Appendix E

Social Impact Assessment

Hydro Tasmania

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

Acronym/ abbreviation	Meaning
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACHA	Aboriginal cultural heritage assessment
AHRC	Australian Human rights Commission
AHURI	Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute
AIPP	Australian Industry Participation Plan
ATAR	Australian Tertiary Admission Rank
AHA	Aboriginal Hertiage Act 1975
BAU	Business as usual
CAP	Hydro Tasmania's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commitment and Action Plan
CC Act	Climate Change Act
CEC	Clean Energy Council
CHC	Central Highlands Council
CH	Central Highlands
COC	Code of Conduct
CSEP	Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan
CTMP	Construction Traffic Management Plan
DA	Development Application
DCCEEW	Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water
DECYP	Department for Education, Children and Young People
DEWR	Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
DS&JMP	Driver Safety and Journey Management Plan
DVC	Derwent Valley Council
EAP	Employee Assistance Progam
ECI	Early contractor involvement
EcIA	Economic Impact Assessment
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EMP	Emergency Management Plan
EMPC Act	*Environmental Management and Pollution Control Act 1994*
EMS	Environmental Management System
EPA	Environmental Protection Authority
EPBC Act	*Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*
EPC	Engineering, Procurement and Construction

Acronym/ abbreviation	Meaning
ESG	Environmental, Social & Governance
E&M	Electrical and Mechanical
FfWMP	Fitness for Work Management Plan
FID	Final Investment Decision
FIFO	Fly-in-fly-out
FNPP	First Nations Participation Plan
FSL	Full supply level
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GP	General Practitioner
GRP	Gross Regional Product
GSP	Gross State Product
ha	Hectares
hrs	Hours
HSA	Hydropower Sustainability Alliance
HSS	Hydropower Sustainability Standard
HT	Hydro Tasmania
IAIA	International Association for Impact Assessment
ICN	Industry Capability Network
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ICSEA	Index of Community Socio-educational Advantage
IER	Index of Economic Resources
IFC	International Finance Corporation
IOT	Integrated owners team
IRSD	The Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage
IVMS	In-Vehicle Monitoring System
JMP	Journey Management Plan
JSA	Jobs and Skills Australia
LBS	Local Benefits Sharing
LBSS	Local Benefit Sharing Strategy
LCF	Loal Content Framework
LGA	Local Government Area
LGBTIQA+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer, and/or asexual people, or people otherwise diverse in gender, sexual orientation, and/or innate variations of sex characteristics

Acronym/ abbreviation	Meaning
LUPA Act	*Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993*
km	Kilometres
mins	Minutes
m	Metres
Mm^3	Cubic millimetre
m3/s	Cubic meters per second
MERI	Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement
MNES	Matters of National Environmental Significance
MP	Major Projects
MPP	Major Projects Program
MPSP	Major Projects' Social Program
MW	Megawatts
NEIR	National Institute of Economic and Industry Research
NEM	National Electricity Market
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
No.	Number
NPRM Act	*National Parks and Reserves Management Act 2002*
NSW DPE	New South Wales Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
NVIA	Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment
OSOM	Oversize and overmass
ODVs	Over-dimensional vehicles
PBHA	Preliminary Bushfire Hazard Analysis
PCYC	Police Citizens Youth Club
PVS	Hydro Tasmania's Purpose, Vision and Strategy
PHS	Primary Health Tasmania
PWS	Parks and Wildlife Service
RAA	Reserve Activity Assessment
RAPs	Registered Aboriginal parties
ReCFIT	Renewables, Climate and Future Industries Tasmania
RFD	Reasonably Foreseeable Developments
RMPS	Resource Management Planning System
RTOs	Registered Training Organisations
SAL	Suburbs and localities

Acronym/ abbreviation	Meaning
SALTAS	Salmon Enterprises of Tasmania
SA2	Statistical Area Level 2
SA4	Statistical Area Level 4
SEIFA	Socio-economic Indexes for Areas
SES	State Emergency Service
SIA	Social Impact Assessment
SIMP	Social Impact Management Plan
SPMP	Social Procurement Management Plan
STRLUS	*Southern Tasmanian Regional Land Use Strategy 2010-2035*
STE	State
STT	Sustainable Timbers Tasmania
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
TAS	Tasmanian Ambulance Service
TASCAT	Tasmanian Civil & Administrative Tribunal
TBM	Tunnel boring machine
TCE	Tasmanian Certificate of Education
TFS	Tasmanian Fire Service
The Guidelines	The EIS Guidelines for the Tarraleah Redevelopment Project
The Project	The Tarraleah Redevelopment Project
TIA	Traffic Impact Assessment
TIAMP	Traffic Impact Assessment and Management Plan
TIPP	Tasmanian Industry Participation Plan
TPS	Tasmanian Planning Scheme
TSMP	Traffic Safety Management Plan
TWWHA	Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area
VIA	Visual Impact Assessment
VET	Vocational Education and Training
WAF	Workforce Accommodation Facility
WM Act	*Water Management Act 1999*
W/NW	West and North West
WTDP	Workforce Training and Development Plan
24/7	24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Executive Summary

This Social Impact Assessment Report (SIA) has been prepared by Hydro Tasmania (HT) to examine the likely socio-economic impacts and opportunities of the Tarraleah Redevelopment Project.

Introduction

Hydro Tasmania is proposing to redevelop the Tarraleah Hydropower Scheme in Tasmania's Central Highlands. The Tarraleah Redevelopment Project (the Project) proposes to increase the capacity of the existing Tarraleah Hydropower Scheme from 90 megawatts (MW) to approximately 190 MW of peak capacity.

The Project will increase operational flexibility and efficiency by providing a direct pressurised connection between the scheme's headwaters at Lake King William and a new power station located adjacent to the existing Tarraleah Power Station on the Nive River. Part of the existing No. 2 Canal will be retained and water captured by Derwent Pumps, Horne's Dam and smaller water pick-ups will be transferred to the new pressurised conveyance. All other elements of the existing Tarraleah Hydropower Scheme will be decommissioned. Decommissioning of the existing assets will be subject to a future decommissioning plan and does not form part of this Social Impact Assessment or the broader Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

This redevelopment supports renewable energy targets and aligns with state, regional, and local plans for sustainable development.

Purpose

The Social Impact Assessment (SIA) report, forming part of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), evaluates the socio-economic impacts and opportunities of the Project across the construction and operations phases. The scope of the SIA excludes the proposed workforce accommodation facility (WAF) to be located at Tarraleah Village, ancillary infrastructure outside the Project area and decommissioning activities associated with existing Scheme components.

Social impact assessment is about people, how they live and how they will be directly or indirectly affected by planned interventions such as projects or policies (Vanclay et. al 2015; Vanclay & Esteves 2024). The concept and process of SIA seeks to ensure that the Project adds value to local communities by enabling positive social changes and positive social development (Vanclay et al, 2015).

Project Overview

Principal components of the Project are described briefly below:

- An above ground headrace pipeline connected to the Lake King William intake tunnel and underground headrace and power tunnels with a total length of approximately 17 km forming a pressurised water conveyance to the new power station.
- A new power station with an installed capacity of approximately 180 MW (peak capacity of 190 MW) and rated flow of approximately 60 m^3/s located adjacent to the existing Tarraleah Power Station.
- A surge tower, approximately 70 m high (above ground level) and associated underground surge shaft to control water pressure in the headrace and power tunnels.
- An approximately 6 m^3/s pumping station and approximately 1 km long pipeline to transfer water from the existing No. 2 Pond to the new conveyance via the surge tower.
- Access tunnels and portals to headrace and power tunnels and associated permanent spoil emplacement areas.
- A new, approximately 14-15 km long 220 kilovolt (kV) transmission line connecting the new power station to an existing TasNetworks' substation at either Dee Lagoon or Liapootah.

Additional temporary infrastructure is proposed to support construction and would include a workforce accommodation facility (WAF) to be located adjacent to the existing Tarraleah Village.

Access to the Project during construction will be via the Lyell Highway. Butlers Gorge Road will be closed for public access during construction. Excepting temporary closures as required, Oldina Drive will remain open during construction for public access to the Penstock Lookout and proposed Project information centre.

Construction works associated with the Project are estimated to be completed over a six-year period. The workforce is expected to peak at 330 personnel. Based on current workforce planning, approximately 30% of the workforce is anticipated to be recruited from within Tasmania. The remaining 70% would be sourced from interstate or international locations. The core workforce will consist of professional staff, machinery operators and drivers, trades and labourers, and specialists working at different periods throughout the construction phase. Shift arrangements will vary according to the different areas of construction work and will include 10hr and 12hr shifts on varying rosters.

Hydro Tasmania plans to engage an Engineering, Procurement, and Construction (EPC) Contractor to develop the detailed design and construction methods for the project. The EPC contractor will refine the reference design provided by Hydro Tasmania to ensure economic, environmental, and socially sustainable outcomes. Early works, such as installing temporary power and relocating the switchyard, will be completed before the EPC contractor mobilizes to the site.

Project setting

The Project area is located approximately 125 km north-west of Hobart near the villages[1] of Tarraleah and Wayatinah in the Central Highlands Local Government Area (LGA), Tasmania. The Project area is located within the cumulative territory of the Big River nation.

The Project area covers approximately 4,800 hectares (ha) and extends from Lake King William via Tarraleah to either Dee Lagoon or Liapootah in a broadly linear manner (two transmission line options form part of the Project for the purpose of seeking approval, however only one option will be constructed). Access to the Project area is provided by the Lyell Highway and Butlers Gorge Road.

Bradys Lake and Bronte Lagoon are located approximately 6 km and 10 km respectively to the north-east of the Project area. The Project area is located within proximity to the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area (TWWHA). Components of the Project are located within the Tarraleah Conservation Area.

Access to the Project area is provided by the Lyell Highway and Butlers Gorge Road; a 17 km unsealed road connecting the Lyell Highway to Lake King William and the existing Butlers Gorge Power Station. The Lyell Highway extends to Hobart in the south-east and Queenstown in the west.

The Project area is located away from major towns, in an area with very low population density. There are approximately nine private residences within 1 km (direct line) of the Project area. These residences are located proximate to Dee Lagoon and the northern transmission line option. The Project area is predominantly covered by tenures managed by either Sustainable Timber Tasmania or Hydro Tasmania.

The region around the Project area is primarily used for forestry and conservation purposes and is well-known for its natural environment and features.

[1] Note: Tarraleah and Wayatinah are referred to as 'villages' and were established by HT in the early 1930's and 1950's (respectively) during the development of the Derwent Hydropower Schemes.

SIA methodology

The SIA methodology included the following key components:

- Preliminary scoping of potential social impacts and opportunities
- Identification of the SIA study area
- Identification and understanding of issues through an analysis of the existing socio-economic environment of the SIA study area, review of existing information/data and consultation with community and key stakeholders
- Identification and assessment of potential social impacts and opportunities. Determination of impact significance through the application of a risk-based methodology
- Identification of mitigation and management measures to respond to potential social impacts and enhance opportunities.

Consultation with community and key stakeholders was inherent in each step of the SIA methodology. SIA consultation was conducted to gather information on community perceptions, to inform the characteristics of the current social setting and to assist in the prediction and assessment of potential social impacts. EIS consultation focussed on disseminating information about the project and understanding community and key stakeholder's key issues.

SIA study area

The SIA study area is defined with reference to a local study area and regional study area (Table ES 1).

Table ES 1 SIA Study Area

SIA Study Area	Description	Geographic areas
Local Study Area	Consisting of the communities anticipated to experience direct social impacts across the Project life. These direct social impacts may include potential changes in local connectivity and accessibility, changes in surroundings including amenity and effects on values and aspirations.	Localities of Tarraleah, Wayatinah, Butlers Gorge, Bronte Park, Dee, Ouse, Bradys Lake and London Lakes
Regional Study Area	The area which may experience broader socio-economic effects. Potential impacts may be associated with use of infrastructure, services and facilities, increased through traffic, or cumulative impacts arising from other Projects in the area. Potential benefits may be associated with economic development opportunities, including supply and procurement of materials and personnel.	Central Highlands LGA and the Derwent Valley LGA
Area of reference	The broader area that may experience socio-economic opportunities, primarily those associated with employment and procurement activities	South-east Region of Tasmania.

SIA engagement scope

The SIA was informed through a program of consultation with key stakeholders and community members. SIA engagement was an integral component of the broader program of engagement which was delivered by Hydro Tasmania through the Hydro Tasmania Major Projects' Social Program (MPSP).

The field study component of the SIA used a combination of social research methods including in-depth stakeholder interviews, service provider interviews and discussions, and an online/hard copy community survey to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. This data was then used to:

- Validate baseline data and assumptions
- Identify/test impacts that may be experienced by near neighbours and the broader community
- Confirm identified impacts and identify potential management strategies
- Provide communities with an opportunity to express any concerns or ideas for opportunities.

Engagement findings

Key concerns expressed by the community in relation to the Project include:

- **Access to recreational opportunities** – Concerns were raised about restricted access to lakes and water storages for recreational fishing. Once explained that any restrictions to access would be temporary and contained to a small number of sites (e.g. Lake King William at Clark Dam), most community members were satisfied. Access to the south-eastern parts of Lake King William is popular as this is the most accessible part of the lake due to prevailing winds, and it is not as far to travel as the northern access point (near Derwent Bridge) or western shores (off Harbacks Rd).
- **Access to services and facilities** – A change (reduction) in access to Tarraleah Village and the existing facilities and services such as the Lodge, Highlander tavern, golf club and camping area raised concerns for locals who value these facilities, and regular visitors who have family/historical ties to the Village. Some raised concerns about the future of the toilet facility at Hydro Park in the Nive Valley, as these are a popular resting spot for people traveling between Hobart and the West Coast. A broader concern regarding potential impacts on the already limited health resources in the local and regional area, as a result of any increased demand for services, was expressed by community and health-sector stakeholders and general community members. The capacity of emergency services to meet additional demands generated by the Project was also raised as a concern by volunteers of these services and general community members.
- **Labour force capacity and capability** – Education, training and skill development organisations raised concern about labour force capability and readiness to capitalise on Project opportunities citing numerous barriers to education and workforce participation.
- **Community connection to place and heritage values** – Maintaining access to the old Butlers Gorge township area was raised by some members of the community, who often return on a regular basis to see where their family members lived and/or worked. Concerns were commonly raised about the impact of the Redevelopment on the heritage values of the Tarraleah Village and the Tarraleah hydro scheme generally.
- **Environmental impacts** – Key concerns raised relate to the potential impact of the Project on water storage levels, fishing conditions, and general environmental values across the Hydro Tasmania assets. A few concerns were expressed about direct impacts on endangered flora and fauna. The impacts of increased traffic on roadkill of wildlife, particularly Tasmanian Devils, was raised infrequently.

- **Traffic** – Concerns were expressed regarding the potential increased risk of accidents along the Lyell Highway (in particular) due to the cumulative effects of a higher volume of road traffic (as a result of the Project), on roads that are already poor and in a region that experiences weather conditions that increase road hazards. This is further exacerbated by the lack of overtaking opportunities on steep and winding sections of road; the additional potential frustrations of drivers in these situations could lead to risk-taking behaviours. These concerns were often mentioned in the context of emergency service provision. Specific concerns were expressed by 'commuters' who live in the Bradys Lake and Bronte Park areas and work in Ouse and/or Wayatinah, regarding the potential closure of the Lyell Hwy during construction and or delays to journey times. Similar concerns were expressed by fire and SES emergency services personnel who were concerned about a potential impact on response times due to changes in road conditions, closures, etc. Emergency service providers highlighted a need to ensure unhindered accessibility on the Lyell Highway for emergency service access.
- **Distributional impacts** – Some concern was expressed regarding the perceived cost of the Project and that its benefits primarily accrue to the mainland rather than Tasmania.

From the SIA engagement program, the following opportunities were identified from the perspective of the community and local stakeholders:

- **Economic and employment benefits** – Many participants in engagement (including survey participants) view the Project as a significant source of employment opportunities for local people and perceive positive benefits for the Tasmanian economy and local businesses. Schools in the project region view the Project as providing work exposure and entry level employment options for local students who cannot readily commute to Hobart for further education or training. The building activity also creates hope; students can see the future opportunities on their doorstep. The workforce accommodation village is welcomed due to the range of services (cleaning, laundry, reception, maintenance, catering) that can support social procurement labour. State Growth's Industry Capability Network have an opportunity to support the project through creating awareness of opportunities for Tasmania's small to medium enterprises and this includes training for being 'tender ready'.
- **Social procurement** – Collaboration with service providers may result in social procurement opportunities for marginalised groups in our community. Existing programs can be leveraged through this project to increase social value outcomes for youth, women, culturally and linguistically diverse people and the disabled.
- **Energy and infrastructure** – Increased production of renewable energy for the state is perceived as a benefit of the project, as is the more efficient generation of electricity from existing water resources and the opportunities that increased availability of renewable energy presents for attracting new industries to the state. Participants appreciate the need for maintenance of valuable hydropower assets.
- **Tourism** – Mentions were made of the opportunity for integrating tourism with hydro operations. The preservation of Art Deco industrial buildings of the existing Tarraleah Scheme is seen as important to regional visitor attraction, which could be enhanced further.
- **Expertise and innovation** – Some participants in engagement welcomed the international expertise to keep Tasmania at the forefront of hydropower technology.
- **Community health and wellbeing** – Some participants saw opportunities to encourage a proportion of the workforce to reside in nearby local communities as permanent residents. The main desired consequence of this would be an increase in regional population, during to the construction phase, and associated opportunities for reinstating services in Ouse – particularly education. Participants thought the LBS Strategy represented an opportunity to improve health service delivery to residents of the CH LGA.

Existing social environment

The **local study area** includes the Hydro Tasmania-owned Tarraleah Village and is about 30 minutes by road from Ouse, the second largest town in the Central Highlands LGA. Nearby small settlements such as Wayatinah, Bronte Park, Dee, Bradys Lake, and London Lakes, each with permanent populations less than 50 people as of 2021, are culturally significant due to their hydropower development origins and are now popular for recreational activities. In 2021, the population of the local setting was approximately 452 people. Many of the localities in the local setting have their origins in the development of hydropower in the region and are therefore culturally important. They are associated with lakes such as Lake King William, Wayatinah and Tungatinah Lagoons, Lake Binney, Bradys Lake and Bronte Lagoon and are now important for recreational fishing and other nature-based activities. Table ES 2 presents selected socio-economic characteristics of the local study area.

Table ES 2 Selected characteristics – Local Study Area

Location*	Population	No. Private dwellings	Median Age	Median weekly household income ($)
Wayatinah	18	53	39	1,625
Bronte Park	49	111	59	649
Dee	7	27	74	474
Ouse	326	184	46	850
Bradys Lake	42	123	67	665
London Lakes	10	48	62	724
Total	452	546	-	-

Source: Source: (ABS 2021)

** Demographic information is unavailable for the Tarraleah locality as it had no recorded population or a very small population at the time of the ABS 2021 Census.*

The **regional study area** includes the local government areas of Central Highlands and Derwent Valley. In 2021, the regional study area had a population of 13,462 people.

Central Highlands LGA

The Central Highlands LGA is situated in central Tasmania. The LGA, with an area of 8,010 km², has the lowest population density of all Tasmanian LGAs. The LGA includes the small townships of Bothwell, Hamilton and Ouse and numerous villages. The CHC Chambers and administration are in Bothwell, and a works depot is located in Hamilton. In 2021, the Central Highlands LGA had a population of 2,520 people, with roughly 3,700 ratepayers who own 'shacks' in the communities around the region's lakes and mountains (CHC, 2024a). In 2021, approximately 6.1% of the population identified as being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent. Bothwell is the largest centre in the Central Highlands LGA with a population in 2021 of 379 people. Parts of the LGA are considered isolated, with limited services available.

The Central Highlands LGA is predominately a rural area. The economy is heavily reliant on primary industries, with much of the workforce employed in agriculture, forestry and fishing. Tourism also plays a growing role, particularly eco-tourism activities, and heritage related activities. The LGA is characterised by a small aging population and has experienced negligible population and dwelling growth over the past decade. Over time, the low population growth rates will impact the sustainability of communities in the LGA. There is some evidence of this already occurring in the smaller communities.

As with many regional areas, the LGA is subject to several socio-economic challenges primarily due to its low population density, aging demographic and limited employment opportunities. The LGA faces difficulties in recruiting and retaining skilled workers, due to limited housing, distance from peri urban areas and no public transport, and limited services in particular health services. The LGA has below average median household incomes, reflecting economic challenges for many residents; high unemployment rates, with limited employment opportunities outside of agriculture and tourism sectors; a lower proportion of residents with tertiary qualifications impacting job prospects and earning potential, and a higher demand for health care and social support services due to the aging demographic.

The Central Highlands LGA encompasses part of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area, two national parks and other Wilderness Conservation Areas, and is a popular area for recreational fly fishing, hunting, and bushwalking activities (Tasmanian Government, 2021). Key industries across the region include agriculture, horticulture and tourism. The region is also the birthplace of Hydro Tasmania's Hydro-Electric power system.

Key socio-economic characteristics of the Central Highlands LGA in 2021 compared to the state include:

- A relatively stagnant population with a lower proportion of people in the younger age groups (0 to 17 years) and a higher proportion of people in the older age groups (60 + years), indicating an ageing population
- A high and increasing proportion of lone person households (33% compared to 28%)
- Low median weekly household income ($1,114 compared to $1,368), with a smaller proportion (9.6%) of high-income households (those earning $3,000 per week or more) and a higher proportion (36%) of low-income households (those earning less than $800 pr week) compared to the state.
- A small proportion of households renting (16% compared to 26%)
- Lower educational attainment. Twenty-three per cent hold a trade qualification (certificate) compared to 22% for the state. Only 10% of the population hold a university qualification compared to 22% for the state.
- Unemployment rate of 5.5% similar to the state, but a lower labour force participation rate (49% compared with 58%).
- Higher rates of socio-economic disadvantage compared to the state (ABS, 2021).

Derwent Valley LGA

The Derwent Valley LGA, located northwest of Hobart and covering 4,108 km², had a population of 10,942 in 2021, with over half of the population residing in New Norfolk. In 2021, the LGA had a population of 10,942 people: with over half the population residing in and around the town of New Norfolk. The remaining population are spread across smaller residential and rural living areas with over 60% of the land area held in reserve or other parks areas. The LGA has a similar proportion of population identifying as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the Central Highlands, and a higher proportion than the state.

New Norfolk serves as the regional hub for services and commerce and is the location of the Derwent Valley Council (DVC) Chambers and administration. New Norfolk is located a 1 hour and 15 min drive from Tarraleah Village.

The Derwent Valley LGA has a more diverse economy than the Central Highlands LGA, and includes agriculture, manufacturing, health care and construction (construction services).

The DVC is striving for local economic diversification. However, the area faces high unemployment rates and a skills gap that hinders economic growth. Like the Central Highlands, the LGA population has low educational attainment, which also affects employment opportunities. Many residents in the LGA experience economic hardship, with lower median incomes compared to the state average. This can lead to difficulties in accessing essential services as well as economic opportunities. The population also experiences significant health challenges, including higher rates of chronic illness and mental health issues.

Major features of the Derwent Valley LGA include its freshwater resources, and productive agricultural land that supports agriculture and horticulture industries.

Key socio-economic characteristics of the Derwent Valley LGA compared to the state include:

- A growing population. In the five years to 2024, the LGA has experienced a higher annual percentage population change compared to the state.
- A higher proportion of people in the younger age groups (0 to 19 years) and a lower proportion of people in the older age groups (65 + years).
- A smaller proportion (9.5%) of high-income households (those earning $3,000 per week or more) and a higher proportion (29.2%) of low income households (those earning less than $800 pr week) compared to the state.
- A smaller proportion of households renting (21% compared to 26%)
- Low educational attainment. Nine per cent of the population holds a university qualification compared to 22% for the state, and 25% hold a trade qualification (certificate) compared to 22% for the state
- A high unemployment rate (7.3% compared to 5.9%), and a lower labour force participation rate (55% compared with 58%).
- A high level of youth disengagement with employment and education. The number of people aged 15 to 24 years in Derwent Valley LGA in 2021 was 1,287, of this, 14.9% were disengaged and 16.9% were partially engaged, compared to 11.9% and 15.4% respectively for the state.
- Higher rates of socio-economic disadvantage compared to the state.

Assessment of social impacts and opportunities

Social impacts and opportunities were assessed across all Project phases. All significant impacts and opportunities identified were associated with the Project construction and operational phase. Table ES 3 and Table ES 4 present a summary of these impacts and opportunities.

Table ES 3 Construction Phase – social impacts

Impact	Management	Significance (mitigated)
NEGATIVE IMPACTS		
An influx of temporary workers to the regional area may adversely affect community cohesion, character and amenity in nearby communities e.g. Bronte Park, Ouse, Hamilton.	The key management response is to provide a WAF at Tarraleah. Other management responses include requiring a workforce code of conduct to guide how workforce interacts with nearby communities when not on shift; a Project Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan to proactively manage issues through two-way communication processes and respond to the communication needs and expectations of key stakeholders and the broader community; and, encouraging Project workforce to contribute to the local community through volunteering. Further mitigations and processes for monitoring and evaluating impacts will be developed in consultation with local government and key stakeholders and documented in the SIMP. Regular 'community perception surveys' will be undertaken to monitor this impact.	**Low**
Changes in heritage and landscape values, amenity and accessibility adversely affect sense of place. Sense of place reflects emotional and cultural ties to locations, shaped by history, nature, and personal connections. For Tarraleah, community feedback highlights deep attachment to its hydro heritage, scenic landscape, and tranquillity, with concerns about project impacts on heritage, access, wilderness, and local amenity.	Technical studies detail detailed design/specification recommendations to reduce physical impacts relating to noise, dust and other emissions, as well as ways to reduce visual impacts on landscape values during the construction phase and in the long term. Other management responses include: establishing a project information centre at Tarraleah village to enable locals and visitors to learn about the Project and how it is being constructed and impacts managed; communicating regularly with stakeholders and local community; and, promoting other recreational opportunities in the area to mitigate any temporary access restrictions to existing opportunities.	**Low**
Disturbance of Aboriginal artefacts or areas of cultural significance, disturbance of existing landscape and temporary or permanent changes in access to country adversely affect Aboriginal health and wellbeing.	All Aboriginal relics in Tasmania are protected under the Aboriginal Heritage Act 1975. The AHA Report confirms that impacts on heritage sites can be avoided through careful design and construction practices and includes a set of management recommendations to support this. However, Hydro Tasmania has a limited understanding of the intangible cultural landscape values and other intangible Aboriginal cultural values associated with the Project area. Further understanding of cultural values of the Project area, and an assessment of potential impacts is underway through specific engagement with Tasmanian Aboriginal people. Further management of this impact is proposed through a program of access for Tasmanian Aboriginal People to connect to land and share stories, and the development of a First Nations Participation Plan.	**Medium**

Impact	Management	Significance (mitigated)
Reduced access to health services for existing residents of nearby communities due to additional demands of the Project workforce.	This impact is managed primarily through the Workforce Accommodation Facility at Tarraleah village and the requirement that the Contractor provides appropriately resourced health services for the duration of the construction phase, available to all Project construction workers. The workforce will also have access to an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) service. Opportunities to support local and regional health services through the Project LBS Action Plan will also be identified with community and key stakeholders.	**Low**
Reduced access to emergency services and increased response times for existing residents of nearby communities due to additional demands of the Project workforce.	Develop and implement an emergency response plan in consultation with local emergency service providers, ensuring that the contractors provide emergency response personnel at the Project site and works collaboratively with emergency services.	**Low**
Changes in accessibility to valued public recreational areas affects resident and visitor way of life.	During construction promote to the public other regional opportunities for recreational fishing, camping and boating activities	**Low**
Impacts to connectivity and accessibility for existing road users in the regional area with flow-on adverse effects to way of life. These impacts mainly relate to additional traffic on the Lyell Hwy because of construction-related vehicle movements such as heavy vehicles, over-dimensional loads and the workforce being transported to and around work sites. This may impact journey times along the Lyell Hwy, and/or some potential displacement as locals seek alternative routes to avoid construction traffic delays.	The Traffic Impact Assessment makes recommendations in relation to the management of potential traffic impacts, including the development of a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP), in consultation with relevant stakeholders, prior to the commencement of construction. The CTMP will include measures, processes and responsibilities to minimise the potential for impacts on the community and the operation of the surrounding road network during construction. Other management responses include regular monitoring of traffic conditions, and the implementation of various controls to minimise risks to Project workforce and the public such as driver safety and journey plans, in-vehicle monitoring systems, fitness for work management plans, and a driver code of conduct for Project workers.	**Medium**

Impact	Management	Significance (mitigated)
Reduced accessibility to rental housing in local communities, and increased housing costs. Major Projects have the potential to adversely impact housing market conditions in nearby communities due to workforce size and associated accommodation arrangements. The local area has a high proportion of owner-occupied dwellings (i.e. low housing capacity) and limited options for short-stay accommodations.	Given the remote location of the Project, the proposed shift arrangements and the likely presence of a significant interstate or overseas workforce, construction workers will be accommodated in a workforce accommodation facility (WAF) to be located adjacent to Tarraleah Village. The WAF would be provided for the commencement of construction. This accommodation approach significantly reduces the potential for direct impacts to the local and regional housing market, and displacement of vulnerable households from existing rental accommodation.	**Medium**
Reduced accessibility to short-term accommodation in the local and regional area for the visitor economy and other industry sectors.	Availability of short-term accommodation in the local and regional study area is limited and seasonal. The capacity of the local study area to absorb any sustained demand for short-term accommodation is low. The provision of the WAF (as per above) is the key management measure to mitigate this impact.	**Low**
Labour demand generated by the Project may lead to labour draw (direct and indirect) from other industry sectors, adversely affecting the economic output and service delivery capacity of these industry sectors. Economic modelling suggests a potential effect of the Project on tourism, mining and the agricultural, forestry and fishing industry sectors. Likely effects relate to labour draw and flow-on impacts to industry sector economic output	Although the impacts and disruption to some tourism-oriented business during construction may be material and require mitigation measures, the overall impact to tourism (as measured by spending in Retail Trade and Accommodation and Food Service) is net positive by contrast to the business-as-usual case. Impact management is proposed through the development and implementation of a Workforce Training and Development Plan (WTDP) for the construction phase and prior to commencement of construction, an engagement program with the tourism industry to identify potential strategies to offset or minimise potential effects.	**Low**
POSITVE IMPACTS (OPPORTUNITIES)		
The Project will create employment opportunities accessible to residents across the state. The Project will also generate opportunities for existing labour force upskilling across the state.	Management responses aim to ensure local and regional labour forces benefit from the Project by addressing skill gaps through training and removing barriers like transport. Most employment will be managed by the Contractor, who will develop and implement a Workforce Training and Development Plan. Hydro Tasmania will promote local hiring through obligations tied to recruitment and training. The Project will also apply Hydro Tasmania's Major Projects Local Content Framework and implement both an Australian Industry Participation Plan (AIPP) and, where relevant, a Tasmanian Industry Participation Plan (TIPP) to support local industry engagement during construction. Also, through the SIMP, actions that support the realisation of the social procurement objectives established in Hydro Tasmania's Major Projects Local Benefit Sharing (LBS) Strategy will be applied.	**High**

Impact	Management	Significance (mitigated)
Project procurement activities will generate industry and business opportunities across the State, supporting industry and business capacity and capability improvements and enabling diversification. Local spend by the Project workforce will increase trade for local businesses.	The contractor will be required to develop and implement a Workforce Training and Development Plan (WTDP) which will include a local and regional workforce development program which addresses barriers to employment and training participation, equips local workers with the necessary skills and certifications to participate in project opportunities (directly and indirectly) and trains a workforce that contributes to the development of an improved local and regional skills base. The local content and procurement provisions will also ensure local businesses and suppliers benefit directly and indirectly from the Project.	**High**
Enhanced employment and economic outcomes for marginalised people	Develop and implement a cultural awareness training program for Project construction. Prior to the commencement of work, all Project personnel will be required to complete cultural awareness training in support of a culturally safe work environment for First Nations people	**Medium**

Table ES 4 Construction phase - social impacts and opportunities

Impact	Management	Significance (mitigated)
NEGATIVE IMPACTS		
Permanent changes in local landscape and visual amenity adversely affect community held values.	Several mitigation measures are proposed in the Visual Impact Assessment to minimise impacts to landscape values for permanent Project infrastructure such as the Surge Tower.	**Low**
Changes in Scheme operations may affect the recreational use and enjoyment of downstream areas. Some minor changes to daily flows and fluctuations in Hydro storages immediately downstream of Tarraleah Power Station (e.g. Wayatinah Lagoon) may be experienced when the new scheme is operational.	Prior to the commencement of operations, Hydro Tasmania will develop and implement a stakeholder engagement plan to communicate to downstream users any changes in operational flow regimes and likely effects.	**N/A** (unmitigated impact assessment is **low)**
Changes in existing scheme operations affect the economic operations and livelihood of downstream water consumers.	It is not expected that lake level operation will impact on irrigation (or other downs-stream uses) as existing storage operating rules will remain in place.	**N/A** (unmitigated impact assessment is **low)**
The withdrawal of construction phase economic stimulus adversely effects the economy and livelihood of businesses, households and the broader communities in the local and regional area.	The SIMP and associated engagement plan, the development and implementation of a Local Benefit Sharing Action Plan for the Project and the development of a transition plan to support the shift from construction to operations, involving key stakeholders and affected communities. This plan would identify areas and demographic groups likely to face economic and social impacts and highlight services, funding, and programs to ease the transition.	**Medium**

Impact	Management	Significance (mitigated)
Cumulative construction activity may strain housing, labour availability, and social infrastructure, while also boosting local economic activity and employment.	Collaborate with the proponents of other projects, governments, and stakeholders to share timelines and workforce needs. Engage communities transparently and support skill development to ease labour and housing pressures. Collaborate with key stakeholders (e.g. State Growth, ReCFIT) and industry sector stakeholders to facilitate workforce forecasting and inform labour force planning. Advocate for policies that support workforce development and facilitate the movement of workers between regions and sectors.	Negative impacts: **Medium** Positive Impacts: **High**

Mitigation and management

Hydro Tasmania's approach to social impact management and monitoring through the design and construction of the Project with the EPC Contractor involves:

- Project design - The Project will incorporate measures to avoid negative social impacts e.g. provision of a workforce accommodation facility.
- Hydro Tasmania's Project Construction Phase Social Impact Management Plan (Project SIMP) - will be the primary social impact management and monitoring tool during construction.
- The EPC Contractors SIMP – will be developed by the EPC Contractor for the construction phase. It will document processes for achieving compliance with the commitments made in this SIA and in the Project SIMP.
- Hydro Tasmania's EMS – will be used by Hydro Tasmania as the framework to manage the implementation of the EPC Contractors construction environmental management plan (CEMP) during construction of the Project. The EMS, whilst primarily focused on environmental performance will indirectly influence and contribute to social impact mitigation.
- The EPC Contractors EMS – will be used to manage Project construction. The EMS will provide the framework for developing and implementing the Contractor's CEMP and will indirectly influence and contribute to social impact mitigation.

Twenty-six specific Management Measures are defined to address negative socio-economic impacts and maximise the opportunities of the Project.

Consistent with the core principle of adaptive management, the SIMP will include a monitoring, evaluation, reporting and improvement program. The program will detail the specific key performance indicators and targets which measure the effectiveness of the defined commitments in supporting the realisation of desired outcomes.

Conclusion

The demand for labour, the influx of a temporary workforce and the economic stimulus from the Project are key drivers of potential social impacts (both positive and negative) in the local and regional area. Unmitigated, the potential negative Project effects include limitations on community access to health services and emergency services, adverse changes in community access to and affordability of housing, constraints on visitor access to short-term accommodation, labour draw from other industry sectors impacting productivity. Potential positive impacts associated with Project include employment, training, and business opportunities relating to direct and indirect economic activity from the Project.

Mitigation and enhancement strategies are proposed to minimise negative consequences and maximise the social benefits to the local community and to Tasmania generally. An adaptive management approach is proposed, enabling Hydro Tasmania to manage and respond to changing socio-economic conditions and Project circumstances. This adaptive approach will ensure the effective management of the social impacts identified in the SIA and the enhancement of potential social benefits.

1 Introduction

This Social Impact Assessment Report has been prepared by Hydro Tasmania (HT) to examine the likely socio-economic impacts and opportunities of the Tarraleah Redevelopment Project.

1.1 The Project

1.1.1 Project overview

Hydro Tasmania is proposing to redevelop the Tarraleah Hydropower Scheme in Tasmania's Central Highlands (Figure 1-1). The Tarraleah Redevelopment Project (the Project) proposes to increase the capacity of the existing Tarraleah Hydropower scheme from 90 megawatts (MW) to approximately 190MW. The Project forms part of Hydro Tasmania's Major Projects Program (previously known as Battery of the Nation).

The Project will increase operational flexibility and efficiency by providing a direct pressurised connection between the scheme's headwaters at Lake King William and a new power station located adjacent to the existing Tarraleah Power Station on the Nive River. Part of the existing Number 2 water (No. 2 Canal) will be retained and water captured by Derwent Pumps, Horne's Dam and smaller water pick-ups will be transferred to the new pressurised conveyance. All other elements of the existing Tarraleah Hydropower Scheme will be decommissioned including Butlers Gorge Power Station, No. 1 Canal, hillside penstocks and Tarraleah Power Station. Decommissioning does not form part of this Social Impact Assessment (SIA).

The Project will utilise the new intake on Lake King William and associated 1 km tunnel that is currently being constructed as part of a program of upgrade works (the Tarraleah Upgrade Works Project). The Lake King William intake and tunnel are subject to separate approvals and do not form part of this SIA.

The Project proponent is Hydro Tasmania (HT), a Tasmanian Government Business Enterprise that has been generating electricity for Tasmania through hydropower for over 100 years. Hydro Tasmania is a trading name of the Hydro Electric Corporation (formally the Hydro-Electric Commission).

1.1.2 Project location

The Project is located near Tarraleah in the Central Highlands Local Government Area (LGA), approximately 125 kilometres (km) northwest of Hobart, Tasmania (Figure 1-2). The Project area covers approximately 4,800 hectares (ha) and extends from Lake King William via Tarraleah to either Dee Lagoon or Liapootah in a broadly linear manner (two transmission line options form the Project for the purpose of seeking approval, however only one option will be constructed). Access to the Project area is provided by the Lyell Highway and Butlers Gorge Road.

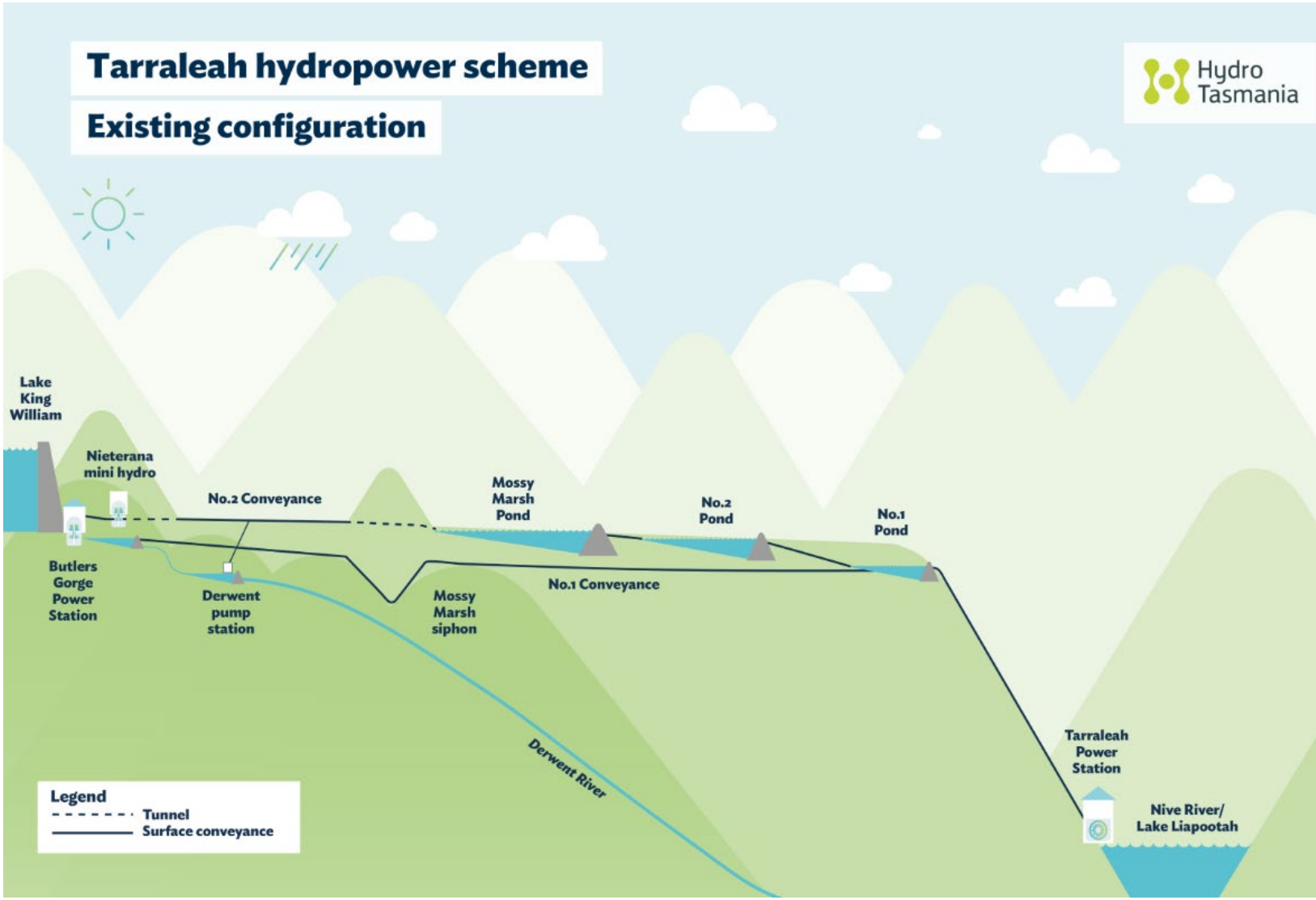

Figure 1-1 Tarraleah Hydropower Scheme

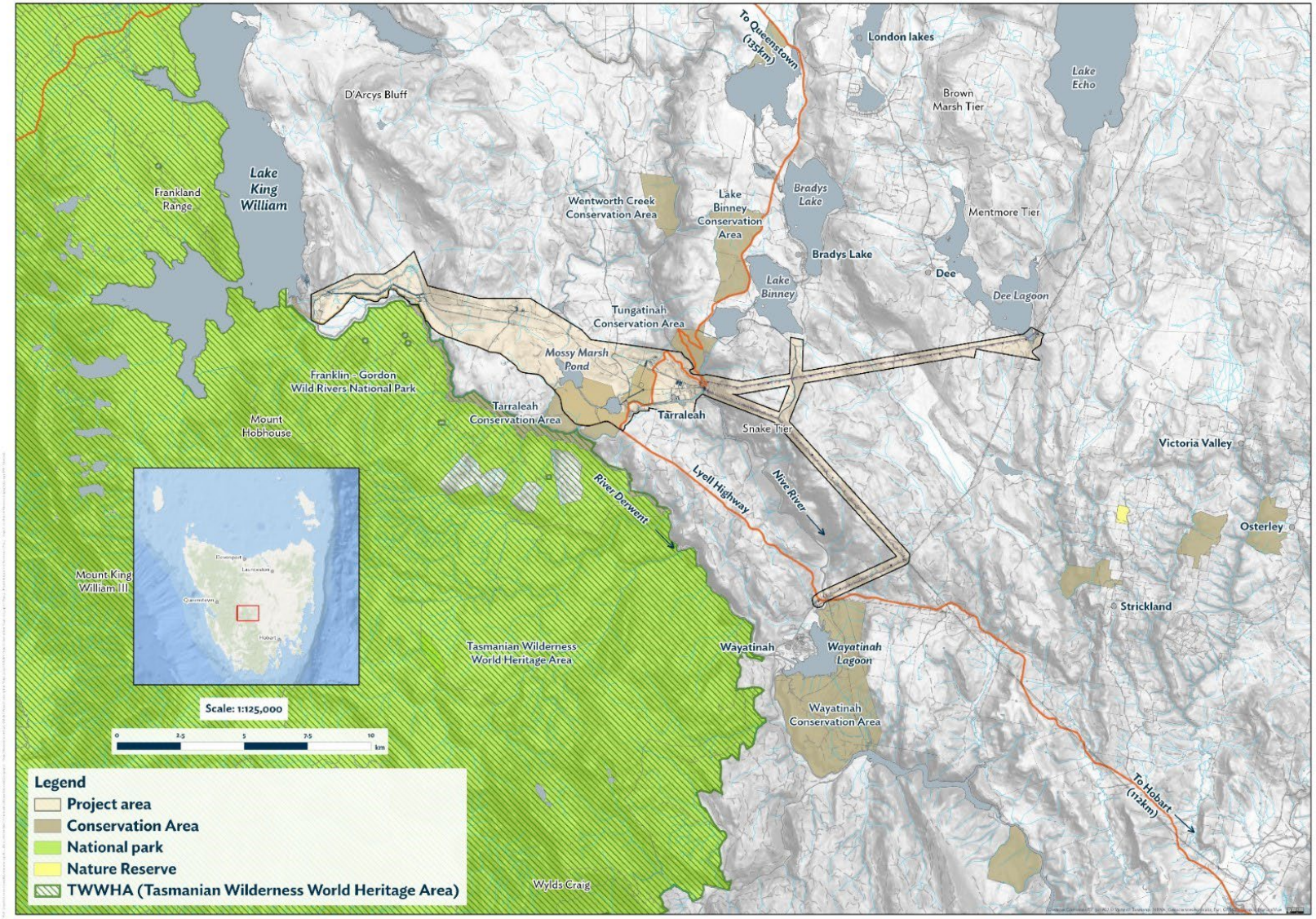

Figure 1-2 Project Location

1.2 Legislative framework

The legislative framework for the Project is described in the EIS. The following section summarises key approvals relevant to the conduct of the SIA.

