as other initiatives that can give back to the community. This will fast track our goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.



A journey to net zero electricity emissions

The proposed project in the NPA is part of Ergon Energy Network's commitment to delivering a sustainable electricity supply, and moving to net zero electricity emissions across our isolated networks.

While we are focusing initially on the communities with the large power stations, including the NPA, we're doing feasibility studies across our other isolated communities to support renewable generation where it is cost effective.

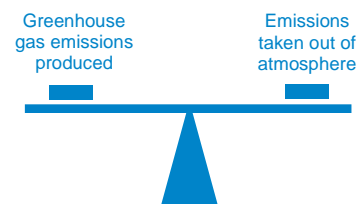
We are looking to support social benefits through the clean energy transition, embed First Nations land stewardship, preserve, and protect cultural heritage, and ensure any potential economic benefits are shared. We are especially wanting to engage respectfully around land use.

All of this 'big yarnin', and everything we learn from our current projects and our feasibility studies, will help refresh our Isolated Networks Strategy for all the communities we serve.

These projects will not remove the ongoing need for the Queensland Government's current subsidies on electricity prices. As part of its commitment to keeping regional Queensland power prices on par with the southeast, the Queensland Government provides a subsidy. This lets Ergon Energy Retail charge all of their customers to same regulated electricity prices wherever they live – whether in Bamaga or Bundaberg.

In the longer term, introducing renewable energy into Queensland's energy mix, and taking advantage of new technologies, will help put downward pressure on electricity prices for all.

NET ZERO – A BALANCE



The expansion of the Doomadgee Solar Farm is progressing well, with the civil works completed by the local council and the infrastructure for the solar panels now installed.

Get in touch with us

To find out more, don't hesitate to contact Towie (Tommy Sebasio), in our community engagement team, on 0428 000 736 or email us at: NetworkProjectEngagement@energyq.com.au

Towie has worked locally with Ergon Energy for thirty years, having been involved in everything from getting the power back on after a cyclone to educating businesses about energy efficiency, and mentoring locals looking for a career path into the electricity industry. He is keen to ensure we engage with cultural sensitivity and respect for traditions and protocols. Keoyma Eso, Au Eso.



Ergon Energy Network acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we live and work, and recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay respect to Elders past and present.

