

# Caring for Country and Community



Clean Energy

**BIG**  
Yarnin

## Together we can shape Thursday Island, Horn Island and Hammond Island'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 more clean, renewable generation into the communities' power supply, along with large batteries to store the clean 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 Tommy Sebasio, in our community engagement team, on 0428 000 736 or email us at: [NetworkProjectEngagement@energyq.com.au](mailto:NetworkProjectEngagement@energyq.com.au)

Thursday Island's iconic wind turbines represent the history and the future of renewable energy. Since 1997, they have saved over five million litres of diesel and, and with a major refurbishment, will now generate clean energy for years to come.



# Finding future solutions

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

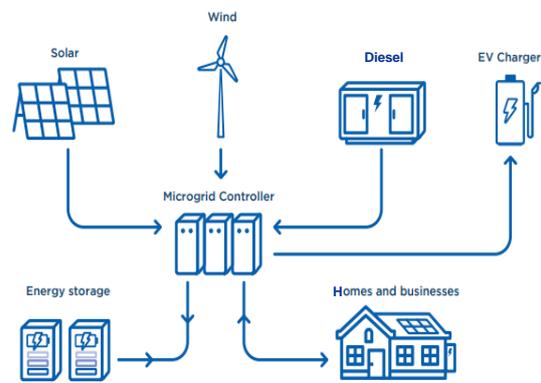
This led to eight companies visiting communities across the Cape and Torres Strait and completing detailed feasibility studies for their proposed solutions. These solutions included solar, wind, battery storage, hydrogen storage, alternate renewable generation sources and biodiesel.

This work formed the foundations for a detailed assessment of the options to decarbonise the power supply, and the concept designs for renewable energy investment outlined here. The proposal is currently considered the best technical solution to transition Thursday, Horn and Hammond Island to renewable energy.

## About our new renewable energy projects

### Solar farm, wind and utility-scale battery

For Thursday, Horn and Hamond Island – to move to 80% renewable energy\* – we are proposing to install a 12.5MW centralised solar system, 4MW of wind turbines (4 x 1MW), and a 8.8MVA/26.5MWh battery energy storage system to be built on Horn Island, with undersea power cables connecting Wasaga Power Station, on Horn Island to Thursday Island, and then across to Hammond Island.



## Land use consultation

The image above shows indicative locations for the proposed energy infrastructure.

We have been talking with Traditional Owners (including the Kaurareg Aboriginal Corporation), the Torres Shire Council, the Torres Strait Island Regional Council and other stakeholders about the different sites that could potentially be used for the solar and wind farm.

Our current focus is on using wind monitoring on Horn Island to confirm potential wind farm sites. Although the project still requires additional steps – such as land surveys and technical designs – before securing financial approvals from our Board and the Queensland Government, we remain committed to gathering feedback and building support for these locations. As we move into detailed project scoping and technical design, the solution may continue to evolve.

Our engagement with Traditional Owners, the Torres Shire Council, Torres Strait Regional Island Council and the Torres Strait Regional Authority, as well as other stakeholders across the community will continue, through planning and land use negotiations, to construction commencing in 2027.

Our engagement to date has been pivotal in identifying the opportunity to follow the existing undersea pipeline corridors as the ideal route for the undersea cable.

Horn Island, Thursday Island and Hammond Island	
Renewables	Target 80% by 2030
Proposed Scope	12.5MW solar farm 4 x 1MW wind turbines 8.8MVA/26.5MWh battery Undersea cables between islands
Diesel / emissions savings	7 million litres 18,900 tCO <sub>2</sub> -e

## Rooftop solar

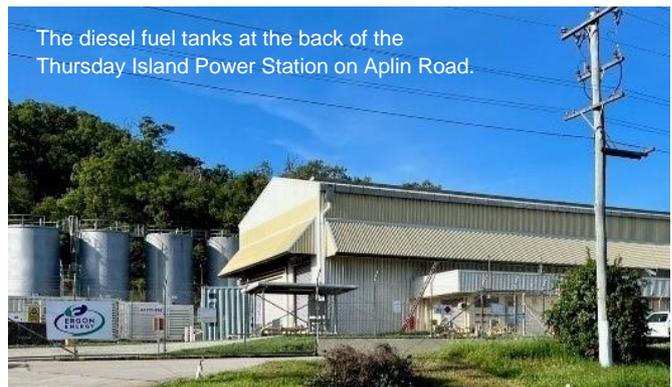
This project will enable more rooftop solar to be connected across the community. This provides local businesses and community members greater choice and control of their power options. We are also looking at the opportunity for Ergon Energy Network to invest in rooftop solar, as well as other initiatives that can give back to the community. This will fast track our goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

## Saving diesel, reducing emissions

Together the power stations in these communities currently use around 10 million litres of diesel fuel each year. The investments above will reduce this diesel use by over seven million litres a year, saving 18,900 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO<sub>2</sub>-e) emissions. It's a great win for the environment. With less reliance on fossil fuels being barged into and used in the community, it will also improve the resilience and security of the power supply.



## Saving 7 million litres of diesel each year



# A journey to net zero electricity emissions

The proposed project 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.

Our initial project plans aim to achieve 25% renewables across all of our 33 isolated networks. While we are focusing initially on the communities with the large to medium power stations, including Thursday Island, 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 the 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.

## Get in touch with us

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

Tommy 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.*