Hydro Tasmania holds a special licence under division 6, part 6 of the *Water Management Act 1999* (WM Act). A special license allows Hydro Tasmania to use water resources in Tasmania for electricity generation. Hydro Tasmania is able to take, store and manage water for electricity generation without requiring any further licensing. Tarraleah and its associated hydrology is located within the Derwent hydro-electric district and forms part of the rights to take and manage water afforded by Hydro Tasmania's special licence. The operation of the existing Tarraleah Hydro Power Scheme and the operation of the Project will be regulated through the WM Act.

A planning permit application was submitted to the Central Highlands Council in June 2024 for assessment of the use and development of land for the Project under s.51 of the *Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993* (Tas) (LUPA Act).

In accordance with s.25 of the *Environmental Management and Pollution Control Act 1994* (EMPC Act) the CHC referred the Project to the Tasmanian Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) in June 2024. In August 2024, the EPA determined that the construction of the new conveyance infrastructure, which includes crushing of more than 1 000 m^3 of rock per year - an activity listed under Schedule 2 of EMPCA (6(a) a materials handling facility), requires assessment by the Board of the Environmental Protection Authority (the Board) and that the Project will be subject to a class 2C assessment. In August 2024, the EPA issued Project Specific Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Guidelines (the Guidelines) for the Project.

The Guidelines exclude the following activities from assessment by the Board:

- new hydropower power station
- new transmission lines
- new switchyard

An EIS has been prepared to support the applications for Project approval. The EIS has been prepared in accordance with the Guidelines and the EPA Guidelines for Preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (March 2019). Although a number of activities associated with the Project will not be assessed by the Board, Hydro Tasmania has chosen to address the complete Project in the EIS to provide an accessible, holistic document to the community and stakeholders.

This Social Impact Assessment (SIA) report has been prepared by Hydro Tasmania and forms an Appendix to the Project EIS.

The Project also requires approval under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cwth) (EPBC Act). A referral was submitted in June 2025 and is currently under assessment. The bilateral agreement between Tasmania and the Commonwealth Government is not applicable to the Project.

1.3 Report purpose and scope

The SIA supports the planning and approval process for the Project. It has been prepared in accordance with the relevant requirements of the EPA's Guidelines for the Project as well as relevant guidelines, and policies.

The SIA assesses the potential socio-economic impacts and opportunities associated with all direct project activities within the defined Project area (**Figure 3-1**). It includes the new hydropower power station, the new transmission lines (two options) and the new switchyard. It also considers impacts associated with the following aspects:

- All Project related off-site vehicle movements, such as heavy and over-dimensional vehicles (ODVs), aggregate truck movements, and workforce light vehicle movements.
- Installation of temporary power and relocation of the existing switchyard.

Whilst the SIA considers the impacts and opportunities associated with both the construction and operations of the Project, its primary focus is the construction phase, as this is when the greatest impact is anticipated.

The scope of the SIA excludes consideration of:

- Any ancillary infrastructure located outside the Project area.
- Components currently being constructed as part of the Tarraleah Upgrade Works (further described in the EIS).
- The construction workforce accommodation facility (WAF) to be located on land adjacent to the existing Tarraleah Village. The WAF is the subject of a separate development application to the CHC.
- Activities associated with the decommissioning of assets made redundant by successful construction of the Project.

1.4 Report structure

This report is structured as follows:

- Sections 1 to 3 provide an overview of the scope and objectives of the Project, its social and policy context and a description of the Project during construction and operations, with particular focus on the social and socio-economic factors.
- Section 4 - Assessment methodology – describes the SIA approach, scoping, methodology and definition of social impacts and describes the limitations and assumptions of the SIA.
- Section 5 - Assessment Scope – describes the scope of the SIA including relevant statutory requirements and guidelines, Project activities, assessment focus, Project setting and the defined local and regional study area.
- Section 6 - SIA Engagement - summarises the scope of engagement undertaken to inform the social impact assessment.
- Section 7 - Existing social environment - presents a summary of the existing socio-economic environment in the local and regional study area.
- Section 8 - Impacts and opportunities assessment – presents a summary of the likely social impacts and opportunities should the Project proceed, proposed management approach and tools.
- Section 9 - Monitoring and adaptive management – describes the overall approach to the management of social impacts, the monitoring of potential social changes and effectiveness of mitigation actions.
- Section 10 - Conclusion.
- Section 11 - References.

2 SIA Policy context

This section provides a summary of the relevant policy, plans, strategies, and guidelines that inform an appreciation of potential social impacts and benefits associated with the Project.

2.1 Hydro Tasmania requirements

2.1.1 Hydro Tasmania's Purpose, Vision and Strategy

Hydro Tasmania's Purpose, Vision and Strategy (PVS) charts the course for the company and aims to inspire, motivate and direct the GBE's efforts over coming years. It has been recently reviewed as a response to HT's evolving business and the broader market, as well as changes to HT's Ministerial Charter (Figure 2-1).

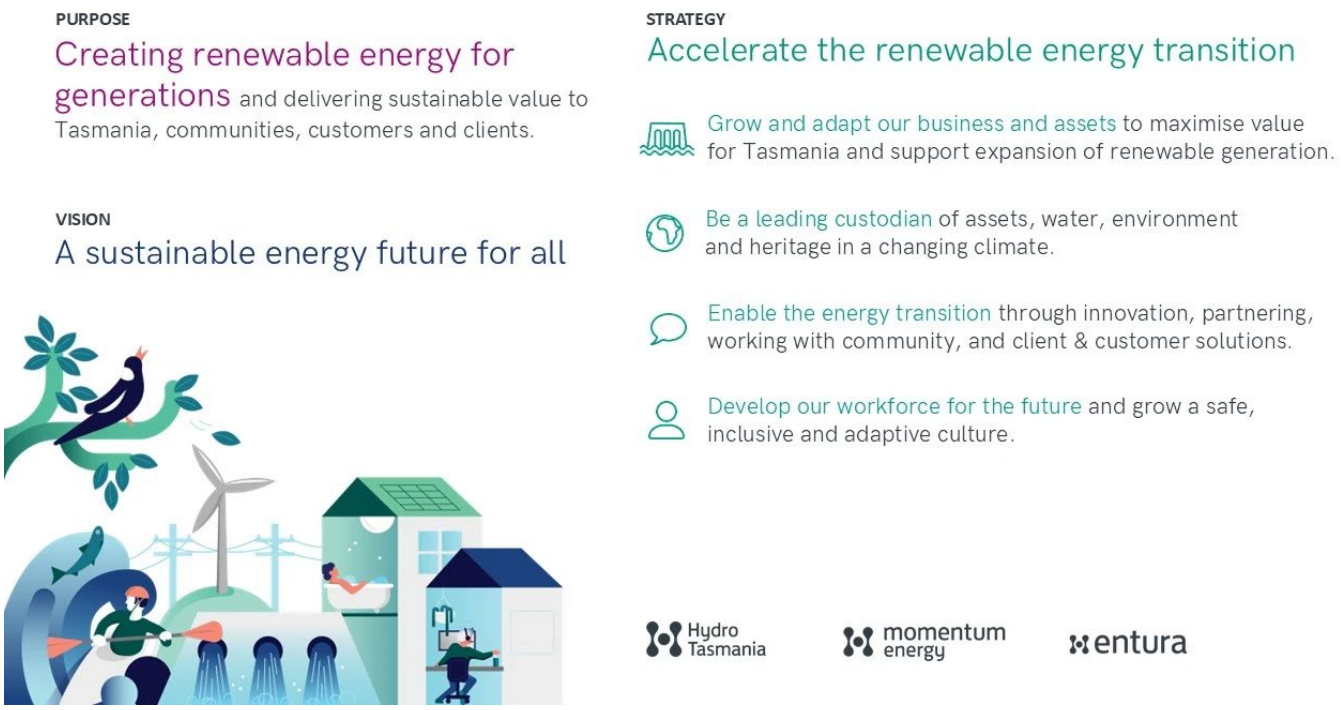

Figure 2-1 Hydro Tasmania's Purpose, Vision and Strategy

2.1.2 Other Hydro Tasmania guidance

The following key Hydro Tasmania policies, principles, strategies and programs have shaped the consideration of social impacts and opportunities and informed the development of management measures. These are described in Appendix A.

- Hydro Tasmania Stakeholder Engagement Charter
- Hydro Tasmania Environmental Policy
- Hydro Tasmania Sustainability Principles
- Hydro Tasmania Modern Slavery Statement.

2.1.3 Major Projects Environment, Social and Governance (ESG) Framework

The Project forms part of the Major Projects Program (MPP) of Hydro Tasmania. Hydro Tasmania's commitment to and performance in environment, social and governance areas for its MPP is reflected in the Major Projects ESG Framework (Table 2-1). The preparation of this SIA supports achievement of the ESG Objectives.

Table 2-1 Major Projects' Environmental, Social and Governance Framework

Corporate Sustainability Pillars		ESG Objectives
Environment	**Planetary Integrity** A leading custodian	Ensure leading environmental management, enhance biodiversity outcomes, and minimise project carbon emissions.
	Sustainable Resource Use A sustainable energy transition	Adopt circular economy principles across the project life cycle, prioritising renewable energy production and sustainable water use for shared value.
Social	**People** Foster a safe, inclusive and adaptive culture. Provide a holistic employee experience.	Support the development of a safe, skilled, diverse, and resilient workforce, including contractors, to enable future energy transition projects.
	Prosperity A sustainable energy future for all. Enable the transition	Deliver social and economic value to local communities and the State and realise market and Tasmanian consumer benefits. Build trusted relationships with local communities, including Aboriginal communities.
Governance	**Governance** A trusted organisation.	Build stakeholder confidence through ethical, commercial and technical governance and procurement processes to ensure transparency and accountability.

2.1.4 Major Projects social performance guidance

The following strategies and frameworks support the objectives of the Major Projects ESG Framework and have informed the approach to management and monitoring of social impacts and opportunities for the Project.

Guidance	Description
Major Projects Local Benefit Sharing (LBS) Strategy	LBS is defined as deliberate measures undertaken by Project proponents to share the benefits of the development with host communities. The LBS Strategy has three mechanisms for delivering local benefits: 1. Developing the project reference designs, and encouraging the contractors throughout the early contractor involvement (ECI) phase, to consider solutions that leave ancillary infrastructure in place that can add social and economic value to communities in the future. 2. Defining Employer's requirements and targets for the contractor, and developing and supporting enabling initiatives, to help contractors realise opportunities for local industry participation and capacity building. This will be achieved by investing in social procurement and programs to support local workforce development; setting targets for local content; and other specific requirements, targets and policies. 3. Establishing and investing in a 'community benefits sharing fund' to support locally identified and co-designed initiatives that respond to local community needs. The LBS Strategy establishes a requirement for the development of a Project Local Benefit Sharing Action Plan that involves local community members in co-designing benefit-sharing initiatives. The LBS Strategy is designed to align and integrate with the approach to community benefit sharing across Hydro Tasmania's hydropower developments.
Major Projects Local Content Framework (LCF)	The LCF sets out Hydro Tasmania's objectives in relation to achieving economic and social benefits for local communities and regions as an outcome of our investment in major Hydropower developments such as the Tarraleah Redevelopment Project. The LCF guides identified community objectives and sustainable procurement outcomes through the various stages of the Project procurement life cycle. The MP LCF is designed to ensure the economic and social benefits of our Major Projects are realised by local communities. Using local labour, materials and services in Project construction where practicable not only supports the local economy but also helps to build local capacity and skills, therefore contributing to long-term resilience of the local, regional and statewide economy. Defining 'local' for the Project is complex because of the remote nature of the project locations and the socio-economic relationships between settlements proximate to the projects and the broader regional and Tasmanian economy. 'Local' within the LCF is defined as the 'Local Priority Area' and is the combined geographic area of the Central Highlands and Derwent Valley LGAs.

2.2 Other relevant policies, strategies and plans

The SIA considers and has been informed by a range of national, state, regional and local plans and policies as well as renewable industry sector policies and strategies. Key guidance is listed below and described further in Appendix A.

- Tasmanian Renewable Energy Action Plan and Renewable Energy Coordination Framework (Tasmanian Government, 2020)
- Renewable Energy Development in Tasmania: A Guideline for Community Engagement, Benefit Sharing and Local Procurement May 2024 (ReCFIT, 2024) and associated technical supplements.
- Leading Practice Principles: First Nations and Renewable Energy Projects (CEC & KPMG, 2024)
- Southern Tasmanian Regional Land Use Strategy (STRLUS) (Tasmanian Planning Commission, 2010).
- Central Highlands Council Strategic Plan 2015-2024 (CHC, 2015).

3 Project description

This section presents a summary description of the Project components and construction phase activities with a focus on the key aspects relevant to the consideration of social impacts and opportunities. A comprehensive Project description is provided in the EIS.

3.1 Key permanent project components

The key permanent components of the Project are outlined below and illustrated in Figure 3-1:

- An approximately 4.2 km **headrace pipeline** and associated service roads connecting Lake King William, via the Lake King William intake and tunnel, to the headrace tunnel.
- An approximately 9.5 km low-pressure **headrace tunnel**.
- An approximately 2.3 km underground partly lined high pressure **power tunnel** will transfer water from the headrace tunnel to the power station. The power tunnel separates into two short **underground penstocks**, one for each turbine, prior to entering the power station.
- A partially underground **powerhouse** complex, adjacent to the existing Tarraleah Power Station, with an installed capacity of 180 MW (and peak capacity of 190MW) made up of two turbine sets and associated mechanical and electrical equipment. The power station includes a new tail bay to discharge water into the Nive River.
- An underground **surge shaft** and above ground **surge tower** located on the unnamed hill between the Lyell Highway and Fourteen Mile Road. The surge facility will be connected to the head race tunnel to manage fluctuations in water pressure (hydraulic transients). The surge shaft will be approximately 265 m deep and the surge tower approximately 70 m above ground level.
- A **pumping station** and approximately 0.8 km long rising main connecting No. 2 Pond to the base of the surge tower. The pump station and rising main will transfer water from Derwent Pumps, Hornes Pond and intermediate water pick-ups via No. 2 Pond to the headrace tunnel.
- A **transformer yard** will be established adjacent to the power station that will be connected to a switchyard located either next to transformer yard (southern transmission line option) or adjacent to the existing Tungatinah switchyard (northern transmission line option).
- A new **22 kV power supply** from the existing 22 kV network to the western, mid access and Paddy's Quarry portals, pump station, surge tower and power station will provide power during construction and operation.
- A new **220 kV transmission line** will be constructed to connect the switchyard to an existing substation. There are currently two transmission line options being considered, with only one to be constructed:
  - A 14 km double circuit line from Tungatinah Switchyard to Dee Lagoon substation (northern option), or
  - A 15 km double circuit line from Tarraleah Switchyard to Liapootah substation (southern option).
- Access tunnels, tunnel portals and access roads to provide access to the headrace and power tunnels. Excess spoil from tunnel, power station and portal excavations will be stored in one of three permanent spoil emplacement areas located at the western portal, mid tunnel access portal and Paddy's Quarry portals.

A detailed description of the Project is provided in the **EIS** (Chapter 2 Project Description).

There are no plans to expand the operation of the new Tarraleah hydropower scheme outside of the works described in this EIS.

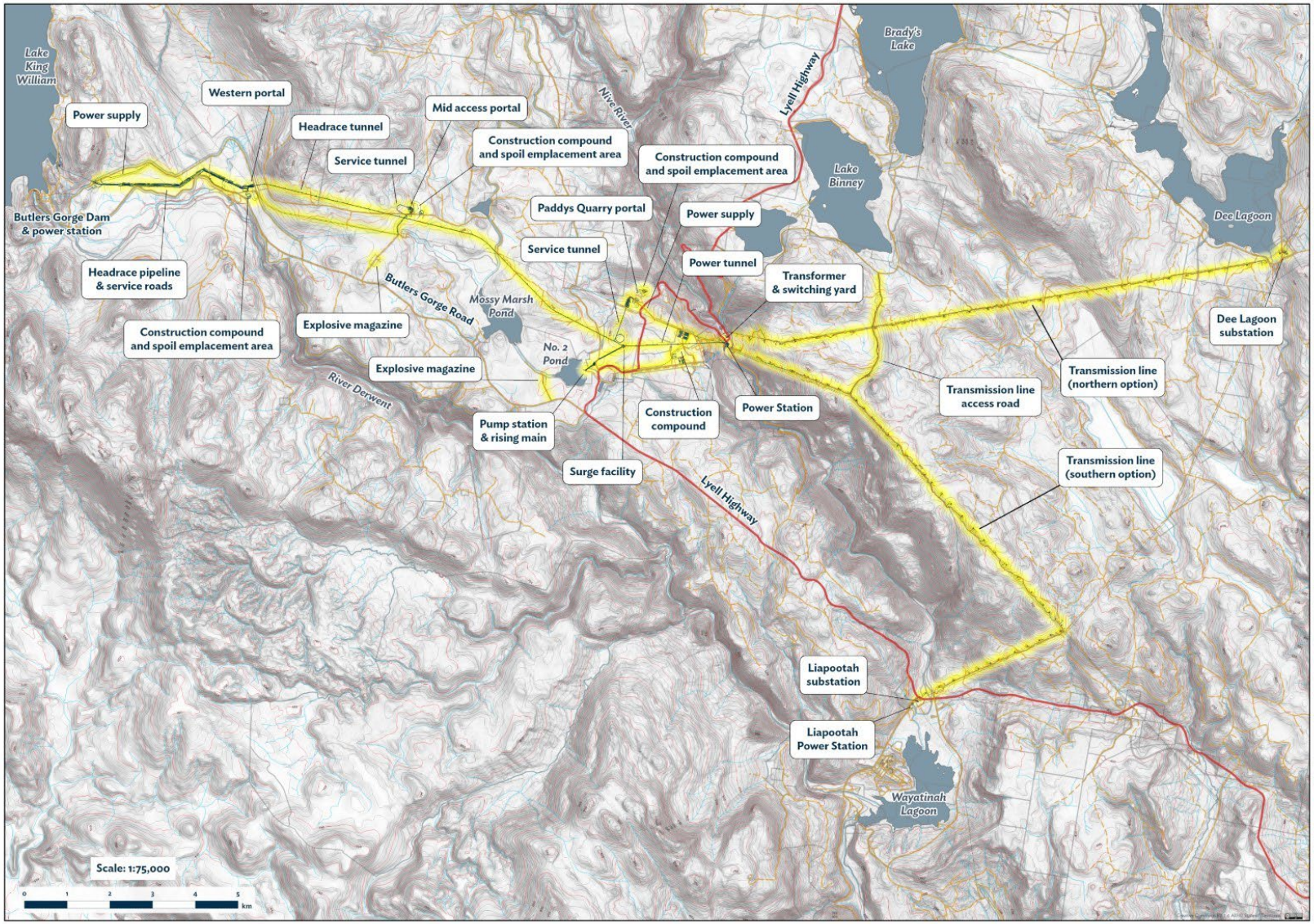

Figure 3-1 Key project components

3.2 Project development

Hydro Tasmania intends to engage an Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) contractor (the contractor) for the Project. The contractor will be responsible for developing a detailed design and cost for the Project prior to a final investment decision (FID). As this SIA has been completed prior to the engagement of an EPC contractor, the design and construction methods presented are based on a reference design developed by Hydro Tasmania which aims to retain flexibility for the contractor to refine the design and construction methods. It is important that Hydro Tasmania provides this flexibility in the reference design to allow the EPC contractor to develop a detailed design and construction method that achieves economic, environmental, and socially sustainable development outcomes.

Hydro Tasmania will establish minimum requirements for the contractor in delivering the Project. Minimum requirements will be set across a range of thematic areas including procurement, environment and social management, work health and safety and employee relations. Establishing minimum requirements is an important mechanism for enabling Project benefits and managing potential socio-economic impacts.

3.3 Project terminology

3.3.1 Project area

The Project area is the broader area within which the Project will be built and operated, and the extent within which direct impacts from the Project are anticipated. The Project area does not represent a footprint for the construction works, but rather indicates an area that was investigated during environmental assessments.

The Project area is illustrated in **Figure 3-2**.

3.3.2 Land disturbance footprint

Within the Project area, a disturbance footprint has been defined (**Figure 3-3**). The disturbance footprint represents the maximum extent of where land disturbance for the Project may occur and allows for potential future refinement to the Project's design and construction method.

Stakeholders with interests within or near the disturbance footprint are a key focus for the SIA. The SIA Study Area (defined in Section 5.5) is significantly broader than the disturbance footprint reflecting the spatial distribution of potential social impacts.

Land that is not required for permanent infrastructure will be progressively rehabilitated during and following the completion of construction. Land that is required for permanent infrastructure and that will not be rehabilitated has been included in the operational footprint.

The disturbance footprint and operational footprint are shown in **Figure 3-3** and **Figure 3-4**.

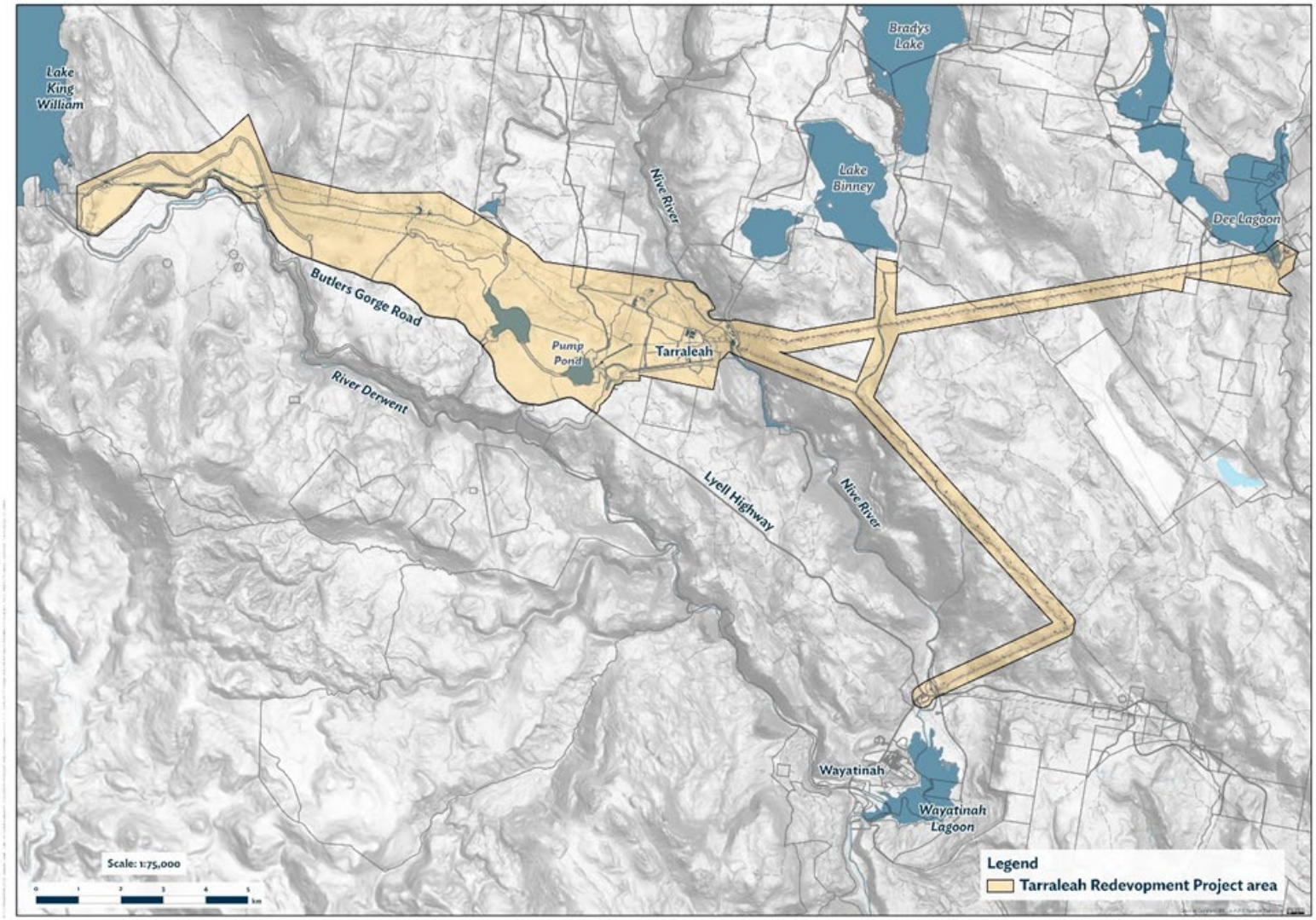

Figure 3-2 Tarraleah Redevelopment Project area

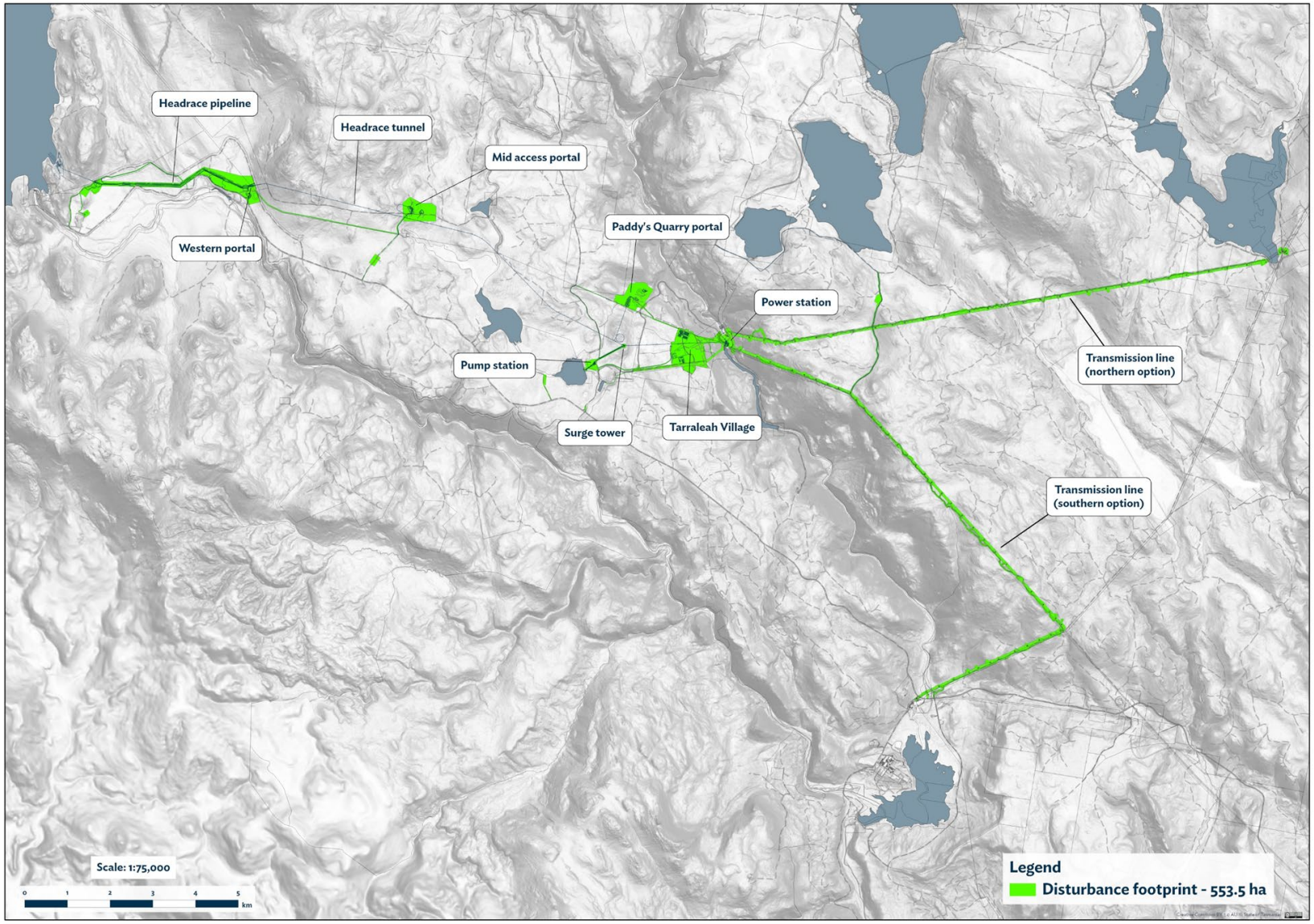

Figure 3-3 Tarraleah Redevelopment Project disturbance footprint

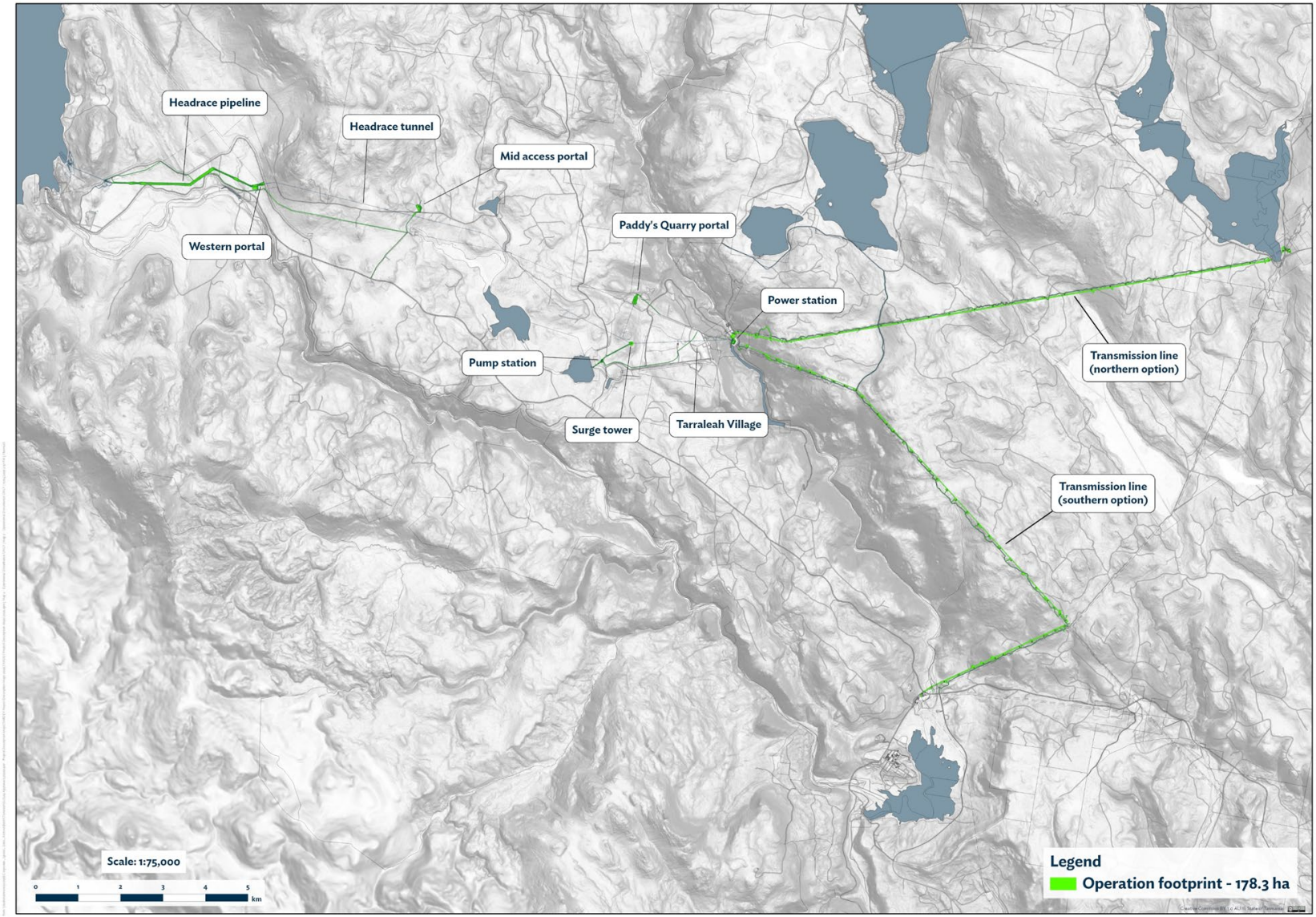

Figure 3-4 Tarraleah Redevelopment Project operational footprint

3.4 Construction phase

This section describes the key construction activities, construction schedule and workforce requirements relevant to the consideration of potential social impacts and opportunities, based on the reference design.

3.4.1 Summary of key construction activities and supporting works

3.4.1.1 Key construction activities

Key construction activities include:

- Site establishment works including installation of erosion and sediment controls, water management measures and clearing and grubbing of all unwanted surface materials at construction sites.
- Excavation of the portals using a combination of conventional earth moving techniques and drill and blast (where higher strength rock is encountered).
- Tunnel excavation using a combination of mechanised excavation and drill and blast techniques. A tunnel boring machine (TBM) may also be utilised.
- Construction of the surge shaft and tower. The shaft will be constructed using a raise borer.
- Power station excavation using a combination of conventional excavation, rock hammering and drill and blast.

3.4.1.2 Supporting works

To construct the permanent infrastructure required for the Project, the following temporary work items will need to be constructed and subsequently removed and rehabilitated following completion of the construction phase:

- Workshop, laydown areas and batch plants – These will be constructed on land owned by Hydro Tasmania at the Tarraleah Village or at other locations within the disturbance footprint, as required to support the works. A minimum of two (2) batch plants for concrete supply will be required to support construction activities.
- Administration buildings - An area has been set aside in the Tarraleah Village for a Project office. This could involve the installation of a prefabricated building that will be removed and rehabilitated at the conclusion of the Project. The interiors of existing buildings in the village will be retrofitted where possible, to optimise existing space and minimise the need for further prefabricated buildings across the village. Any modifications made to Tarraleah Village will be minor and will maintain the heritage value of the Tarraleah Village.
- Magazine facilities for storing explosive requires for drill and blast activities - The explosive material for blasting activities is required to be stored in magazine facilities. Two dedicated locations have been identified for magazine facilities off Butlers Gorge Road. These areas have been selected by a blasting specialist in response to various legislated offset distances from sensitive structures and the forecast explosive demands of the Project.
- Temporary bridge over the Nive River - Tunnel excavation and / or steel lining of the power tunnel may be undertaken from the power station site. To facilitate tunnel excavation, and minimise interfaces on the constrained site, a temporary bridge over the Nive River will be constructed.

A WAF will be constructed adjacent to the existing Tarraleah Village. Any direct impacts of the WAF are not included in the scope of this assessment[2].

Installation of temporary power and relocation of the existing switchyard in the Nive Valley would also be undertaken as part of Project construction.

Upon the completion of works, all temporary construction sites will be rehabilitated.

[2]The WAF is referenced in this SIA as a management tool to mitigate construction workforce aspects of the Project.

Project construction will also require the permanent closure of the public amenity facilities (rest area and toilet facilities) located adjacent to the Lyell Highway in the Nive Valley, and the relocation of the Polish monument in the same location.

3.4.2 Construction schedule

Construction works associated with the Project are estimated to be completed over a six-year period. An indicative construction schedule is shown in Figure 3-5.

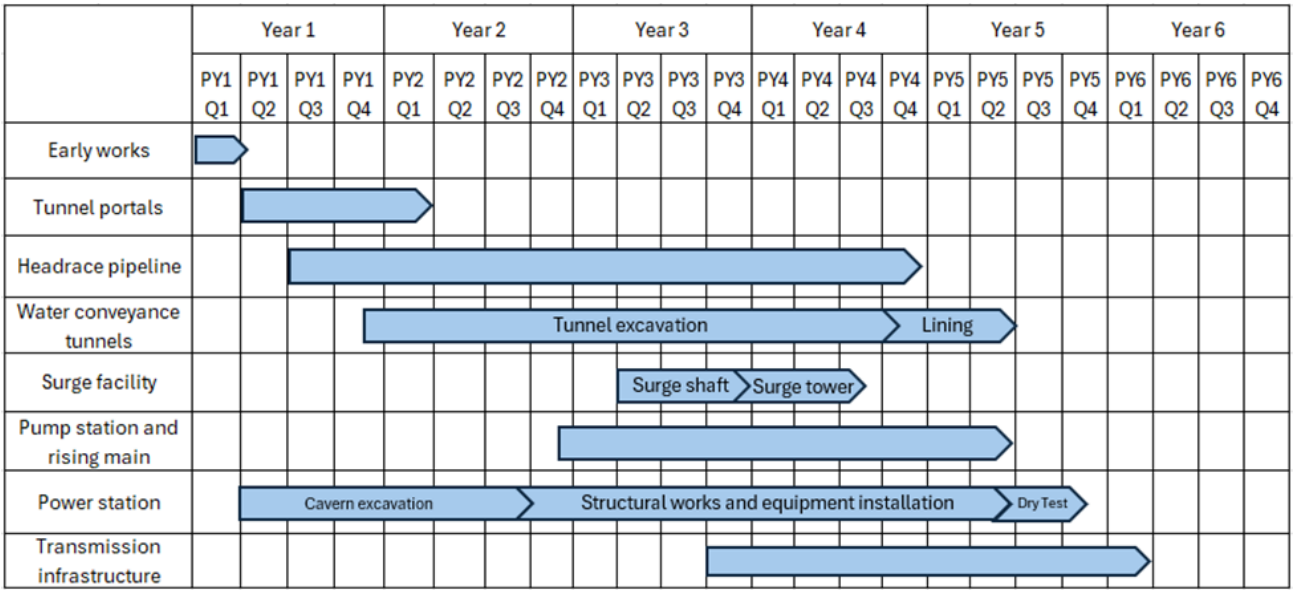

Figure 3-5 Indicative Construction Schedule

3.4.3 Construction workforce requirements

3.4.3.1 Workforce demand

A histogram of the expected construction phase workforce distribution (excluding transmission line) is shown in Figure 3-6. Based on current project planning, a peak workforce of up to 330 personnel is anticipated.

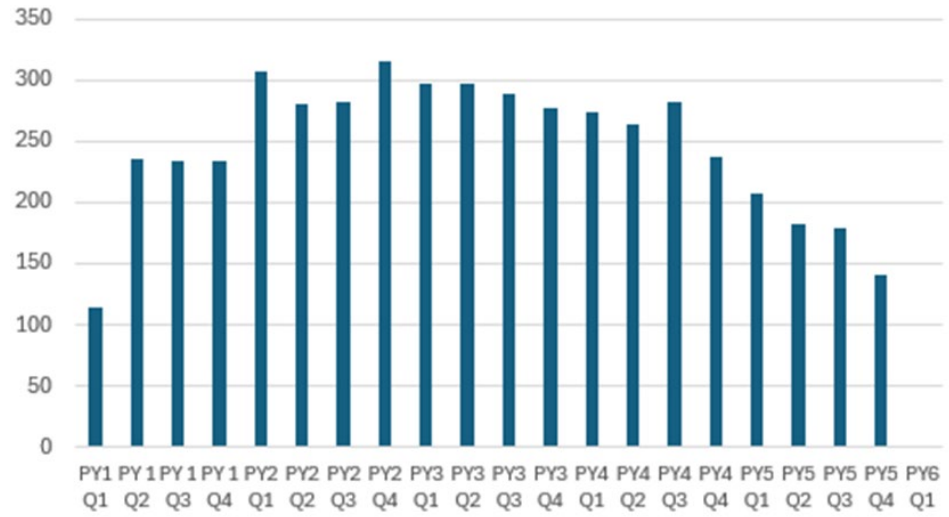

Figure 3-6 Construction Workforce by quarter

The core construction workforce will consist of professional staff, supervisors, trades and labourers, tunnelling and underground specialists, plant operators and earthworks crews working at different periods through the construction phase.

Shift arrangements will vary according to the different areas of construction work, with the following combination of arrangements anticipated:

- 8 hours/day, 5 days/week
- 10 hours/day, 5.5 days/week
- 24 hours/ day, 2 shifts/day, 7 days/week.

3.4.3.2 Workforce sourcing

A maximum of 30% of the construction workforce is assumed to be recruited from within Tasmania, with the majority recruited from south-east Tasmania. The remaining 70% will be sourced from interstate or international locations.

3.4.4 Workforce accommodation

Hydro Tasmania owns and operates the Tarraleah Village and 16 houses (a total of 48 beds) in Wayatinah village. The accommodation facilities at Tarraleah Village are for the most part self-contained and comprise a mix of shared-style cottages, cabins and single rooms. The houses at Wayatinah Village are also self-contained.

The construction workforce will be accommodated in a combination of existing accommodation at Tarraleah Village and a purpose-built workforce accommodation facility (WAF) to be located on land adjacent to the existing Tarraleah Village. Based on current workforce planning a WAF with up to 300 beds will be required to accommodate the workforce during construction. The WAF is the subject of a separate Development Application (DA) to the CHC. There are various factors that would influence the actual peak accommodation demand, including the composition of the workforce in terms of local, regional, state and interstate or international workers and any refinement of the construction schedule by the contractor.

For example, subject to contractor requirements, workers residing permanently in the local or regional area may commute to the Project daily or alternatively be accommodated at the WAF for their shift roster. The extent to which workers are permitted by the contractor to commute daily to the Project will depend on the workers usual place of residence and the fitness for work and fatigue management policies of the contractor.

Some workers sourced from outside Tasmania may choose to relocate to Tasmania for the duration of their employment. Most of these workers are anticipated to reside in greater Hobart (due to the availability of housing, social infrastructure and services) and would likely reside in the WAF whilst on shift roster.

3.4.5 Workforce transport arrangements

Workers sourced from outside Tasmania will likely fly into Hobart airport as the closest airport to the Project area. These personnel would then commute by bus (Project provided) to the WAF. Given the duration of the construction phase it is possible that some personnel may collect a Project vehicle, hire car or private vehicle and drive to the WAF.

All intrastate workers will be required to make their own way to the Project either daily or for the start of their shift roster. Depending on the number of intrastate workers including daily commuters, the contactor may choose to provide a bus service between key pick-up points e.g. Hobart and the Project.

All personnel who are housed at the WAF will be transported to construction activity areas by bus and light vehicle so as to minimise parking requirements and the number of vehicles present on the external and internal road network. This will improve the efficiency of transport within the site while also improving safety outcomes. Bus pickup and drop off points will be marked, and sufficient buses will be present to account for the extent of the workforce. Superintendents, engineers, and other employees requiring flexibility of transport for their roles will have access to light vehicles in accordance with their needs.

3.4.6 Construction traffic

A variety of activities will be undertaken during the construction phase of the Project that will generate additional traffic on the road network. Such activities will include:

- Delivery of materials and equipment
- Transport of personnel (via bus and private vehicle) between place of residence or port of arrival into Tasmania to the WAF.
- Transport of personnel (via bus and private vehicle) between the WAF and construction areas.
- Servicing of the WAF, such as waste collection and food delivery
- Transportation of spoil from tunnelling and surface works

Access to the Project during construction will be via the Lyell Highway with key access points from the Lyell Highway at Butlers Gorge Road, Fourteen Mile Road, Oldina Drive, Paddy's Quarry, Tarraleah Power Station. Butlers Gorge Road will be closed for public access during construction. Excepting temporary closures as required, Oldina Drive between the Lyell Highway and Tarraleah Lookout will remain open for public access during construction. Other sections of Oldina Drive within Tarraleah Village will be closed during construction.

While the Project is located on private roads, there are a number of interfaces with public roads including the Lyell Highway. During tunnelling and excavation works, trucks will travel to and from the power station and Paddy's Quarry via the Lyell Highway. All excavated material from the power station site will be transported in trucks to Paddy's Quarry via the Lyell Highway, as there is insufficient laydown area at the power station. There may also be ongoing movement of TBM-excavated material being re-purposed across the site. The Project will also require materials and equipment to be transported to site from across Tasmania, including shipping ports located at Hobart and Bell Bay.

3.4.7 Public access arrangements

The following public access arrangements to key infrastructure and facilities in the Project area are proposed during construction:

- Access to Lake King William and the old Butlers Gorge Settlement: These sites are accessed by Butlers Gorge Road, which will be closed to public access for the duration of the construction phase.
- Access to facilities at Tarraleah Village:
  - Public access will be provided via Oldina Drive to the Penstock Look-out and a refurbished café and proposed Project interpretation centre in the existing Edge Café building.
  - Accommodation options at the main Tarraleah Lodge may be available to the public during the construction phase, as it is unlikely to be required for workforce accommodation needs.
  - The Tarraleah Tavern may be available to the public intermittently, as workforce needs vary.
  - The Highlander Caravan Park will be closed to the public during construction. Due to the Project's accommodation and hospitality infrastructure requirements, access restrictions, security issues, and planned high-intensity use of Tarraleah Village, the facility cannot remain open to the public.
- Tarraleah Golf Club – the golf club located off Probula Avenue will continue to operate during construction with ongoing access provided for members of the club and visiting public. The facility may be available to the construction workforce for their recreational time, subject to the contractor's policies.

3.4.8 Supply opportunities

The construction phase of the Project will require a range of construction supplies and equipment as well as a range of goods and services associated with the construction works as well as the supporting logistical services, including to sustain the workforce. These may be directly or indirectly associated with the Project. Key opportunities are in:

- Civil works packages under subcontracts such as portals, access roads, clearing and grubbing etc.
- Material supplies including
  - Construction materials - cement, aggregates, timber
  - Fuel and lubricants,
  - Hardware and PPE
- Food including local produce
- Services including transportation, security, hospitality, workforce training and development, health and wellbeing.

3.5 Commissioning, operation and decommissioning phases

3.5.1 Commissioning and operations

Following the construction of the Project's permanent assets and the demobilisation of the any temporary works areas, electrical and mechanical assets will undergo testing to ensure reliability of equipment. Once these tests have been performed and equipment deemed satisfactory then the site can be commissioned, and the Scheme can become operational.

Once operational, the scheme will operate 24 hours a day 7 days a week. The scheme will be operated remotely and there will be no site presence other than that what is required for routine maintenance activities. Permanent flood lighting will only be for security purposes at the power station and pump station adjacent to No. 2 Pond. Once operational an estimated staffing level of 2 FTE personnel is anticipated. This is consistent with staffing requirements at stations elsewhere in Hydro Tasmania's portfolio.

3.5.2 Decommissioning

The proposed design for the new Scheme will have an operational life of 80-85 years. This could be extended through asset replacement and refurbishment as dictated by the energy market conditions at the time, just as this proposal is aiming to do for the existing scheme. In the instance that the Project needs to be fully decommissioned however, a dedicated decommissioning plan will be prepared at the time of decommissioning planning.

4 Assessment methodology

This section describes how the SIA was conducted. The approach was informed by industry best practice guidance and standards including guidance developed by the International Association for Impact Assessment (IAIA), the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and the Hydropower Sustainability Alliance (HSA). The concept and process of SIA seeks to ensure the Project adds value to local communities by enabling positive social changes and positive social development (IAIA 2015).

4.1 Approach

The SIA methodology adopted is illustrated in Figure 4-1 with key activities described in the following sections.

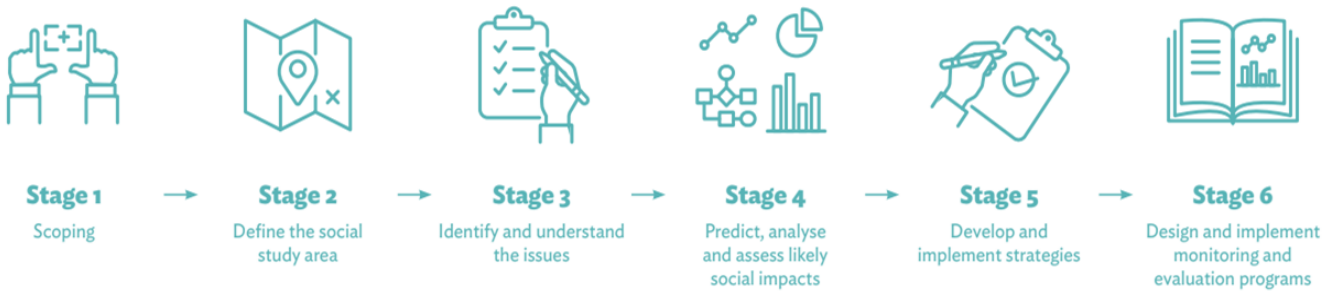

Figure 4-1 Social Impact Assessment Methodology

A comprehensive community and stakeholder consultation program was undertaken as an integral component of the EIS process for the Project. The consultation program included consultation with neighbouring landowners, local, state and Australian governments, industry bodies, community groups and organisations and other interested parties. The consultation program is described in full in the EIS *Phase 1 Engagement Report*.

SIA engagement was integrated with the broader Project engagement process, as described in Section 6.

4.1.1 Stage 1 – Scoping

Scoping involved the preliminary identification of the project's potential socio-economic issues, impacts and opportunities. It provided a basis for the identification of issues to be investigated through the SIA.

Social impacts are rarely cause-effect relationships; they are multi factorial with intersecting impact pathways. For example, workforce accommodation arrangements can have positive social benefits for host communities but can also lead to displacement of vulnerable people from existing housing, reduced accessibility for local residents to community services and facilities in townships, changing community dynamics with an influx of new, and sometimes temporary population.

The scoping of issues was informed by:

- A desktop review of literature relating to the social context of the study area and the social impacts of renewable energy development and linear infrastructure.
- An analysis of the social baseline of the Central Highlands and Derwent Valley LGAs.
- The project description and proposed construction methodology and timeframes.
- The outcomes of early stakeholder and community engagement.

The scoping phase informed the SIA scope and provided a framework for the definition of the SIA study area.

4.1.2 Stage 2 – Define the social study area

The study area defines the spatial areas of focus for the SIA and considers the:

- Location and characteristics of potentially affected individuals and communities. This includes landholders, nearby neighbours, community members, downstream water users, businesses, service providers and indigenous groups who may have an interest in the Project or could be directly or indirectly impacted.
- Nature and scale of the Project, including associated infrastructure.
- Scope and spatial distribution of potential social impacts (positive and negative) across the project life cycle.
- Patterns of land and water use and infrastructure provision.

The SIA study area is defined in Section 5.5.

4.1.3 Stage 3 – Identify and understand the issues

4.1.3.1 Analysis of administration, governance and policy setting

Local, state, national and international guidelines and standards relevant to the conduct of the SIA were identified and analysed. Hydro Tasmania standards, policies and programs relevant to the SIA were reviewed. The governance frameworks relevant to the communities of interest of identified and analysed. Findings are presented in Section 2 and Section 5.2 and Appendix A.

4.1.3.2 Social baseline study

The social baseline study characterises the existing social conditions in the study area before the Project commences. It informs an understanding of current and future socio-economic trends, which aids in identifying potential social impacts and opportunities. The study uses desktop data analysis, literature review, and tailored social research to validate findings and fill data gaps. It describes the social conditions across themes such as values, population, land use, economy, education, employment, and community health.

The social baseline is presented in Section 7 with additional supporting information presented in Appendix C.

4.1.3.3 SIA field study

The SIA was informed through consultation with key stakeholders and community members undertaken as part of the broader Project engagement delivered by Hydro Tasmania through the Hydro Tasmania Major Projects' Social Program (MPSP). A full description of this program is presented in the EIS *Phase 1 Engagement Report*.

The SIA field study used various social research methods including tailored interviews and surveys to collect quantitative and qualitative data. This data helped validate baseline assumptions, identify and test potential impacts and opportunities and develop management responses.

Qualitative and quantitative data collected was analysed to identify community values strengths and vulnerabilities.

Table 4-1 provides a summary of engagement techniques adopted to support the SIA. The relevant findings of the SIA engagement program are described in Section 6.

Table 4-1 Summary of engagement techniques adopted to support the SIA

Level of participation	Examples of Project Engagement Activities	Purpose
Sharing information	• Impromptu discussion and informal conversations • Tarraleah Power Station Open Days and attendance at community events e.g. Derwent Valley Autumn Festival in New Norfolk • Presentations to CHC • Presentations to community and industry organisations • Pop-up events in key communities • Editorials in Central Highlands Digest • Project Newsletters • Thematic Fact Sheets, e.g. Workforce Accommodation, Local Benefit Sharing, Social Procurement • Contact points (e.g. email, websites, phone) • Website, direct mail/email/SMS,	• Identifying interested and affected people, groups, organisations and communities • Supporting people to understand the project, timing, the approvals process and the social impact assessment process • Addressing questions, issues and concerns • Demonstrating early engagement • Responding to misinformation
Consultation to collect information and insights	• Community feedback survey 2024 • Pop-up engagement events in community • Interviews with key service providers, government agencies, education and training service providers • Key interviews with residents of nearby communities	• Validate existing social baseline information • Understand community values and aspirations • Inform assessment of impact significance • Inform potential opportunities for community partnerships and shared value
Collaborating on opportunities	• Participation in clinical health service planning meetings	• Encouraging co-design, or collaboration in assessment and design of potential benefit sharing opportunities • Identifying and predicting social impacts

4.1.4 Stage 4 – Identify and assess likely impacts

4.1.4.1 Social impact identification

The identification of the project's potential social impacts and opportunities was completed through several different complementary approaches, helping to triangulate the findings and confirm their accuracy. These approaches included:

- Analysis of potential impact pathways (causal factors) – Project elements were reviewed to identify potential impact pathways such as road closures, workforce arrangements, changes in downstream flows during operation, vegetation clearance, off site vehicle movements.
- Consideration of engagement outcomes – findings from SIA field studies contributed to the identification of potential Project impacts and opportunities.
- Consideration of technical reports – findings from other technical disciplines that contributed to the EIS were reviewed and potential social impacts identified.
- Consideration of local plans and policies – findings from the review aided to contextualise and understand the local priorities as well as to identify local values.
- Review of case studies – Review of case studies and literature pertaining to renewable energy projects and similar infrastructure projects.
- Consideration of cumulative impacts – review of documentation from other existing projects within or nearby the SIA study area.

Potential Impacts and opportunities were validated through the SIA Field Study program and the broader EIS engagement program (refer to the EIS *Phase 1 Engagement Report* for methodology). Further impact validation will be undertaken through the EIS public exhibition process (as described in the EIS).

4.1.4.2 Cumulative impact assessment

Cumulative impacts result from incremental impacts caused by multiple projects occurring at similar times and within proximity to each other. There are several major projects proposed or currently under construction across Tasmania (Appendix E), however not all of these projects have the potential to credibly contribute to cumulative impacts.

The approach for identifying projects for the cumulative impact assessment considered:

- Spatial impacts – impacts with potential to occur over the same area. The location, scale and nature of the other projects expected to occur in the same social area of influence as the Project.
- Temporal impacts - impacts that vary over time. The timing of the relative construction, operation and decommissioning of other existing developments and/or projects that coincide (partially or entirely) with the project.
- Linked impacts – impacts that involve complex interactions – one my trigger another impact.

Projects were identified based on their potential to credibly contribute to cumulative impacts due to their temporal and spatial boundaries. Projects were identified based on publicly available information at the time of assessment.

Given the characteristics of the Project particularly workforce size, construction schedule and likely traffic generation, the assessment of potential cumulative social impacts focussed on the following areas:

- Labour market impacts
- Infrastructure impacts notably road infrastructure.

Potential cumluative impacts are described in Section 8.4.

4.1.4.3 Impact evaluation and significance assessment

Each identified social impact and opportunity was assessed using a risk-based approach to predict potential social impacts across the Project's life and determine across the overall impact significance. This approach evaluated the consequence and likelihood of positive and negative social impacts, with and without mitigation from the perspective of those people affected by the Project. The social risk assessment methodology is described in Appendix B.

4.1.5 Stage 5 –Response strategies

Mitigation and management responses have been identified for all negative impacts, and enhancement responses identified for opportunities presented in Section 8. Other technical studies also contribute to mitigating and managing social impacts. These measures are cross-referenced where appropriate.

The findings from Stages 1 – 4 were used to distil and analyse social management responses. This stage used a multidisciplinary approach led by Hydro Tasmania's social scientists supported by environmental specialists. The management responses identified consider industry-standard approaches, leading practices and the latest international approaches to social impact management.

Some potential social impacts have been avoided and/or mitigated already through project design. For example, a WAF is included in the Project design to reduce Project impacts on local housing market conditions and housing accessibility for local communities.

Community engagement findings reinforce the need to ensure that the Project delivers positive outcomes for communities. Deliberate actions have been identified in Section 8, to increase the likelihood of success of positive outcomes such as local employment, and procurement opportunities for local businesses. These actions are called enhancements.

Whilst Hydro Tasmania has focussed on avoiding and minimising social impacts through Project Design, and in the development of mitigation measures to potential impacts, there will be residual impacts on people and communities. The management and enhancement measures presented in Section 8 include deliberate actions that seek to provide a range of additional benefits to local and regional communities. These benefits will be delivered through Hydro Tasmania's Major Projects Local Benefit Sharing Strategy (LBS).

Hydro Tasmania has a range of existing programs (e.g. sponsorships and community grants, school-based and post education programs and post school employment and training pathways) that ultimately seek to enhance health and wellbeing outcomes for Tasmanians. These existing programs apply to communities within the SIA Study Area and will continue to apply, regardless of Project progression.

4.1.6 Stage 6 – Monitoring and evaluation programs

The SIMP will include a monitoring, reporting, evaluation and improvement (MERI) framework for the construction phase. Monitoring and evaluation will help Hydro Tasmania to understand and improve the effectiveness of management strategies by identifying both expected and unexpected results and tracking how well social impact efforts are working. Development of the MERI framework is a future step in the SIA process.

4.2 Limitations and assumptions

The SIA was undertaken at a point in time. Communities are dynamic in nature, as reflected in the analysis of trend data in the Section. Notable limitations and assumptions of this report are listed in Table 4-2.

Table 4-2 Limitations and Assumptions

Limitation	Description
Limitations of secondary data sources:	• The SIA relies on information from a range of secondary sources. Except where stated, information has not been verified. • Small sample sizes (such as those applying to several of the smaller communities in the local study area) are randomised by the ABS for confidentiality. Therefore, this data should be treated as indicative only.
Limitations of primary data sources	• The data collected through the SIA field study program may not fully represent all community members' perspectives, as participation was voluntary. While capturing key stakeholders' perceptions is crucial, it might not reflect broader community sentiment. Program findings were supplemented by a broader awareness engagement program and a targeted survey (refer to the EIS *Phase 1 Engagement Report*).
Literacy and digital literacy	• A key finding from project engagement was the low levels of literacy and digital literacy in the regional study area. Despite using diverse tools to enhance engagement and information dissemination (as detailed in the EIS *Phase 1 Engagement Report*), literacy issues remain a barrier to participation and project awareness.
Status of Project design	• The impact assessment is based on the current Project design and construction methodology, but future refinements possible during the ECI process may require further social impact assessment. • Preliminary workforce data informed the SIA. This data may change with project refinements, necessitating a review of potential social impacts.

5 Assessment scope

This section describes the SIA scope by defining the applicable statutory requirements and assessment focus, describing the project setting and defining the SIA study area.

5.1 Defining the scope

The scope of the SIA was informed through:

- Statutory requirements and guidelines for social impact assessment
- The policy and planning context of the regional setting
- The Project's key elements including workforce characteristics, construction methods and operational arrangements which may impact on social values
- The findings of EIS technical reports
- Stakeholder inputs on potential impacts and opportunities
- Characteristics of the SIA study area

5.2 Statutory requirements

The SIA has addressed the requirements of the Guidelines (Table 5-1).

Table 5-1 The Guideline requirements for SIA

Aspect & Section Ref	Scoping requirement	SIA Section
Socio-Economic Issues – Section 5.9	Discuss the social and economic impacts of the proposal. This discussion may: • Include an estimate of total capital investment for the proposal and where that capital will be expended (particularly in relation to the source of large capital items of processing equipment). • Describe impacts on local and state labour markets of the proposal. The number and nature of direct and indirect jobs arising from the proposal must be detailed. Skills and training opportunities should also be discussed. • Describe impacts on upstream/downstream industries, both locally and for the State. • Detail the extent to which raw materials, equipment, goods and services will be sourced locally. • Describe impacts on the local, regional, state and national economies.	SIA Section 8 Impacts and Opportunities Assessment Tarraleah Redevelopment Economic Impact Assessment (SGS Economics, 2025)

5.3 SIA guidance

The content or methods for completing an SIA are not prescribed in Tasmanian legislation or guidelines. The following guidance has informed the SIA scope and method:

- International Association of Impact Assessment (IAIA) SIA: Guidance for assessing and managing the social impacts of projects (Vanclay et al, 2015)
- Social Impact Assessment Guidelines (NSW DPE February, 2023a) and associated technical supplement (NSW DPE February, 2023b)
- NSW Government Cumulative Impact Assessment Guidelines for State Significant Projects (October 2022).
- Hydropower Sustainability Standard and associated guidelines produced by the International Hydropower Association (IHA).
- International Finance Corporation Environmental and Social Performance Standards (IFC, 2012)

5.4 Project elements of relevance to the assessment

Project elements with potential for social impacts and opportunities are summarised in Table 5-2.

Table 5-2 Project elements of relevance to the consideration of social impacts

Key elements	Detail	Potential impact areas
Disturbance footprint & access	The Project has a disturbance footprint of approx.. 550 ha. The Project will require the closure of Butlers Gorge Road, restrictions on public access to some recreational areas e.g. Lake King William, infrastructure and facilities at Tarraleah Village, and the decommissioning of existing amenities at the Nive Valley.	• Connectivity and accessibility • Visual amenity • Other industry sector output • Cultural heritage values • Sense of place • Use and enjoyment of nature-based areas
Off-site traffic movements	The project will generate traffic on the local and regional road network including the Lyell Highway. Traffic will include over dimensional vehicle (ODV) movements and workforce related traffic.	• Connectivity and accessibility • Travel behaviour and road safety
Key Infrastructure	Key permanent Project components e.g. new surge tower, Hydropower Power station, pipelines, tunnel portals and spoil stockpiles will impact on the existing landscape when viewed from some locations. The landscape changes are considered 'low' because the changes are within a landscape that is characterised by a long history of hydropower assets.	• Visual amenity • Tourism values • Cultural heritage values • Sense of place

Key elements	Detail	Potential impact areas
Construction employment	Based on current planning the construction workforce is expected to peak at approximately 330 persons. Approximately 30% of the workforce is anticipated to be sourced from within Tasmania.	• Employment opportunities • Workforce availability • Economic growth • Other industry sector output • Employment and economic outcomes for marginalised people • Community cohesion and sense of place • Housing and accommodation • Health and wellbeing
Economic investment	With a construction investment of more than $1.87 billion (SGS Economics, 2025), the Project will act as a significant stimulus for economic investment. Project procurement processes will create demand across the State for a range of goods and services.	• Local industry participation • Economic growth • Employment
	Conversely the completion of the Project construction phase would result in the cessation of economic stimulus at a local, regional and state level and contraction of associated economic and employment opportunities.	• Economic growth • Employment • Community
Operational arrangements	Operational arrangements for the Project will potentially result in some changes to water level fluctuations in Wayatinah Lagoon.	• Use and enjoyment of downstream water ways for recreational purposes

5.5 SIA study area

The study area is defined with reference to a local study area and regional study area (Table 5-3, Figure 5-1 and Figure 5-2). The social baseline characterisation presented in Section 7 reflects the defined SIA study area. It primarily utilises data generated by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) for statistical geographies including Suburb and Localities (SAL), Statistical Area 2 (SA2), Statistical Area 4 (SA4), LGA and State (STE).

Table 5-3: SIA Study Area

SIA Study Area	Description	Geographic areas
Local Study Area	Consisting of the communities anticipated to experience direct social impacts across the Project life. These direct social impacts may include potential changes in accessibility, surroundings, way of life and livelihoods.	Tarraleah, Wayatinah, Butlers Gorge, Bronte Park, Dee, Ouse, Bradys Lake and London Lakes.
Regional Study Area	The area which may experience broader socio-economic effects. Potential impacts may be associated with use of infrastructure, services and facilities, increased through traffic, or cumulative impacts arising from other Projects in the area. Potential benefits may be associated with economic development opportunities, including supply and procurement of materials and personnel.	Central Highlands LGA and the Derwent Valley LGA
Key urban areas	Key urban centres within the regional study area that may experience project related impacts	New Norfolk
Area of reference	The broader area that may experience socio-economic opportunities, primarily those associated with employment and procurement activities	South-east Region.

Table 5-4 describes the study area with reference to the ABS statistical boundaries which correspond to the component local and regional communities.

Table 5-4 Study area spatial definition and report terminology.

Study area	Location	Statistical Boundaries	Report Terminology
Local study area	Tarraleah	Tarraleah SAL	Tarraleah
	Wayatinah	Wayatinah SAL	Wayatinah
	Bronte Park	Bronte Park SAL	Bronte Park
	Butlers Gorger	Butlers Gorge SAL	Butlers Gorge
	Dee	Dee SAL	Dee
	Ouse	Ouse SAL	Ouse
	Bradys Lake	Bradys Lake SAL	Bradys Lake
	London Lakes	London Lakes SAL	London Lakes
Regional study area	Central Highlands	Central Highlands LGA	Central Highlands LGA
	Derwent Valley	Derwent Valley LGA	Derwent Valley LGA
Area of reference	South-east and Greater Hobart Region	Hobart SA4 South-east SA4	South-east Tasmania
State	Tasmania	Tasmania	State / Tasmania

Source: (ABS, 2021).

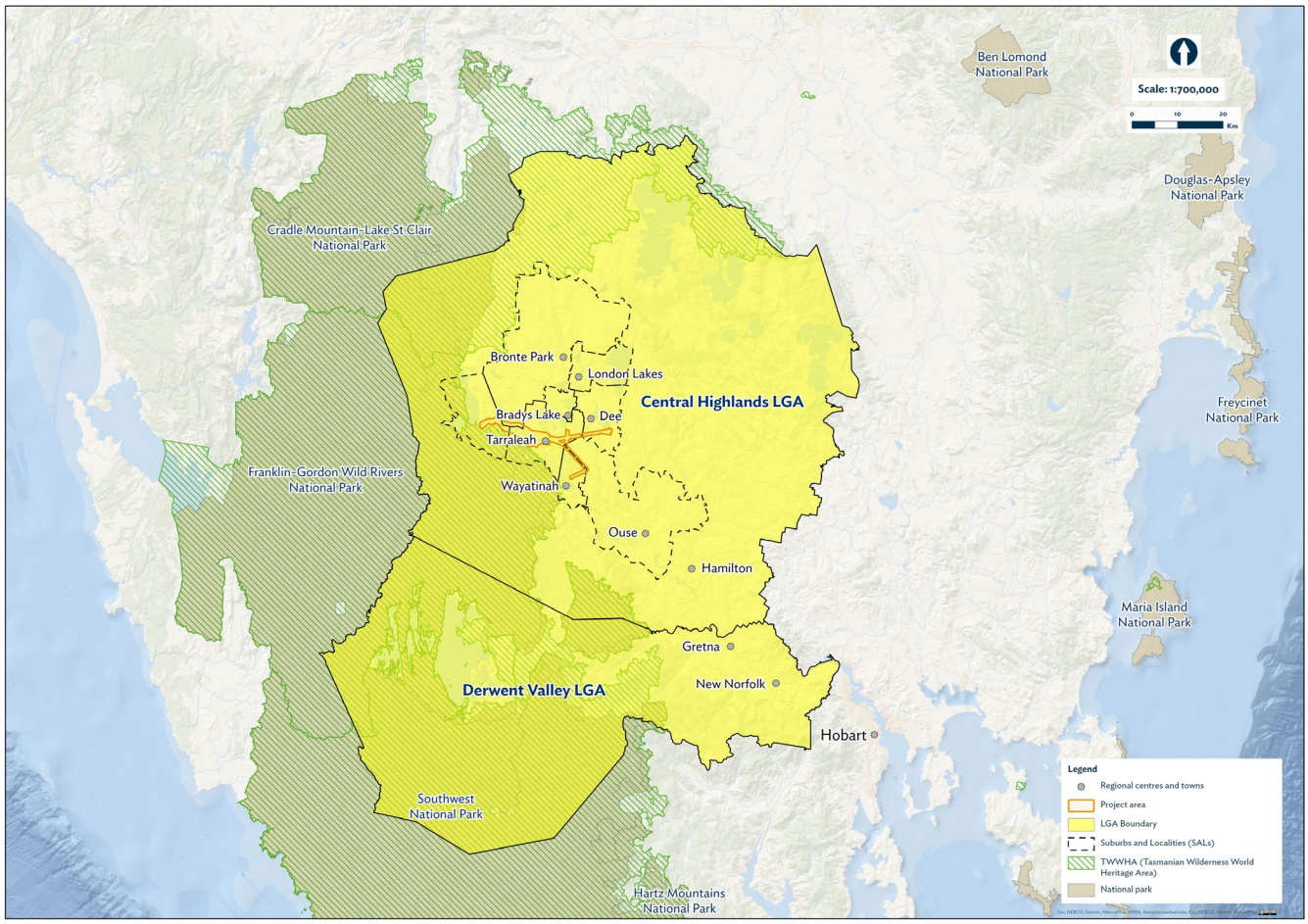

Figure 5-1 Regional Study area

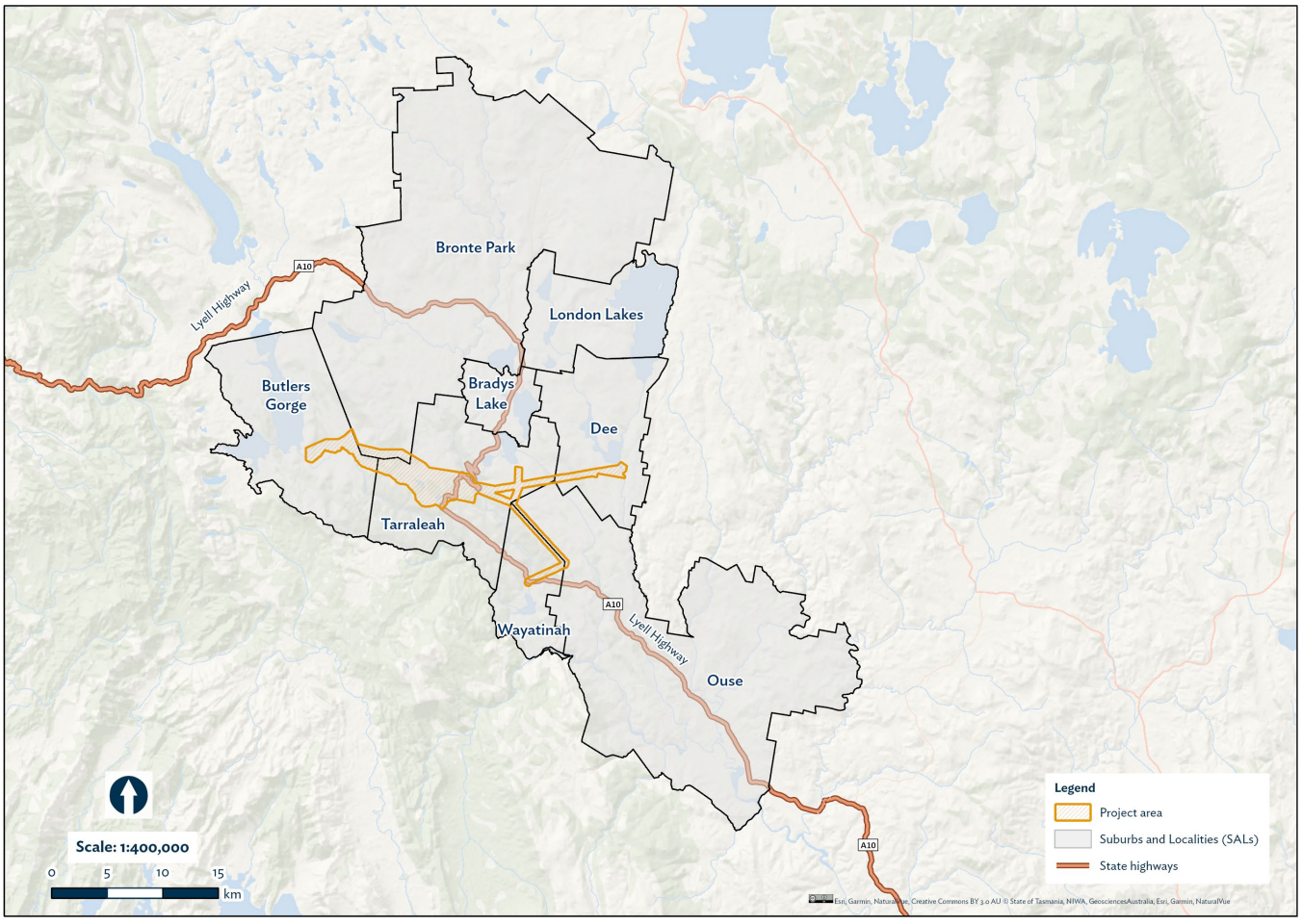

Figure 5-2 Local study area and component SALs

5.6 Linkages to other reports

This report is informed by or informs the following technical assessments:

- Tarraleah Redevelopment Aquatic Values Report (Entura, 2025)
- Tarraleah Redevelopment Terrestrial Ecology Assessment (Entura, 2025)
- Tarraleah Redevelopment Visual Impact Assessment (VIA report) (Inspiring Place, 2025)
- Tarraleah Redevelopment Economic Impact Assessment (EcIA report) (SGS Economics, 2025)
- Summary Community and stakeholder Engagement Report (Hydro Tasmania, 2025)
- Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Report (NVIA report) (Tarkarri Engineering, 2025)
- Traffic Impact Assessment Report (TIA report) (Pitt & Sherry, 2025)
- Air Quality Assessment (Air Quality report) (Tarkarri Engineering, 2025)
- Preliminary Bushfire Hazard Analysis (PBHA report) (Fire Risk Consultants, 2025)
- Aboriginal Heritage Assessment Report (Hydro Tasmania, 2025).

6 SIA engagement

This section presents a summary of the community engagement activities and key findings which have informed the SIA. A detailed description of the full program of community and stakeholder engagement completed in support of the EIS is provided in the Phase 1 Engagement Report.

6.1 Introduction

Hydro Tasmania is committed to meaningful stakeholder and community engagement and communications so that we can develop and implement a sustainable project, grounded on the support of communities and key stakeholders.

Our aim is to interact with our communities and stakeholders in a way that manages project related risks, reduces impacts, and delivers benefits for our communities derived from the Project.

In accordance with Hydro Tasmania's 'Stakeholder Engagement Charter', we are committed to engaging with all our stakeholders, including: our shareholder (the Tasmanian Government), partner organisations, the community and contractors and suppliers.

6.2 Engagement summary

6.2.1 Planning and approvals engagement

Between July 2022 and early 2025 Hydro Tasmania delivered a comprehensive community and stakeholder consultation program to support the Project approvals process and broader community awareness raising. Consultation activities to date have included:

- Promotion and awareness raising activities - These activities including newsletters, flyers and posters, social media posts, direct invitations to stakeholders to participate in a range of engagement events.
- Digital engagement activities – These activities included the maintenance of a project webpage (with feedback and Q&A interaction), places of interest 'online-mapping' tool, community surveys and social media.
- In-person engagement activities – These activities included face-to-face meetings, community pop-up sessions, hosting of information stalls at regional events (e.g. Derwent Valley Autumn Festival and Hydro Tasmania's Tarraleah Open Day), presentations to local government, community groups and organisations, participation in multi-agency discussion forums regarding health service delivery, education, employment, training and workforce development.

Key themes raised during the EIS consultation process are documented in the EIS *Phase 1 Engagement Report* and include:

- Traffic, transport and access
- Accessibility to existing nature based recreational areas
- Visual impacts including potential impacts on the experience of visitors to the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area (TWWHA).
- Population change
- Workforce management
- Workforce accommodation arrangements and potential impacts on local housing market conditions

- Local and regional employment opportunities
- Training and skill development opportunities
- Health and emergency service provision
- Decommissioning of existing infrastructure and the impacts on associated cultural and built-heritage values
- Aboriginal and non-aboriginal cultural and landscape values
- Opportunities for delivery of shared value through the Local Benefit Sharing (LBS) strategy.

6.2.2 SIA engagement

The Major Projects Social Program delivered both the broader Project engagement program as well as specific SIA engagement. SIA engagement sought to gain in-depth insights into key socio-economic issues from the perspective of key stakeholders likely to experience project impacts and benefits. A summary of the SIA engagement undertaken with key stakeholders is provided in Appendix C.

During 2023, Hydro Tasmania initiated a community survey as a component of the broader engagement program. The purpose of the survey was to gather information about how residents and visitors value the places around, and experiences of, the locality around the Tarraleah Hydropower Scheme. Findings from the survey have informed this SIA.

There were 31 responses to the community survey. Twenty respondents submitted their responses through the online form, and 11 respondents filled out paper surveys. A full description of the survey including the approach, survey design and findings is provided in the EIS *Phase 1 Engagement Report*. Key findings relevant to the SIA are summarised in Section 6.2.3. The findings of the survey informed the social baseline, and the identification and assessment of potential impacts and opportunities.

6.2.3 Key findings of SIA engagement

6.2.3.1 Social baseline information

This section summarises the community feedback received in relation to existing socio-economic conditions in the local and regional study area. It includes information gathered through the community survey.

Survey participants were asked about the values of the local area. Specifically, participants were asked how important a set of attributes were to their way of life.

On average, respondents identified a safe road network as the most important attribute to their way of life, followed by access to lakes for recreation and natural environment (lakes, rivers, forest) equally, and peace and tranquillity, respectively. Access to business opportunities was identified as the least important attribute, followed by sense of community and access to employment opportunities (equally), affordable housing, and historic association with Hydro Power Schemes.

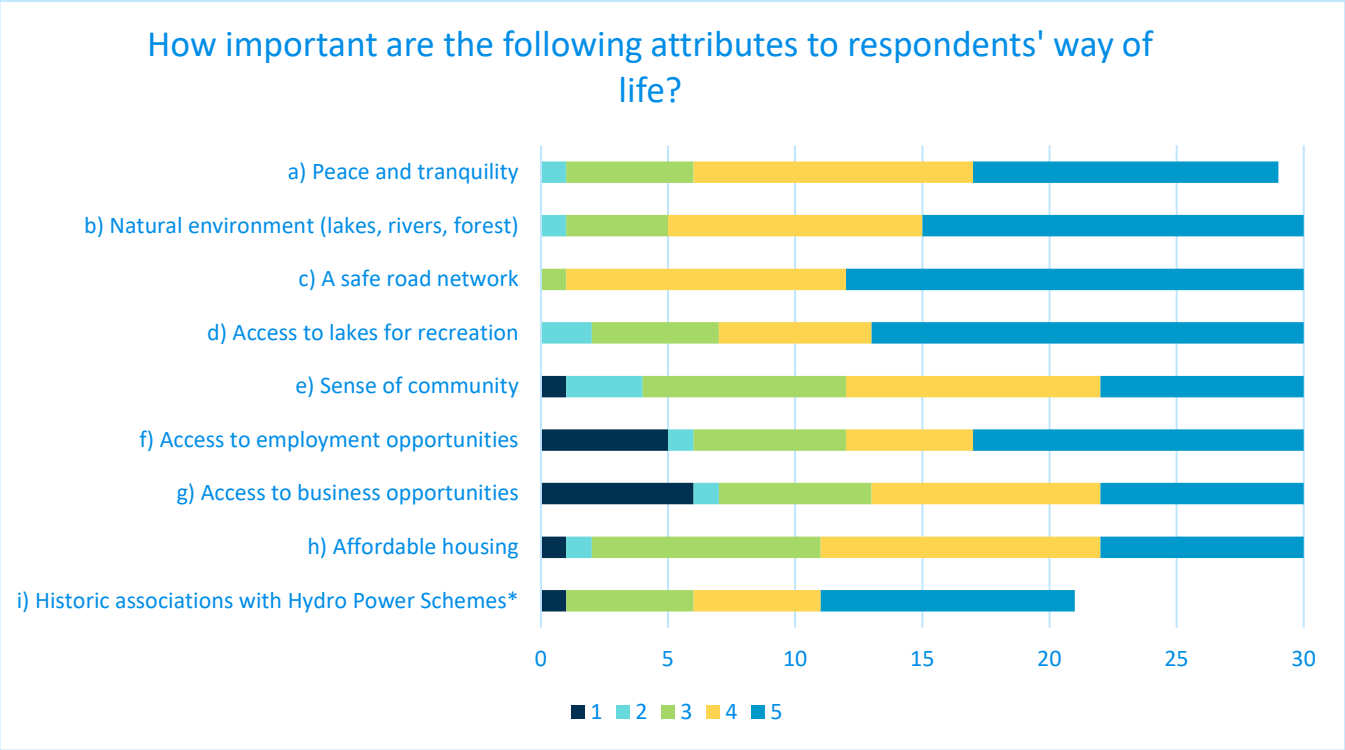

Figure 6-1 Count of survey responses (by rating) to the question: on a scale of 1-5 where 1 is not at all important and 5 is extremely important, how important are the following attributes to your way of life?[3]

Table 6-1 provides a summary of the social baseline information gathered through SIA engagement.

Table 6-1 Summary of social baseline information

Theme	Description
Population and demography	• Ageing population in the CH LGA • Low levels of digital literacy • Low unemployment rates across the CH LGA • High youth unemployment rates in the Derwent Valley LGA • Prevalence of middle to low socio-economic households across local and regional communities
Telecommunications and digital connectivity	• Poor mobile telephone coverage across the region, and particularly through the greater Project area. This is concerning for the regional community. • Mobile 'blackspots' can have an impact on emergency response, but also a general sense of safety and connectivity for people traveling through the region and/or recreating in the area.

[3] *A minor discrepancy meant that attribute (i) Historic associations with Hydro Power Schemes was not included in the paper surveys. Consequently, there were fewer recorded responses to attribute (i)).*

Theme	Description
Recreation	• The Hydro Tasmania lakes associated with the Tarraleah scheme are highly valued by local and regional communities as nature based recreational assets for boating, fishing and camping. • Local people consider Lake King William an important recreational asset with several people expressing disappointment regarding the intermittent and ongoing closure of Butlers Gorge Road and resulting loss of access to Lake King William.
Health & community services	• Health and community services are very limited. There is no general practice in Ouse (since 2020) and attempts to re-commence a General Practitioner (GP) clinic have been unsuccessful. The previous GP clinic also provided pharmacy services, which was well supported by the community. • Residents travel to Bothwell, New Norfolk or Hobart for medical services. Accessibility to these services is further diminished by high fuel costs and a lack of public transport and related community services. • The toilet facilities at Hydro Park in the Nive Valley were identified as one of the few, and most popular, stopping points along the Lyell Highway between Ouse and Derwent Bridge.
Emergency Services	• Local fire brigades (volunteer) are relatively well supported and resourced, however, there are increasing demands on a reducing number of people in the community volunteering, exacerbated by the aging population. • Ambulance services in Ouse (staffed) and Great Lake (volunteer) are adequate for the small population. • Aging demographics and low population base in the local area mean volunteer ambulance stations are less viable in the region. • The Ouse Ambulance station was established in response to the withdrawal of the local general practitioner service to fill the gap in service delivery. • Air-ambulance/emergency response capability can be drawn on for emergencies/larger incidence. • Weather conditions can restrict access for helicopters and emergency services in winter due to snow and ice and high winds.
Housing	• House ownership is relatively high in the region, but the housing stock is relatively old. The availability of rental properties – on short and long-term market – is low. • There is a high volume of 'shack' housing stock that has a low, seasonal occupation. However, these are in remote areas with poor water, sanitation and waste-disposal services and are not suited to higher occupancy. Their availability is also limited because their owners want to have them available for their own recreational use.
Local labour market and workforce development	• Unemployment is relatively low in the region with labour expected to be sourced from outside of the project area. The South-Central Jobs Hub (Pontville) is keen to provide training programs on request. • Local secondary schools have developed bespoke student work exposure programs with local employers. This has achieved positive educational engagement and employment outcomes. They need more employers to participate. • The Department of Education, Children and Young People (DECYP) are committed to their Year 9 -12 Vocational Education and Training programs (launched in 2024) and the Tasmanian Government has released the Youth Jobs Strategy with the intent of connecting students to skills and jobs.
Transport	• While surrounding communities embrace the training and employment opportunities the Project may bring, there are concerns about accessibility to these opportunities given the limited public transport options. This is a barrier for continuing education past Year 12, accessing training or employment. Current cost of living challenges means most families run only one vehicle, and this presents challenges for learner drivers.

Theme	Description
Community identity	• Many participants in engagement expressed a fondness and/or deep connection to Tarraleah Village and the old Butler's Gorge settlement. The Tarraleah Hydropower Scheme is an important part of local and regional identity.

6.2.3.2 Perceived Project issues and concerns

The key Project issues, concerns and opportunities identified by participants in SIA engagement are summarised below, with community survey findings presented separately.

Survey findings - community issues and concerns

Issues and concerns were explored through the community survey. Participants were asked to rate (on a scale of 1 – 5) how concerned they were about the effects of the Project on a range of defined attributes. There were 21 respondents to this question and the results are illustrated in Figure 6-2.

On average, respondents were most concerned about access to lakes for recreational activities, followed by heritage values of the existing Tarraleah Hydro Power Scheme, public use and enjoyment of the natural environment, and (equally) the values of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area and residential amenity (i.e., the peace and tranquillity of the local area). Respondents were least concerned about travel time on the Lyell Highway during construction, followed by road safety on the Lyell Highway during the project's construction phase, neighbouring property values, housing affordability and availability in neighbouring communities and access and use of the Tarraleah Village by the public during construction, respectively.

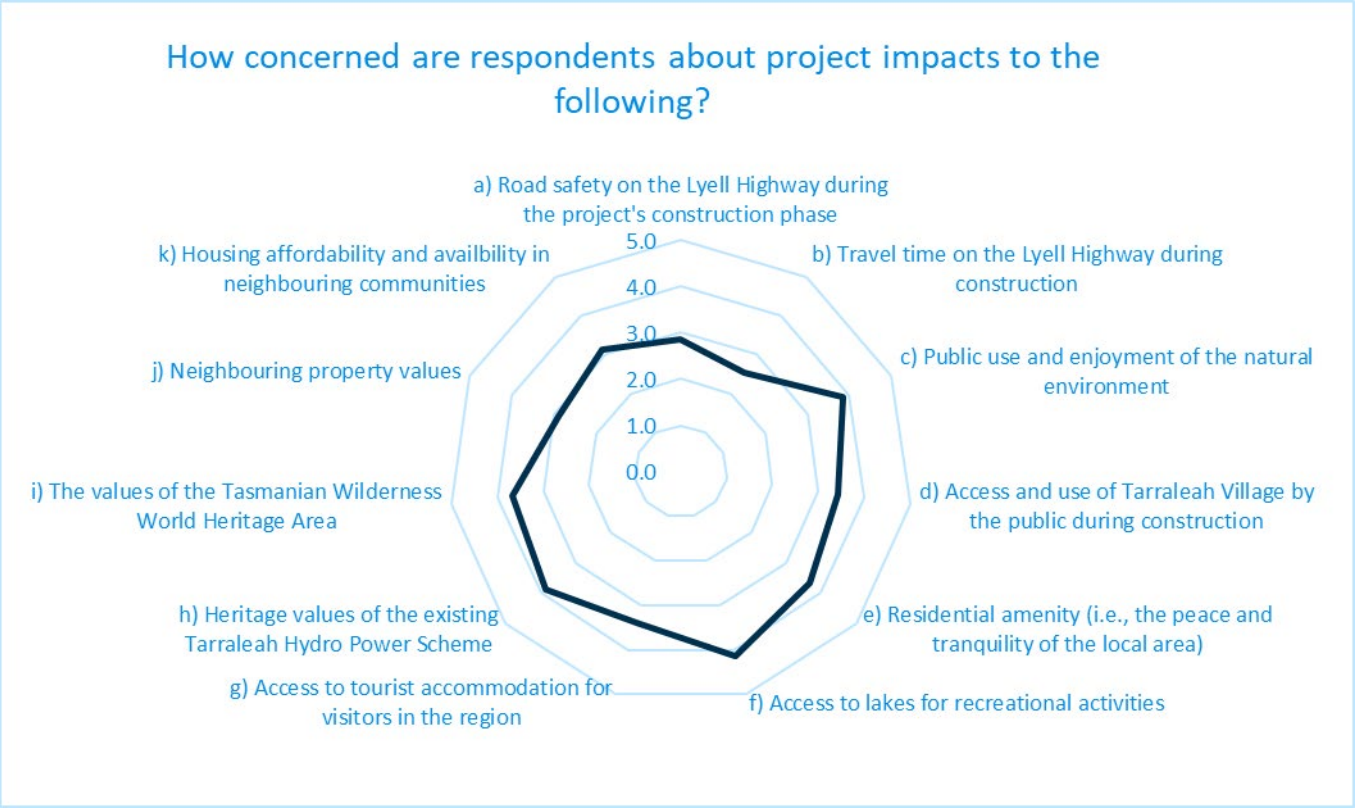

Figure 6-2 Level of concern regarding potential project impacts

Survey participants we also asked an open-ended question: "*What (if any) concerns do you have about the project?*"

This question received 23 responses out of the 31 total surveys. Of these 23, some respondents stated that they had no concerns (three), that the project is a 'good thing' (one) or that their only concern is that it isn't happening (one). Across the remaining 18 responses, respondents were most concerned with impacts on access to areas around the project site. Impacts on recreational opportunities were the second-most expressed concern among respondents, which were often tied to concerns around access. Environmental impact was the third-most expressed concern, followed by impacts on visual amenity and historical values. Traffic and road safety, opportunities for locals, and economic impact also emerged as concerns.

Summary of Project issues and concerns

Table 6-2 presents a summary of Project issues and concerns raised during engagement and relevant to the consideration of potential social impacts.

Table 6-2 Thematic grouping of Project key issues and concerns

Themes	Issue raised
Access to recreational opportunities	• Concerns about restricted access to lakes and water storages for recreational fishing. Once explained that any restrictions to access would be temporary and contained to a few specific sites (e.g. Lake King William at Clarke Dam), most community members are satisfied. Alternative access to the south-eastern parts of Lake King William would be appreciated, as the prevailing winds mean that sometimes this is the most accessible part of the lake, and it is not as far to travel as the northern access point (near Derwent Bridge) or western shores (off Harbacks Rd).
Access to services and facilities	• Potential for a change (reduction) in access to Tarraleah Village and the existing facilities and services such as the Lodge, restaurant, golf club and camping area. • Concerns regarding the future of the toilet facility at Hydro Park in the Nive Valley. • Limited health resources in the local and regional area to accommodate any increased demand for services. • Capacity of emergency services to meet additional demands generated by the Project.
Labour force capacity and capability	• Education, training and skill development organisations raised concern about labour force capability and readiness to capitalise on Project opportunities citing numerous barriers to education and workforce participation. • Barriers to employment and training must be addressed first in collaboration with services and education providers. They are best placed to understand the challenges and solutions and have developed placed based and person-centred programs that have yielded positive outcomes e.g. Glenora District High School).
Community connection to place and heritage values	• Concerns were frequently raised regarding potential changes in public access to Tarraleah Village. • Maintaining access to the old Butlers Gorge township areas was highlighted by many members of the community, who often return on a regular basis to see where their family members lived and/or worked. • Concerns were commonly raised about the impact of the Redevelopment on the heritage values of the Tarraleah Village and the Tarraleah hydro scheme generally.

Themes	Issue raised
Environmental impacts	• Key concerns raised relate to the potential impact of the Project on water storage levels, fishing conditions, and general environmental values across the Hydro Tasmania assets. • A few concerns were expressed about direct impacts on endangered flora and fauna. The impacts of increased traffic on roadkill of wildlife, particularly Tasmanian Devils, was raised infrequently.
Traffic	• Concerns expressed regarding the potential for a higher volume of road traffic, poor road conditions, and potential increased risk of accidents. These concerns were often mentioned in the context of emergency service provision. • Specific concerns were expressed by 'commuters' who live in the Bradys Lake and Bronte Park areas and work in Ouse and/or Wayatinah, regarding the potential closure of the Lyell Hwy during construction and or delays to journey times. Similar concerns were expressed by fire and SES emergency services personnel who were concerned about a potential impact on response times due to changes in road conditions, closures, etc. • Emergency service providers highlighted a need to ensure unhindered accessibility on the Lyell Highway for emergency service access.
Distributional impacts	• Some concern was expressed regarding the perceived cost of the Project and that its benefits primarily accrue to the mainland rather than Tasmania.

6.2.3.3 Perceived Project opportunities

Table 6-3 summarises the potential Project opportunities identified through the community survey and Project engagement activities.

Table 6-3 Summary of Project opportunities

Themes	Opportunities identified
Economic and employment benefits	• Many participants in engagement (including survey participants) view the Project as a significant source of employment opportunities for local people and perceive positive benefits for the Tasmanian economy and local businesses. • Schools in the project region view the Project as providing work exposure and entry level employment options for local students who cannot commute to Hobart for further education or training. The building activity also creates hope, students can see the future opportunities on their doorstep. • The workforce accommodation village is welcomed due to the range of services (cleaning, laundry, reception, maintenance, catering) that can support social procurement labour. • State Growth's Industry Capability Network are keen to support the project through creating awareness of opportunities for Tasmania's small to medium enterprises and this includes training for being 'tender ready'.
Social procurement	• Collaboration with service providers may result in social procurement opportunities for marginalised groups in our community. Existing programs can be leveraged through this project to increase social value outcomes for youth, women, culturally and linguistically diverse people and the disabled.

Themes	Opportunities identified
Energy and infrastructure	• Increased production of renewable energy for the state is perceived as a benefit of the project, as is the more efficient generation of electricity from existing water resources. People appreciate the need for maintenance of valuable hydropower assets.
Tourism	• Mentions were made of the opportunity for integration of tourism with hydro operations. The preservation of Art Deco industrial buildings is seen as important as a regional visitor attraction, which could be enhanced further.
Expertise and innovation	• Some participants in engagement welcomed the international expertise to keep Tasmania at the forefront of hydropower technology.
Community health and wellbeing	• Opportunities to encourage workforce to reside in nearby local communities as permanent residents • Likely population increases in nearby communities during to the construction phase, and associated opportunities for reinstating primary 'education services in Ouse. • Opportunities through the LBS strategy to improve health service delivery to residents of the CH LGA

7 Existing social environment

This section presents the existing social conditions in the SIA study area, with reference to key socio-economic indicators. Supporting data is presented in Appendix D.

7.1 Overview

7.1.1 Project area

The Project area is located approximately 125 km north-west of Hobart near the villages of Tarraleah and Wayatinah in the Central Highlands LGA, Tasmania. Access to the Project area is provided by the Lyell Highway and Butlers Gorge Road; a 17 km unsealed road connecting the Lyell Highway to Lake King William and the existing Butlers Gorge Power Station. The Lyell Highway extends to Hobart in the south-east and Queenstown in the west.

The region around the Project area is primarily used for forestry and conservation purposes and is well-known for its natural environment and features. The Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area (TWWHA) is located to the southwest of the Project area, however there will be no direct impacts within the TWWHA.

The Project area has a long history of hydropower development, timber harvesting and plantation development for production forestry. Hydropower infrastructure including dams, canals, flumes, penstocks and transmission lines are prominent features of the landscape.

The Project area is predominantly covered by tenures managed by either Sustainable Timber Tasmania or Hydro Tasmania. A small number of private land tenures within the local area, including to the north of Paddy's Quarry along Fourteen Mile Road, which are primarily managed as private production forests.

7.1.2 Local study area

The Project area is located away from major towns, in an area with very low population density. There are approximately nine private residences within a 1 km (direct line) of the Project area. These residences are located proximate to Dee Lagoon and the northern transmission line option (Figure 7-1).

The Project area includes the Hydro Tasmania owned Tarraleah Village. The Project is situated approximately 30 mins by road northwest of the township of Ouse. Ouse is the second largest town in the Central Highlands LGA and is the gateway to the west coast and highlands regions. The town offers basic amenities including a general store, hotel and a community centre.

The small settlements and localities of Tarraleah, Wayatinah, Butlers Gorge (ruins only), Bronte Park, Dee, Bradys Lake and London Lakes are located within an approximate 30minute driving radius of the Project area. In 2021, the population of each locality did not exceed 50 people (Table 7-1). Many of these localities have their origins in the development of hydropower in the region and are therefore culturally important. They are associated with lakes such as Wayatinah and Tungatinah Lagoons, Lake Binney, Bradys Lake and Bronte Lagoon and are now important for recreational fishing and other nature-based activities.

Table 7-1 Settlement size and distance from Project area

Settlement/Locality	Population[4]	Distance from Project Area	Travel Time
Tarraleah	0	0	0
Butlers Gorge	0	0	0
Wayatinah	18	16 km	15 mins
Bronte Park	49	31 km	28 min
Dee	7	28 km	30 min
Bradys Lake	42	17 km	21 mins
London Lakes	10	26 km	25 mins
Ouse	326	38 km	30 mins
Hamilton	241	69 km	55 min
New Norfolk	6,037	92 km	1 hr 13mins

Source: 2021 ABS Census; google maps for drive times and distances from Tarraleah Village.

[4] Based on 2021 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) census data.

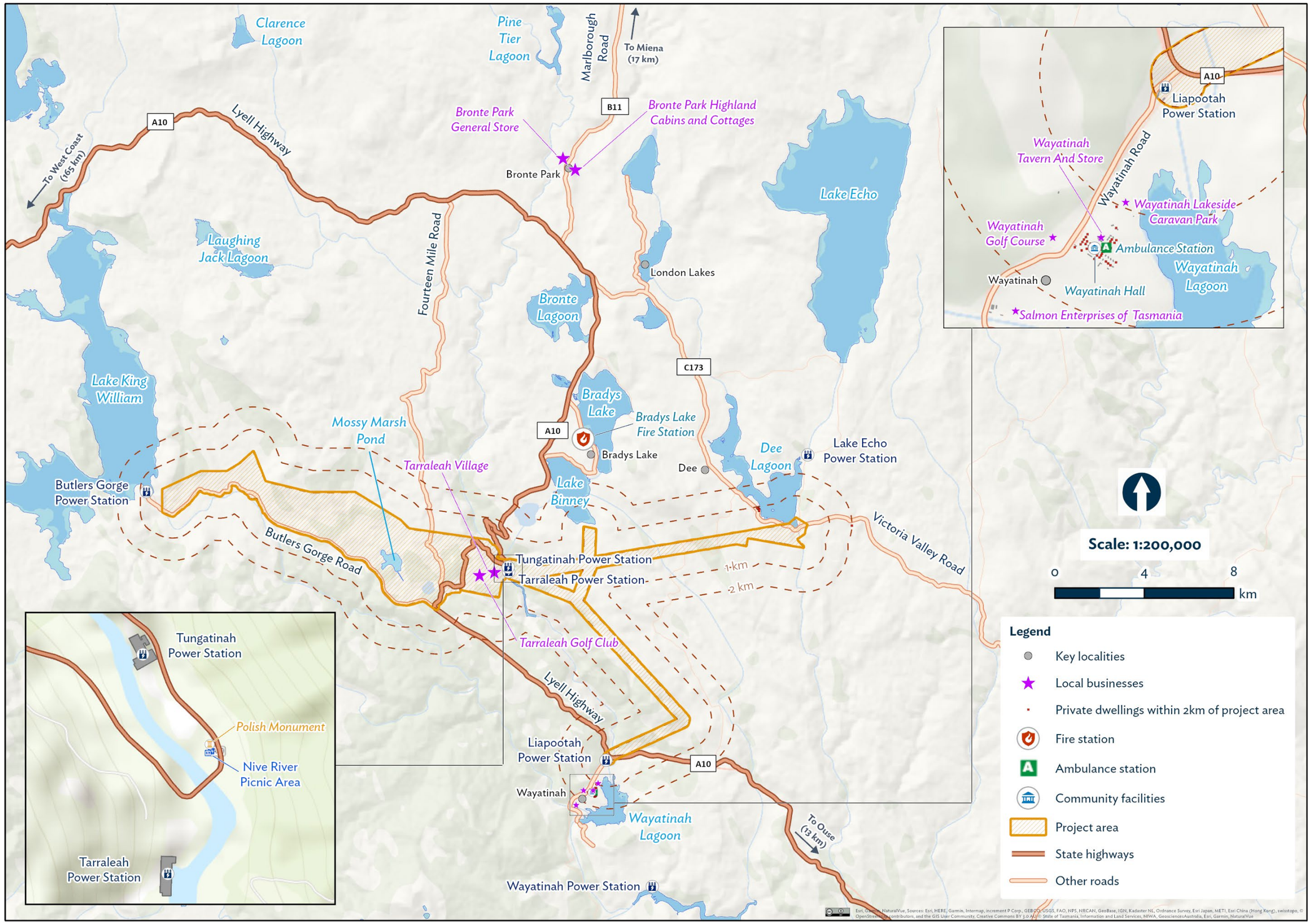

Figure 7-1 Local Setting

7.1.3 Localities and key communities

7.1.3.1 Tarraleah and the Tarraleah Village

The Tarraleah locality includes the Hydro Tasmania owned Tarraleah Village. The Tarraleah Village is a historic Hydro town that was developed to house the hundreds of workers that built and worked on the Tarraleah Hydro scheme. There is currently no recorded permanent residential population in the Tarraleah locality.

Existing infrastructure and facilities in the Tarraleah Village include:

- 32 self-contained homes, villas and pavilions
- 'Scholars' accommodation units (10)
- The Highlander Arms, Tavern
- Battery Café, Tarraleah
- Lodge with nine suites
- A spa pavilion
- A conference centre with commercial kitchen
- A hall
- A church (currently a gym)
- A caravan park.

To service the current Upgrade Works workforce, approximately 20 to 25 people (12-15 FTE) are employed, mostly on casual/contract basis in various hospitality, cleaning and maintenance roles. Many of these are local people, residing in the CH LGA area, mainly traveling from Ouse.

The Tarraleah Village is accessible to the public and is an important part of the regional hydro power history. The Tarraleah Lodge and campground provide accommodation to the public, and the tavern and café are also open to the public. The Penstock Lookout at Tarraleah Village is a publicly location providing views of the Tarraleah scheme.

The Tarraleah Golf Club (nine holes, clubrooms) continues to operate today on land owned by Hydro Tasmania. As at March 2025, the Club has a membership of approximately 65 people, drawn from the local and regional area, and includes many current and former Hydro Tasmania employees. Many of the people residing in the Village whilst engaged on the Upgrade Works play the course in their recreation time.

7.1.3.2 Wayatinah Village

Wayatinah is another Hydro village that was established in the early 1950s to house workers involved in the construction and maintenance of the Wayatinah Power Station and other hydropower projects in the Upper Derwent scheme. Wayatinah is located approximately 2km of the Lyell Highway and 16km south of Tarraleah Village.

In 2021, Wayatinah recorded a resident population of 18 people. The village includes a tavern and store (owned and operated by Hydro Tasmania), a community hall (managed by Central Highlands Council) and 47 houses. Twenty-two of the houses are owned by Hydro Tasmania, and 25 are in private ownership, approximately seven of which are owned by Salmon Enterprises of Tasmania (SALTAS). The housing at Wayatinah is primarily used by Hydro Tasmania staff and contractors engaged in the Tarraleah Upgrade works and SALTAS staff.

A SALTAS salmon hatchery is situated on the River Derwent near Wayatinah Lagoon (Hydro Tasmania, 2014). The Wayatinah Lakeside Caravan Park is a privately operated caravan park located on the shores of Wayatinah Lake just outside Wayatinah village. The caravan park is a popular seasonal short-term accommodation facility. The 9-hole Wayatinah Golf Course is operated on land owned by CHC.

7.1.3.3 Bronte Park

Bronte Park is a rural locality to the north of Tarraleah. Bronte Park consists of three settlement areas: Bronte Village, Bronte Estate and the Highland Cabins and Cottages.

Bronte Village was built in the late 1940s to house workers who were building dams and canals for the Nive River Scheme. It was the first of the Hydro villages to have been planned in advance. By November 1951, the village had expanded to a town with housing, school, kindergarten, civic centre, post office, theatre, hospital, and sporting grounds. Construction works for the scheme ended in the late 1950s, and the population and services dwindled. The remains of the Bronte village were sold into private ownership in 1991. The remaining 17 cottages ('shacks') are largely privately owned and either owner occupied (intermittently or permanently), rented or operate as AirBnBs. Bronte Village caters primarily to trout fishers, kayakers, and walkers. There is also a privately owned caravan park in Bronte Village with majority of residents having established permanent shacks. At the time of writing additional residential development was being proposed in Bronte Village. There is a residential population, who live either permanently or part time in shacks. The Bronte Park Chalet, that was operating as a pub, was destroyed by a fire in March 2018.

Bronte Park General Store, located on the Marlborough Highway provides basic services and fuel for residents and visitors to Bronte Park, as well as through traffic.

Bronte Estate consists of multiple houses (estimated at 21) with a mix of permanent and semi-permanent residents. At the time of writing several properties in Bronte Estate were for sale.

Highland Cabins and Cottages is a tourism accommodation establishment located to the immediate south of Bronte Estate and accessed from the Marlborough Highway.

Bronte Park had a recorded population of 49 in 2021. Given the number of 'shacks' in the locality, this population is anticipated to increase significantly during peak recreation and fishing season.

7.1.3.4 Ouse

Ouse is a small township located on the Lyell Highway and is the closest service centre to the Project area. As of 2021, the population of Ouse was 326. The town has a small range of services including the Central Highlands Community Health Centre, Ash Cottage which operates like a neighbourhood centre, post office, supermarket, roadhouse, an on-line access centre, and a pub (which operates as a café during the day) and provides accommodation, as well as a small range of recreational groups and facilities.

The community of Ouse has experienced a number of challenges in the past 20 years that have had significant and long-lasting impacts on the community. In 2006 the Ouse hospital was downgraded to a health centre. In 2016, devastating floodwaters swept through Ouse, damaging property, and infrastructure. In 2021, the Central Highlands General Practice in Ouse announced it would close its doors and after a change in ownership, twice, abruptly shut in April 2022 (Murray, et al., 2021; Langenberg, 2022). As at March 2025 Ouse is still without a general practice. In 2022 the Ouse District School was temporarily closed due to low enrolment numbers (DECYP, 2025 conversation, 27 March). From 2023 existing students transferred to either Westerway Primary School or Glenora District School, with a bus service to both schools provided from Ouse.

Meadowbank Lake, part of the Derwent hydropower scheme, is located between Ouse and Hamilton. It attracts visitors to the area and is a popular fishing location.

7.1.3.5 Bradys Lake, Bronte Lagoon and London Lakes

Bradys Lake, Bronte Lagoon and London Lakes are small rural localities to the north of the Project area and situated on the fringes of various smaller lakes and lagoons of the Upper Derwent scheme. Bradys Lake and Bronte Lagoon are accessed off the Lyell Highway and London Lakes is accessed off the Victoria Valley Road. They are popular locations for camping and other outdoor recreation pursuits.

In addition to the 'shacks', there are also more substantial houses, in both localities, with a population estimated at 42 and 10, respectively. There are no retail facilities at Bradys Lake, Bronte Lagoon or London Lakes, however the Bradys Lake Fire Brigade (and SES Station) is located at Bradys Lake.

There are numerous other shacks at Dee Lagoon and the 'Highland Lake Estate' along Victoria Valley Road. These localities are not distinguished in the census data.

7.1.3.6 Dee

Dee is a rural locality adjacent and to the east of Tarraleah. It is centred around Dee Lagoon. The road through Dee was part of the old road to the west coast. In 1955, Dee Lagoon was created as storage for the Derwent hydropower scheme. Dee Lagoon is utilised recreationally as a popular trout fishing location. Dee recorded a population of 7 people as of 2021.

7.1.3.7 Other localities

There are a range of other localities associated with the Tarraleah Scheme that have strong cultural connection for the families who lived across the region during the construction of the Tarraleah and other Schemes within the Upper Derwent system. These are often significant for the families of the migrants who were employed on the schemes in post-war resettlement programs.

One of the more significant of these localities is the Butlers Gorge township location, situated east of Clark Dam and accessed via Butlers Gorge Road. This site is marked by a monument and is visited frequently by families of those who lived and worked there.

7.1.4 Regional study area

The regional setting of the Project is illustrated in **Figure 7-2** and described in the following sections.

7.1.4.1 Central Highlands LGA

The Central Highlands LGA is situated in central Tasmania and covers an area of approximately 8,010 km^2 – roughly 12% of Tasmania's land mass. The Central Highlands LGA is home to several townships including Bothwell, Bronte Park, Derwent Bridge, Hamilton, Liawenee, Miena, Ouse, Tarraleah, Gretna, Ellendale, Fentonbury, Westerway, and Wayatinah. Bothwell is the administrative seat of the CHC, although there are Council offices and a works depot in Hamilton.

In 2021, the Central Highlands LGA had a population of 2,520 people, with roughly 3,700 ratepayers who own 'shacks' in the communities around the region's lakes and mountains (Central Highlands Council, 2024a). Bothwell is the largest centre in the Central Highlands LGA with a population in 2021 of 379 people. Parts of the region are considered isolated, with limited services available.

The Central Highlands LGA is predominately a rural area. The economy is heavily reliant on primary industries, with much of the workforce employed in agriculture, forestry and fishing. Tourism also plays a growing role, particularly eco-tourism activities, and heritage related activities. The LGA is characterised by a small aging population and has experienced negligible population and dwelling growth over the past decade. Over time, the low population growth rates will impact the sustainability of communities in the LGA. There is some evidence of this already occurring in the smaller communities.

As with many regional areas, the LGA is subject to several socio-economic challenges primarily due to its low population density, aging demographic and limited employment opportunities. The LGA faces difficulties in recruiting and retaining skilled workers, due to limited housing, distance from peri urban areas and no public transport, and limited services in particular health services. The LGA has below average median household incomes, reflecting economic challenges for many residents; high unemployment rates, with limited employment opportunities outside of agriculture and tourism sectors; a lower proportion of residents with tertiary qualifications impacting job prospects and earning potential, and a higher demand for health care and social support services due to the aging demographic.

Key industries across the region include agriculture, horticulture and tourism. The region is also the birthplace of Hydro Tasmania's Hydro-Electric power system.

Key socio-economic characteristics of the Central Highlands LGA in 2021 compared to the state include:

- A relatively stagnant population with a lower proportion of people in the younger age groups (0 to 17 years) and a higher proportion of people in the older age groups (60 + years), indicating an ageing population
- A high and increasing proportion of lone person households (33% compared to 28%)
- Low median weekly household income ($1,114 compared to $1,368), with a smaller proportion (9.6%) of high-income households (those earning $3,000 per week or more) and a higher proportion (36%) of low-income households (those earning less than $800 pr week) compared to the state.
- A small proportion of households renting (16% compared to 26%)
- Low educational attainment. Ten per cent of the population holds a university qualification compared to 22% for the state. Twenty-three per cent hold a trade qualification (certificate) compared to 22% for the state.
- Unemployment rate of 5.5% similar to the state, but a lower labour force participation rate (49% compared with 58%).
- Higher rates of socio-economic disadvantage compared to the state (ABS, 2021).

7.1.4.2 Derwent Valley LGA

The Derwent Valley LGA, located northwest of Hobart and covering 4,108 km², had a population of 10,942 in 2021, with over half of the population residing in New Norfolk. In 2021, the LGA had a population of 10,942 people: with over half the population residing in and around the town of New Norfolk. The remaining population are spread across smaller residential and rural living areas with over 60% of the land area held in reserve or other parks areas. The LGA has a similar proportion of population identifying as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the Central Highlands, and a higher proportion than the state.

New Norfolk serves as the regional hub for services and commerce and is the location of the Derwent Valley Council (DVC) Chambers and administration. New Norfolk is located a 1 hour and 15 min drive from Tarraleah Village.

The Derwent Valley LGA has a more diverse economy than the Central Highlands LGA, and includes agriculture, manufacturing, health care and construction (construction services).

The DVC is striving for local economic diversification. However, the area faces high unemployment rates and a skills gap that hinders economic growth. Similar to the Central Highlands, the LGA population has low educational attainment, which also affects employment opportunities. Many residents in the LGA experience economic hardship, with lower median incomes compared to the state average. This can lead to difficulties in accessing essential services as well as economic opportunities. The population also experiences significant health challenges, including higher rates of chronic illness and mental health issues.

Major features of the Derwent Valley LGA include its freshwater resources, and productive agricultural land that supports agriculture and horticulture industries.

Key socio-economic characteristics of the Derwent Valley LGA in 2021 compared to the state include:

- A growing population. In the five years to 2024, the LGA has experienced a higher annual percentage population change compared to the state.
- A higher proportion of people in the younger age groups (0 to 19 years) and a lower proportion of people in the older age groups (65 + years).
- A smaller proportion (9.5%) of high-income households (those earning $3,000 per week or more) and a higher proportion (29.2%) of low income households (those earning less than $800 pr week) compared to the state.
- A smaller proportion of households renting (21% compared to 26%)
- Low educational attainment. Nine per cent of the population holds a university qualification compared to 22% for the state, and 25% hold a trade qualification (certificate) compared to 22% for the state
- A high unemployment rate (7.3% compared to 5.9%), and a lower labour force participation rate (55% compared with 58%).
- A high level of youth disengagement with employment and education. The number of people aged 15 to 24 years in Derwent Valley LGA in 2021 was 1,287, of this, 14.9% were disengaged and 16.9% were partially engaged, compared to 11.9% and 15.4% respectively for the state.
- Higher rates of socio-economic disadvantage compared to the state.

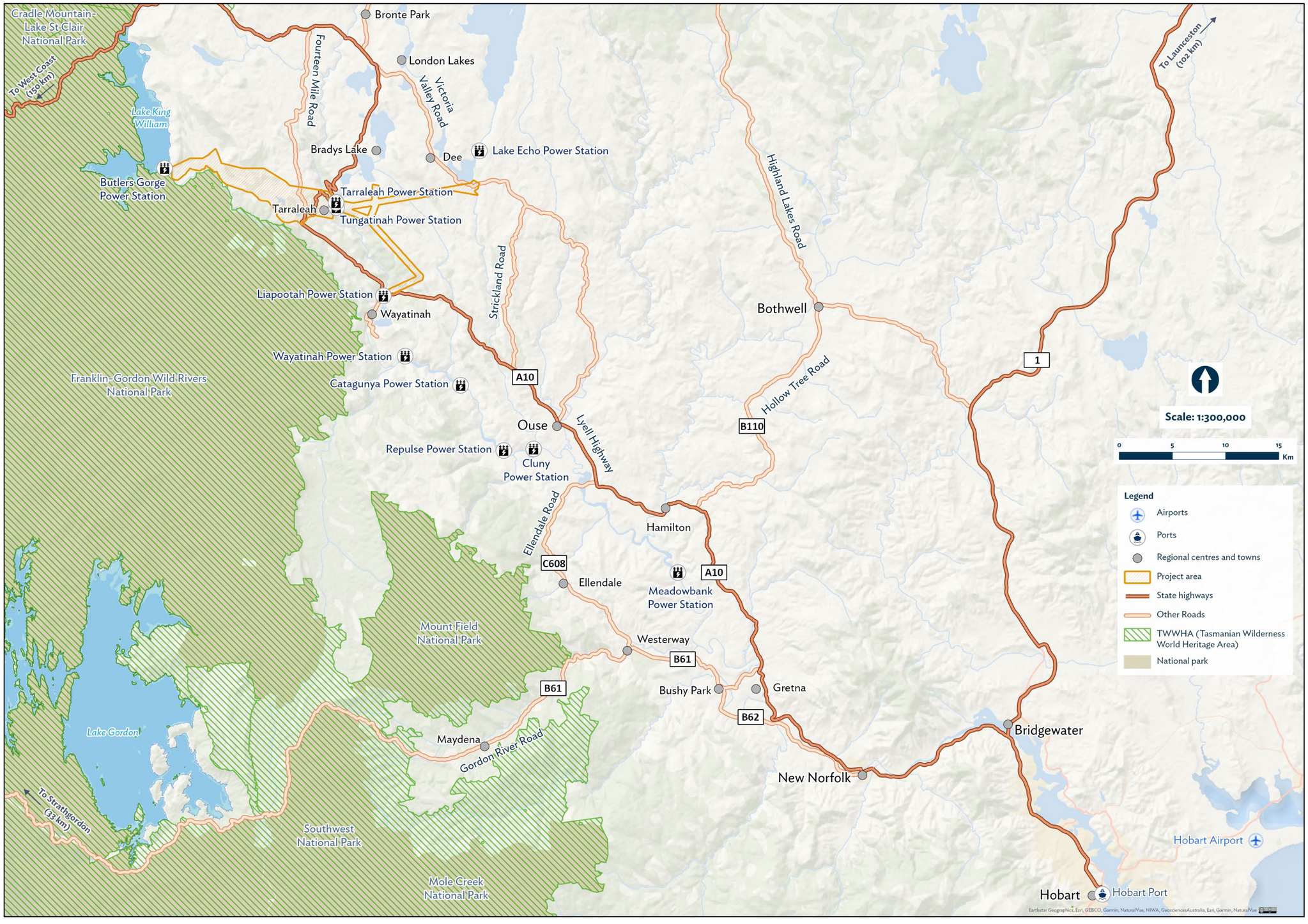

Figure 7-2 Regional Setting

7.1.5 Historic Aboriginal cultural setting

This section presents a summary of the historic Aboriginal cultural setting of the Project with reference to social structure and land use. The Tarraleah Redevelopment Aboriginal Heritage Assessment Report (Hydro Tasmania, 2025) provides additional information.

At the time of European invasion, the upper Derwent region, including the tributaries draining the central Plateau to the north, was within the cumulative territory of the Big River nation, the most landlocked group of Tasmanian Aboriginal peoples. The nation's combined territory encompassed the highland lake country, extending as far as New Norfolk in the south and Surrey Hills in the north-west, and extending to the edge of the midland plains in the east. Without a territorial coastline, the Big River people accessed the lowlands and coasts through social contracts with other groups.

The Big River nation is thought to have comprised 5 or 6 distinct clans, with the high-country west of the Dee River being the core territory of the *Larmairremener* believed to comprise between 60-80 individuals. High country specialists, the *Larmairremener* practiced a culture that was well adapted to sub-alpine life.

Occupation of the highlands was typically seasonal, with Big River clans migrating to the East Coast to spend the colder months in the lands of the Oyster Bay Nation clans with whom relations were generally amicable (Ryan 2012: 25-29). Year-round highland occupation could be practised when required.

Movement throughout the Big River domain was via a sophisticated network of radiating tracks, generally committed to memory, but also conspicuously marked in places. These roads, which had specific Aboriginal names, connected hunting and foraging areas with campsites, and generally coincided with lines of least travelling resistance, such as along river valleys and across flat plains (Cosgrove 1984: 48).

Based for the most part beyond the fringes of white settlement, for the first decade following the arrival of Europeans the *Larmairremener* continued to practice their culture relatively unhindered. This changed radically in the second decade with the movement of settlers, cattle and sheep into prime hunting grounds along the Derwent and its major tributaries, the Ouse and Clyde, and the summer de-pasturing of stock on the highland marshes.

After 1822, when the British began expropriating clan territories lands to gift to white pastoralists, the Ouse and Clyde River valleys became important strategic corridors for the emerging Aboriginal resistance. Between 1824 and 1831, European settlement along the river valleys and kangaroo hunting grounds along the upper Derwent was met with fierce and protracted opposition in the form of guerrilla-style attacks on persons and property. However, by the end of 1831, when finally enticed by government appointed conciliator G. A. Robinson to lay down their arms, white reprisals and the travails of the resistance campaign had reduced the numbers of remaining Big River people to twenty-six, including several *Larmairremener* (Ryan 2012: 196).

7.2 Population and demographic characteristics

This section describes the key population and demographic characteristics of the SIA Study area relevant to the assessment of potential social impacts.

Key insights

- The local study area has a small population (452 people), the majority of which reside in Ouse.
- The local study area has a high median age when compared to the regional study area and Tasmania (58 years compared to 46 years and 42 years respectively).
- Population projections to 2053 show a decrease in the Central Highlands LGA population of 0.9% and an increase in Derwent Valley LGA population (12.3%).
- The population of the regional study area has a higher proportion of people who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander (6.5%) compared to the state (5.4%).
- The regional study area has a high level of disadvantage compared to the state and rest of Australia.
- Vulnerable groups in the regional study area include older people, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people, LGBTIQA+, people at risk of experiencing homelessness and people living with a disability.

7.2.1 Population

In 2021, the local study area had a combined population of 452 residents, with more than 70% of the population residing in the township of Ouse. In 2021, the regional study area had a population of 13,462 people, representing approximately 2.4% of the total state population.

The towns and communities of the study area have experienced population change across the last three Census collections. Between the 2016 and 2021 Census the population of the local study area increased by 6.4 %, with Bronte Park experiencing considerable growth during this time (**Table D 1**, Appendix D). This can be partly explained by statistical boundary changes, but also may be explained through changes in use patterns of 'shacks' during the COVID-19 pandemic and the use of some shacks (particularly in Bronte Park) by contractors associated with the construction of the Cattle Hill Wind Farm within the municipality. Also of note are the population decreases experienced in both Wayatinah and Bradys Lake. This may be the result of seasonal differences in use of Bradys Lake shacks occurring between Censuses.

Between the 2011 and 2021 Census periods, the regional study area population increased by 12.5% – with steady population increases occurring consistent with the States 12.6% growth in the same period. However, the majority of population growth in the study area occurred in the Derwent Valley LGA. Between 2012 and 2016 Central Highlands LGA experienced population contraction, before returning to positive growth from 2017-2023. In the Central Highlands LGA, the main source of population growth is natural increase.

New Norfolk is the largest centre in Derwent Valley LGA with a population of 6,236 persons in 2023, and a 55% share of the Derwent Valley LGA population. Analysis of population growth in New Norfolk shows sustained population growth (in numbers) in the five years to 2023, but a gradual reduction in percentage change in population over the same period.

Population projections for the regional study area indicate an overall population increase for both LGAs over the next thirty years (2023-2053) (**Table D 2** and **Figure D 1**, Appendix D). Whilst population growth in the Central Highlands LGA is anticipated to be small (0.9%), the population of the Derwent Valley LGA is projected to increase by 12.3% which is comparable to the State (11.8%).

7.2.2 Population by age and gender

Table 7-2 presents data for key age and gender indicators for the SIA study area and the state. Compared to the state, both areas of interest have a higher median age and a higher proportion of males compared to females.

Analysis of age-sex data for the Central Highlands LGA shows an aging, and shrinking population, with smaller percentages of people in the younger age cohorts. Of interest is the significantly higher proportion of males compared to females in the population across all five-year cohorts from 55 years to 75 years, a trend which is significantly different to the structure of the state population in comparable cohorts. In 2021, Central Highlands LGA had the 5th highest median age of all Tasmanian LGAs. The presence of an ageing population in the Central Highlands LGA has implications for future service provision, increasing demand for specialist health services including aged care, and implications for accessibility. The presence of an ageing population also has implications for securing a locally based workforce for the Project.

In contrast the Derwent Valley LGA shows a more stationary population with somewhat equal percentages of population across age cohorts. The Derwent Valley LGA population is similar in structure to the state population.

Table 7-2: Population age structure indicators, 2021

Geography	% Males	Median Age (persons)	<15 years (persons) %	>65 years (persons) %
Local Study Area	56	58	12.9	32.9
Regional Study Area	51	46	17.3	20
Central Highlands LGA	54.5	50	14.9	24.9
Derwent Valley LGA	50.2	42	17.8	18.9
Tasmania	49.1	42	16.1	20.9

Source: (ABS, 2021).

7.2.2.1 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

In 2021, 2.2% of the local study area population identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander compared to 6.5% of the regional study area population and 5.4% of the State population (Table 7-1). Of the component LGAs, Derwent Valley LGA had the highest number of people identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and also the largest proportion of population. This is also reflected in school enrolments. In 2022 the proportion of Aboriginal and /or Torres Strait Islander students at New Norfolk Primary School and New Norfolk High School was 15% and 16% respectively.

Table 7-3: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, 2021

Geography	Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	Non-Indigenous	Indigenous status not stated	Total	% Total population
Local study area	10	406	35	452	2.2%
Central Highlands LGA	154	2,137	231	2,520	6.1%
Derwent Valley LGA	727	9,583	632	10,942	6.6%
Regional study area	878	11,720	863	13,462	6.5%
Tasmania	30,186	501,521	25,851	557,571	5.4%

Source: (ABS, 2021).

The Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander population of the regional study area has a relatively young age structure, with a large proportion of people aged 24 years and under (Figure D 2, Appendix D). This is consistent with the State and is also reflected in the median age (24.5 years in the regional study area, 25 years in the State in 2021).

There are more females (52.1%) than males (48.1%) in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population of the regional study area.

7.2.3 Vulnerable groups

Key vulnerable population groups residing in the study area are summarised in Table 7-4.

Table 7-4: Key vulnerable population groups residing in the study area

Vulnerability	Relevance
Older people	The median age of the study area population is 46 years, compared to 42 years for the state. In 2021 in the Central Highlands LGA, Seniors (70-84) and Elderly (85 and over) represented 16.5 % of the LGA population compared to 13% for Derwent Valley LGA and 14.6% for the state. Between 2016 and 2021 the proportion of seniors in the Central Highlands LGA increased by 30.0% (113 people) (ABS, 2021).
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people	The study area has a high proportion of population identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander (6.5%) and the majority of this population is aged 24 years or younger. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people experience a range of inequalities in comparison to non-Indigenous Australians (Dwyer et al., 2021). These inequalities include health and wellbeing, education and access to employment.
LGBTIQA+ people	LGBTIQA+ inclusion has increased over the years. However, people still routinely experience abuse and discrimination and carry the legacy of abuse and discrimination from the past. This means the LGBTIQA+ Tasmanians have poorer mental and physical health outcomes than the general population. Several key services providers identified the LGBTIQA+ population in the study area as a vulnerable population.
Youth	In 2021, there were 1,524 people (11.32%) aged 15-24 years in the regional study area, comparable to the state (11%). Within the regional study area, Derwent Valley LGA (11.9%) had the largest proportion of population aged 15 to 24 years of age (11.9%). There are high levels of youth disengagement with employment and education across the regional study area. Both the Derwent Valley LGA and Central Highlands LGA have high youth unemployment rates, and at April 2025 compared to the state, both LGAs had a higher proportion of JobSeeker and Youth Allowance recipients in the 15-64 age population.
Young parents	The findings of consultation with services providers highlighted the prevalence of young parents in the study area, particularly in New Norfolk. Service providers also highlighted that many young parents come from low socio-economic backgrounds and experience entrenched disadvantage, and difficulties accessing further education and training.
People at risk of experiencing homelessness	In 2021 a total of 2,350 people in Tasmania were homeless, up 45% from the 2016 census – this is the largest increase in homelessness out of all Australian States and territories (Shelter Tasmania, 2024a) in the period 2016- 2021. Analysis of rates[5] of homelessness across the regional study area in 2016 and 2021 shows: • A reduction in rates of homelessness in the Central Highlands LGA (rate of 28 to 16 persons) • An increase in rates of homelessness in the Derwent Valley LGA (rate of 9 to 43 persons) • An increase in rates of homelessness in Tasmania (rate of 32 to 42 persons) (ABS 2021) Compared to all states of Australia, Tasmania has the lowest rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people experiencing homelessness at 82, compared to 307 at the national scale.

[5] Rate per 10,000 of the population, based on the Census count of people.

Vulnerability	Relevance
People living with a disability	Over 25% of Tasmanians have a disability, which is a significantly higher proportion than the national average of 17.7% (ABS, 2021: PHT 2022). Data shows that, in the local study area, there was a higher proportion of people in need of assistance when compared with Tasmania (7.1% and 6.8% respectively). The regional study area also has a relatively high proportion of persons requiring assistance (8.0%).

7.2.4 Vulnerabilities

7.2.4.1 Socioeconomic advantage and disadvantage

The study area has high rates of socio-economic disadvantage, consistent with the broader state. The socio-economic status of the study area is influenced by income, education, employment and ability to participate in community. The level of disadvantage or advantage in the population is indicated by the Socio-economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) tool[6]. SEIFA data from 2021 shows that both LGAs of the regional study area:

- Have relatively greater disadvantage and a lack of advantage compared to the State.
- Are in the lowest scoring 20 per cent of areas for all SEIFA indexes except the Index of Economic Resources (IER) index.
- Have similar access to economic resources.

In November 2024, 10.2 % (709) of the Derwent Valley population aged 15-64 were jobseeker and youth allowance recipients, representing a 1% increase from November 2023. A similar proportion of the Central Highlands LGA population aged 15-64 were also Jobseeker and Youth Allowance recipients. Both LGAs of interest have job seeker and youth allowance recipient rates significantly higher than the state (7.3%) (Department of Social Services).

Analysis of the Index of Community Socio-educational Advantage (ICSEA)[7] values for the regional study area show students attending secondary schools in the regional area have a lower level of educational advantage than the State. Government secondary schools in the regional study area recorded values of approximately 900 or slightly lower. Values below 900 are equivalent to the bottom 16% of Australian values.

7.2.4.2 Low-income households

The regional study area has median weekly, personal and household income levels lower than the state. This is reflective of the component LGAs SEIFA scores which indicated higher levels of disadvantage. In 2021, in the Central Highlands LGA, there were 392 low-income households[8] (36% of all households), compared with 1,220 households (29.2%) in Derwent Valley LGA and 27.4% in the state.

Table 7-5: Median weekly income (personal, family and household) - 2021

Geography	Personal ($)	Family ($)	Household ($)
Regional study area	594	1,459	1,129
Tasmania	701	1,720	1,358

Source: (ABS, 2021).

[6] SEIFA is a tool developed by the ABS to rank areas in Australia based on their relative socio-economic advantage and disadvantage. SEIFA uses data from the Census to summarize the socio-economic characteristics of regions, including factors such as income, education, employment, occupation, housing, and family structure.
[7] The ICSEA is a measure developed by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and reporting Authority (ACARA) to assess the socio-educational advantage of students in Australian schools. ICSEA values are standardised for Australia, with an average of 1000.
[8] Low-income household is defined as a household with an income of less than $800 per week.

7.2.4.3 Culturally and linguistically diverse communities

The diversity of a community and community sentiments regarding diversity can make communities resilient in the face of change, or vulnerable to fracturing along lines of social tension. The local study area and the regional study area have a lower level of cultural diversity compared to the state (Table 7-6). In 2021, less than 10% of the local and regional study area population was born overseas. Data from 2021 shows that a high proportion (93%) of people living in the local study area only spoke English, slightly higher than the regional study area (91%), and state (89%).

Table 7-6: Birthplace (Australia or elsewhere), 2021

Geography	Born in Australia	Born elsewhere
Local study area	83.4%	8.4%
Regional study area	84.1%	8.2%
Tasmania	79.1%	15.4%

Source: (ABS, 2021).

7.2.5 Population mobility

Population mobility is a measure of migration within a population. The ABS measures population mobility through length of residency at the same address, measured as one year ago and five years ago. A high proportion of population living at the same address five years ago shows relative stability in a community.

Table 7-7 shows the mobility of residents in the local and regional study areas compared to the state. It indicates similar levels of mobility across all areas of interests, suggesting relative stability. Whilst the local study area has a slightly higher mobility in the short-term, it has lower mobility for the long-term. This slightly higher mobility may be a result of the small population size skewing data with relatively small changes and could also be attributed to transient movements within shack communities, particularly in Bronte Park.

Table 7-7: Mobility data, 2021

Geography	Lived at Same Address 1 Year Ago (%)	Lived at Same Address 5 Years Ago (%)	Change
Local study area	73.3	62.1	11.2
Regional study area	80.0	57.8	22.1
Tasmania	80.7	56.3	24.4

Source: (ABS, 2021).

7.3 Economic and labour force characteristics

This section describes the key economic and labour force characteristics of the SIA study area relevant to the assessment of potential social impacts.

Key insights

- The economies of the areas of interest are small, but strong in areas related to agriculture and natural resources.
- In 2021 the estimated labour force of the study area was 6,038 persons with a labour force participation rate of 52.3% compared to 58.2% in Tasmania.
- At December 2024 Derwent Valley LGA had an unemployment rate of 6.8%, which was significantly higher than the Central Highlands LGA (5.3%) and Tasmania (4.2%).
- Both the Derwent Valley LGA and Central Highlands LGA have youth unemployment rates higher than the state, and at April 2025 both LGAs had a higher proportion of 15-64 age population were JobSeeker and Youth Allowance recipients.
- Educational attainment across the regional study area is lower than Tasmania. Compared to the state, the regional study area population has lower high school completion rates and there is a lower percentage of residents with post-school qualifications.
- The regional study area has median weekly personal and household income levels lower than Tasmania. This is reflective of the component LGAs SEIFA scores which indicated higher levels of disadvantage.
- The regional study area has a significantly higher proportion of households in the lowest income quartile than Tasmania. Both LGAs of the study area showed an increase in households in the lowest income quartile between the 2016 and 2021 Census periods.
- Barriers to employment participation in the study area include high rates of entrenched intergenerational disadvantage, limited access to transport and inequality in education due to socio-economic marginalisation.

7.3.1 Economic context

Table 7-8 presents key economic characteristics of the regional study area and Southern Tasmania. In 2023-2024 the Derwent Valley LGA contributed 1.2% of Tasmania's employment and 1.1% of its value added. In comparison the Central Highlands LGA contributed 0.1% of Tasmania's employment and less than 0.1% of its value added. Analysis of key industry sector contribution to the regional economy is presented in Appendix D (Table D 4 and Table D 5).

Table 7-8: Key economic characteristics – Regional study area and Southern Tasmania

Indicator	Central Highlands LGA	Derwent Valley LGA	Southern Tasmania Region
Estimated Resident Population (2024)	2,588	11,436	299,214
GRP (2024)	$142 million	$456 million	$21.43 billion
Output (2023/2024)	$254.3 million	$805.3 million	$37.09 billion

Indicator	Central Highlands LGA	Derwent Valley LGA	Southern Tasmania Region
Highest output by industry sector (2023/2024)	• Agriculture, forestry & fishing • Construction • Mining	• Manufacturing • Construction • Agriculture, forestry & fishing	• Construction • Health care and social assistance • Public administration and safety
Businesses (2024)	282	501	22,657
Jobs (June 2023)	963	3,246	156,511
Unemployment rate (Dec 2024)	5.3%	6.8%	4.2%
Highest employing industries (2023/2024)	• Agriculture, forestry & fishing • Accommodation & food services • Retail trade	• Health care and social assistance • Manufacturing • Agriculture, forestry & fishing	• Health care & social assistance • Education & training • Public administration & safety

Source: ABS, 2021; National Institute of Economic and Industry Research (NIEIR) 2025a,b; ABS, 2025

7.3.2 Labour force characteristics

7.3.2.1 Labour force size and participation

Employment statistics are an important indicator of socio-economic status. The levels of full or part-time employment, unemployment and labour force participation indicate the strength of the local economy and social characteristics of the population.

The labour force of the regional study area for the December quarter 2024 was 6,596 people, representing approximately 2.3% of the total labour force in the State (JSA, 2024). Of the total labour force, 1,134 people were located in the Central Highlands LGA and 5,462 in the Derwent Valley LGA.

Analysis of labour force change in the study area over the 10 years to December 2024 shows:

- A small and relatively stable labour force in the Central Highlands LGA
- A significantly larger labour force in the Derwent Valley LGA, commensurate with the population size. Since 2016, the Derwent Valley LGA has experienced steady growth in labour force size.

7.3.2.2 Unemployment

As at December 2024 unemployment rates in the Derwent Valley LGA (6.8%) are significantly higher than the Central Highlands LGA (5.3%) and Tasmania (4.2%) (JSA, 2024).

Figure 7-3 shows considerable fluctuation in the Tasmanian unemployment in the 10 years to June 2024, but overall unemployment rates are trending down. This trend is also evident in the unemployment rates across the study area. Unemployment rates in the Derwent Valley LGA were consistently and significantly higher than Tasmania in the reporting period. In 2022 and 2023 the Derwent Valley LGA had the second highest unemployment rate in the Hobart and Southern Tasmania Employment Region and one of the highest unemployment rates in the state.

The sustained high levels of unemployment in the Derwent Valley LGA reflect low educational attainment in the population, which exacerbates long-term disadvantage and impacts social and economic outcomes. This is most represented in the largest town, New Norfolk, where on the northern eastern side of the town, the suburb of Fairview is a lower socio-economic area and intergenerational unemployment. Derwent Valley Council has developed strategies to create community connection and social improvements for single parents and unemployed youth. The schools are very focused on breaking unemployment cycles and work closely with local businesses to create training and employment pathways for students, which have been successful.

New Norfolk tends to be a satellite suburb of Hobart, its relative housing affordability, good road network and rural lifestyle, results in many people commuting to Hobart for work mainly in the health sector. The unemployment rate in the Central Highlands LGA is the lowest rate over the past 5 years. Low unemployment alongside a small labour force in the Central Highlands LGA may present challenges for businesses to find personnel.

Peak unemployment rates occurred in 2014 across all areas of interest and may be associated with the 2014 State government cuts to the Public Service. The deep cuts impacted the public sector with Health and Human Services experiencing $200m reduction in budget that resulted in job losses.

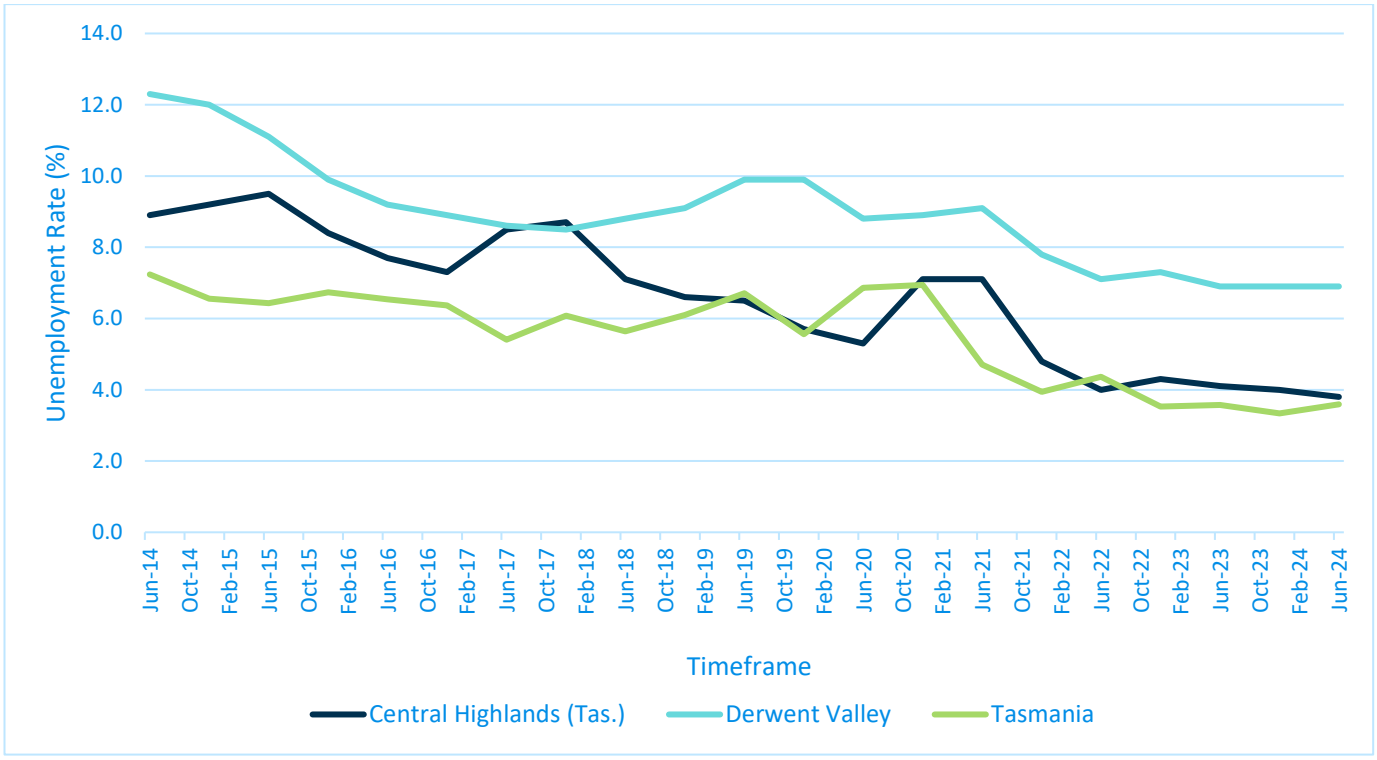

Figure 7-3: Unemployment rates 2014 - 2024
Source: (Jobs and Skills Australia, 2024).

Youth unemployment data for the regional study area, derived from the 2021 ABS Census shows a youth[9] unemployment rate in the Derwent Valley LGA of 15.6%, significantly higher than the Central Highlands LGA (10.5%) and Tasmania (13.4%). In line with the overall unemployment rates, the Central Highlands LGA was the only area where females experienced higher rates of youth unemployment compared to males (13.5% compared to 6.8%). Males experienced higher rates of youth unemployment compared to females across the Derwent Valley LGA (17.9% compared to 12.5%) and Tasmania (15.3% compared to 11.5%). Analysis jobseeker and youth allowance[10] recipient data for the two LGAs of the regional study area shows that both LGAs have a significantly higher proportion of population aged 15-64 receiving jobseeker and youth allowance compared to the state (11.6% for Central Highlands LGA and 10.5% for Derwent Valley LGA compared to 7.5% for the state) (DSS, 2025). Consistent with the State, both LGAs experience an increase in the proportion of 15-64 age population receiving Jobseeker and Youth allowance between April 2023 and April 2025.

Unemployment rates vary by gender across the regional study area. In 2021 within the Central Highlands LGA, males typically experienced lower rates of unemployment compared to females (5% compared to 6.3%). The unemployment rate for males within the Central Highlands LGA was lower than the rate for Tasmania, whilst the rate for females was higher. This is in contrast with the Derwent Valley LGA, where females tended to experience lower rates of unemployment compared to males (6.6% compared to 8%). Unemployment rates for males and females in the Derwent Valley LGA were both considerably higher than the rates for Tasmania. Derwent Valley LGA has a higher proportion of youth unemployment due to young single mothers and school disengagement, plus inter-generational welfare dependency and low value of education nor aspirations for work.

7.3.3 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander workforce skill and capacity

Table 7-9 presents a comparison of employment data for the year 2021 for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population and the non-Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Island population of the Derwent Valley LGA, Central Highlands LGA, and Tasmania. The comparison is provided to highlight the 'gap' in employment across the population. The Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Island labour force across the study area LGAs is relatively high. However, both LGAs of the study area have a higher proportion of unemployed Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Island persons compared to the State.

A significantly higher proportion of the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Island population residing in Derwent Valley LGA are not in the labour force compared to the Central Highlands LGA and Tasmania, overall numbers are small.

Anecdotal evidence confirms that Aboriginal youth within the project area are participating in senior secondary school training programs, and the local Jobs Hub applied for funding to coordinate a program that connected Aboriginal youth with country. The Bridgewater Bridge project (located in Brighton LGA, to the east of the Derwent Valley LGA) has also recorded participation by Aboriginal people in their employment and training programs, which study area residents are likely to have engaged in these in.

Educational attainment in the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Island population of Tasmania is noticeably lower compared to the non-Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Island population and to the State as a whole. Certificate III and IV level qualifications are the dominant qualifications in the study area Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander population and rates are comparative to the State.

[9] Youth is defined as a person aged 15-24 years.
[10] This represents the number of people who are eligible recipients of JobSeeker allowance (generally aged 22+) and youth allowance (excluding students, generally aged 21 and under). To be eligible for JobSeeker, participants must be unemployed and looking for work.

Table 7-9: Selected labour force characteristics, 2021 (15 years and above)

	Derwent Valley LGA				Central Highlands LGA				Tasmania	
	Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander		Non-Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander		Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander		Non-Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander		Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	%	%
Unemployment	42	13.7	321	6.9	5	8.3	54	5.5	10.1	5.7
Labour Force & participation rate	301	60.6	4,653	58.3	45	44.4	987	53.8	58.6	60.9
Employment to population	-	52.3		54.3	-	40.7	-	50.9	52.7	57.4
Not in labour force	187	37.9	3,199	40.1	53	47.3	820	44.6	39.4	37.9
Educational Attainment										
Bachelor Degree or higher	15	3.0	794	9.5	0	0	222	12.1	7.0	23.7
Advanced Diploma / Diploma	27	5.5	535	6.7	0	0	133	7.2	5.6	8.4
Certificate II & IV	115	23.3	1,847	23.1	23	20.5	379	20.6	22.5	19.1

Source: (ABS, 2021)

7.3.4 Educational attainment and qualifications

7.3.4.1 Educational attainment

Educational attainment (i.e. the highest level of schooling completed) is a key indicator of a population's capacity to take advantage of new opportunities arising from emerging economic developments, such as new infrastructure. It is also an indicator of the existing diversity and performance of the local economy because of the tendency for individuals with higher educational attainment to move away from areas of lower economic performance and opportunity.

Educational attainment in the local study area is similar to the regional study area (Table D 8, Appendix D), however both areas experience lower levels of educational attainment compared to Tasmania. The low level of educational attainment in the study area exacerbates long-term disadvantage and impacts social and economic outcomes for the LGAs. It is likely that the proportion of residents completing year 12 or equivalent in the study area will increase as the Tasmanian Government continues to push for accessible and mandatory year 11 and 12 programmes.

In 2021, 28% of the population aged 15 years and over in the local study area had completed Year 12 as their highest level of schooling, compared to 31% in Central Highlands LGA, 34% in Derwent Valley LGA and 47% in Tasmania.

Across the study area, a higher percentage of the population aged 15 years and over had completed Year 10 or equivalent compared to Year 12 or equivalent. In comparison, at the State level, a higher percentage of the population aged 15 years and over had completed Year 12 or equivalent compared to year 10 or equivalent (47% compared to 28%). This may be a result of schools in the regional study area only having recently expanded to offer Years 11 and 12.

Prior to 2020, the majority of Tasmanian secondary schools only serviced up to Year 10, with specialist pre-tertiary 'colleges' offering Year 11 and 12 programmes (DECYP, 2024a). In 2023, the Tasmanian Government introduced Year 11-12 programmes into all public secondary schools. It is likely that the proportion of residents completing Year 12 or equivalent in the study area will increase as the Tasmanian Government continues to push for accessible and mandatory Year 11 and 12 programmes.

7.3.4.2 Non-School Qualifications

Table 7-10 presents the highest non-school qualification data for the study areas. Each of the component study areas had a lower proportion of residents with a non-school qualification when compared to Tasmania overall. This trend was particularly prominent for higher education, where all component study areas reported significantly lower rates of Bachelor degree or higher attainment, compared to Tasmania. The study area had a higher proportion of population with Certificate level III or IV attainment compared to Tasmania overall.

Table 7-10: Proportion of persons aged 15 years and over with a non-school qualification, 2021

Geography	Bachelor degree or higher	Advanced diploma or diploma	Certificate level III & IV
	%	%	%
Local study area	8.1	5.3	17.4
Central Highlands LGA	10.5	6.4	18.7
Derwent Valley LGA	9.0	6.2	21.9
Regional study area	9.3	6.3	21.3
Tasmania	21.9	7.9	18.5

Source: (ABS, 2021).

7.3.5 Industry of employment

In 2021, the top three industries of employment (usual residents) in the:

- Central Highlands LGA were the:
  - Agriculture, forestry and fishing industry sector (300 persons or a share of 30%)
  - Accommodation and food services (122 persons or a share of 12%)
  - Healthcare and social assistance (85 persons or a share of 9%).
- Derwent Valley LGA were:
  - Healthcare and social assistance (809 persons or a share of 18%).
  - Construction (585 persons or a share of 13%)
  - Retail trade (419 persons or a share of 9%).

In 2021, the top three industries of employment for Derwent Valley LGA were the same for Tasmania.

Industries of employment that are most relevant to the Project include construction and electricity, gas, water and waste services, as well as accommodation and food services. In the regional area the construction industry employs 643 people (11.5%). Within the regional area the Derwent Valley LGA demonstrates more capacity in the construction industry compared to the Central Highlands LGA as the construction industry employs 12.6% of the resident workforce compared to 5.9% in the Central Highlands LGA.

7.3.6 Employment capacity

Employment capacity is a way of looking at the capacity of an area to provide jobs for all its residents if they were to choose to work locally.

In 2024 there were:

- 1,080 residents of the Central Highlands LGA employed and a total of 928 jobs.
- 5,211 residents of the Derwent Valley LGA employed and 3,438 jobs within the LGA.

The jobs to workers ratio in the study area was therefore:

- 0.86 in the Central Highlands LGA.
- 0.66 in the Derwent Valley LGA.

This means that there were fewer jobs than resident workers in both LGAs. However, the jobs to workers ratio differs significantly between industry sectors. The industry sectors recording more jobs than resident workers in 2022/23 were:

- In the Central Highlands LGA - Agriculture, forestry and fishing (1.01), mining (7.02), electricity, gas, water and waste services (1.38), retail trade (1.25), accommodation and food services (1.26), arts and recreation services (1.53).
- In the Derwent Valley LGA - Agriculture, forestry and fishing (1.15) and education and training (1.10).

The jobs to ratio for the construction sector in each LGA was: 0.34 in Central Highlands LGA and 0.36 in Derwent Valley LGA.

7.3.7 Occupation

There is substantial variation in the top occupations across the study area. The top three occupations in the Central Highlands LGA in 2021 were managers, labourers, and technicians and trades workers. The top three occupations in the Derwent Valley LGA in 2021 were technicians and trades workers, community and personal service workers and labourers.

Occupations most relevant to the Project include technicians and trade workers, labourers and machinery operators and drivers.

The significant proportion of managers in the Central Highlands LGA in 2021 is likely due to the prevalence of the agriculture, forestry and fishing industry, as farmers comprise the largest share of managers across Australia (approximately 12%). The significant proportion of technicians and trades workers in the regional study area, particularly in the Derwent Valley LGA reflects educational attainment and the prevalence of certificate level qualifications. The prevalence of community and personal service workers in Derwent Valley LGA is likely attributable to the presence of several community service and health facilities in the LGA. These services and facilities are not present in the Central Highlands LGA.

7.3.8 Workforce availability by industry

Analysis of the regional labour market (occupations and unemployment) provides an understanding of the potential availability of skills to support project construction. Occupations relevant to project construction include electricity, gas, water and waste services; transport, postal and warehousing; construction and professional, scientific and technical services. In 2021, across the regional study area there were a total of 1,147 people (20.5% of the total workforce employed across the four industries of employment. The construction industry accounted for 643 persons (11.5%) across the regional study area.

Turnover rate refers to the proportion of workers in relevant industries who change jobs annually and generally equates to around 10% of the labour force. Therefore, the labour force with potentially relevant skills in the study area is estimated to be 114 persons. Outside the study area within Tasmanian, an additional 48,413 work in relevant industries which equates to up to 4,841 persons with relevant skills.

The number of unemployment people in the study area in 2021 was 426 people. For this assessment it is assumed that 10% of unemployed people (42 persons) within the study area may have capacity to take up employment with the Project.

Information on employment by industry sector relevant to Project construction is included in Appendix D.

7.3.9 Barriers to employment participation

Engagement with South Central Workforce Network (a local employment service provider) and DVC's Strategy and Community Development staff has confirmed that barriers to employment, particularly for youth include:

- Shortage of low skilled-entry level positions. The majority of positions advertised either require years of experience or specific qualifications.
- Poor access to training facilities due to distance, lack of relevant courses or lack of trainers.
- Sustained reduction in birth rate resulting in less people moving into the workforce.
- Lack of access to public transport; bus timetables do not tend to support timely access to workplaces, particularly those in the northern Greater Hobart (e.g. City of Glenorchy). This means those who do not have access to private transportation are at a disadvantage.
- High rates of entrenched intergenerational disadvantage. This is a strong determinant of training and employment outcomes.
- Inequality in education due to socio-economic marginalisation
- Lack of access to early childhood education.
- Poor work cultures due to lack of diversity, equity, and inclusion policies and practices.

Barriers to employment for single parents include lack of childcare, proximity to training facilities (more than 30 minutes away), cost of living and lack of clarity around career options.

Other demographic cohorts are a low representation of unemployed and choose to be unemployed.

7.4 Social infrastructure and services

7.4.1 Education

Educational institutions are a focus of community life and often determine the liveability of an area and region for families. Educational institutions are often a significant employer in small and regional towns, although the school staff do not necessarily live close to the school. However, according to our engagement, regardless of where teachers reside, they are committed to improving student educational attainment and employability, particularly since the introduction of Years 11 and 12 to all Tasmanian high schools.

7.4.1.1 Primary and secondary education facilities

There are eight schools located across the regional study area, with the majority of these located in the Derwent Valley LGA (**Table D 10**, Appendix C). All listed schools offer primary education, but only three offer secondary school education. The largest school within the study area is New Norfolk High school, which had 326 students enrolled in 2023. The closest schools to the Project site are Westerway Primary School (70km away from the Project site by road) and Glenora District School (approx. 80 km drive from Project site).

Engagement to validate social baseline information found that Bothwell District High School enjoys solid enrolments from Kindergarten to Year 4, however at that point, many students transition to private schools in Hobart. The lower student enrolment numbers from Years 5 – 12, prevents the school from attracting suitable teacher numbers and funding to provide certificate courses or work exposure opportunities.

New Norfolk High School identify students who may disengage from learning early in their education journey. There are teams of teachers from various year levels who work together to develop individualised learning plans. As students progress into senior secondary school, opportunities for work exposure and Certificate II training options are explored - with the intent of using Year 11 & 12 to further improve literacy and numeracy and gain additional work ready skills. These programs also contribute to improved student engagement and educational attainment. However more employers are required to participate and there are barriers to some workforce participation i.e. unable to purchase PPE, no transport options to work, unable to secure a provisional licence.

Analysis of attendance rates at educational institutions within the regional study area show a marginal improvement in attendance the last two years. However, two of the three high-schools have experienced a slight decline (up to 3%) in attendance over the past two years (2021 – 2023). Transport is a major impediment with students reluctant to travel anywhere that requires an overnight stay and grant requests to secure a minibus have been unsuccessful.

While access to pre-tertiary education in the project area is limited, the focus of schools is to understand students' ability, aspirations, and barriers early on in their education and develop pathways to achieving either an Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) or their Tasmanian Certificate of Education (TCE). Programs include Schools Based Apprenticeship Program, and VET Certificate courses. Schools within the Derwent Collective are utilising the delivery of Certificate II and III courses alongside functional Maths and English classes. This serves two purposes, to keep students engaged and attending school beyond Year 10 in courses where they can see an outcome (employment), and to improve literacy and numeracy skills which can result in students achieving their Tasmanian Certificate of Education (TCE).

7.4.1.2 Tertiary education and vocational education

There are no tertiary education facilities in either the Central Highlands or Derwent Valley LGAs. The nearest tertiary training and education facilities include:

- TasTAFE (Claremont) offering hospitality training – 116km from the Tarraleah power station by road.
- TasTAFE (Clarence) which includes the Water and Energy Trades Centre of Excellence – 124 km by road
- Metal Engineering Training Facility (Derwent Park) – 124km from the Tarraleah power station by road
- TasTAFE Campbell Street Campus (Hobart) – 128km from the Tarraleah power station by road
- University of Tasmania, Hobart campus – 129km from the Tarraleah power station by road

7.4.1.3 Work readiness and capacity building programs

The Derwent Valley Council is proactive in supporting work readiness and capacity building programs, as an outcome of research they've undertaken to understand barriers to employment. Collaboration with service providers and DECYP Derwent Valley collective, results in a 'village approach' to linking people to relevant, timely and appropriate programs. The smaller communities in the regional study area have developed bespoke work readiness programs that accommodates the specific needs of participants.

Key programs available within the regional study area and broader Tasmania to support young people's transition to work include:

- **Derwent Valley Youth Future Action Team** – is a youth led not-for-profit organisation in the Derwent Valley LGA that exists to empower young people.
- **Derwent Valley Council Youth Program** – takes a proactive and youth led approach to finding solutions and programs that address young people's needs.
- **Earthworks Academy Carrick** – this purpose-built training facility will provide civil skills training experiences for students across the State and will be aligned with the Certificate II Construction Pathways delivered in Years 11 & 12.
- **Jobs Tasmania** – aims to connect jobseekers and businesses together, connects job seekers to further education/training pathways.
- **Home Base** – aims to create an inclusive and diverse community through the implementation of a range of supportive programs.
- **RTOs and non-government organisations** – dependant on student learning pathways, select schools have individual arrangements with a variety of Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) and Non-Government Organisations (NGOs).

7.4.2 Health and emergency services

7.4.2.1 Hospitals

The nearest hospital to the Project site – and the only hospital within the regional study area – is the New Norfolk District Hospital. It is located approximately 94km from the Project site by road. The hospital is small, providing 14 sub-acute beds, radiology, physiotherapy, podiatry, community health, mental health services, child health services and visiting consultants. The hospital does not have an emergency department. A list of hospitals in proximity to the Project site is included in Appendix D (Table D 12).

7.4.2.2 General practitioners and health service provision

The Bothwell Medical Centre is the only general practice located in the Central Highlands LGA. The medical centre operates four days a week and is closed from Saturday to Monday. Afterhours or weekend general practices are not available in the study area. The Central Highlands General Practice, previously located in Ouse, closed in April 2022. As a response, additional GPs were employed at the Bothwell Medical Centre. The nearest afterhours general practice is in Derwent Park, Glenorchy. In addition, there are also general practices located in New Norfolk (Derwent Valley Medical Centre) and in Brighton (Brighton Medical Centre) – both over 90km away from Tarraleah power station (by road).

Insights gathered through community engagement actions suggest that long waitlists for medical services in the broader region and the lack of transport options, cost of fuel and wear-and-tear on vehicles mean that residents across the Project regional study area are reluctant to, and/or nervous about, accessing health care. In 2019, an estimated 53% of Central Highlands LGA residents saw a GP, compared to 73% of Tasmanian residents (Howes et al., 2020). It should be noted that this estimate was taken prior to the closure of the Central Highlands General Practice. The estimated percentage of Derwent Valley LGA residents who saw a GP in 2019 was 73%, in line with the percentage of Tasmanians.

There are no aged care facilities located within the local study area or within the Central Highlands LGA. Aged care facilities are available in New Norfolk, Derwent Valley LGA (Department of Health, 2021).

CHC operates six independent living units in Bothwell and three units in Ouse. The Department of Health & Human Service also operate three units at Ouse and three at Bothwell.

7.4.2.3 Emergency services

The emergency services available in the area are characteristic of a rural setting, with a high reliance on local volunteer emergency service workers. Further information on the emergency services listed below can be found in the Appendix C (Table D 13 to Table D 17).

- Tasmanian Fire Service: Nearest services at Bradys Lake, Ouse and Hamilton.
- Tasmania Police: Nearest services at Hamilton, Liawenee and Bushy Park.
- Ambulance Tasmania: Nearest services at Ouse, Wayatinah and Ellendale (latter two are volunteer-only stations).
- State Emergency Service: Nearest services at Central Highlands, Derwent Valley and Brighton.
- Westpac Rescue Helicopter Service: Services across Tasmania.

7.4.3 Community infrastructure and services

The study area has a limited range of social and community infrastructure and facilities including recreational facilities, community halls and centres, libraries and places of worship. A summary list of facilities is provided in Table D 11, Appendix C. There are several community clubs and organisations within each component LGA (i.e. RSL branches, and other associations covering the environment, arts and tourism sectors). The closest significant community facilities to the Project area are in the town of Ouse.

There are limited youth specific services and programs available across the study area with the majority located in New Norfolk. Existing services include Derwent Valley Youth Future Action Team, Derwent Valley Family and Youth Network and PCYC Programs (DVC, 2022a).

Access to childcare in the local study area and the broader Central Highlands LGA is extremely limited. There is one childcare service operating in the Central Highlands - Happy House Daycare programme located at Ouse School. This program operates under the Brighton Family Day Care Scheme. Decisions by DECYP in relation to the future of the Ouse primary school may impact operation of the childcare centre.

In the Derwent Valley, childcare services are offered at Valley Children's Centre and at St Brigid's School, both in New Norfolk.

In a report by the Mitchell Institute at Victoria University, the Central Highlands area was identified as having '0.0000 places per child' for childcare, whilst the Derwent Valley area was identified as having '0.0847 places per child' (Hurley et al., 2022). The same report found that Tasmania has relatively low levels of childcare accessibility compared to the Australian median (Hurley et al., 2022).

The 2021 ABS Census data for the Central Highlands (Tasmania) LGA confirms that it had one of the lowest rates of internet access at home in the state, with 69.4% of households in the CH reporting having internet access at home in 2021. For comparison, the Tasmania-wide average is 82.7% of households and 87.9% Australia-wide. Derwent Valley LGA region has a reported average of 78.4% households with internet access.

7.4.4 Outdoor recreation

Across the local and regional study area, there are multiple recreation opportunities providing a diverse range of recreational experiences, many of which are nature based. Many of the recreational sites are located on Hydro Tasmania land. Hydro Tasmania manages waterways for a range of commercial and non-commercial uses, including power generation, irrigation, kayaking, rowing, water skiing and recreational fishing.

The region features National Parks, reserves and forests including the TWWHA. These are all very popular destinations for nature-based activities.

Many of the recreational destinations in the study area support regional sporting events (amateur and professional), drawing together participants and supporters in activities such as rowing, kayaking, biking, bushwalking and fishing. Key recreational activities undertaken in the study area include:

- Fishing (freshwater, mainly for trout)
- Camping (including vehicle-based)
- Bushwalking (day and overnight)
- Mountain biking
- Waterskiing on Meadowbank Lake
- Kayaking.

Commercial operators run a range of nature-based recreational activities and experiences across the region including bushwalking, fishing and kayaking. Community groups such as Scouts and Guides also utilise the region's natural assets for a range of recreational pursuits.

7.4.4.1 Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area

The Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area (TWWHA), which includes the Franklin – Gordon Wild Rivers National Park is located immediately to the south of the Project area. The TWWHA is a popular destination for day and multiday hiking, rafting and four-wheel driving though aside from hiking these activities do not occur in the vicinity of the Project area.

Mount King William I, 11 km to the west of the Project area, is a known bushwalking destination within the TWWHA but is not strongly promoted as a destination. No formal counts are made on this track but registrations in the Parks and Wildlife Service logbook suggest approximately 180 walkers fill in the book per annum.

Mount King William Ranges, including King William II and III are options for an extended walk from the more accessible Mount King William I. Walkers need to be well prepared for indistinct tracks and exposed conditions.

Further afield (> 21 kms), the Mount Rufus walk attracted just over 3000 walkers between January and September 2022. Mount Rufus is a well know and promoted day walk.

7.4.4.2 Lake King William and Mossy Marsh

Lake King William is a popular trout fishery in the local study area. Access to the lake is via Butlers Gorge Road (eastern waters) where a MAST certified boat ramp is provided near Clark Dam, Derwent Bridge (northern waters) and Harback's Road (western waters). The prevailing winds, boat ramp and proximity to the major centres of Hobart and New Norfolk, make the Butlers Gorge Road access the most popular for recreational fishers and campers.

Figure 7-4 plots the estimated number of anglers visiting Lake King William per season, using Inland Fisheries angler survey data. Lake King William averages 673 anglers fishing its waters annually, with many anglers fishing multiple days (on average 2.5 days). The total number of days fished per season is estimated at 1,667 days per season (i.e. 673 anglers fished an average of 1,667 days per season since 2000).

Lake King William was ranked 17th in popularity of Tasmania's lake fisheries in the 2017-18 Inland Fisheries Angler Postal Survey Report (IFS, 2018). Other lakes in the Upper Derwent that featured in the top 20 rankings included Bradys Lake (ranked 8th) and Meadowbank Lake (15th) in the same year.

Since the commencement of the Upgrade Works to build a new intake to Lake King William for the Tarraleah Scheme, Butlers Gorge Road has been closed to the public on workdays, between 7am and 5pm. This closure is reflected in the figures plotted in Figure 7-4, showing a drop to about a third of the usual numbers over the preceding two decades.

This is also reflected in commentary from some people involved in the engagement rounds to date and is likely to trigger future concerns for these fishers.

Data on the number of people camping and boating at Lake King William is not available.

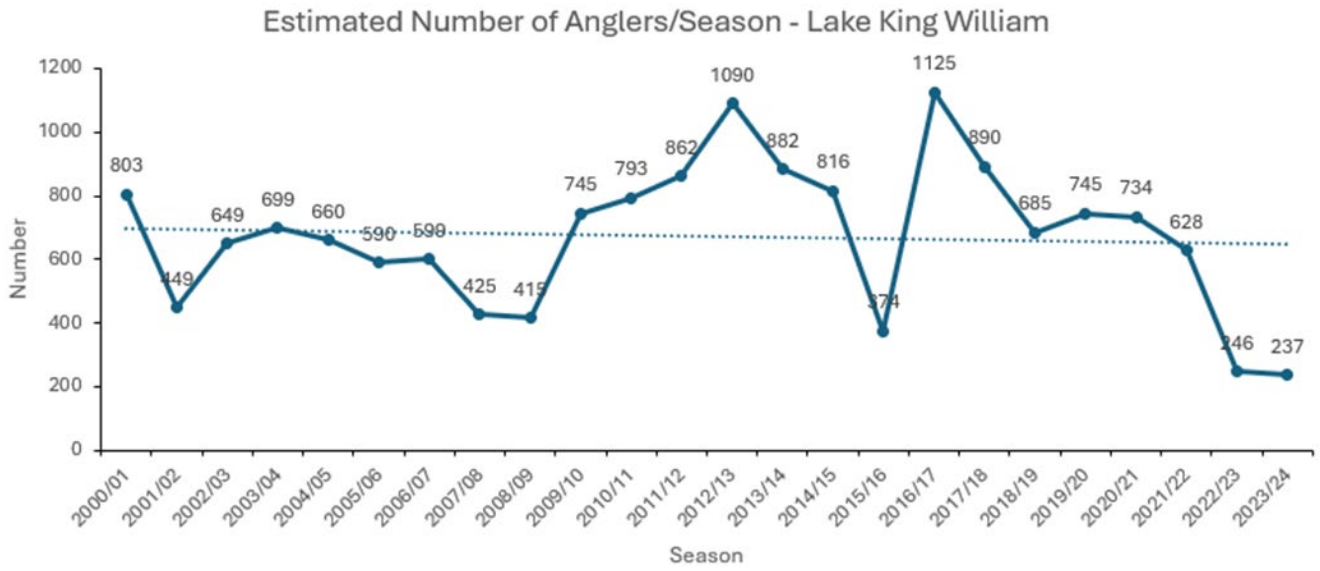

Figure 7-4: Estimated visitation by anglers per season – Lake King William (Source: Inland Fisheries Service)

Mossy Marsh is a much smaller waterway which is characterised by its shallow shores with high density of submerged timber. It is suitable for fishing from canoes/kayaks or wading only. It sees around 60-80 anglers fishing this water per season for a seasonal average of around 60-80 days per season (i.e. most anglers only fish this water for one day each season).

The Mossy Marsh Day Use Area was upgraded by Hydro Tasmania as part of the Tarraleah Upgrade Works and new spillway to Mossy Marsh constructed in 2023/2023. It was re-opened to the public in November 2023.

7.4.5 Tourism experiences and events

Visitation to towns, events and attractions in the study area make a significant contribution to the regional economy and are a vital component of the visitor economy. Tourism also helps support and contribute to the identity of local communities. The region's natural assets are a key attraction, supporting a range of recreational pursuits. The following sub-sections summarise some of the key events, attractions and visitation trends for the most-relevant regions to the Project footprint.

Key events and attractions in the regional study area are included in Appendix D.

7.4.5.1 Central Highlands

Central Highlands attractions are predominately associated with natural heritage, such as fishing, camping, sightseeing, and water sports. The hydro power history of the LGA is also a significant visitor attraction. The Highlands Power Trail - a self-guided driving trail providing an insight into the history of hydro power within Tasmania, enables visitors to interpret key sites and learn about the extraordinary challenges faced by the workers. The circular trail extends north from Bothwell, heading through the Hermitage valley towards Waddamana Village and the power station. It continues along to Penstock Lagoon, Waddamana Canal, and Shannon, then Miena Dam, located at the southern end of yingina / Great Lake.

Events in the Central Highlands include:

- Highlands Bushfest: This event celebrates the unique culture and heritage of the Central Highlands with activities like wood chopping, sheep shearing, and local crafts.
- Tasmanian Highlands Gathering: A festival celebrating Gaelic, Celtic, and Scottish heritage with music, dance, and traditional games.
- The Great Lake Winter Festival: A winter celebration featuring various activities and events around the Great Lake.
- Hamilton Show: an annual event held in Hamilton since 1952, it celebrates community and agriculture with a variety of activities and attractions featuring the regions agricultural industries and history. The 2025 show featured a Sustainable Agriculture Showcase, highlighting modern farming practices in the Derwent Valley and Central Highlands.

Derwent Bridge, on the western boundary of the Regional Setting of the Project, is a key gateway to the southern sections of the iconic Cradle Mountain Lake St Claire National Park and the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area. Derwent Bridge is also the northern access point to Lake King William. 'The Wall' is a popular tourist attraction on the eastern edge of Derwent Bridge.

Tourism Tasmania data recorded a total of 95,608 visitors to Lake St Claire/Derwent Bridge for the year ending September 2024, up from 83,191 at the peak of Tasmania's tourism boom just prior to COVID-19. This is consistent with Parks and Wildlife Service visitation data for Lake St Clair (Cynthia Bay) which cites 82,000 visitors in 2023-24, down from 90,000 in 2022-23 but similar to pre-COVID-19 statistics. Being the end point of the iconic Overland Track (which sees around 11,000 walkers per year), Derwent Bridge and other centres along the Lyell Hwy to Hobart are important stopping-points for walkers at the end of their multi-day experience.

Tourism Tasmania visitation data for 2024 shows that some 158,965 people visited Derwent Bridge to the year ending September 2024. Of these, 44% stopped, 14.9% stayed and 41% passed through. Over half (50.8%) of these were traveling in rental cars, 23.9% in their own car and 3.7% travelled by public transport.

By comparison, the only other location in the Central Highlands LGA that features in the Tourism Tasmania Visitor Survey is Bothwell, which had a total visitation for the year ended September 2025 of 52,225 people, up from the pre-covid visitation of 38547. Approximately 14% of visitors stayed at least one night, and 43% stopped.

7.4.5.2 Derwent Valley

Derwent Valley is a popular tourist region due to its natural beauty; it is a gateway to Mount Field national park and to the Central Highlands. Regional attractions include adventure tours, hiking, biking and walking trails, breweries and wineries, fresh produce and restaurants, and historical buildings and tours.

Tourism Tasmania visitation data for 2024 shows that some 158,395 people visited New Norfolk to the year ending September 2024. Of these, 21,780 (13.8% of visitors to New Norfolk, or 2% of all Tasmanian visitors) stayed at least one night there and some 71,000 stopped.

7.4.5.3 West Coast

The Lyell Highway is a key gateway to Tasmania's rugged west coast. Visitation for Queenstown for the year ended September 2024 totalled 149,796 visitors, suggesting that a large proportion of those visitors traveling along the Lyell Hwy did not continue to Queenstown at some point in their journey (Tourism Tasmania, 2024). This is further supported by the visitation data for Lake St Claire/Derwent Bridge detailed above.

7.4.6 Road infrastructure and transport services

7.4.6.1 Public transport

Limited public transport services operate within the regional study area. Area Connect operates in the regional study area and provides flexible transport to jobs and training where access is limited or unavailable. Area Connect also operates the following timetabled bus services in the study area:

- Bothwell to Glenorchy return Connector Service – weekly service on a Friday
- Ouse and Hamilton to New Norfolk return Connector Service – weekly service on a Tuesday
- West Coast (Queenstown) to Hobart return Connector Service stopping at Ouse, Hamilton, Gretna and New Norfolk – twice a week on a Tuesday and Friday.

Additional daily public bus services are available between New Norfolk and Glenorchy with connecting services into Hobart.

There are no school buses operating within the local study area. In the Derwent Valley LGA, Derwent Valley Link provides school bus services between New Norfolk and Hobart. There are also three free bus services that operates for Westerway Primary school, to and from the townships of Maydena, Ellendale, and Ouse (Tasmanian Government, 2024b).

7.4.6.2 Road network

The Lyell Highway is the primary road infrastructure in the study area and extends from Hobart in the south-east to Queenstown in the west.

The Department of State Growth is developing a corridor strategy for the Lyell Highway between Granton and Strahan. The strategy will inform government decisions regarding the Lyell Highway and will identify a range of different actions and priorities to improve the road. At the time of writing the Department of State Growth was conducting targeted stakeholder engagement to inform the strategy.

7.4.6.3 Air

The nearest airport to the study area Hobart Airport, located at Cambridge. Hobart Airport is Australia's ninth busiest airport and services the greater Hobart area and all southern Tasmania. The airport is privately-owned.

There are daily connections to a number of capital cities across Australia including Canberra, Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, Brisbane and Perth. Seasonal connections also operate to New Zealand. Passenger airlines currently operating from Hobart Airport include Air New Zealand, Qantas, Jetstar, Virgin Australia, Rex Airlines and Link Airways.

Local operators providing services out of Hobart Airport include Rotor Lift Aviation and Air Tasmania. The Royal Flying Doctor also operates from Hobart Airport.

A $200 million terminal upgrade is currently underway at Hobart Airport, with completion due in 2027. The work will double the terminal footprint, including doubling of the departures area, creation of a third baggage-claim and increases in screening lanes and upgrades to facilities.

7.5 Housing and affordability

This section provides a summary of the existing housing and short-term accommodation conditions in the regional study area with reference to affordability and accessibility.

Key insights:

- Housing affordability has declined rapidly and significantly in Tasmania consistent with national trends. Demand has exceeded supply, resulting in an escalation of land and property prices.
- Central Highlands LGA and Derwent Valley LGA have similar SEIFA (IRSD) index scores (911 and 913 respectively) and both have a significant proportion of low-income households. This exacerbates housing affordability issues in the communities.
- Rental stress in the Derwent Valley LGA is significantly higher than in the Central Highlands LGA and Tasmania (35.6% compared to 19.4% and 34.2% respectively).
- There is a limited supply of rental stock in the regional study area. Fewer than 10 properties were available for rent in the regional study area as of December 2024, and there were no rental properties available in the local study area. All available rental stock was in New Norfolk.
- There are low residential vacancy rates in the regional study area, with rates from June 2019 to December 2022 peaking at 1.0%.
- There is a high proportion of unoccupied private dwellings in the local study area and broader Central Highlands LGA, indicating the presence of a very high number of holiday homes (i.e. shacks).
- There is a lack of diversity in housing stock across the study area, with detached houses being the dominant stock type.
- The median house price is $389,000 in Central Highlands and 573,000 in Derwent Valley LGA, compared to $1.4m in Hobart at $586,000 in Tasmania (HTAG, 2025) highlighting an affordability advantage. Noting that the median price includes all houses in the LGAs, including smaller properties that are relatively isolated from settlements.

7.5.1 Study area housing snapshot

Key housing statistics for the study area are presented in Table 7-11.

Table 7-11: Key Housing Characteristics – Study Area 2021

Indicator	Local Study Area	Central Highlands LGA	Derwent Valley LGA	Tasmania
Dwelling structure				
Dwellings	546	2,582	4,455	247,597
Unoccupied private dwellings	47%*	61%	8%	12%
Detached dwellings (standalone houses)	81%	95%	95%	88%
Average household size	1.6 people	2.1 people	2.5 people	2.4 people
Tenure				
Owned outright	65%	49%	35%	37%
Mortgage	16%	26%	40%	33%
Rented	-	18%	22%	22%
Rented (social housing)	-	0.6%	4.7%	5.2%
Affordability				
Households experiencing mortgage stress	-	14.1%	10.0%	10.1%
Households experiencing rental stress		19.4%	35.6%	34.2%

Source: ABS 2021

* If Ouse is excluded from the local study area calculation, then the per cent of unoccupied private dwellings is 60.5%.

7.5.2 Household occupancy

In 2021, 47% of the dwellings in the local study area were unoccupied. In 2021, Central Highlands LGA recorded the highest ratio of unoccupied private dwellings to private dwellings across Australia (ABS, 2022). For comparison, the proportion of unoccupied dwellings in the Derwent Valley LGA and Tasmania was 8% and 12% respectively (Figure 7-5).

The high proportion of unoccupied private dwellings in the Central Highlands LGA indicates the likely presence of a very high proportion of holiday homes/shacks. This is further reinforced by the ratio of households and population to dwellings in the Central Highlands LGA. It is unusual for a municipality to accommodate more dwellings than residents, therefore this data provides further evidence of the high proportion of holiday homes in the LGA.

The substantial proportion of unoccupied dwellings, particularly in the local study area and across the Central Highlands LGA can in part be attributed to the historical change in function of the old Hydro Villages (such as Tarraleah, Wayatinah and Bronte Village). A number of these villages are now home to ‘shack communities’ which are typically occupied in full seasonally and have only a small handful of permanent residents.

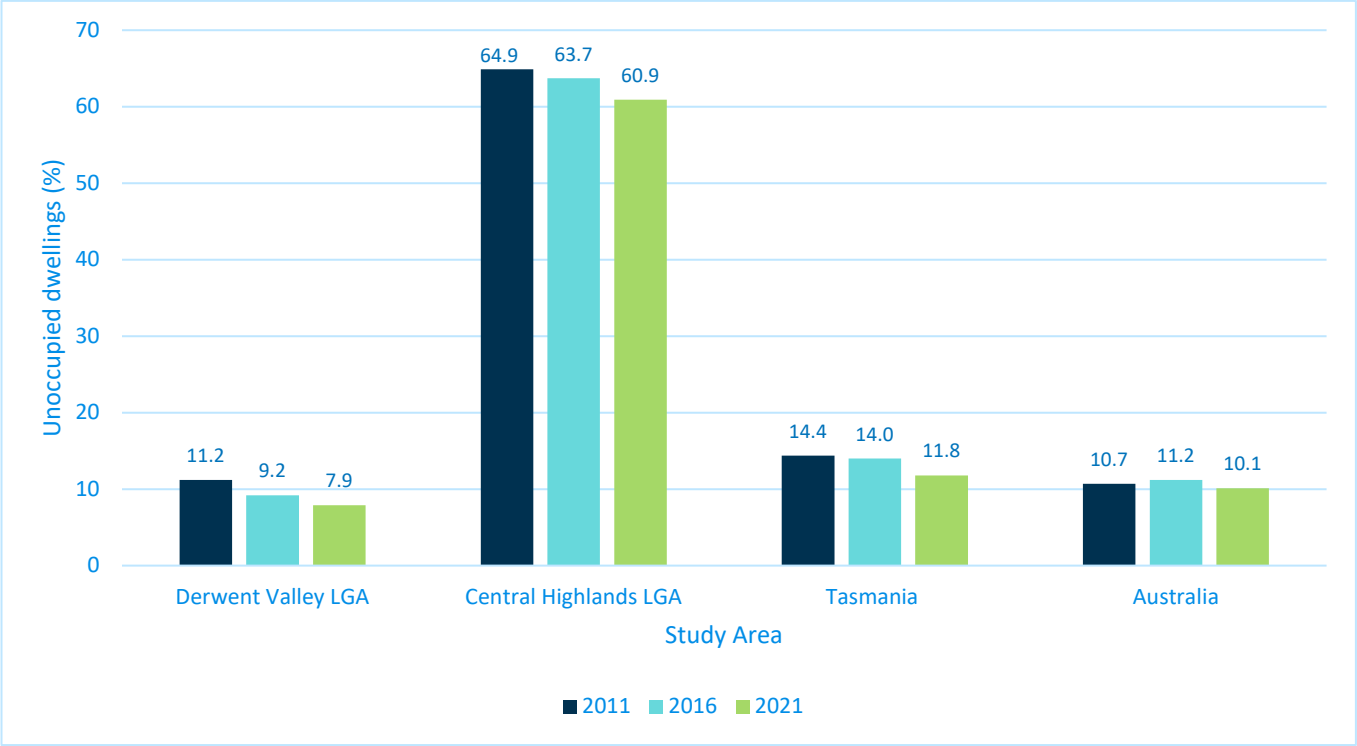

Figure 7-5 Unoccupied dwellings, 2011 – 2021

Source: (ABS, 2021).

7.5.3 Household size and composition

In 2021, the average household size of the regional study area was very similar to that of Tasmania (2.3 and 2.4 respectively). However, the average household size of the local study area was significantly smaller at 1.6 persons.

Whilst this may be indicative of a smaller household size and reflective of the aging population, the small sample sizes for the local study area at the time of the 2021 Census may have been edited for anonymity by the ABS. Of the areas of interest, the local study area had the highest proportion of single person households (41%) compared to the regional study area (29%) and Tasmania (29%).

The majority of households in all study areas were family households, with group households making up the smallest household type in the study area and State.

The projected household composition of the study area and the State is in line with national projections up to the year 2046. Family households are projected to remain the most common household type in Australia, with lone person households making up to 26-28% of households, and group households up to 4% of all households (ABS, 2024).

7.5.4 Housing availability

Housing availability in the local study area is extremely limited. Analysis of data from Realestate.com (December 2024) for the postcodes of the local study area (postcode 7140) show a total of six properties available for purchase (2 properties in Ouse, 3 in Bronte Park, 4 in Bronte Estate, and one in Dee and 2 in London Lakes). There were no properties available for rent in the local study area.

There is greater housing availability across the regional study area, with 134 properties available for purchase as of December 2024, with values ranging from $195,000 to more than $1.5 million. Most housing stock for purchase is located in the Derwent Valley LGA and specifically in New Norfolk.

An extremely limited supply of rental stock (less than 10 properties) is available across the regional study area. All available properties are in New Norfolk, with weekly rent ranging from $280 to $530.

Information on residential rental vacancy rates is included in Appendix D.

7.5.5 Housing affordability

Housing affordability is a function of both housing costs and household income. Housing stress is a specific measure of the extent to which lower income households face unaffordable housing costs (rent or mortgage payments). The usual benchmark for affordability is that households paying more than 30% of their gross income for housing costs are in 'stress'.

Table 7-12 presents rates of mortgage and rental stress for the regional study areas, as well as the State. Affordability across the local study area is not considered due to the small dataset.

Housing affordability conditions in the two LGAs of interest differ significantly. A higher proportion of households in the Central Highlands LGA experience mortgage stress when compared to the Derwent Valley LGA and Tasmania (14.1% of households compared to 10.0% and 10.1% of households respectively).

A lower proportion of households in the Central Highlands LGA experience rental stress when compared to the Derwent Valley LGA. Both Derwent Valley LGA and Tasmania are experiencing severe rental stress, with over 30% of the populations in these areas experiencing 'stress'.

Table 7-12: Housing affordability, 2021

Geography	Median mortgage repayment ($/monthly)	Households experiencing mortgage stress (%)	Median rent ($/weekly)	Households experiencing rental stress (%)
Central Highlands LGA	900	14.1	200	19.4
Derwent Valley LGA	1,235	10.0	285	35.6
Tasmania	1,313	10.1	290	34.2

Source: (ABS, 2021).

7.5.5.1 Rental affordability

Analysis of rental affordability across the study area using rental payment quartile[11] data based on the 2021 Census shows:

- Both Central Highlands LGA and Derwent Valley LGA have proportionally more households paying low rents relative to the state, and less high rent households. Of note, more than 50% of households in the Central Highlands LGA are in the lower quartile group with just 8.8% of households in the highest group.
- The medium highest rent quartile has the largest proportion of households in Derwent Valley (32.9% of households).
- Between 2016 and 2021 in both LGAs, the number and proportion of households in the lowest rental quartile decreased with a corresponding increase in the number and proportion of households in the highest rental quartile. This suggests rents are increasing faster in the study area than in the State.

[11] Rental payment quartiles look at the distribution of rents among rented households in an LGA.

Key findings of the Anglicare Australia annual rental affordability snapshot (Anglicare Australia 2024) for Tasmania shows:

- Rental affordability overall is unchanged from the previous year
- Affordability for people relying on income support payments is at an all-time low
- There are more renters competing for the affordable properties available
- Tasmanians on low incomes are being outcompeted and pushed into homelessness
- Older Tasmanian renters are at increasingly experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

People on Youth Allowance in Tasmania are entirely priced out of the market and single people on JobSeeker can pay just $216 a week in rent before they enter rental stress.

Further information on rental affordability is provided in Appendix D (Table D 19).

7.5.5.2 Mortgage Affordability[12]

Analysis of home loan quartiledata developed from the 2021 Census provides an indication of mortgage affordability in the study area. The data shows that:

- The Central Highlands LGA has a significantly higher proportion of households (73.4%) making lower loan repayments ($1,357 per month or less) relative to Derwent Valley LGA (59.5%) and the State (50.0%).
- Both Central Highlands LGA and Derwent Valley LGA have proportionally more households in the lowest repayment quartile ($0-$919 per month) relative to the state, and less households in the highest repayment quartile ($1,876 and over).
- Between 2016 and 2021, the Derwent Valley LGA experienced a reduction in the proportion of households in the highest housing loan quartile and the lowest quartile, but an overall increase in the number of households in each quartile.
- Between 2016 and 2021 the total number of households with mortgage repayments in the Central Highlands LGA from 227 to 253 (+26 or 11.4%) and in the Derwent Valley LGA from 1,412 to 1,605 (+193 or 13.6%).

7.5.6 Residential rental vacancy rates

Data from SQM Research (2024) indicates that the vacancy rate for postcode 7140 has fluctuated over the past decade, but only at a small scale (i.e. peaks of up to 3.0% in 2013 and 2.7% in 2014 to 1% in 2022). Residential vacancy rates for these suburbs tend to be very low, with the rates from June 2019 to December 2022 reaching a maximum of 1.0%. This is likely due to the small number of dwellings across this area, and the low turnover rate of residents (i.e. high number of residents who have lived at the same residence for a number of years), as well as the small population.

[12] Note that the data is based on the 2021 Census which was undertaken when interest rates were at a record low in Australia. The first of several interest rate rises by the Reserve Bank began an upward cycle from May 2022 (.idcommunity, 2024)

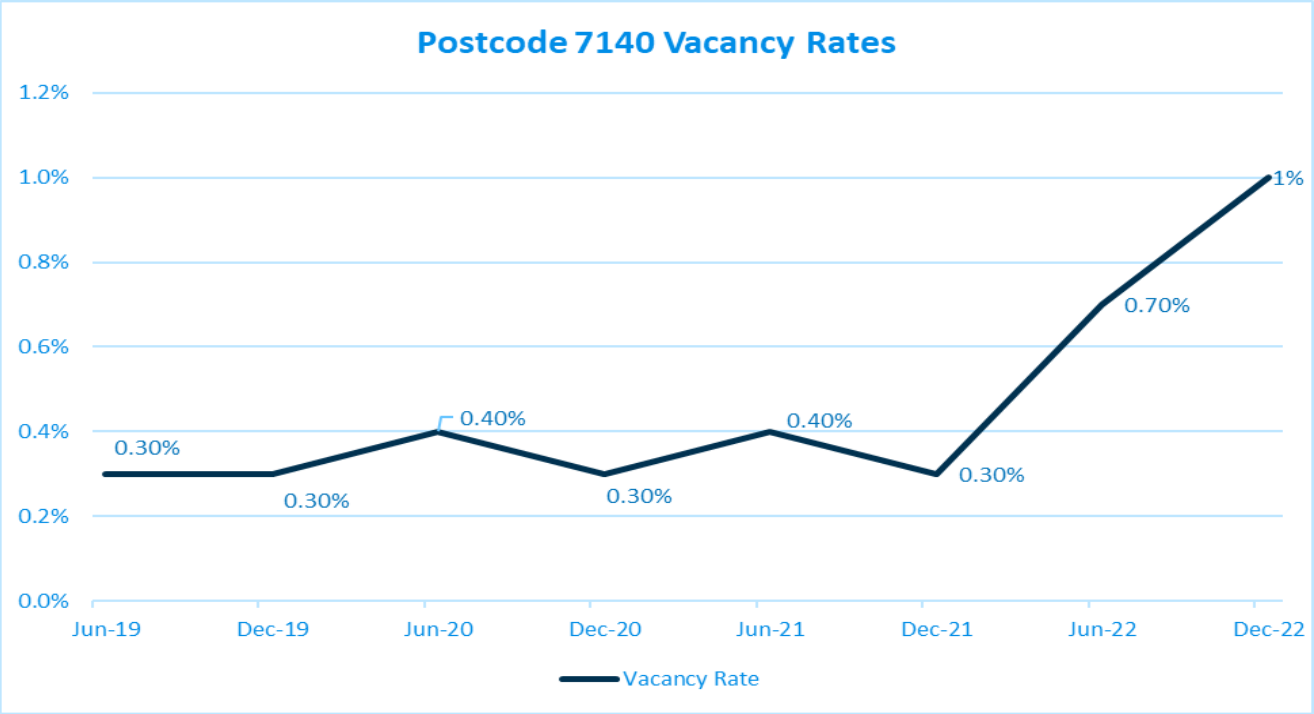

Figure 7-6: Vacancy rates from June 2019 – December 2022 (quarterly) for postcode 7140
Source: (SQM Research, 2024).

7.5.7 Short-term accommodation

The term 'short-term accommodation' refers to accommodation options that are typically provided to visitors or tenants for a short period of time. Examples include motels, hotels, serviced apartments, bed and breakfast, self-contained homes, caravan and camping parks. The length of tenancy in these forms of accommodation can often extend to lengthy stays, depending on accommodation availability, price and personal circumstances.

Short-term accommodation providers in the study area service a number of different industry sectors including tourism, renewable energy and agricultural industry sectors.

The *Short Stay Accommodation Act 2019* (SSA Act) facilitates data collection for applicable short stay accommodation premises in Tasmania. The SSA Act applies to short stay accommodation that is let out to guests using a dedicated booking platform such as Airbnb, within any of the following residential zones (as per the Tasmanian Planning Scheme): General Residential Zone, Inner Residential Zone, Low Density Residential Zone, Rural Living Zone, Environmental Living Zone, Village Zone, or Activity Area 1.0 Inner City Residential (Wapping) (Department of Justice, 2021). It does not apply to hotels, motels or caravan parks. At the time of the latest reporting period under the SSA ACT, in September 2022, there were a total of 47 premises used for short stay accommodation in the Central Highlands LGA, and 53 in the Derwent Valley LGA (Department of Justice, 2021).

As shown in Figure 7-7, the number of short stay dwellings increased at a greater rate in the Central Highlands LGA than in the Derwent Valley LGA between 2020 and 2022 (i.e. by four-fold). A steady increase in short stay accommodation in the Central Highlands may reflect a broader transition of the area into a tourist location, as the residential population deceases. At the time of the preparation of this report, short-term accommodation rentals on tourism websites such as Stayz and AirBnB indicated that approximately 11-50 homes and rooms were available across the regional study area for accommodation at any one time (Stayz, 2024; AirBnB, 2024). These accommodation options were priced between $145 to $500 per night. Detailed short-term accommodation information was not available at the council level for the regional study areas.

Figure 7-7: Number of properties used for short-stay accommodation, 2020 – 2022
Source: (Consumer, Building and Occupational Services, 2023).

In addition to the above short stay premises, the local study area is serviced by caravan parks at Tarraleah Village, Bronte Park and Wayatinah. There is also several free Hydro Tasmania camping areas associated with lake based recreational areas. Prior to the commencement of the Tarraleah Upgrades works, Lake William was a popular camping area for locals and visitors to the area. The temporary and intermittent closure of Butlers Gorge Road currently restricts public access to Lake King William. Depending upon the location of the intermittent road closure, at times Mossy Marsh has been open for fishing since the upgrade works to the spillway at that waterway in November 2023.

The Tarraleah Estate provides a range of accommodation options, food, and recreation services. The Tarraleah Estate includes art deco cottages, cabins and a caravan park (refer to Section 7.1.3).

Short-term accommodation options are also available at Bronte Village and at Highland Cabins and Cottages Bronte Park.

Further short stay accommodation options within the regional study area are located primarily in the communities of Hamilton and New Norfolk. Accommodation in Hamilton consists mainly of cottage-style premises, whilst New Norfolk offers a mix of motels/inns, apartments, cottages, lodges, and a caravan park. Truffle Lodge in the suburb of Gretna also offers a luxury glamping accommodation experience within the regional study area.

8 Impacts and opportunities assessment

This section presents the outcomes of the social impact assessment. The assessment considered the potential effects of the Project (positive and negative) on individuals, households, social groups and broader community.

8.1 Introduction

Social impacts have been assessed using the methodology described in Section 4.1.4 and impact significance (unmitigated and mitigated) determined by applying the significance matrix in Appendix B. Recommended management responses are presented for all described impacts (positive and negative). Throughout this section, 'impacts' are considered as having, or potential of having, positive and negative effects. Positive impacts are also referred to as 'opportunities.'

Potential social impacts are presented for both the construction and operation phases of the Project, however the primary focus of the assessment is the construction phase. This phase was assessed as having the greatest potential to generate social impacts. Potential social impacts have been assessed based on the change to, or the perceived change to, the social and biophysical environment. The SIA has considered potential impacts and opportunities against a range of social impact categories including community, economy and livelihood, health and wellbeing, accessibility, culture and way of life.

8.2 Construction phase impacts and opportunities

This section describes the potential social impacts (positive and negative) associated with the Project's construction phase. Impacts have been grouped into the following themes:

- Community
- Health and wellbeing
- Housing and accommodation
- Economy and livelihood.

8.2.1 Community

This section describes the potential effects of the Project construction phase activities on community **cohesion** (the strength of connections within a community), **identity**, **sense of place** and the **shared values and aspirations** held by community members. Key matters considered include the:

- Extent to which the temporary construction workforce may affect community cohesion and shared values in nearby communities
- Potential for construction activities and resulting impacts on natural and built environment (including historic heritage values) to lead to changes in perceptions of 'sense of place'.
- Potential for construction activities to adversely affect Tasmanian Aboriginal people due to impacts on tangible and intangible values.

A key factor influencing the likelihood of Project effects on community identity is the potential for permanent or temporary project-induced population growth in nearby communities.

8.2.1.1 Community cohesion

The presence of a sizeable temporary workforce may impact the character and liveability of communities in the local and regional area such as Bronte Park, Ouse or Hamilton. Impacts may include perceived changes in safety and security within townships, increased occurrence of antisocial behaviour in public spaces, overcrowded living conditions (such as an influx of parked vehicles reducing parking availability for local residents going about their day-to-day lives) and potential conflict within community regarding the acceptability of any changes. Conversely any Project related permanent population increase in the local and regional areas may have positive effects on community resilience and diversity, contributing to social and economic vibrancy.

The magnitude of any impact will depend on several factors including the size of the existing resident population in the affected community(ies) and the strength of existing community cohesion, the size of the incoming Project workforce and the associated workforce accommodation arrangements, potential for interactions with the public and how these interactions are managed. Smaller communities such as Bronte Park, Ouse and Hamilton may have less capacity to absorb impacts and changes due to the pre-existing small residential population.

1. Potential Project induced population growth

Population change can be a key driver of both positive and negative social impacts. The peak Project workforce is estimated at 330 personnel of which up to 90% (300 personnel) could be on site at any one time. Project-induced population growth in the local and regional area is predicted based on the peak workforce and using the following two workforce sourcing and accommodation scenarios:

- Scenario 1
  - Approximately 70% of the workforce (230 personnel) would be sourced from outside Tasmania (herein referred to as the non-local workforce). This workforce would be accommodated at the WAF for their shift roster, then return home to their usual place of residence. A very small number of workers (and their families) may relocate permanently to Tasmania for the duration of construction.
  - Approximately 30% of the workforce (100 personnel) would be sourced locally (i.e. from within Tasmania and likely the Southern Tasmanian Region). Most workers would also be accommodated at the WAF for shift rosters, then return home to their usual place of residence for their extended time off. A very small number of workers may commute daily from their usual place of residence to the Project site.
- Scenario 2
  - Workforce sourcing as described in Scenario 1 except that 50% (115 personnel) of the non-local workforce relocates to Tasmania long term.

Under Scenario 1 at peak labour-demand, the Project would temporarily increase the population of the local and regional study area by up to 300 people. The population of the local study area is estimated at 452 of which 326 reside in Ouse. The temporary addition of up to 300 people represents a sizeable (more than 70%) increase in the local study area population.

At peak labour-demand the Project would temporarily increase the Central Highlands LGA population by approximately 13%. The potential scale of population increase in the local and Central Highlands LGA may have both positive and negative implications for community dynamics, housing and service provision. The likelihood of impacts occurring are assessed in the following sections.

Under Scenario 2 the Project would result in a similar temporary increase in the local and regional study area population. However, there would also be Project induced population change occurring in other localities due to an influx of non-local workers seeking to reside permanently in Tasmania. It is assumed that any workers relocating to Tasmania would bring their families and would likely seek to reside in Greater Hobart, perhaps also into New Norfolk, to take advantage of the available services and employment opportunities for family members, as well as proximity to the Project area.

Assuming all workers bring family members, and household size is the same as household size in the existing Greater Hobart population (i.e. 2.4 persons per household) then the incoming population can be estimated at approximately 276 persons.

In 2021 the population of Greater Hobart was 247,086 people. The Project induced population represents a 0.1% increase in the total population of Greater Hobart. A population increase of 2% or higher is generally considered to be significant and substantial enough to have notable impacts on social infrastructure and resources if not effectively managed. For comparison, In Tasmania population growth in recent years has been relatively low (less than 1%).

2. Project effects on community

Balancing the Project benefits with the need to preserve social cohesion, character and identity is important for local communities such as Bronte Park, Ouse, Hamilton. The likelihood of these communities experiencing social impacts due to an influx of workforce during the construction phase is significantly reduced through the provision of a WAF at Tarraleah.

Interactions between the workforce residing at the WAF and the broader public will be limited primarily to the movement of un-rostered personnel between their port of arrival or place of residence and Tarraleah Village or Wayatinah. The potential for interactions is further limited by a preference for workers to be bussed to site rather than use private vehicles.

Construction workers can be expected to travel through local towns and consume some goods and services on an ad hoc basis. Given the proposed workforce transport arrangements (refer Section 3.4.5), local workers driving to site in private vehicles are more likely to stop and spend in nearby communities.

There may be periods during the construction phase when the size of the construction workforce exceeds available Project accommodation options (discussed in Section 8.2.3.1). This may require a small proportion of the workforce to reside temporarily in short-term accommodation options located within or proximate to nearby communities such as Bronte Park, Ouse and Hamilton. In these circumstances there is a high likelihood that these workers will interact with the public, particularly if they draw on commercial and retail services in the host townships.

The majority of construction workers will be employed on shift rosters. It is expected that most workers will return to their usual place of residence for un-rostered time. It is possible that a small proportion of the interstate / international workforce may choose to remain in the regional area during their un-rostered time to take advantage of local and regional recreational opportunities (e.g. fishing) and available short-term accommodation opportunities. This is estimated at less than 5% for the purposes of the social impact assessment. Owners of retail and accommodation venues in the local area (e.g. lakeside shack owners) may see the potential for rental incomes as a Project benefit.

Ultimately the potential for flow-on impacts to nearby communities would depend on the number of workers taking up the opportunity and the respective season (many of the nearby recreational opportunities, such as trout fishing, are seasonal activities).

As noted in Section 8.2.1 under Scenario 2, any Project induced population increase in Greater Hobart is minor in the context of the larger population and unlikely to have any noticeable effect on social capital and community cohesion in the larger centres.

Applying the significance assessment methodology described in Section 4.1.4.3, the likelihood of Project-induced population change having an adverse effect on community cohesion and character in nearby communities is **possible**, the magnitude of the impact is **minor**, and the unmitigated significance rating is **medium**.

Management response

The following specific social management responses are recommended to minimise Project effects on social capital and community cohesion in neighbouring communities during the construction phase:

Ref	Description of Specific Social Management Response
SE01	**Develop and implement a Social Impact Management Plan (Project SIMP) for the pre-construction and construction phase of the Project.** The Project SIMP will be developed in consultation with relevant government and local government agencies, key stakeholders, and directly affected parties to minimise construction phase social impacts. The Project SIMP should address key components of the construction program. The SIMP should be made readily available to the public in a format easily interpreted, and must: • Include an updated social baseline assessment focussing on the social indicators of relevance to the identification and management of construction phase impact • Include a summary of the anticipated social impacts (positive and negative), potential residual impacts and consideration for cumulative impacts. • Identify the desired management outcomes for the key performance areas of: – Workforce management (including housing and accommodation) – Community health and wellbeing – Tasmanian industry and business participation – Social Procurement – Workforce employment and training – First Nations participation and engagement – Visitor economy – Local benefit sharing – Community and stakeholder engagement • Incorporate key strategies for achieving the desired management outcomes, responsibilities for implementation, timing and key partners in strategy delivery. • Document the monitoring, evaluation and reporting process for ensuring the effectiveness of mitigation measures and adopting an adaptive management approach. • Describe the approach to complaints management during construction. • Define the roles and responsibilities for social performance management during construction. The contractor will be required to develop a construction phase SIMP that achieves the objectives of the Project SIMP.
SE02	**Develop and implement a Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan (Project CSEP) for pre-construction and construction.** The CSEP will outline an effective approach to communication and engagement underpinned by a proactive issues-management approach, open and transparent two-way communication processes and responsiveness to the communication needs and expectations of key stakeholders and the broader community. This would include ensuring community and key stakeholders are kept informed of: • Project construction timelines • Changes in construction workforce numbers

Ref	Description of Specific Social Management Response
	• Timing of key construction activities and potential affects • Any required changes in existing conditions to accommodate construction activities e.g. introduction of traffic management, changes in public access arrangements to Tarraleah Village. • Workforce accommodation arrangements. The Project CSEP would document the approach to grievance management. The contractor will be required to prepare a CSEP the pre-construction and construction phase in accordance with the requirements of the Project CESP.
SE03	**Develop and implement a Project workforce code of conduct (CoC)** that establishes expectations in relation to workforce behaviour both on-site and off-site (i.e. in community) and demonstrates how potential impacts on the rural and heritage character of local communities (e.g. Ouse and Hamilton) will be minimised.
SE04	**Prior to the commencement of construction, develop and implement a workforce accommodation plan (WAP) based on the final construction workforce profile**. The WAP should: • Demonstrate how the peak project workforce will be accommodated and serviced and how flow-on impacts to host communities will be minimised. • Consider pedestrian and vehicle access and connectivity within the Tarraleah Village during construction to always ensure pedestrian safety. • Detail controls to be implemented to minimise workforce related traffic on the public road network. • Include a plan for monitoring workforce accommodation arrangements to enable proactive response to off-site impacts. • Achieve the relevant objectives of the Project SIMP.
SE05	As a component of the Project SIMP develop and implement actions that **encourage workforce contribution to community** and seek to build relationships between the workforce and the community.
SE06	**Undertake regular community perception surveys** during construction to inform Project SIMP reviews, including the evaluation of impacts and outcomes.

Residual impact significance

With the implementation of the above management responses, the likelihood of Project induced population change having an adverse effect on community cohesion and character in nearby communities is **unlikely**, the magnitude of the impact is **minor**, and the residual significance rating is **low**.

A summary of the assessment is provided in Table 8-1.

Table 8-1 Assessment Summary: Effects of temporary workforce on community cohesion in nearby communities

Theme	Impact	Affected parties	Extent	Unmitigated Significance	Mitigated Significance
Community	An influx of temporary workers to the regional area may adversely affect community cohesion, character and amenity in nearby communities e.g. Bronte Park, Ouse, Hamilton. **Negative impact**	Existing residents of nearby communities	Local study area	Medium	Low

8.2.1.2 Sense of place

Sense of place refers to the attachment people develop or experience in particular locations and with unique settings. The concept of sense of place is multidimensional and can be shaped by people's experiences, memories, and cultural backgrounds. Sense of place is dynamic; it can change over time as people and their way of life change and as environments evolve. Perceptions of sense of place can differ for individuals, families, social groupings and broader communities. A 'space' may transition to become a 'place' when values begin to be ascribed to it.

Community and stakeholder engagement for the Project highlighted the deep connections many Tasmanians have with the Tarraleah Village and its hydro power heritage. The findings of consultation indicate that the Tarraleah Village, the Tarraleah Hydro Power Scheme and its associated landscape features (e.g. the associated lakes) and the broader setting of the TWWHA landscape collectively contribute to 'sense of place' for many people including local residents, visitors to the regional area and people with connections to the Tasmanian hydro power industry.

Consultation suggests that people's sense of place is influenced by factors such as the scenic and spiritual qualities of the surrounding landscape and its cultural value (the story the landscape tells of the history of the location), the natural values of the landscape, the cultural heritage elements of the Tarraleah Hydro Power Scheme and the presence of familial connection to the location.

The findings of the community survey (Section 6.2.3.2) indicate respondents were most concerned about potential Project impacts to the public use and enjoyment of the natural environment, the values of the TWWHA, the heritage values of the existing Tarraleah Hydro Power Scheme and the peace and tranquillity of the local area.

This section considers potential Project effects on sense of place for existing residents, visitors to the region and people with historic connection to the Project area. The section specifically considers:

- Historic cultural heritage values
- Access to places of value
- Landscape values
- Wilderness values
- Amenity

1. Historic cultural heritage values

A desktop historic heritage assessment was completed for the Project and did not identify any statutory historic values located in the Project area. However, some nearby non-listed Hydro Tasmania assets e.g. the existing Tarraleah Power Station, penstock, surge tanks, concrete open canals have significance in the overall development of the State's power supply. The cultural significance of the Tarraleah Power Station is documented in the *Tarraleah Power Station Conservation Management Plan* (Austral Archaeology Pty Ltd 2007). The Tarraleah Power Station, which opened in 1938, was the first stage of the Upper Derwent Valley Power Scheme. It was an important late-Depression era job creation project and played a key part in the initial post-Depression industrial development. The first permanent building erected in the village [Tarraleah Village] was the chalet in 1937 (Austral Archaeology Pty Ltd, 2007).

The contribution of the Tarraleah hydro power heritage to sense of place is highlighted through Project consultation: many participants spoke fondly of "Tarraleah" sharing childhood stories of growing up at the village, or experiences working on aspects of the Derwent scheme. These participants attributed strong heritage value to the Tarraleah Power Station, surge towers, penstocks and open canals, and a strong historic connection to Tarraleah Village. The importance and value of Tarraleah Village to the regional community was evident in the public response to the 2023 purchase of the Tarraleah Village by Hydro Tasmania, with many people expressing with affection a sense of relief that 'it's back with Hydro'. Some consultation participants also expressed strong connections with the site of the old Butlers Gorge settlement. During consultation many participants asked about the future of the Tarraleah Power Station and associated infrastructure should the Project proceed. Participants also asked about the future of Tarraleah Village, use of and public access during construction.

Hydro Tasmania will undertake Heritage Impact Assessments of its assets that may be affected by the Project. Assets made redundant by successful operationalisation of the Project will be decommissioned and made safe by Hydro Tasmania. This will include the existing Tarraleah Power Station and water conveyances (No. 1 Canal, Tarraleah No. 1 Pond, part of No. 2 Canal, hillside penstocks and hilltop valves). As much of the existing scheme has heritage value, decommissioning will be planned in consultation with Heritage Tasmania. Hydro Tasmania's existing historic heritage Conservation Management Plan will be updated.

The construction administration site and the WAF will be located adjacent to the existing Tarraleah Village. During the construction phase, the primary purpose of the Tarraleah Village locality will be to support construction activities and the construction workforce. This is significantly different from its current primary role as a tourism and accommodation facility.

2. Access to places of value

Many visitors to the region, but especially locals, particularly those with connections to the Tarraleah and Butlers Gorge localities, value the opportunity to visit Tarraleah Village, explore the hydro power history and/or re-live childhood memories and emotions, as well as to fish in the lakes. Some participants in consultation expressed concern and in some cases disappointment that public access to Tarraleah Village may be restricted during the Project construction phase. A few participants were also disappointed to learn that access to the old Butlers Gorge settlement may be restricted during construction.

As discussed in Section 3.4.7:

- Access to Lake King William at Clark Dam and the former Butlers Gorge settlement will be restricted due to the closure (to the public) of Butlers Gorge Road for the duration of the construction phase.
- Public access will be provided to the Penstock Look-out and a refurbished café and proposed Project interpretation centre in the existing Edge Café building throughout construction, noting there may be some intermittent closures of Oldina Drive (the access to Tarraleah Village) to accommodate construction activities.
- Accommodation options at the main Tarraleah Lodge may be available to the public during the construction phase, as it is unlikely to be required for workforce accommodation needs.
- Tarraleah Golf Club will continue to operate during construction with ongoing access provided for members and the public.

A monument to the migrant workforce engaged in the construction of Tungatinah Power Station (and other Hydro Tasmania assets) is located at the 'Hydro Park' rest area adjacent to the Lyell Highway in the Nive Valley. This monument is within the disturbance footprint of a new switchyard and will be disturbed during the construction process. Hydro Tasmania is currently identifying interested and affected stakeholders to inform a negotiated process to remove and temporarily/permanently relocate the monument.

3. Landscape values

The potential effects of the Project on the landscape character and visual quality of the Project area and broader Project setting have been assessed through a *Visual Impact Assessment* (VIA) (Inspiring Place, 2024). The VIA assessed the scenic quality and scenic interest of the Project setting, as well as the visual sensitivity of the landscape. Hydropower development is a characteristic element within both the local and regional area and includes features consistent with the Project such as power stations, surge towers, penstocks, canals, transmission lines, intakes, tunnels and ponds.

The landscape within and surrounding the Project area includes areas of buttongrass that are broken up by tall woodlands and areas of tall forest with dense understorey, particularly along the Lyell Highway. There are many streams in the local and regional area that add to the landscape character.

The VIA concluded that the Project setting generally had moderate scenic quality with the following elements proximate to the Project area identified as having high scenic quality:

- The King William Range (as a backdrop to Lake King William)
- The Nive River Gorge near the existing Tarraleah and Tungatinah Power Stations
- The River Derwent and its strongly incised valley, running parallel with Butlers Gorge Road.
- Lake King William.

The existing Tarraleah power station holds high scenic interest for its architectural merit as a building in the art deco style and has been considered "one of the most architecturally impressive and well designed in the hydro system … as part of … the most impressive and significant group of hydro assets in Tasmania" (Austral Archaeology 2007 p 47). The Tarraleah hydroelectric development is also recognised for its engineering merit having received a Historic Engineering Marker from Engineers Australia as part of its Engineering Heritage Recognition Program. The Conservation Management Plan (Austral Archaeology 2007) for the power station noted the existing penstocks and surge towers as having high heritage significance for their influence on the setting.

With respect to scenic interest, the VIA concluded that the Project "will generally have low scenic interest in contrast to the existing [scheme]…… the proposed pipelines, power lines and spoil piles lack the built form or the intrinsic heritage interest that the existing infrastructure of the area holds." (Inspiring Place, 2025 p 47).

In describing the scenic interest of the Project setting, the VIA notes that the high scenic interest of the existing developments reinforce the need to minimise the visual impacts of the redevelopment as far as possible to avoid diminishing the scenic interest ascribed to the existing facilities.

With respect to the potential effects of Project construction on landscape character and visual quality, the findings of the VIA indicate that it is during the construction phase that the visual impact is greater than the effect of the Project in operation. This is because native vegetation clearance to facilitate construction can change the visual character of an area and introduce change to landscapes local people have become familiar with. It also opens views to works areas and other landscape components that may previously have been screened from view by the vegetation. Furthermore, the earth and rock exposed during the construction phase is generally of a lighter colour than the pre-existing state, which makes it more visible and attracts attention of the viewer, increasing the visual impact of this change in the landscape.

In response to preliminary visual assessments early in the project design phase, Hydro Tasmania has already made several refinements to the siting and design of project elements. This early assessment and design work, inherently part of the reference design and siting process, included:

- Using GIS data to understand the seen views
- Integrating the Project with existing hydroelectric infrastructure of the Tarraleah Hydropower Scheme
- Consolidating the Project, in part, in a similar location with other hydro infrastructure and facilities thereby utilising existing access roads and minimising vegetation clearing in previously undisturbed locations further afield
- Siting much of the water conveyance infrastructure underground avoiding the visual impacts associated with the existing canals
- General avoidance of infrastructure elements being sited on the skyline where practicable.

The preliminary design phase investigated options for locating infrastructure away from the ridgelines and reducing infrastructure height to limit visibility against the skyline. The design reflects that process, taking into consideration the technical and operational constraints of the scheme. For example, the height of the surge tower above ground is a function of its relative elevation to Lake King William. This is a fixed design constraint. The siting of the surge tower relative to the distance from the power station is also constrained by hydraulic, geotechnical and other engineering parameters.

4. Wilderness Values

The VIA also included an assessment of potential Project impacts to the aesthetic and wilderness values of the TWWHA.

> "Each person's perception of wildness varies. For those seeking a wild experience, wildness is only experienced in the raw without mitigating influences. The presence of hydroelectric infrastructure in the landscape could separate viewers from the sensual qualities of the landscape that differentiates wilderness from the everyday experience of their lived-in setting. For those pursuing an unbounded experience of the landscape, the distant views to the redevelopment site from visited areas within the TWWHA have been considered for their possible impact on the experience of wilderness sought by visitors to the reserve." (Inspiring Place, 2025 p 107)

Inspiring Place (2025) concluded that overall, the magnitude of the impact of the Project on the experience of wilderness by those visiting the TWWHA was low for the following reasons:

- "The visible footprint of the redevelopment from areas within the TWWHA is generally limited.
- Visible features are small in scale compared to the expanse of the setting and will be seen in conjunction with existing disturbances with which they do not contrast strongly enough to be visually incompatible;
- The numbers of visitors to areas within the TWWHA who might have views of portions of the redevelopment are thought to be low[13]; and the limitations on visibility experienced by viewers looking from the middle ground to background distances from which viewing might occur." (Inspiring Place, 2025 p 116)

5. Amenity Values

Construction activities have the potential to temporarily diminish the sense of tranquillity of the Project area for visitors. A number of nature-based recreational areas are located proximate to the Project area. During engagement, some participants noted the high amenity and aesthetic quality of existing nature based recreational areas, particularly the TWWHA. The Project area is located proximate to the TWWHA, which is also a listed matter of national environmental significant (MNES) under the EPBC Act. At its closest point at the proposed western portal, the disturbance footprint is approximately 50 m from the TWWHA boundary on the opposite side of Canal No. 1.

[13] Some viewing may be had from the higher elevations of Wylds Craig 20km to the south, a known bushwalking destination within the TWWHA but is not strongly promoted as a destination. No formal counts are made on this track. The redevelopment is not visible from more promoted/popular destinations such as Frenchmans Cap, Lake St Clair, etc.

Project construction activities may affect the amenity and aesthetic values of the of the TWWHA, primarily due to construction noise. Potential construction noise impacts were assessed through a Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment (NVIA) (Noise Vibration Consulting, 2024). Noise and vibration modelling was carried out to determine likely noise emissions across the Project area and at the nearest sensitive receivers, where in private ownership. The findings of the NVIA indicate that noise levels are inaudible at the nearest sensitive receptors in private ownership. Further, the Project will not have any direct impact on the TWWHA, as no construction activities are proposed within the TWWHA and potential construction pollution sources from nearby worksites will be effectively managed through the implementation of standard environmental management practices.

Considering the above findings, the likelihood of the Project affecting existing **sense of place** for residents, visitors and individuals with historic connection to the location is **possible**, the magnitude of the impact is **minor** and the unmitigated significance rating is **medium**.

Management responses

Recommended management responses are included in the following EIS technical studies:

- Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment (Noise Vibration Consulting, 2024)
- Visual Impact Assessment (Inspiring Place, 2025).

With respect to visual impacts, Hydro Tasmania will continue to investigate opportunities to further mitigate visual impacts. Principal opportunities include to:

- Refine the design specifications of key Project elements to ensure they either blend into the surrounding landscape, or make a feature of these elements as part of a hydropower scheme interpretation asset.
- Reduce the visibility of the Project elements (in construction and operational phase) by maintaining and managing vegetative screening as far as practicable.
- Minimise the short-term visual impacts of sediment, dust and other contaminants during construction activities around the Project footprint generally.

The following (previously described) management responses are recommended to minimise potential Project effects on sense of place – **SE01, SE02, SE03, SE04, SE06.**

The following additional specific social management responses are also recommended:

Ref	Description of Specific Social Management Response
SE07	**Establish a publicly accessible project information centre** at Tarraleah Village for the duration of construction. Ensure visitors can continue to engage with the village and construction progress, including latest events and opportunities to engage. Incorporate heritage interpretation into the project information centre to enable remote connection for the public to Tarraleah Village and components of the Tarraleah Hydro Power Scheme. As a component of interpretation, identify opportunities to provide public access to the Tarraleah locality during construction.
SE08	Where possible during construction **provide public access to existing regional visitor experiences located in proximity to the Tarraleah Village.** This includes the penstock lookout at Tarraleah Village, the Tarraleah Falls walking track and elements of the Tarraleah Village valued by community.
SE09	Prior to the commencement of construction, persons with connection to the **Polish monument** in the Nive Valley will be identified and engaged through a structured process to explore solutions for monument relocation.

Residual impact significance

With the implementation of recommendations from the applicable technical studies and the social specific recommendations above, the likelihood of the Project affecting sense of place for existing residents, visitors and individuals with historic connection to the location is **unlikely**, the magnitude of the impact is **minor** and the unmitigated significance rating is **low**.

A summary of the assessment is provided in Table 8-2.

Table 8-2 Assessment Summary: Potential effects on sense of place

Theme	Impact	Affected parties	Extent	Unmitigated Significance	Mitigated Significance
Community - Sense of place	Changes in heritage and landscape values, amenity and accessibility adversely affect sense of place **Negative impact**	Existing residents, visitors to the region and people with historic connection to the Project area.	Regional and State	Medium	Low

8.2.1.3 Tasmanian Aboriginal Community

For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people Country, culture and spirituality play important roles in health and wellbeing and identity (Poroch et al, 2009). The relationship between Aboriginal people, culturally curated resources and the natural world is not simply transactional but has a deep spiritual dimension. Country is a source of identity, spirituality and connection or belonging. Country must be managed not only to maintain ecological health and productivity but to appease the spirits of land, water and sky. Rivers play a key role in sustaining country but with its own spirit and personality demanding acknowledgement and respect. Failing to do so has consequences, both spiritual and real.

This section of the SIA considers the potential impacts to the Tasmanian Aboriginal community from Project-induced changes in the landscape, and potential disturbance of tangible and intangible Aboriginal cultural values. The consideration of impacts is informed through the Tarraleah Redevelopment Aboriginal Heritage Assessment Report (AHA Report) (Hydro Tasmania, 2025). The AHA Report considered the potential effects of the Project on tangible and intangible cultural values including Aboriginal heritage sites and cultural landscapes.

1. Artefacts and sites of cultural significance

A preliminary desktop heritage assessment for the Project area was prepared in March 2019 as part of the pre-feasibility design constraints identified process. The scope of this study included a review of available literature and an assessment of the historical occupation and use of the land by Tasmanian Aboriginal people.

Aboriginal heritage surveys have been conducted of geotechnical investigation sites and most of the disturbance footprint, including the two transmission line options. Surveys were completed during 2024 and 2025. Surveys identified several stone artefact sites including scatters and single artefacts within and proximate to the Project disturbance footprint including the two transmission line options. Information on the identified sites is available in the AHA Report. All Aboriginal relics in Tasmania are protected under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1975*. According to the AHA Report, avoidance of impacts is technically achievable with appropriate design and construction mitigation measures. A series of management recommendations to this end are included in the AHA Report.

2. Cultural landscapes values

UNESCO defines cultural landscapes as the expression of culturally patterned interactions between people and the natural environment over generations. They encompass tangible and intangible aspects of culture and may be environmentally sustainable. Recognising and protecting cultural landscapes helps maintain cultural practices and spirituality and biological diversity.

Cultural landscapes may be designed or evolve organically by association with and in response to the natural environment, which itself is not static and evolves with changing climate. In Lutruwita/Tasmania, changes in climate over the Holocene have been responded to culturally by Aboriginal people who have in turn altered the changing natural systems to maximise spaces and resources for living. The result is a dynamic landscape shaped by human ideas and practices. These ideas and practices were committed to memory and song over countless generations, and it was not until the appearance of Europeans in the landscape in the last few centuries that a general sense of them was documented for wider posterity. While not recorded, it is likely that Timtumili minanya/River Derwent and (*trarrerkinnbineer*) Nive River held supernatural meaning for the Big River people, however what obligations stemmed from that and what significance is presently attached can only be attributed by Aboriginal people (Hydro Tasmania, 2025).

Hydro Tasmania has a limited understanding of the intangible cultural landscape values and other intangible Aboriginal cultural values associated with the Project area. A process is in place to further understand cultural values of the Project area, and to assess potential impacts. This includes a process of community engagement. Specific engagement with Tasmanian Aboriginal people occurred at the Project area in June 2025. This community-controlled engagement was facilitated by a Tasmanian Aboriginal consultant with approximately fifteen members of the Tasmanian Aboriginal community. It is anticipated that this engagement will assist to build understanding of community perceptions, interests and concerns in relation to the Project and assist the Project in how to best acknowledge Aboriginal cultural values and manage potential impacts. This engagement is the first step in a program of engagement to be progressed by Hydro Tasmania.

Further, Hydro Tasmania has engaged a Tasmanian Aboriginal consultancy to develop a framework for assessing cultural values across Hydro Tasmania managed land, through a community-controlled engagement process. The framework will be informed through a process of reconnecting Tasmanian Aboriginal people with Hydro Tasmania managed land. The outcomes of the engagement process will be reported separately.

The AHA Report (Hydro Tasmania 2025:69) makes the following conclusions in relation to key potential Project impacts:

- The greater impacts will be associated with above ground and visible works and infrastructure.
- The pipeline segment between the Downstream Portal and Western Portal intersecting the buttongrass plains and tree belts will be a significant visual change and affect an area with a wide diversity of culturally plant resources that were likely to have been used by Aboriginal people travelling through this zone.
- It is anticipated that both the new infrastructure and changes to landforms and vegetation patterns may constitute cultural landscape impacts.
- Other civil works areas, including the portals, occur in timbered country with a lower level of traditional utilisation, are visually more contained, and are subject to other landscape impacts, including plantation forestry.
- The proposed surge tower would interrupt the forested skyline and is likely to be considered by Aboriginal people, a cultural landscape impact.

For Tasmanian Aboriginal people, community is Country and Country is community. The likelihood that Project-induced changes in the landscape, and potential disturbance of tangible and intangible Aboriginal cultural values, will adversely affect Tasmanian Aboriginal people is **likely**, the magnitude of the impact is **minor** and the unmitigated significance rating is **medium**.

Management responses

Specific cultural heritage management measures are presented in the AHA Report.

The following (previously described) specific social management responses are proposed to enhance economic and employment outcomes for marginalised people: **SE01, SE02.**

The following specific social management responses are also recommended to reduce/offset the magnitude of potential impacts:

Ref	Description of Specific Social Management Response
SE17	Prior to and during construction **facilitate a program of access to Hydro Tasmania managed land in the Derwent hydropower scheme so that Tasmanian Aboriginal People can connect to Country** and share stories. This will inform the development of a broader cultural values mapping process to support Hydro Tasmania's future land management practices.
SE18	**Develop and implement a First Nations Participation Plan (FNPP)** as a component of the construction phase Project SIMP. The FNPP will establish desired outcomes and key actions to be implemented to support First Nations participation during the construction phase. The FNPP will reflect the core pillars of Hydro Tasmania's Commitment and Action Plan (CAP). Key themes to be addressed in the FNPP include: • Supporting connection to Country for Tasmanian Aboriginal people during construction • Recognising culture through project design and delivery • Delivery of cultural safety training for the workforce • Realising employment and economic development opportunities The contractor will be required to develop and implement a contractor FNPP in accordance with the requirements of the Project FNPP and the Project SIMP.

Residual impact significance

With the initiation of the community-controlled engagement program and the cultural values mapping process, together with the recommendations of the AHA Report, the likelihood of the Project adversely affecting the Tasmanian Aboriginal community is **possible**, the magnitude of the impact is **minor** and the residual significance rating remains **medium**.

A summary of the assessment is provided in Table 8-3.

Table 8-3 Assessment Summary: Tasmanian Aboriginal Community

Theme	Impact	Affected parties	Extent	Unmitigated Significance	Mitigated Significance
Community	Disturbance of Aboriginal artefacts or areas of cultural significance, disturbance of existing landscape and temporary or permanent changes in access to country adversely affect Aboriginal health and wellbeing. **Negative impact**	Tasmanian Aboriginal people and their families	State and potentially inter-state	Medium	Medium

8.2.2 Health and wellbeing

Community health and wellbeing is shaped by a complex interplay of personal, social, economic, political, cultural and environmental influences. A safe environment, adequate income, meaningful social roles, secure housing, higher levels of education and social support are all associated with better health outcomes. This section examines the impacts of the Project on aspects which influence health and wellbeing including:

- Access to social infrastructure such as health and emergency services
- Connectivity and accessibility

This section also considers the potential of the construction phase to adversely affect Aboriginal cultural heritage and cultural values with flow-on effects to Aboriginal identity, values, health and wellbeing.

Potential Project effects on resident access to secure and affordable housing, education, skill development and employment are considered separately in Section 8.2.3 and 8.2.4.

8.2.2.1 Access to health services

Projects with sizeable workforces have the potential to significantly increase demand for a range of health services (e.g. general practice, mental health, pharmaceutical services), potentially affecting local community access to these services. Health service provision across the local and regional study area is profiled in Section 7.4.2. Consistent with trends across Tasmania, the local study area has a limited supply of health services and these services experience high demands from the existing community. Whilst the regional study area has a broader range of health services, these services also experience sustained high demand from local residents and struggle to meet the health needs of the communities they service.

Most construction workers' health care needs would be taken care of by their local doctors or allied health service providers in their place of usual residence. Workforce demands for health services will likely, for the most part, involve minor injuries and illnesses. In the absence of Project-provided health services, these needs would need to be met by existing local GPs and health services in the nearby communities. Given the existing significant service and capacity constraints in the regional study area this approach would have a significant impact on existing resident access to the services.

In the absence of project-provided health services it is **almost certain** that the Project construction phase will increase demand for existing health services in nearby communities e.g. Ouse, Bothwell and New Norfolk, affecting access to these services for existing residents of the communities. The magnitude of the impact is **moderate** and the impact significance **high**.

Management response

The following (previously described) social management response is recommended to ensure that both everyday and emergency medical needs of the construction workforce can be met minimising demand on existing health services in the nearby communities – **SE01.**

The following additional specific social management responses are also recommended:

Ref	Description of Specific Social Management Response
SE10	**Provide appropriately resourced health services for Project workforce the duration of the construction phase.** These services will be made available to all Project construction workers. Provide the construction workforce with access to an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) service for the duration of construction.
SE11	**Develop and implement a Local Benefit Sharing Action Plan for the Project** consistent with the Major Projects LBS Strategy. The LBS Action Plan would be informed through a structured engagement process with key stakeholders and affected communities. There could be a range of core community needs that are identified and that the LBS may respond to. These may include addressing barriers to participation and realisation of project opportunities.

Residual impact significance

With the recommended management responses implemented, it is **unlikely** that the Project construction phase will increase demand for existing health services in nearby communities and affect access to these services for the local community. The magnitude of the impact is **minor** and the residual impact significance is **low**.

A summary of the assessment is provided in Table 8-4.

Table 8-4 Potential effects on access to health services for existing residents

Theme	Impact	Affected parties	Extent	Unmitigated Significance	Mitigated Significance
Health and wellbeing	Reduced access to health services for existing residents of nearby communities due to additional demands of the Project workforce. **Negative impact**	Existing residents, vulnerable people, particularly residents of Ouse. Health service providers	Local study area and broader CH LGA.	High	Low

8.2.2.2 Access to emergency services

Projects with sizeable workforces also have the potential to significantly increase demand for emergency service response such as ambulance and fires services. Communities proximate to the Project area have minimal emergency service capacity. Most nearby emergency services (fire and ambulance) are provided (entirely or partly) by volunteers.

The nearest ambulance station to the Project site is at Wayatinah, which is a volunteer-only service. Other nearby stations are located at Ouse and Ellendale (Department of Health, 2023a). The Ouse ambulance station is a single branch station with a paramedic rostered on day shift and on-call out-of-hours, with volunteer support. The Ellendale ambulance station is a volunteer-only station. A volunteer-only ambulance station is also located in Bothwell and Wayatinah. During engagement some Ouse residents highlighted the importance of the staffed Ambulance Station to the community given the absence of a GP service.

The closest career Tasmanian Fire Service (TFS) brigade to the Project area is the Hobart Fire Station, which is approximately 128km away. The closest volunteer fire stations to the Project site are Bradys Lake, Ouse and Hamilton; all small stations. During consultation the local volunteer fire brigade members highlighted ongoing difficulty recruiting volunteers and noted a significant difference between the number of 'registered volunteers' and the number of volunteers that can 'turn out' to respond to a fire/incident. This low number of volunteers is in part due to the aging population.

Bushfire poses a significant threat to people, communities, industries, and the environment in Tasmania. A fire risk assessment has been completed and is included in the Preliminary Bushfire Hazard Analysis (Fire Risk Consultants, 2025). SIA engagement with Tasmanian Fire Service staff and volunteers identified some concerns regarding potential bushfire risks during construction. TFS representatives noted that the local TFS stations are staffed by volunteers from the surrounding local communities.

Given the pattern of emergency service provision across the local and regional area, any increase in service demand generated by the Project has the potential to reduce emergency service accessibility for existing local residents, increase response times and reduce emergency service capacity.

Accessibility for emergency services could be impeded during construction when encountering heavy haulage and large load vehicles on roads, as well as any construction crossings or road upgrade works.

In the absence of Project-provided emergency response services, it is **likely** that Project construction will increase demands on existing emergency services, adversely affecting access to these services for the local community and affecting service response times. The magnitude of the impact is **major** and the impact significance **high**.

Management Responses

Implementation of the management recommendations contained in the Preliminary Bushfire Hazard Analysis (Fire Risk Consultants, 2025).

The following (previously described) specific social management responses are recommended to minimise potential Project effects on existing community access to emergency services and associated emergency response times – **SE02**.

Additional specific social management responses are recommended below. With the recommended responses implemented the Project would likely have a beneficial effect on local and regional emergency service capacity and in particular bushfire management.

Ref	Description of Specific Social Management Response
SE12	**Develop and implement an emergency response plan in consultation with local emergency service providers**. Provide emergency response personnel at the Project site for the duration of construction. The emergency response service may be called upon to assist in incidents that occur within or near the project area, including those involving public roadways intersecting the site. In the event of external bushfire threat to the Project, the emergency response personnel will assist Tasmanian Fire Service (TFS) in coordinating workforce evacuations and facilitate safe access for State response teams. Provide qualified and experienced medical personnel with responsibility for responding to and managing medical and trauma incidents, including stabilising and transporting patients to onsite facilities or designated handover points. These personnel will interface with the Tasmanian Ambulance Services and support further off-site medical evacuation co-ordination.

Residual impact significance

With the recommended management responses implemented, it is **unlikely** that the Project construction phase will increase demand for existing emergency services in nearby communities and adversely affect access to these services for the local community. The magnitude of the impact is **minor** and the residual impact significance is **low**.

A summary of the assessment is provided in Table 8-5.

Table 8-5 Potential effects on access to emergency services for existing residents

Theme	Impact	Affected parties	Extent	Unmitigated Significance	Mitigated Significance
Health and wellbeing	Reduced access to emergency services and increased response times for existing residents of nearby communities due to additional demands of the Project workforce. **Negative impact**	Existing residents, vulnerable people in the local and regional study area. Particularly the residents of Ouse.	Local and regional	High	Low

8.2.2.3 Access to recreational areas

Hydro Tasmania owns and manages recreational and visitor sites across the state. These sites are used for fishing, boating, paddling, camping etc. and several popular sites are located proximate to the Project area. These sites complement the existing nature based recreational experiences provided through other public and private recreational areas, for example national parks and conservation areas.

There are strong cultural ties to recreational (trout fishing) and camping in many of the Hydro Tasmania lakes. The lakes within and around the Project area (e.g. Lake King William, Brady's Lake, London Lakes, Wayatinah and Dee) are used seasonally for a variety of recreational activities by existing residents, shack owners and visitors to the area. During trout fishing season (from August to April each year) and over holiday periods the population of the shack communities increases significantly. During SIA engagement local people and visitors expressed concern that the Project may impact access and use of the lakes around the Project area. Lake King William was often cited as a popular fishing and camping location.

Sections 7.4.4 and 7.4.5 described the use of the Project area and adjoining areas for nature based recreational activities and tourism generally.

Based on current project planning:

- Access to Lake King William and Mossy Marsh from the Lyell Highway will be closed to public access for the duration of the construction phase (as described in Section 7.4.4).
- Project construction will not have a direct impact on the use and enjoyment of other lakes in the Tarraleah Scheme including Wayatinah, Bronte Lake, Bradys Lake, Lake Binney and Tungatinah Lagoon.

The Project will not directly impact the use and enjoyment of the TWWHA.

Since 2000, an annual average of 673 anglers have fished the waters of Lake King William, with many anglers fishing multiple days (on average 2.5 days), resulting in a rate of 1,667 fishing-days per season (IFS, 2025). Lake King William was ranked 17th in popularity of Tasmania's lake fisheries in the 2017-18 Inland Fisheries Anglers survey (the latest report available) (IFS, 2018). Since the commencement of the Tarraleah Upgrade Works in 2022, Butlers Gorge Road (the primary public access to Lake King William) has been closed to the public on workdays, between 7am and 5pm. This closure has resulted in a decline of approximately two-thirds in the annual visitation of fishers to the waters, based on Inland Fisheries data. Mossy Marsh is a smaller, less-frequently visited waterway. No data is available on annual visitation by recreational fishers (IFS, 2025).

Feedback during engagement also indicates intermittent use of the northern bank of the Nive River (opposite the existing Tarraleah Power Station) for local fishing activities. Public access to this area will be restricted during the construction phase.

The likelihood of the Project affecting community way of life and enjoyment due to changes in access to recreational areas is **possible**, the magnitude of the impact is **moderate** (primarily due to the duration of the impact) and the unmitigated significance rating is **medium**.

Management responses

The following (previously described) specific social management responses are recommended to minimise the potential Project effects on public access to recreational opportunities: **SE01, SE02**. Additional recommended management responses include:

Ref	Description of Specific Social Management Response
SE13	During construction **promote to the public other regional opportunities** for recreational fishing, camping and boating activities.

Residual impact significance

With the implementation of the specific social management responses, the likelihood of the Project affecting access to recreational areas with flow-on impacts to community way of life is **possible**, the magnitude of the impact is **minimal** and the unmitigated significance rating is **low**.

A summary of the assessment is provided in Table 8-6.

Table 8-6 Potential effects on way of life due to changes in accessibility to recreational areas of value

Theme	Impact	Affected parties	Extent	Unmitigated Significance	Mitigated Significance
Health and wellbeing	Changes in accessibility to valued public recreational areas affects resident and visitor way of life. **Negative impact**	Existing residents of the local area, including seasonal residents of shack communities, visitors to the local area.	Local study area	Medium	Low

8.2.2.4 Connectivity and accessibility

This section considers the potential effects of the construction phase on connectivity and accessibility within the regional study area and flow-on impacts to way of life for existing residents and road users. Connectivity and accessibility impacts relate to the capacity for local people, tourists, businesses and emergency services to travel through the Project area as they go about their day-to-day activities and access services, facilities and resources in a manner to which they are accustomed.

Participants in Project engagement expressed concern regarding the capacity of the existing road infrastructure (roads, bridges, intersections) to accommodate additional construction vehicle movements and over-dimensional loads, as well as the cumulative impacts of additional construction activity on the pre-existing traffic volumes and characteristics. The potential cumulative impact of increased traffic during the construction phase and the additional tourist traffic generated by the introduction of new higher-capacity Spirit of Tasmania vessels, was also raised through stakeholder and community engagement.

Engagement participants also expressed concern about the potential increase in traffic on the Lyell Highway in the vicinity of the Project and likely flow-on effects to way of life, and perceptions of road safety.

The Lyell Highway is the major arterial road between the West Coast and Hobart and the key connector with the southern end of the popular Cradle Mountain Lake St Claire National Park and other key tourism assets around Derwent Bridge. It provides integral connection to mining, aquaculture and hydro-electric industries, as well as tourism opportunities.

The Lyell Highway will remain open throughout the construction phase, although some traffic management measures at key times through the construction period may impact journey times (see below). Butlers Gorge Road will be closed to the public for the duration of the construction phase, restricting public access to the eastern shore of Lake King William, adjacent to Clark Dam. There will also be changes in public accessibility to areas of Tarraleah Village, noting that public access via Oldina Drive to the Penstock Lookout and the proposed Project information centre at Tarraleah Village will be retained.

During construction the Project will increase the number of heavy and light vehicle movements on the regional road network, which in turn may give rise to:

- Perceptions of reduced road safety. Any potential increase in vehicle movements, particularly heavy vehicle movements through the Nive Valley (a steep and winding section of the Lyell Highway) or on the broader regional road network may adversely affect public perceptions of road safety on the Lyell Highway.
- Potential disruption to daily life. Project construction activities will require some road closures and detours, potentially causing inconveniences and delays for road users.
- Increased stress. The uncertainty and changes in traffic patterns can increase stress levels among road users, especially people who may rely on consistent travel routes and journey times.

1. Project related vehicle movements and existing road safety

Both heavy vehicles and the Project workforce will travel between construction sites primarily using the following DSG and CHC owned roads: Lyell Highway, Fourteen Mile Road, Victoria Valley Road (northern transmission line option) and Wayatinah Road (southern transmission line option). Oldina Drive, access to the Hydro Tasmania-owned Tarraleah Village, will also be used for construction vehicles accessing laydown areas and workshops, and vehicles transporting workers between work sites and accommodation facilities.

During tunnelling and excavation works, most of the on-road truck vehicle movements will be between the Power Station Site and Paddy's Quarry. Other on-road vehicle movements (light-vehicle, workforce buses and some truck movement) will be between each key construction workfaces (e.g. tunnel portals, surge tower, pump station, etc.).

All excavated material from the power station site will be transported in trucks to Paddy's Quarry via the Lyell Highway, as there is insufficient space to accommodate stockpiles and laydown areas at the power station. There may also be ongoing movement of - material excavated from tunnelling being re-purposed across the Project area.

During construction there will also be over size over mass (OSOM) vehicle movements transporting materials and equipment to and from the Project area, including from deep water ports located at Hobart and Bell-Bay. Materials arriving at the ports will be transported directly from the port to the Project area with no intermediary laydown areas necessary.

An increase in the number of heavy and light vehicles on the road network may give rise to perceptions of reduced road safety for users.

A Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) (Pitt & Sherry, 2024) was completed for the Project. The TIA assed the various intersections during the AM and PM construction peak hours (7:00am to 8:00am and 3:30pm to 4:30pm). The TIA also considered the existing road safety on the Lyell Highway with reference to road width and capacity, as well as crash history. Crash data for the period 2014-2024 showed a count of 61 crashes with six occurring on the horizontal curve at the Tarraleah Power Station in the Nive Valley and four crashes opposite the existing Tarraleah Hydro Park. The assessment found that the intersections with the greatest estimated traffic volumes, the Lyell Highway/ Oldina Drive (south) intersection and the Lyell Highway/ Tarraleah Power Station intersection, operated with minimal queues and delays during construction.

The TIA also considered the capacity of the existing road network to accommodate the OSOM movements. The number of OSOM vehicle movements during the construction of the Project is estimated to be in the order of 400. The TIA found that no upgrades or modifications to the OSOM route are anticipated to be required (outside what is already in preliminary planning by the Department of State Growth). The movement of some equipment will require permanent traffic management personnel to supervise. This may include operations to block traffic during periods of time when the equipment is travelling along the centre of the carriageway or completing turning movements. Mobile warnings (i.e. that a large, slow-moving vehicle is on the approach) will be provided for approaching vehicles. Where possible movements will be confined to nighttime and/or low-traffic periods.

The Project is not anticipated to affect the safety of people using school buses. School buses, as per the *Tasmanian Government School Bus Routes App*, do not operate in the vicinity of the Project area, finishing at Ouse in Tasmania's south and Queenstown in Tasmania's west.

Pedestrian activity within the study area and along the construction traffic routes is primarily limited to the Tarraleah village areas.

A rest area, including public amenities facility is currently available adjacent to the Lyell Highway in the Nive Valley. This facility is a popular stopping point for users of the Lyell Highway and will be permanently decommissioned early in the construction phase.

2. Journey times on the Lyell Highway

The Project may lead to increases in journey times on Lyell Highway, particularly through the Nive Valley. During construction there will be regular daily heavy vehicle movements on the Lyell Highway between the Nive Valley and Paddy's Quarry for the transportation of spoil from the excavation areas. Changes to journey times may impact local people, business operations and the plans of tourists through the area. Locals may experience some disruption to their way of life due to an increase in journey times, and the journey experience of visitors, particularly those towing caravans, may be negatively impacted.

3. Displacement of traffic impacts and effects on residential amenity and road safety

For local and/or regular users of the Lyell Highway who are sensitive to delayed journey times, the selection of alternative routes (e.g. Fourteen Mile Road, Victoria Valley Road) may occur. Additional traffic on these lower-order roads can impact the integrity of these roads themselves (by exceeding their design limits and/or maintenance regimes), result in increased hazards to road users and increased rates of accidents and have adverse impacts on neighbouring properties (e.g. through increased dust). With the TIA finding that queuing and traffic delays are likely to be minimal, the likelihood of people diverting around the Project area on the alternative routes is considered low.

In the absence of management, it is **likely** that Project construction activities will impact connectivity and accessibility for existing road users with flow-on adverse effects to way of life and perceptions of safety. The magnitude of the impact is considered **major** and the unmitigated significance rating is **high**.

Management responses

The TIA makes a number of recommendations in relation to the management of potential traffic impacts. The TIA includes a requirement to develop and implement a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) prior to the commencement of construction. The plan will include measures, processes and responsibilities to minimise the potential for impacts on the community and the operation of the surrounding road network during construction. This will include identifying times of low traffic volumes on the Lyell Highway (e.g. outside of busy commute times), during which planned heavy movements may be undertaken.

The plan will be developed in consultation with relevant stakeholders, including Central Highlands Council, DSG, emergency services and public transport operators. The plan will include, as appropriate, additional reasonable and feasible measures identified as an outcome of consultation

The following (previously described) specific social management responses are recommended to further reduce the likelihood of the Project adversely affecting resident way of life and perceptions of road safety on the regional road network: **SE01, SE04, SE06**.

The following additional social specific management response are also recommended.

Ref	Description of Specific Social Management Response
SE14	**Before and during construction monitor traffic on alternative routes** around Tarraleah and advise CHC/State Growth of changes in usage patterns
SE15	**Prior to the commencement of construction, develop and implement the following controls** to minimise risks to workers and the public when driving: – Driver Safety and Journey Management Plan (DS & JMP) – to address hazards such as distance of journey, wildlife interaction, adverse weather and interaction with public vehicles. – Installation of In-Vehicle Monitoring System (IVMS) in all vehicles used for travel to and from site. – Fitness for Work Management Plan (FfWMP) to protect and support workforce health and wellbeing whilst minimising safety risks to the surrounding communities. – Driver Code of Conduct outlining the minimum driver behaviour requirements to ensure compliance with the legislative requirements. – Commence early and ongoing engagement with the Department of State Growth, CHC and Tasmanian Police in relation to public safety and construction traffic management.
SE16	**Relocate the public amenities from the Nive Valley to the Tarraleah Village** and provide 24 hr public access to the relocated facilities for the duration of construction.

Residual Impacts

With controls in place, it is **likely** that Project construction activities will impact connectivity and accessibility for existing road users with flow-on adverse effects to way of life. The magnitude of the impact is **moderate** and the residual significance is **medium**.

A summary of the assessment is provided in Table 8-7.

Table 8-7 Potential impacts on connectivity and accessibility

Theme	Impact	Affected parties	Extent	Unmitigated Significance	Mitigated Significance
Health and wellbeing	Impacts to connectivity and accessibility for existing road users in the regional area with flow-on adverse effects to way of life **Negative impact**	Existing and future Lyell Highway users, existing residents and communities of the local and regional area, visitors to the local area.	Local and regional study area	High	Medium

8.2.3 Housing and accommodation

Rental housing and short-term accommodation in the local and regional study area serve the needs of local residents, seasonal workers and visitors to the regional area. Both rental and short-term accommodation in the regional areas is also drawn upon for emergency accommodation and accommodation for vulnerable members of communities. The Project has the potential to adversely affect accessibility to long term rental accommodation and short-term accommodation in the regional area for community, visitors and vulnerable people.

This section considers the potential impacts of the Project on housing market conditions in nearby communities, and accessibility to short-term accommodation for visitor, seasonal workers and vulnerable people.

8.2.3.1 Accessibility to rental accommodation

Major Projects have the potential to adversely impact housing market conditions in nearby communities due to workforce size and associated accommodation arrangements. An analysis of regional housing market conditions is presented in Section 7.3.9 and confirms a highly constrained regional housing market with low rental vacancy rates and increasingly challenging affordability for low income and vulnerable individuals and households.

As discussed in Section 8.2.1, Project construction will require a workforce of up to 330 personnel. A significant proportion of these workers will be drawn from outside the state. Given the remote location of the Project, the proposed shift arrangements and the likely presence of a significant interstate or overseas workforce, the majority of construction workers will be accommodated in a workforce accommodation facility (WAF) to be located adjacent to Tarraleah Village. The WAF would be provided for the commencement of construction. This accommodation approach significantly reduces the potential for direct impacts to the local and regional housing market, and displacement of vulnerable households from existing rental accommodation.

However, the smaller nearby communities of Ouse, Hamilton and Bronte Park each have a very small pool of rental stock, extremely low vacancy rates and a prevalence of low-income households. It would only take a handful of Project workers seeking longer term rentals in these locations to affect local rental rates (increase) and potentially displace low-income households.

Notwithstanding the proposed workforce accommodation arrangements, it is **possible** the construction phase may adversely affect affordability and accessibility of rental accommodation in nearby communities for existing and new residents and vulnerable persons. The magnitude of the impact is **moderate** and the unmitigated significance rating is **medium**.

Management Responses

The following (previously described) specific social management responses are proposed to minimise the likelihood of the Project adversely affecting affordability and accessibility of rental accommodation in nearby communities: **SE01, SE02 and SE04.**

Residual impact significance

With the additional controls in place, it is **unlikely** the construction phase will adversely affect accessibility and affordability of rental housing in nearby communities. The magnitude of the impact is **minor** and the residual significance rating is **low**.

A summary of the assessment is provided in Table 8-8.

Table 8-8 Accessibility to rental accommodation

Theme	Impact	Affected parties	Extent	Unmitigated Significance	Mitigated Significance
Housing and accommodation	Reduced accessibility to rental housing in local communities, and increased housing costs. **Negative impact**	Existing and new residents, low socio-economic households	Local	Medium	Low

8.2.3.2 Accessibility to short-term accommodation

The supply of short-term accommodation (hotels, motels, caravan parks and short-term holiday stays) in the local study area is constrained with short-term accommodation principally available at Tarraleah Village (cabin/houses and lodge-style accommodation[14]), the Bronte Park locality (largely Airbnb options), Wayatinah (caravan and camping options) and Ouse (Lachlan Hotel). There are also several Hydro Tasmania camping areas in the local area. These accommodation options are primarily utilised by visitors to the local area, with caravan and camping areas seasonally popular.

A range of short-term accommodation is available across the regional study area and options include hotels, motels, Airbnb, and caravan parks. The regional centre of New Norfolk has a larger and more diverse supply of short-term accommodation options.

Availability of short-term accommodation in the local and regional study area is heavily affected by event-related and seasonal accommodation demands. The capacity of the local study area to absorb any sustained demand for short-term accommodation is significantly less than the broader regional area, due primarily to the small supply of short-term accommodation in the local area.

This section considers the potential impact of the construction phase on accessibility to short-term accommodation in the local study area for visitors to the locality, other industry sectors and vulnerable people.

The Project will result in an overall reduction in the existing supply of short-term accommodation beds in the local area. A portion of the rooms at the existing Tarraleah Village traditionally utilised by visitors to the region will be permanently used by the construction workforce for the duration of Project construction. The existing Highland Caravan Park at Tarraleah Village will also be closed for the duration of the Project construction phase reducing the number of camping and caravaning sites in the local area. The caravan park is a popular seasonal location for visitors to the region. The temporary closure will have flow-on effects for other caravan and camping locations in the locality including the Wayatinah Caravan Park and the camping facilities in Ouse and Hamilton.

[14] Capacity of Tarraleah Village to accommodate visitors has been limited since Hydro Tasmania commenced upgrade works to Mossy Marsh and a new intake to Lake King William, because the village is being utilised by HT employees and contractors engaged in that work.

As noted in Section 3.4.4, minimal sustained demand for short-term accommodation is expected from the direct construction workforce. However, the potential flow-on or indirect workforce may generate demand for short-term accommodation. Within the local study area, the Bronte Park locality with its concentration of Airbnb accommodation has the most potential to provide short-term accommodation to the indirect workforce. It is likely that accommodation providers in the locality would welcome the opportunity of any increased trade associated with the Project. Demand also has the potential to stimulate the provision of additional short-term accommodation in some localities. Any sustained increase in demand for short-term accommodation in the local area could inflate overnight rates in short-term tourism accommodation.

Any increased demand for short-term accommodation also has the potential to displace vulnerable people. Consultation with residents in the Bronte Park locality confirms existing accommodation is either owner-occupied or available for short-term lets through short stay platforms such as Booking.com or Airbnb. With respect to caravan and camping options in the local study area, this form of short-term accommodation is unlikely to meet the needs of the indirect workforce. Therefore, there is limited potential for the indirect workforce to displace vulnerable people who may be utilising the less expensive forms of short-term accommodation.

In the absence of controls, it is **almost certain** that within the local study area, the construction phase will reduce accessibility to short-term accommodation for the visitor economy and other industry sectors. The magnitude of the impact is **minor** and the unmitigated significance rating is **medium**.

Management responses

The following (previously described) specific social management responses are recommended to minimise potential Project effects on access to short-term accommodation for visitors to the regional area: **SE01, SE02 and SE04**.

Residual Significance

With the application of the above specific social management controls, it is **likely** within the local study area that the construction phase will reduce accessibility to short-term accommodation for the visitor economy and other industry sectors. The magnitude of the impact is **minimal** and the residual impact significance rating is **low**.

A summary of the assessment is provided in Table 8-9.

Table 8-9 Accessibility to short term accommodation

Theme	Impact	Affected parties	Extent	Unmitigated Significance	Mitigated Significance
Housing and accommodation	Reduced accessibility to short-term accommodation in the local and regional area for the visitor economy and other industry sectors. **Negative impact**	Visitors to the local area, other industry sectors, owners and operators of short-term accommodation	Local	Medium	Low

8.2.4 Economy and livelihoods

Construction projects can stimulate local areas by generating employment opportunities, fostering economic growth, building community resilience and enhancing community diversity and cohesion. This section discusses the Project's likely effects (positive and negative) on the characteristics of the socio-economic environment that support individual and community livelihoods. Specifically, this section examines regional and state economic conditions, local business opportunities, industry sector productivity, employment and workforce availability and opportunities.

8.2.4.1 Employment opportunities and workforce availability

This section considers the employment and skill development opportunities associated with the Project.

Construction employment opportunities

Project construction is expected to require a peak workforce of up to 330 personnel. The Project will create direct and indirect employment opportunities accessible to residents across the state.

Modelling undertaken as part of the Economic Impact Assessment (EcIA) (SGS Economics, 2025) estimates that the construction phase of the Project would generate 1,949 full time equivalent (FTE) job-years across the State at an average of 244 FTE jobs per annum. The peak annual impact is estimated to occur in Project year 4, with over 490 FTE jobs generated in the state economy that year. In the South East Tasmania SA4 and Hobart SA4, the Project is expected to generate approximately 451 FTE job-years over construction, at an average of 56 FTE jobs per annum. Modelling outputs indicate that such employment demands span multiple direct and indirect industries including construction, professional services, manufacturing and retail.

Project employment impacts represent a benefit to the regional area and the State. The workforce will include local, intrastate, and interstate personnel depending on the complexity of the work and the specialist skill sets required. Depending on the contractor engaged and their workforce arrangements, international workers may also be engaged during construction.

Initial project planning suggests approximately 30% (100 personnel) of the peak construction workforce would be sourced from within Tasmania, with the remaining 70% (230 personnel) sourced from interstate or overseas locations. As discussed in Section 7, the existing labour pool across the state is largely already utilised and likely to be over-subscribed due to the cumulative labour demands of other major projects. The workforce sourcing assumptions reflect the existing constrained state labour market.

The Project will require workers across a range of occupational areas including technicians and trades workers (e.g. construction trade, food trades, engineering, ICT and science technicians), machinery operators and drivers (e.g., stationary and mobile plant operators, store persons) and labourers (e.g. construction labourers, cleaners and laundry workers), as well as managers and professionals. Whilst the underground works will require highly specialised skill sets, the surface works activities (e.g. clearing and grubbing, earth works, road construction) are traditionally trades-based occupations with semi or low-skilled requirements. These skill sets are generally consistent with the labour market characteristics of the Southern Tasmania region. However, the majority of this labour is already employed. Much of the available labour (i.e. unemployed or underemployed) across the region and broader state does not currently have skill sets that align with Project construction, or individuals face other barriers to workforce participation. These issues are important to consider when seeking to enhance Project benefits for the state. Further, workers and their households typically spend most of their wages or income in the region where they live. Therefore, increasing the share of local or Tasmanian based workers in the construction workforce would have positive economic impacts and social benefits for the region and state.

During SIA consultation many participants commented on the existing labour shortages across several industry sectors and occupations. Some concerns were raised regarding potential flow-on impacts to other industry sectors and the effect of labour draw on business and service delivery. This issue is examined in Section 8.2.4.4.

Skill development opportunities

The job creation impacts associated with the Project span numerous industries and a diverse range of occupational categories, from administrative to managerial and executive functions as well as trades and labour in the construction industry. The Project presents an opportunity to build and develop a skilled workforce in the State that can take advantage of job opportunities directly and indirectly related to the Project and other renewable energy projects. This includes opportunities in upstream or downstream industries.

The extent to which the broader local and regional labour forces will benefit from such economic opportunities is a key focus for Hydro Tasmania. At issue are:

- Whether and to what extent the local labour force possesses or lacks the capacity and skills to fill jobs required for the construction or operations of the Project, and
- Where there are capacity and skills gaps, what opportunities exist to address them through training and upskilling the local workforce and through the removal of barriers to participation (e.g. transport).

Engagement undertaken with employment and training stakeholders to inform the SIA identified several key challenges to improving the capability and capacity of the Tasmanian workforce relevant to the Project:

- There is a lack of alignment between the skills needed for the local and regional labour force to benefit from such opportunity and the small number of people locally studying and employed in these skills, such as science, technology, engineering and mathematics, and also trades, which are recognised as highly critical in the renewable energy space.
- There is a year-on-year decrease in the number of students enrolling in school, reducing the available future workforce.
- There are significant literacy, numeracy and behavioural challenges impacting Tasmanian students' engagement in secondary and tertiary education.
- There are many barriers to workforce participation particularly in rural and remote regions where transport and access to education is challenging.
- The undersupply of qualified trainers for mechanical and electrical trades in Tasmania's VET system is hampering the number of training positions and providing challenges for existing students to complete their apprenticeships.
- Teachers lack the knowledge and awareness to connect students with local career opportunities.
- Some VET certificates can be cost-prohibitive for small to medium enterprises and individuals for example, Traffic Controller Training.
- Providing continuity of employment in the construction industry as major projects commence and complete, to maintain capacity in the Tasmanian labour force. This also impact's employers' ability to offer apprenticeships and traineeships.
- Project proponents / developers are not the direct employer of most of the construction workforce, and therefore are reliant on the effectiveness of their contractors' workforce development activities. As mentioned above, contractors may be unwilling to invest in such activities without a steady pipeline of projects.
- Low rates of digital access (reported home internet access in the 2021 Census was 69.4% in Central Highlands and 78.4% for Derwent Valley LGA's, compared to 82.7% for the State and 87.9% for Australia[15]).

These barriers are acknowledged industry wide, and the Tasmanian government and industry is taking action to address these barriers. For example, in 2024, the Tasmanian Government released the Youth Jobs Strategy which seeks to ensure the right supports, partnerships and polices are in place to help young people in Tasmanian navigate smooth, informed pathways through education, training and/or work. It builds on the efforts from the Regional Jobs Hub Network to ensure young people in Tasmania can access opportunities for employment. TasTAFE recently released a new strategic plan. The strategic plan seeks to address existing barriers to learning and includes a focus on learners first -tailoring training to suit industry and clients.

[15] ABS, 2021 Census Data.

Hydro Tasmania is also a proactive supporter of skill development across the renewable energy industry in Tasmania. Existing initiatives include active participation in forums and policy development (e.g. Energy Industry Skills Compact[16]), and participation and investment in early career development (e.g. Hydro Tasmania Apprenticeship Program).

The likelihood that the Project will support local and regional employment, and labour force upskilling across the State is **likely**, the magnitude of the impact is **minor,** and the unenhanced significance rating is **medium**.

Management Responses

Most of the Project employment opportunities will be delivered through the EPC contractor and not Hydro Tasmania. The EPC contractor will be responsible for workforce related training and skilling programs. Hydro Tasmania will encourage local employment and training through obligations required of the EPC contractor during the construction phase. These obligations include specific requirements in relation to training and development and recruitment procedures.

The following previously described specific social management responses are proposed to enhance economic and employment outcomes for marginalised people: **SE01 and SE02.**

The following additional specific management responses are also proposed:

Ref	Description of Specific Social Management Response
SE19	**The contractor will be required to develop and implement a Workforce Training and Development Plan (WTDP) for the construction phase**. The WTDP will detail the strategy for employee training programs, available apprenticeships, traineeships and other workforce development programs. The WTDP will include a local and regional workforce development program. This program will demonstrate the Project's commitment to: • Reducing barriers to employment and training participation • Equipping local workers with the necessary skills and certifications to participate in project opportunities (direct and indirect) • Training a workforce that contributes to the development of an improved local and regional skills base.
SE20	**The Project will apply Hydro Tasmania's Major Projects Local Content Framework to the Project construction phase**. The Project will develop and implement an Australian Industry Participation Plan (AIPP). The contractor will develop and implement a Tasmanian Industry Participation Plan (TIPP), where relevant. The contractor will develop and implement a project specific local industry action plan that seeks to achieve the objectives and outcomes of the Major Projects Local Content Framework and the Project SIMP. In addition to other matters, the local industry action plan will detail: • Actions to facilitate the full, fair and reasonable participation of local, regional, social and First Nations businesses and industry in Project procurement opportunities. • Actions to build capacity and capability across local business and industry. • How supplier and subcontracting opportunities will be presented to the market to optimise local business and industry participation. The Project will utilise the Tasmanian Industry Capability Network (ICN), other vendor registration systems, the local Jobs Hub & local representatives of Dept of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) to connect with local and regional business and industry.

[16] A commitment to collaborating with government, industry and educational institutions to address skills shortages at an industry level.

Ref	Description of Specific Social Management Response
SE21	Through the Project SIMP, **develop and implement actions that support the realisation of the social procurement objectives** established in Hydro Tasmania's Major Projects Local Benefit Sharing Strategy. The contractor will be required to develop and maintain a Social Procurement Management Plan (SPMP) that aligns with the objectives of the Hydro Tasmania's Major Projects LBS Strategy and the Project SIMP. The SPMP will enhance opportunities for youth, First Nations people, migrants, women and vulnerable groups to participate in project employment and economic development opportunities. The SPMP would establish performance targets and goals for social procurement on the Project and provide strategies for implementing and meeting these targets /goals.

Residual impact significance

With the implementation of the above management responses the likelihood that the Project will support direct and indirect local and regional employment, and labour force upskilling across the State is **likely**, the magnitude of the impact is **moderate,** and the residual enhanced significance rating is **high**.

A summary of the assessment is provided in Table 8-10.

Table 8-10 Employment and labour force upskilling

Theme	Impact	Affected parties	Extent	Unenhanced Significance	Residual Significance
Economy and livelihoods	The Project will create employment opportunities accessible to residents across the state. The Project will also generate opportunities for existing labour force upskilling across the state. **Positive impact**	Existing and new incoming residents.	Regional and State	Low	High

8.2.4.2 Economic diversification and capacity building

State economic and industry participation

Project procurement activities will generate industry and business opportunities across the State, supporting industry and business capacity and capability improvements and enabling diversification. The economic benefits of the Project to the State were estimated by SGS Economics (2025) as part of the EcIA. SGS also assessed the quantitative effects of the Project on the State and regional (South East Tasmania and Hobart regions) economies. The findings of the EcIA indicate that the Project has the potential to deliver considerable economic outcomes and opportunities to the regions, and for the state.

In Tasmania, the construction phase of the Project, including its indirect effects, is expected to represent approximately $1.12 billion in Gross State Product (GSP) above the business-as-usual (BaU), of which approximately $213 million is estimated to materialise in South East Tasmania SA4 and Hobart SA4 (i.e., Gross Regional Product). In the regional area this equates to an average of $27 million per annum.

Economic modelling also demonstrates considerable economic value-added (as measured by Gross Value Added [GVA]) above the BaU from the Project. In Tasmania, the construction phase of the Project, including its indirect effects, is expected to add approximately $0.96 billion to the State economy at an average of $120 million per year. Given the capital-intensive nature of the Project, approximately 60 per cent of the total value added (or $780 million) is contributed by the construction industry (SGS Economics, 2025). This amount dwarfs the contributions across all other industries.

Local industry and business participation

Project construction will require a range of goods and services (Section 3.4.8) which would be procured through local and industry and businesses. In addition to direct procurement by the Project, some local and regional businesses will benefit from expenditure by the Project's workforce (e.g. local spend). This expenditure will primarily be on local goods and services (e.g., grocery stores, food, and restaurant outlets) and would likely accrue primarily to Hamilton, Ouse and New Norfolk given their location on key transport routes. SIA engagement identified increased patronage and the associated economic stimulus into the local and regional economies as a Project benefit.

The likelihood of the Project delivering industry and business opportunities across the State and also enhancing industry capacity and capability is **possible**, the magnitude of the impact is **minor** and the unenhanced significance rating is **medium**.

Management responses

Securing the modelled economic outcomes for the regional area and for the State requires a focus on job creation and supply chain development within Tasmania. Enabling local workforce participation (direct or indirect) and encouraging people to settle permanently as local residents (as opposed to working on a fly-in / fly-out basis [FIFO]) will increase the value of spend in the regional and state economy with flow-on benefits to industry and business.

In the absence of additional enhancement, industry and businesses across the region and state will benefit from Project procurement opportunities. However, these benefits would be significantly greater with the implementation of the following previously described specific social management responses: **SE01, SE02, SE19 and SE20.**

Residual significance

With the implementation of the above management responses the likelihood of the Project delivering industry and business opportunities across the State and enhancing industry capacity and capability is **likely**, the magnitude of the benefit is **moderate** and the residual significance rating is **high**.

A summary of the assessment is provided in Table 8-11.

Table 8-11 Economic diversification and capacity building

Theme	Impact	Affected parties	Extent	Unenhanced Significance	Residual Significance
Economy and livelihoods	Project procurement activities will generate industry and business opportunities across the State, supporting industry and business capacity and capability improvements and enabling diversification. Local spend by the Project workforce will increase trade for local businesses. **Positive impact**	Regional and state industry, local and regional business operators	Regional and state	Medium	High

8.2.4.3 Enhanced employment and economic outcomes for marginalised people

As discussed in Section 8.2.4.1 and 8.2.4.1, the construction phase will generate jobs across a range of industries including construction, accommodation and food, manufacturing and retail. The Project, through the EPC Contractor and/or industry partners, will also deliver direct training opportunities and may stimulate the delivery of indirect training opportunities. The Project presents an opportunity to improve access to employment and economic opportunities for marginalised people in the local and regional study area. Marginalised groups in the local and regional study area include migrants, youth and Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people.

As discussed in Section 7, there is considerable socio-economic disadvantage in the local and regional study area. The social baseline analysis showed:

- Both the Derwent Valley and Central Highlands LGAs have a higher level of socio-economic disadvantage, and a lack of advantage compared to the state. In 2021 and based on SEIFA scores, both LGAs were in the lowest and most disadvantaged 20% of LGAs in Australia.
- a high youth[17] unemployment rate in both the Derwent Valley LGA (15.6% or 122 people) and Central Highlands LGA (18.0% or 23 people) compared to the state (13.4%). In April 2025 10.5% of the Derwent Valley LGA and 11.6% of the Central Highland LGA populations aged 15-64 were JobSeeker and youth allowance recipients compared to 7.5% for the state.
- Lower rates of education attainment in the youth cohort across the regional study area compared to the state
- Lower median weekly, personal and household income levels across the regional area population compared to the state.

Consultation and literature review highlighted the significant employment barriers faced by young people and also Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people living in the regional area and across southern Tasmania. Addressing existing barriers to participation will be integral to the realisation of Project opportunities for marginalised people.

The likelihood of the Project enhancing employment and economic outcomes for marginalised people across the regional area is **possible**, the magnitude of the impact is **minimal** and the unenhanced significance rating is **low**.

[17] Youth is defined as a person aged 15-24 years. Data is sourced from the ABSE Census of Population and Housing 2021.

Management response

The following (previously described) specific social management responses are proposed to enhance economic and employment outcomes for marginalised people: **SE01, SE11, SE18, SE19 and SE21.**

The following additional specific management responses are also proposed:

Ref	Description of Specific Social Management Response
SE22	**Develop and implement a cultural awareness training program for Project construction**. Prior to the commencement of work, all Project personnel will be required to complete cultural awareness training in support of a culturally safe work environment for First Nations people.

Residual impact significance

With the implementation of the above management actions, the likelihood of the Project enhancing employment and economic outcomes for marginalised people across the regional area is **likely**, the magnitude of the impact is **minor** (due to the number of individuals and households like to benefit) and the residual significance rating is **medium**.

A summary of the assessment is provided in Table 8-12.

Table 8-12 Enhanced opportunities for marginalised people

Theme	Impact	Affected parties	Extent	Unenhanced Significance	Residual Significance
Economy and livelihoods	Enhanced employment and economic outcomes for marginalised people **Positive impact**	Marginalised individuals and households First Nations households	Local and regional study area	Low	Medium

8.2.4.4 Industry sector impacts

This section considers the potential effects of the Project on other industry sectors, in particular tourism, mining and the agricultural, forestry and fishing industry sectors. Likely effects relate to labour draw and flow-on impacts to industry sector economic output.

Industry sector employment and contributions to output and value added in the regional study are summarised in Section 7.3. The EcIA (SGS Economics, 2025) assessed the potential effect of the construction phase on other industry sectors in Tasmania. During construction, employment will be concentrated in the construction industry, which is responsible for almost one third of the employment generated (or 1,060 FTE job-years). Retail trade is responsible for an additional 10 per cent of FTE job-years (200 FTE job-years) in the Tasmanian workforce, followed by the professional services industry which added 7 per cent (140 FTE job-years).

Modelling for the EcIA also illustrates a net negative impact to agriculture, forestry and fishing (-40 FTE job-years) and mining (-20 FTE job-years) during construction. This output is a direct reflection of a constrained labour market, i.e., that labour will likely be pulled away from these sectors during construction to fill labour demand for construction of the Project.

1. Labour draw

The project requires a sizeable construction workforce. The labour supply of the Southern Tasmania Region and the State is described in Section 7.3.2.

All geographic areas of interest in the regional area have highly constrained labour markets. Both the Central Highlands LGA and Derwent Valley LGA are currently experiencing their lowest unemployment rates in 10 years and a correspondingly small pool of unemployed persons (63 people in Central Highlands LGA and 374 people in Derwent Valley LGA). Whilst these labour market constraints limit the extent to which construction workers may be drawn from the CH LGA, the presence of civil contracting related businesses in the Derwent Valley LGA and broader Southern Tasmania region increases the likelihood that local people may be employed during construction. Consequently, there is a high probability of labour draw from small businesses and from other industry sectors across the regional area and neighbouring LGAs.

The diversity of roles on offer, the potential opportunities for skill development and the relatively high civil construction wages will likely make Project construction roles attractive to local residents, particularly young people who may be employed in low skilled or semi-skilled roles e.g. hospitality workers, apprentice builders and electricians. This labour draw will have implications for business operations and service delivery across a range of industry sectors.

Labour draw may reduce the availability of semi-skilled and low-skilled labour for existing business in the CH LGA and Derwent Valley LGA, as well as businesses in the adjoining LGAs. Labour demand may in turn lead to a short-term increase in wage costs, or a shortage of specific skills.

2. Tourism sector impacts

This section considers the extent to which the Project may impact (negative or positive) existing tourism-oriented business operations. The impact was considered by SGS Economics (2025) in the EcIA.

Hydro Tasmania owns the Tarraleah Village, which is intended for use by the Project during construction. While this is likely to displace some tourists from the local area during construction, the net impact on tourism-related industries (as measured by the economic modelling) across the region is positive. In particular:

- Gross value added (GVA) for the retail trade industry is estimated to be approximately $4.2 million higher per annum (than the business as usual (BaU) during construction and approximately $0.36 million higher per annum than the BaU during operations.
- GVA for the accommodation and food services industry is modelled to be approximately $1.5 million higher per annum than the BaU during construction and approximately $0.25 million higher per annum than the BaU during operations.

Consideration for these quantitative findings suggest that although the impacts and disruption to some tourism-oriented business during construction may be material and require mitigation measures, the overall impact to tourism (as measured by spending in Retail Trade and Accommodation and Food Service) is net positive by contrast to the business-as-usual case.

The likelihood of Project construction related labour draw adversely affecting the economic output and service delivery capacity of other industry sectors in Tasmania is **possible**, the magnitude of the impact is **moderate** and the unmitigated significance rating is **medium**.

Management responses

The following (previously described) social management responses are recommended to minimise potential Project effects on other industry sectors – **SE01, SE02, SE06 and SE19.**

The following additional social specific management response are also recommended.

Ref	Description of Specific Social Management Response
SE23	Prior to commencement of construction, **engage with tourism industry sector stakeholders to identify potential strategies to offset or minimise potential adverse construction phase effects** and create opportunities for the sector during Project construction. Agreed strategies would be considered through the LBS Strategy process (SE11).

Residual impact significance

With the implementation of the above management responses, the likelihood of Project construction related labour draw adversely affecting the economic output and service delivery capacity of other industry sectors in Tasmania is **possible**, the magnitude of the impact is **minimal** and the unmitigated significance rating is **low**.

A summary of the assessment is provided in Table 8-13.

Table 8-13 Industry sector impacts

Theme	Impact	Affected parties	Extent	Unenhanced Significance	Residual Significance
Economy and livelihoods	Labour demand generated by the Project may lead to labour draw (direct and indirect) from other industry sectors, adversely affecting the economic output and service delivery capacity of these industry sectors. **Negative impact**	Existing business operators in the local and regional area Other industry sectors	Local and regional study area	Medium	Low

8.3 Operations phase impacts and opportunities

This section considers the potential impacts and opportunities associated with the operation of the scheme.

8.3.1 Community

8.3.1.1 Landscape and visual amenity of recreational areas

Both temporary and permanent changes to the visual character of the landscape will occur as a result of the Project. People who are highly familiar with the Project area will recognise these changes as they occur during construction. The existing landscape is valued for its beauty, associated natural values, and contribution to local identity and sense of place.

The Visual Impact Assessment (VIA) (Inspiring Place, 2025) assessed the visual impact of the final Project development. The findings of the VIA indicate that some areas in the TWWHA where the Project elements would be seen (in the absence of vegetation) were someone present to take in the view. Due to the inaccessibility and low visitation numbers of many of the locations from which views to the Redevelopment are possible, this is considered a low impact. For instance, Mt Hobhouse and Majors Lookout situated to the southwest of the proposed surge tower has high visibility but are currently not accessible by means of any tracks or paths. Based on the findings of the VIA, views to elements of the Redevelopment are possible from some sections of some walking tracks and inside the TWWHA (e.g. Mount King William, Lake St Clair, Mount Rufus, and the Gingerbread track) but these are very distant (>15km) and over time, as the revegetation program takes effect and the new features in the landscape age, their visibility is reduced.

During construction, local and regional communities will be kept informed of the nature of landscape changes likely as a result of the Project, and the actions taken through project design and construction to mitigate these impacts.

The likelihood of the scheme operations affecting community held values is **possible**, the magnitude of the impact is **minimal** and the unmitigated significance rating is **low**.

Management Responses

Several mitigation measures are proposed by Inspiring Place (2025) to minimise impacts to landscape values.

With the implementation of these visual mitigations, the likelihood of the Project affecting community values as a result of changes in landscape and visual amenity is **very unlikely**, the magnitude of the impact is **minimal** and the residual mitigated significance rating is **low**.

A summary of the assessment is provided in Table 8-14.

Table 8-14 Changes in local landscape and visual amenity affect values and aspirations

Theme	Impact	Affected parties	Extent	Unmitigated Significance	Residual Significance
Community	Permanent changes in local landscape and visual amenity adversely affect community held values and aspirations **Negative impact**	Existing recreational user groups	Local study area	Low	Low

8.3.1.2 Recreational amenity

The lakes and lagoons downstream of Clark Dam (e.g. Wayatinah Lagoon) are popular locations for angling, summer camping and aquatic recreation. Changes in Scheme operations may affect the recreational use and enjoyment of these downstream areas.

During scheme operations there will be no changes to the operational ranges of the storages that form part of the Tarraleah Hydropower scheme, however daily water level changes may increase at Lake Liapootah and Wayatinah Lagoon.

Without mitigation the Project will result in reduced flow in the River Derwent below Clark Dam and increase in frequency of small spills from Liapootah and Wayatinah dams. However, the peak spill events are predicted to be reduced in size. Annual flow releases are proposed to mitigate potential environmental impacts in the River Derwent. These will consist of an annual high flow release (i.e., an event of ≥ 60 cumecs), as well as three smaller fresh flow releases. These releases will only occur it they have not occurred naturally within specific time periods.

There is a possibility that lake level changes become more rapid in Wayatinah Lagoon. The Lagoon is a popular location for angling, summer camping and aquatic recreation. It is not expected that operational changes will be material below Wayatinah Lagoon.

The likelihood of the scheme operations affecting recreational amenity is **unlikely**, the magnitude of the impact is **minor** and the unmitigated significance rating is **low**.

Management Responses

Given the unmitigated significance rating of low the primary management responses proposed relate to communications and engagement with downstream users.

Ref	Description of Specific Social Management Response
SE24	Prior to the commencement of operations, Hydro Tasmania will **develop and implement a stakeholder engagement plan to communicate to downstream users changes in operational flow regimes** and likely effects. Downstream users will be provided with information regarding Hydro Tasmania's Complaints Management, including how to raise issues or concerns regarding operational impacts.

A summary of the assessment is provided in Table 8-15.

Table 8-15 Changes in operations affect recreational amenity

Theme	Impact	Affected parties	Extent	Unmitigated Significance	Residual Significance
Community	Changes in Scheme operations may affect the recreational use and enjoyment of downstream areas. **Negative impact**	Existing recreational user groups	Local study area	Low	n/a

8.3.2 Economy & livelihoods

8.3.2.1 Effects of flow changes on downstream water consumers

There are several downstream users including irrigators and other water users such as Salmon Enterprises of Tasmania Pty Ltd (SALTAS). Anticipated changes in daily water level variation at Lake Liapootah and Wayatinah Lagoon and the proposed annual flow releases have been described previously.

Values and issues in downstream lagoons and lakes (Wayatinah Lagoon, Lake Catagunya, Lake Repulse, Cluny Lagoon, Lake Meadowbank and the interconnecting reaches of the Derwent River) were assessed by Entura (2022) through a desk-top study which at the time omitted detailed modelling. Each waterway was assessed for environmental values, and stakeholder values, including:

- Irrigation
- Domestic supply and stock use
- Drinking water offtakes, including Bryn Estyn
- Fish hatchery water use
- Firefighting water use
- Meadowbank Environmental flows and Estuary influences

Modelling conducted after the values assessments indicate that there would not be any material changes to water levels below Wayatinah Lagoon due to the Project. This makes it unlikely that the values above will be significantly impacted.

Concern has been raised by Lake Meadowbank irrigators regarding the potential for changed operation to lead to impacts. However, it is not expected that lake level operation will impact on irrigation as existing storage operating rules will stay in place and irrigator pumps have been upgraded as part of other refurbishment programs.

The likelihood of the operations phase affecting the livelihood of downstream water consumers is **unlikely**, the magnitude of the impact is **minor** and the unmitigated significance rating is **low**.

Management responses

Given the unmitigated significance rating of low the primary management responses proposed relate to communications and engagement with downstream users. The implementation of social specific management response **SE24** is recommended.

A summary of the assessment is provided in Table 8-16.

Table 8-16 Effects of flow changes on downstream consumers

Theme	Impact	Affected parties	Extent	Unmitigated Significance	Residual Significance
Community	Changes in existing scheme operations adversely affect the economic operations and livelihood of downstream water consumers. **Negative impact**	Existing downstream user groups	Local and regional study area	Low	n/a

8.3.2.2 Withdrawal of economic stimulus

The Project construction will act as a significant economic stimulus for the region and broader state. The economic effect of the Project is discussed in Section 8.2.1.3. Given the size of the proposed investment the Project will stimulate the regional and state economy through:

- Job creation and spending
- Infrastructure improvements and efficiency
- Attracting investment and business.

However, when construction ceases, the economic stimulus ceases. Unplanned, the withdrawal of transformational economic stimulus such as that presented by the Project can leave individuals, communities and businesses highly exposed to adverse impacts, this is particularly relevant to local people who may be employed directly on the project.

Hydro Tasmania has a strong focus on building labour force capacity and capability within Tasmania through the Project. Enabling opportunities for the redeployment of this capacity and capability in other areas following the cessation of construction will be essential to minimising the potential effects of the withdrawal of Project economic stimulus.

In the absence of controls, the likelihood of the withdrawal of economic stimulus having an adverse effect on communities in the local and regional study area is **likely**, the magnitude of the impact is **moderate** and the unmitigated significance rating is **high**. The likelihood and magnitude of the impact will be influenced in part by the timing of other major projects in the regional area, the number of local people employed on the Project and local businesses benefiting from local spend and Project procurement.

Management responses

The following (previously described) specific management responses are recommended to reduce impacts to the economy and livelihood of local and regional communities following the cessation of the construction phase: **SE01 and SE11**. The SIMP (SE01) and associated engagement plan will be key tools for reducing the likelihood and magnitude of the impact.

The following specific management response is also recommended.

Ref	Description of Specific Social Management Response
SE25	Prior to the completion of Project construction **develop and implement a plan to support the transition from construction to operations**. Engage with key stakeholders and potentially affected communities. In the development of the plan. Development of the plan could involve: • Identification of areas and demographic cohorts likely to experience potential economic and social impacts from the cessation of construction. • Identification of the services, funding opportunities, programs that can help to soften the transition.

Residual impact significance

With the implementation of the above management actions, the likelihood of the cessation of construction adversely affecting the economy and livelihoods of the local and regional communities remains **possible**, the magnitude of the impact is **moderate**, and the residual significance rating is **medium**.

A summary of the assessment is provided in Table 8-17.

Table 8-17 Withdrawal of economic stimulus

Theme	Impact	Affected parties	Extent	Unmitigated Significance	Residual Significance
Economy and livelihood	The withdrawal of construction phase economic stimulus adversely effects the economy and livelihood of businesses, households and the broader communities in the local and regional area. **Negative impact**	Households and businesses in the regional study area	Local and regional study area	High	Medium

8.4 Cumulative impacts

Cumulative impacts are a result of the successive, incremental and /or combined effects of human action and natural variations over time (DPE 2021). Projects which may contribute to cumulative social impacts are described in Section 0. The projects presented in Table 8-18 were identified as having the greatest potential to contribute to cumulative social impacts, primarily due to their associated construction workforce size, location and/or potential for overlapping construction schedules.

Table 8-18 Projects considered in cumulative impact assessment

Project	Description	Status
St Patricks Plains Windfarm (Ark Energy) Central Highlands	Project involves the installation of 47 wind turbines across a number of rural properties in the Central Highlands of Tasmania. The project is an extension to the Cattle Hill Windfarm. The project area is approximately 10 km south-east of Miena and 25 km north of Bothwell (Ark Energy, 2024b). Up to 200 full-time jobs for construction, and up to 20 jobs for operations.	In appeal with the Tasmanian Civil & Administrative Tribunal (TASCAT)
Cellars Hill Wind Farm (Landholder co-operative)	The Project is a grid connected wind farm with potential capacity up to 350MW. It will potentially be accompanied by a battery energy storage system (BESS) and electricity infrastructure (such as a switchyard and substation) to facilitate connection into existing transmission infrastructure. Construction to commence in 2027 with an estimated 200 construction jobs and 14 ongoing jobs during operation.	Pre-approvals
Whaleback Ridge Renewable Energy Project (Westcoast Renewable Energy) West Coast Tasmania	The project, located around Lake Pieman near Zeehan in western Tasmania, will involve the establishment of up to 500 wind turbine generators, with a projected generating capacity of 3,000 MW (Infrastructure Partnerships Australia, 2020). Declared major project. 170 FTE positions in the first stage of construction 550 permanent jobs projected.	Pre-approvals
North West Transmission Developments (Tas Networks) North West Tasmania	The NWTD Project is proposed to create 240km of new and upgraded overhead transmission lines and other energy infrastructure. It is aimed to unlock a pipeline of future renewable energy Projects in the region. (TasNetworks, 2024). Estimated peak construction workforce of 333 FTE.	Pre-approval

Project	Description	Status
Cethana Pumped Hydro Energy Storage Project (Hydro Tasmania) Kentish LGA	Proposed 750 MW Pumped Energy Storage project located on the eastern side of the existing Lake Cethana in the Kentish Council area. Estimated workforce of ~350 people at peak construction. A final investment decision is anticipated for 2026.	Pre-approvals
Macquarie Point Stadium Project (Tasmanian Government) Hobart	Development of a 23,000-seat multipurpose stadium at Macquarie Point with an estimated $715m investment (Tasmanian Planning Commission, 2024; KPMG, 2024). Project of State Significance. Peak FTE workforce of 588.	Pre-approvals
Gordon Power Station Refurbishment (Hydro Tasmania) Strathgordon, West Coast Tasmania	Refurbishment of the turbines at the Gordon Power Station in Tasmania south-west. Project is ongoing for several years.	Refurbishment program currently underway
West coast refurbishment program (Hydro Tasmania) West Coast, Tasmania	Refurbishment of power stations on the Anthony-Pieman, King and Yolande hydropower schemes. Project due to commence in 2027 and ongoing for several years with a workforce of up to 80 additional workers	Pre-approvals

Given the characteristics of the Project in terms of workforce size, construction schedule and likely traffic generation, this assessment of potential cumulative social impacts focussed on the Project construction phase only and the following areas:

- labour draw
- Skill development and access to training
- Housing and accommodation.

Variables which will influence the potential for cumulative impacts on these social aspects include:

- Labour force capacity, and in particular the availability and distribution of construction labour at the time projects commence
- The timing of any overlap(s) in peak workforce demands
- The likelihood that the delivery schedule for some projects will change
- Timing of operation of the new Spirit of Tasmania ferries and associated significant increase in visitor numbers to the state (in respect of short-stay accommodation impacts).

8.4.1 Construction phase cumulative impacts

8.4.1.1 Local impacts

The local study area is the area of influence for the assessment of cumulative social impacts, on the basis that this is the area where the physical interface of multiple projects, and the potential for connectivity issues, is most likely to have material impact.

As discussed in Section 7 and Section 8, housing affordability is a growing challenge for households in Tasmania. Prolonged exposure to housing cost burden can have detrimental social effects on individuals and households with effects including exposure to greater disadvantage and reduced health and wellbeing outcomes. Projects that have a large workforce drawn from outside the region, but are staying locally, may combine to impact housing and short-term accommodation accessibility and affordability for existing and future residents, seasonal workers and visitors to the region. There may be cumulative impacts to the local and regional housing market if the construction phases of the Project, St Patricks Wind Farm and the Cellars Hill Windfarm occurring concurrently. However, the Project is unlikely to make a large contribution to this, as the majority of the construction workforce is anticipated to be accommodated in a purpose built WAF to be located adjacent to Tarraleah Village. It is possible that cumulative indirect labour demands in the local study area may lead to demands for short-term or rental accommodation.

There is potential for cumulative labour demands (in particular, those associated with St Patricks Wind Farm and Cellars Hill Windfarm) to affect labour availability for businesses operating within the local study area. Both the Project and the two wind farms have a clear focus on providing direct local employment opportunities. As discussed in Section 8.2.4.4 labour draw may reduce the availability of semi-skilled and low-skilled labour for existing business in the CH LGA and neighbouring Derwent Valley LGA, as well as businesses in the adjoining LGAs. Labour demand may in turn lead to a short-term increase in wage costs, or a shortage of specific skills.

The cumulative expansion in construction activity proximate to the local study area, and growth in employment opportunities within the local study area has the potential to increase local spend benefiting local businesses and increasing their trading levels. Cumulative procurement of goods and services sourced from within the local study area and the broader regional area may increase local economic activity.

8.4.1.2 Regional impacts

1. Labour draw

In combination, projects listed in **Table 8-18** have the potential to provide significant employment and business opportunities for residents of Tasmania over the next 10 years. Assessment of cumulative labour demands within the Southern Tasmania Region would be speculative at best, particularly as construction personnel are highly mobile within and across Australian states, and project schedules will vary from current estimates. However, if the labour force requirements for several projects peaked at the same time, a requirement for up to at least one thousand construction personnel at work in the Southern Tasmanian Region is a possibility with a further 1000 construction personnel possible in Northern Tasmania to service other major projects in the north. Given the relatively small size of the Tasmanian population and the construction industry labour force located within Tasmania, this is likely to cause a significant adverse impact on other industries access to labour, potentially exacerbating current shortages of civil engineering professionals, construction project managers and construction trades, and contribute to shortages of trades people and machinery operators, which may in turn constrain domestic and business access to tradespeople.

The expansion in the construction sector would support additional flow-on demands through construction industry supply chain and additional spending on consumer-oriented products by the construction workforce in the Southern Tasmanian Region. The associated supply of construction materials, the development of associated external infrastructure and complementary services will also require additional workforce beyond those directly associated with the Project and other major projects, stimulating jobs and growth in the region.

Hydro Tasmania's strategies and contractor expectations in relation to skill development may help to offset demands which could affect local access to labour, and leave a legacy of increased local workforce skills.

2. Flow-on economic and employment opportunities

The cumulative expansion in the Tasmanian construction sector will generate additional flow-on opportunities (ripple effects). Expansion would necessitate a higher supply of goods and services, leading to increased demand from suppliers within the region and state. The construction workforces, with higher incomes from employment, would likely spend more on consumer goods and services, boosting local businesses. Cumulative growth in the sector will also generate demand for complementary services such as transportation and logistics, which in turn further stimulate the economy. Cumulative economic stimuli may also drive improvements to regional infrastructure such as roads and utilities. These enhancements may improve the quality of life for existing and future residents of the regional area.

Management responses

Responding to and managing any potential cumulative social impacts would be a shared responsibility with other Project proponents, local and state government bodies and key stakeholders such as regional training providers and employment hubs. Sharing information about the Project's construction and operation timeframes and activities, workforce and accommodation requirements and potential impacts with these and other regional stakeholders is expected to assist with managing potential social impacts on local and regional communities, such as labour force impacts, demand for accommodation, and impacts to social infrastructure provision.

The ongoing presence of Hydro Tasmania in the local study area communities and implementing a transparent and meaningful engagement program, may assist with responding to community concerns and cumulative social impacts as they arise.

The following (previously described) specific management responses are recommended to minimise potential cumulative impacts and enhance opportunities: **SE01, SE02, SE04 and SE11**.

The following additional specific social management responses are also recommended:

Ref	Description of Specific Social Management Response
SE26	• Collaborate with key stakeholders (e.g. State Growth, ReCFIT) and industry sector stakeholders to **facilitate workforce forecasting and inform labour force planning**. • **Advocate for policies** that support workforce development and facilitate the movement of workers between regions and sectors.

A summary of the cumulative impact assessment outcomes is provided in Table 8-19

Table 8-19 Cumulative impacts summary

Impact	Affected parties	Extent	Unmitigated Significance	Residual Significance
Potential for cumulative labour draw in the local study area affecting labour access for business, industries and households **Negative impact**	Households, businesses and industry	Local study area (Ouse primarily)	High	Medium
Potential for cumulative demands on housing and/or short-term accommodation, but with minimal Project contributions to impacts expected **Negative impact**	Existing residents, future residents, seasonal workers, vulnerable people and visitors to the region	Local study area (Ouse primarily)	Medium	Medium
Potential for cumulative labour draw in the regional study area affecting labour access for business, industries and households. **Negative impact**	Households, businesses and industry	Regional study area and in particular New Norfolk and Bothwell	High	Medium
The cumulative expansion in the Tasmanian construction sector will generate additional flow-on opportunities (ripple effects) for the regional study area. **Positive impact**	Existing residents and households, business and industry.	Regional study area	Medium	High

8.5 Compiled management responses

Table 8-20 is a compiled list of all social specific management responses to the identified impacts and opportunities.

Table 8-20 Social impact management responses (management measures)

Ref	Management measure
SE01	**Develop and implement a Social Impact Management Plan (SIMP) for the pre-construction and construction phase of the Project**. The Project SIMP must be developed in consultation with relevant government and local government agencies, key stakeholders, and directly affected parties to minimise construction phase social impacts. The Project SIMP should address key components of the construction program. The Project SIMP should be made readily available to the public in a format easily interpreted, and must: • Include an updated social baseline assessment focussing on the social indicators of relevance to the identification and management of construction phase impact • Include a summary of the anticipated social impacts (positive and negative), potential residual impacts and consideration for cumulative impacts. • Identify the desired management outcomes for the key performance areas of: – Workforce management (including workforce behaviour, housing and accommodation) – Community health and wellbeing – Tasmanian industry and business participation – Social Procurement – Workforce employment and training – First Nations participation and engagement – Local benefit sharing – Visitor economy – Community and stakeholder engagement • Incorporate key strategies for achieving the desired management outcomes, responsibilities for implementation, timing and key partners in strategy delivery. • Document the monitoring, evaluation and reporting process for ensuring the effectiveness of mitigation measures and adopting an adaptive management approach. • Describe the approach to complaints management during construction. • Define the roles and responsibilities for social performance management during construction. The contractor will be required to develop a construction phase SIMP (contractor SIMP) that achieves the objectives of the Project SIMP.

Ref	Management measure
SE02	**Develop and implement a communication and stakeholder engagement plan (Project CSEP) for pre-construction and construction**. The CSEP will outline an effective approach to communication and engagement underpinned by a proactive issues-management approach, open and transparent two-way communication processes and responsiveness to the communication needs and expectations of key stakeholders and the broader community. This would include ensuring community and key stakeholders are kept informed of: • Project construction timelines • Changes in construction workforce numbers • Timing of key construction activities and potential affects • Any required changes in existing conditions to accommodate construction activities e.g. introduction of traffic management, changes in public access arrangements to Tarraleah Village. • Workforce accommodation arrangements. The Project CSEP would document the approach to grievance management. The contractor will be required to prepare a CSEP the pre-construction and construction phase in accordance with the requirements of the Project CESP.
SE03	**Develop and implement a workforce code of conduct (CoC)** that establishes strong expectations in relation to workforce behaviour both on-site and off-site (i.e. in community) and demonstrates how potential impacts on the rural and heritage character of local communities (e.g. Ouse and Hamilton) will be minimised.
SE04	**Prior to the commencement of construction, develop and implement a workforce accommodation plan (WAP) based on the final construction workforce profile**. The WAP should: • Demonstrate how the peak project workforce will be accommodated and serviced and how flow-on impacts to host communities will be minimised. • Consider pedestrian and vehicle access and connectivity within the Tarraleah Village during construction to always ensure pedestrian safety. • Detail controls to be implemented to minimise workforce related traffic on the public road network. • Include a plan for monitoring workforce accommodation arrangements to enable proactive response to off-site impacts. • Achieve the objectives of the Project SIMP.
SE05	As a component of the Project SIMP develop and implement actions that **encourage workforce contribution to community** and seek to build relationships between the workforce and the community.

Ref	Management measure
SE06	**Undertake regular community perception surveys** during construction to inform Project SIMP reviews including the evaluation of impacts and outcomes.
SE07	**Establish a publicly accessible Project information centre** at Tarraleah Village for the duration of construction. Ensure visitors can continue to engage with the village and construction progress, including latest events and opportunities to engage. Incorporate heritage interpretation into the project information centre to enable remote connection for the public to Tarraleah Village and components of the Tarraleah Hydro Power Scheme. As a component of interpretation, identify opportunities to provide public access to the Tarraleah locality during construction.
SE08	Where possible during construction **provide public access to existing regional visitor experiences located in proximity to the Tarraleah Village**. This includes the penstock lookout at Tarraleah Village, the Tarraleah Falls walking track and elements of the Tarraleah Village valued by community.
SE09	Prior to the commencement of construction, persons with connection to the **Polish monument** in the Nive Valley will be identified and engaged through a structured process to explore solutions for monument relocation
SE10	**Provide appropriately resourced health services for the duration of the construction phase**. These services will be made available to all Project construction workers. Provide the construction workforce with access to an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) service for the duration of construction.
SE11	**Develop and implement a Local Benefit Sharing Action Plan for the Project** consistent with the Major Projects LBS Strategy. The LBS Action Plan would be informed through a structured engagement process with key stakeholders and affected communities. There could be a range of core community needs that are identified and that the LBS may respond to. These may include addressing barriers to participation and realisation of project opportunities.

Ref	Management measure
SE12	**Develop and implement an emergency response plan in consultation with local emergency service providers**. Provide emergency response personnel at the Project site for the duration of construction. The emergency response service may be called upon to assist in incidents that occur within or near the project area, including those involving public roadways intersecting the site. In the event of external bushfire threat to the Project, the emergency response personnel will assist Tasmanian Fire Service (TFS) in coordinating workforce evacuations and facilitate safe access for state response teams. Provide qualified and experienced medical personnel with responsibility for responding to and managing medical and trauma incidents, including stabilising and transporting patients to onsite facilities or designated handover points. These personnel will interface with the Tasmanian Ambulance Services and support further off-site medical evacuation co-ordination.
SE13	During construction **promote to the public other regional opportunities** for recreational fishing, camping and boating activities.
SE14	**Before and during construction monitor traffic on alternative routes** around Tarraleah and advise CHC/State Growth of changes in usage patterns.
SE15	**Prior to the commencement of construction, develop and implement the following controls** to minimise risks to workers and the public when driving: – Driver Safety and Journey Management Plan (DS & JMP) – to address hazards such as distance of journey, wildlife interaction, adverse weather and interaction with public vehicles. – Installation of In-Vehicle Monitoring System (IVMS) in all vehicles used for travel to and from site. – Fitness for Work Management Plan (FfWMP) to protect and support workforce health and wellbeing whilst minimising safety risks to the surrounding communities. – Driver Code of Conduct outlining the minimum driver behaviour requirements to ensure compliance with the legislative requirements. – Commence early and ongoing engagement with the Department of State Growth, CHC and Tasmanian Police in relation to public safety and construction traffic management.
SE16	**Relocate the public amenities from the Nive Valley to the Tarraleah Village** and provide 24 hr public access to the relocated facilities.

Ref	Management measure
SE17	Prior to and during construction **facilitate a program of access to Hydro Tasmania managed land in the Derwent hydropower scheme so that Tasmanian Aboriginal People can connect to Country**, collect cultural values and share stories. This will inform the development of a broader cultural values mapping process to support Hydro Tasmania's future land management practices.
SE18	**Develop and implement a First Nations Participation Plan (FNPP)** as a component of the construction phase Project SIMP. The FNPP will establish desired outcomes and key actions to be implemented to support First Nations participation during the construction phase. The FNPP will reflect the core pillars of Hydro Tasmania's Commitment and Action Plan (CAP). Key themes to be addressed in the FNPP include: • Supporting connection to Country for Tasmanian Aboriginal people during construction • Recognising culture through project design and delivery • Delivery of cultural safety training for the workforce • Realising employment and economic development opportunities The contractor will be required to develop and implement a contractor FNPP in accordance with the requirements of the Project SIMP.
SE19	**The contractor will be required to develop and implement a Workforce Training and Development Plan (WTDP) for the construction phase**. The WTDP will detail the strategy for employee training programs, available apprenticeships, traineeships and other workforce development programs. The WTDP will include a local and regional workforce development program. This program will demonstrate the Project's commitment to: • Reducing barriers to employment and training participation • Equipping local workers with the necessary skills and certifications to participate in project opportunities (direct and indirect) • Training a workforce that contributes to the development of an improved local and regional skills base.

Ref	Management measure
SE20	**The Project will apply Hydro Tasmania's Major Projects Local Content Framework to the Project construction phase**. The Project will develop and implement an Australian Industry Participation Plan (AIPP). The contractor will develop and implement a Tasmanian Industry Participation Plan (TIPP), where relevant. The contractor will develop and implement a project specific local industry action plan that seeks to achieve the objectives and outcomes of the Major Projects Local Content Framework and the Project SIMP. In addition to other matters, the local industry action plan will detail: • Actions to facilitate the full, fair and reasonable participation of local, regional, social and First Nations businesses and industry in Project procurement opportunities. • Actions to build capacity and capability across local business and industry. • How supplier and subcontracting opportunities will be presented to the market to optimise local business and industry participation. The Project will utilise the Tasmanian Industry Capability Network (ICN), other vendor registration systems, the local Jobs Hub & local representatives of Dept of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) to connect with local and regional business and industry.
SE21	Through the Project SIMP, **develop and implement actions that support the realisation of the social procurement objectives** established in the Major Projects Local Benefit Sharing Strategy. The contractor will be required to develop and maintain a Social Procurement Management Plan (SPMP) that aligns with the objectives of the Major Projects Local Benefit Sharing Strategy and the Project SIMP. The SPMP will enhance opportunities for youth, First Nations people, migrants, women and vulnerable groups to participate in project employment and economic development opportunities. The SPMP would establish performance targets and goals for social procurement on the Project and provide strategies for implementing and meeting these targets /goals.
SE22	**Develop and implement a cultural awareness training program for Project construction**. Prior to the commencement of work, all Project personnel will be required to complete cultural awareness training in support of a culturally safe work environment for First Nations people.
SE23	Prior to commencement of construction, **engage with tourism industry sector stakeholders to identify potential strategies to offset or minimise potential adverse construction phase effects** and create opportunities for the sector during Project construction. Agreed strategies would be considered through the LBS Strategy process (SE11).

Ref	Management measure
SE24	Prior to the commencement of operations, Hydro Tasmania will **develop and implement a stakeholder engagement plan to communicate to downstream users changes in operational flow regimes** and likely effects. Downstream users will be provided with information regarding Hydro Tasmania's Complaints Management, including how to raise issues or concerns regarding operational impacts.
SE25	Prior to the completion of Project construction **develop and implement a plan to support the transition from construction to operations**. Engage with key stakeholders and potentially affected communities. In the development of the plan. Development of the plan could involve: • Identification of areas and demographic cohorts likely to experience potential economic and social impacts from the cessation of construction. • Identification of the services, funding opportunities, programs that can help to soften the transition.
SE26	Collaborate with key stakeholders (e.g. State Growth, ReCFIT) and industry sector stakeholders to **facilitate workforce forecasting and inform labour force planning**. **Advocate for policies** that support workforce development and facilitate the movement of workers between regions and sectors.

9 Management and monitoring framework

This section outlines the social impact management and monitoring framework for the construction phase of the Project.

9.1 Approach to mitigation and management

Hydro Tasmania's approach to social impact management and monitoring through the design and construction of the Project with the EPC Contractor involves:

- Project design - The Project will incorporate measures to avoid negative social impacts e.g. provision of a workforce accommodation facility.
- Hydro Tasmania's Project Social Impact Management Plan (SIMP) - Hydro Tasmania will develop a Project SIMP for the construction phase (refer management response SEO 1 in Section 8.5). The Project SIMP provides the framework for the management and monitoring of potential social impacts and enhancement of opportunities during construction.
- The EPC Contractor's SIMP – The EPC Contractor will prepare, maintain and implement a contractor SIMP and associated sub-plans for the construction phase. The Contractor's SIMP must be accepted by Hydro Tasmania prior to the commencement of construction, and it must align with the requirements of the Project SIMP.
- Hydro Tasmania's EMS – will be used by Hydro Tasmania as the framework to manage the implementation of the EPC Contractors construction environmental management plan (CEMP) during construction of the Project. The EMS, whilst primarily focused on environmental performance will indirectly influence and contribute to social impact mitigation.
- The EPC Contractors EMS – will be used to manage construction of the Project. The EMS will provide the framework for developing and implementing the Contractor's CEMP and will indirectly influence and contribute to social impact mitigation.

9.2 Monitoring, reporting and review

Consistent with the principle of adaptive management, the Project SIMP will include a monitoring, evaluation, reporting and improvement (MERI) program. There will likely be some unintended and unanticipated impacts that arise from the Project. The MERI program will ensure an ongoing social monitoring and adaptive management program is included in the Project to enable expected as well as unexpected impacts and opportunities to be effectively managed.

The MERI program will detail specific key performance indicators and targets, which measure the effectiveness of the defined commitments in supporting the realisation of desired outcomes.

The MERI program will be consistent with leading-practice social guidelines such as the IAIA document *Social Impact Assessment: Guidance for Assessing and Managing the Social Impacts of Projects* (Vanclay et al 2015).

The MERI program will align with the broader Major Projects MERI framework currently in development.

9.2.1 MERI purpose and objectives

The **purpose** of the MERI program is to determine:

- Whether strategies, actions and related targets of the Project SIMP have been met or, where they are not being met or not on track to being achieved, the reasons why
- The effects of implementing specific strategies and actions in the Project SIMP on the social values of the local and regional Project setting; and whether these effects are consistent with the vision for the local and regional area
- Whether the strategies and actions should be adjusted or replaced because they are not working as intended
- Whether the strategies and actions should be modified to reflect changes in community values and economic conditions and local, regional or state policy.

The **objectives** of the MERI program are to:

- Track progress towards achieving the desired outcomes and related targets defined within the Project SIMP
- Enable the contribution of the Project to local and regional sustainability to be accurately tracked and assessed
- Provide a systematic and consistent information base to assist Hydro Tasmania to report internally and externally on its social performance
- Promote efficiencies in the management and monitoring of social sustainability in the local and regional area.

9.2.2 Key Principles

The following principles underpin the design of the MERI program:

- The perspective of community members is integral to the development and implementation of the MERI program
- Efficient and effective monitoring of Project social impacts requires a partnership with the CHC, DVC and other key stakeholders
- The MERI program is outcome-focused, that is, it seeks to monitor progress towards the achievement of the identified desired outcomes and broader Project objectives
- Objectives, targets and indicators must be SMART – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound
- Where possible, the selection of indicators and targets is to draw on existing indicators and targets, such as those already developed by industry, regulatory agencies and peak groups.

9.2.3 Roles and responsibilities

Defining clear roles and responsibilities is required for the effective management of social impacts. The Project SIMP will define the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities for impact management and implementation of the MERI program. Hydro Tasmania will ensure responsibilities for achieving the performance objectives described in the Project SIMP are assigned and clearly communicated.

9.2.4 Stakeholder participation

The participatory monitoring, reporting and review process will include ongoing consultation with the CHC, DVC, key stakeholders and communities of the SIA study area. The participatory monitoring, reporting and review process aims to empower key stakeholders to provide ideas and opinions regarding solutions to potential issues. Through this process, key stakeholders will assist with the identification and refinement of actions and strategies to address monitoring results that do not achieve set targets and to enhance Project benefits.

Further details on the participatory approach to MERI will be included in the Project SIMP.

9.2.5 Social indicators

A range of social indicators will be monitored during construction to support the adaptive management approach. Indicators will be derived from a range of primary and secondary sources such as government datasets (at state and federal levels), industry sources and community-sector organisations.

Data and information collection methodologies will be appropriate to the indicator and will rely on accessing government, industry and community-sector datasets, establishing and maintaining Project-specific datasets (e.g. stakeholder relationship management systems) as well as undertaking primary data collection through surveys, interviews, focus groups and similar. Whenever available, cross-validation of data and information from relevant primary and secondary sources will be used.

Key indicators of the broader population context will likely include:

- Population and demographic characteristics (particularly changes in Local and Regional setting population, relative to other locations)
- labour force characteristics (such as employment and unemployment, including participation rates, training participation, etc.)
- Economic conditions (such as retail trade, commercial occupancy rates)
- Housing (primarily occupancy and affordability)
- Health and community services (access and participation)
- Traffic and road safety (traffic counts on key roads, traffic accident data, journey times)
- Recreation and tourism (occupancy rates, visitation statistics to key regional assets)

Key indicators pertaining specifically to Project will likely include:

- Complaints and grievances (absolute and relative quantities, thematic analysis)
- Workforce demographic characteristics (e.g. representation of minority groups, youth, in the workforce)
- Workforce retention rates (quantitative and qualitative – e.g. reasons for exiting)
- Access to Project information (quantitative and qualitative – e.g. accessibility and comprehension of project).

9.2.6 Reporting and review processes

Reporting on the delivery and effectiveness of the Project SIMP will be integrated with reporting procedures for the Project. A copy of the Project SIMP will be made available to the CHC and DVC. In addition, a copy will be made available for viewing to members of the public at the Project website.

The Project SIMP will be reviewed and if necessary updated at key intervals during the Project construction phase. Hydro Tasmania will review and, if necessary, revise the SIMP in response to material changes in local and regional social indictors, which are attributable to the Project, and relevant material changes in construction activities which have the potential to affect the social environment. Where amendments are made to the SIMP as a result of the review process, Hydro Tasmania will notify the CHC and DVC of the relevant changes and document stakeholder feedback as part of the SIMP amendment.

Hydro Tasmania will ensure appropriate arrangements and resources are in place for the regular review of the Project SIMP implementation.

The review functions of the MERI program are designed to be an internal quality assurance measure, ensure compliance with the SIMP implementation commitments and enable adaptive management. The outcomes of the review process inform any necessary updates to the SIMP or the MERI program. The adaptive management approach will allow for continuous improvement and implementation of leading-practice approaches that enhance outcomes for the community and other stakeholders.

10 Conclusion

This section summarises the key findings of the social impact assessment.

The SIA has provided an assessment of the social impacts of the construction and operation of the Project and presents a set of management recommendations and a framework for monitoring and adaptive management. The report satisfies the social impact assessment requirements of the EPA Guidelines and has been prepared generally in accordance with industry best practice including the IAIA SIA Guidance (Vanclay et al, 2025), NSW SIA Guidance (NSW DPE 2023), and the IHA guideline for environmental and social assessment (IHA, 2021).

The Project area has a long history of hydropower development, timber harvesting and plantation development for production forestry. Hydropower infrastructure including dams, canals, flumes, penstocks and transmission lines are prominent features of the landscape.

The SIA study areas were defined to reflect the geographic distribution of different types of potential social impacts. The local study area includes communities which directly surround the Project area and are most likely to experience direct social impacts. The regional study area (Central Highlands LGA and Derwent Valley LGA) was identified as the area which may experience broader socio-economic effects including service impacts and increased employment and business opportunities.

Through primary and secondary research, this SIA has sought to identify social impacts associated with the construction and operation of the Project across the social study areas. The identified negative social impacts are largely associated with demand for labour and the influx of the construction workforce which affects access to services, perceptions of safety and local community dynamics.

Key social opportunities are predominantly associated with project employment, training, and business opportunities (through procurement of goods and services) relating to direct and indirect economic activity resulting from the project.

This SIA has also considered potential cumulative impacts. Acknowledging the significant increase in planned and existing projects in the Southern Tasmanian Region, there is a focus on understanding and planning for cumulative impacts across several key impact areas. This includes demand for labour and services, housing affordability, and accommodation capacity.

Project design refinements have occurred through stakeholder feedback and other studies undertaken for the EIS. While these refinements have been made in consideration of respective study outcomes, they contribute to reducing potential social impacts. These include:

- Inclusion of a construction workforce accommodation facility to reduce demand on local housing and short-term accommodation
- Consultation and field surveys as part of the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment and subsequent avoidance of sites and items of Aboriginal cultural significance
- The integration of the Project with existing hydroelectric infrastructure of the Tarraleah Hydropower Scheme
- The consolidation of the Project, in part, in a similar location with other hydro infrastructure and facilities thereby utilising existing access roads and minimising vegetation clearing in previously undisturbed locations further afield
- The siting of much of the water conveyance infrastructure underground avoiding the visual impacts associated with the existing canals.

The avoidance, mitigation and offset measures proposed by Hydro Tasmania are consistent with good industry practice to reduce impacts as far as reasonable and practical, acknowledging that the impacts are predominantly confined to a temporary period (albeit medium term). The SIA demonstrates that the Project can achieve an appropriate balance between potential benefits and impacts.

As outlined in Chapter 9, an adaptive management approach is proposed, allowing Hydro Tasmania to manage and respond to changing circumstances and new information over time through ongoing monitoring and periodic review of mitigation strategies allowing for modification if required. The SIMP is the key management tool within this adaptive approach to managing social impacts and realising the opportunities the Project presents.

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Appendix A Policy and planning context

Table A 1 Hydro Tasmania Guidance

Guidance Tool	Description
Hydro Tasmania Stakeholder Engagement Charter	Hydro Tasmania's commitments to working with our stakeholders are set out in Hydro Tasmania's Stakeholder Engagement Charter. Our communications with internal and external stakeholders will be in plain, clear language underpinned by a commitment to accuracy, honesty and authenticity. (hydro-tasmania-stakeholder-engagement-charter-.pdf)
Hydro Tasmania Environmental Policy and Sustainability Principles	Hydro Tasmania's Environmental Policy and Sustainability Principles guides our catchment management practices so that future generations can enjoy Tasmania's wealth of natural attractions. (Environmental Policy and Sustainability Principles)
Hydro Tasmania Modern Slavery Statement FY2022/23	This document satisfies Hydro Tasmania's reporting requirements under s14 of the Modern Slavery Act 2018 (Cth). It provides an overview of Hydro Tasmania's approach to modern slavery, and the risks associated with its operations and supply chain for the financial year FY2022/23.(Modern Slavery Statement)

Table A 2 International standards and guidelines

Reference Document	Description and Application to the Project
Hydropower Sustainability Alliance (HSA) Hydropower Sustainability Standard (HSS) (HSA, 2024).	The HSA is a non-profit organisation that sets industry standards for assessing and certifying the sustainability of hydropower projects. The HSS is a robust assessment and certification framework operated by the HSA. It ensures accountability in hydropower development and promotes the responsible growth of hydropower for positive environmental and social outcomes. The HSS covers 12 environmental, social and governance topics including Communication and Consultation, Community Impacts and Infrastructure Safety, and Indigenous Peoples.
International Hydropower Association Good Practice Guide (IHA, 2021a).	The International Hydropower Association is an international non-profit membership association representing the global hydropower sector. The IHA has published a Good Practice Guide providing tools to understand and manage interactions to achieve coexistence and compatibility between environments, stakeholders and hydropower projects.

Table A 3 National renewable energy industry strategies, plans and guidelines.

Reference Document	Description and Application to the Project
Best Practice Charter for Renewable Energy Projects (CEC, 2021).	Hydro Tasmania is a signatory to the Clean Energy Council (CEC) Best Practice Charter for Renewable Energy Projects and reports annually to disclose how Hydro Tasmania is engaging respectfully with the communities we operate in, including First Nations communities; being sensitive to environmental and cultural values; and making a positive contribution to the regions in which we operate. The Charter establishes 10 principles for engagement with communities and stakeholders to achieve positive outcomes. These principles have been integral to the design and implementation of the Project stakeholder engagement plan.
Leading Practice Principles: First Nations and Renewable Energy Projects (CEC & KPMG, 2024).	This guide sets out expectations for industry and details key considerations for engagement of First Nations people at each stage of a project's lifecycle. The principles and practices discussed in the guide have been considered in the SIA and broader project development.

Table A 3 Federal, state and local government policies and guidance

Reference Document	Description and Application to the Project
Federal	
Australian Industry Participation National Framework (Australian Government, 2001).	The Australian Industry Participation National Framework (Australian Government, 2001) provides a nationally consistent approach to maximise Australian industry participation in investment projects. The Framework notes that there is considerable economic significance of Australian industry participation, including wealth and employment creation, increased standards of living and skills enhancement. The Project may also contribute to these benefits by complying with the Framework and maximising Australian industry involvement in the construction and operation of the proposal.
Tasmanian Renewable Energy Action Plan and Renewable Energy Coordination Framework (Tasmanian Government, 2020).	This plan sets out the Tasmanian Government's vision for utilising renewable energy over three key priority areas: 1. Transforming Tasmania into a global renewable energy powerhouse 2. Making energy work for the Tasmanian community 3. Growing the economy and providing jobs The plan sets clear targets and actions designed to build on Tasmania's natural competitive advantages and attract large-scale investment to significantly grow and expand Tasmanian's renewable energy sector. The Project will contribute significantly to meeting the targets set.

Reference Document	Description and Application to the Project
Renewable Energy Development in Tasmania: A Guideline for Community Engagement, Benefit Sharing and Local Procurement (Tasmanian Government 2024a).	This guideline provides best practice standards for renewable energy projects in Tasmania. It outlines principles and practical advice for community engagement, benefit sharing, and local procurement to ensure projects create lasting value for local communities and involve them in all stages of development.
Strategic Regional Plan for Tasmania 2023 (Regional Development Australia Tasmania, 2023).	This plan sets out the Strategic Regional Priorities for Tasmania. It reflects the vision of the Australian Government, the Tasmanian Government and local governments in Tasmania. A priority of the plan is to deliver renewable energy projects and leverage the benefits for Tasmania, our industries, community, and people.
Southern Tasmanian Regional Land Use Strategy (STRLUS) (Tasmanian Planning Commission, 2010).	The STRLUS is a regional plan that sets the strategic direction for the 12 local government areas in southern Tasmania; the Central Highlands being one of these. STRLUS aims to meet the key planning objectives as set out by RMPS by providing broad policies and goals to help facilitate change, growth, and development within the region until 2035. The STRLUS is currently under review. Section 6 of STRLUS highlights the region's water resources as a key area for sustainable development opportunities with hydroelectric energy production contributing the strategic direction of "making the region nationally and internationally competitive". This development would enhance energy generation and support energy efficiency for the state while strengthening the generating capacity and futureproofing the energy generated, supporting the NEM and giving the region that competitive edge at the national scale. Accordingly, this proposal is aligned with the outcomes of STRLUS.
Tasmanian Planning Scheme (TPS) (Tasmanian Planning Commission)	The TPS is a single, state-wide planning scheme that sets out the requirements for use of development of land in accordance with the LUPA Act. The Project has been assessed against the relevant requirements of the TPS (refer EIS [Chapter 2 Project Description]).
Buy Local Policy (Version 8, August 2024) (Department of Treasury and Finance, 2024).	The intention of the Tasmanian Government's Buy Local Policy is to increase awareness of the requirements for, and benefits in, buying locally and improve access to government contracts for Tasmanian small and medium enterprises (SMEs). The policy mandates a Tasmanian Industry Participation Plan (TIPP) for all procurements with a value of more than $5 million. The objectives of the Buy Local Policy have been considered in the identification, assessment and management of potential Project social impacts and opportunities.
Central Highlands Council Strategic Plan 2015-2024 (CHC, 2015).	The Strategic Plan identifies key issues affecting the municipality and provides direction and strategies for the CHC to continue to manage assets and deliver services. The Project is considered to be consistent with the goals of the Strategic Plan, including encouragement of economic viability within the municipality.

Table A 4 Other Relevant Studies and Assessments

Reference Document	Description and Application to the Project
Federal	
Australian Skills Guarantee (Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, Australian Government)	The Australian Skills Guarantee (Skills Guarantee) uses government investment in major projects to help train the next generation of skilled workers. The Skills Guarantee is a key commitment under the Australian Government's Secure Australian Jobs Plan. The Skills Guarantee introduced new national targets for apprentices, trainees and paid cadets working on Australian Government funded major projects. The Skills Guarantee also introduced national targets for women to increase the proportion of women working on major projects and drive long term sustainable change to reduce gender segregation in the apprenticeship system.
Skilling the Energy Transition report (Clean Energy Council, 2021)	This report explores the potential pathways into the clean energy workforce and provides a set of clear recommendations to address existing barriers that limit the pool of skills and talent entering the industry. The report has informed Hydro Tasmania's approach to workforce development for the Project and our contractor requirements.
State	
Youth Jobs Strategy 2024-2030 (Tasmanian Government, 2024c).	The Tasmanian Youth Jobs Strategy aims to increase youth engagement and participation in employment, further education, or training by aligning effort across government, industry, the education and training sector, and community to help young Tasmanians live fulfilling and productive lives. The Strategy acknowledges that the government's vision to increase renewable energy generation to 200% of Tasmania's current needs by 2040 will require significant uplift in workforce capability. This is presented as a key opportunity to grow Tasmania's youth workforce.
Climate Change Action Plan 2023-25 (Tasmanian Government, 2024d).	The Climate Change Action Plan outlines the Tasmanian government's plan for action on climate change between 2023-2025. Increasing renewable energy generation and attracting renewable energy investment are key actions in this Plan.
Tasmania's Affordable Housing Strategy 2015-2025 (Department of Health and Human Services, 2015).	This strategy provides a road map to improve housing affordability and help those most vulnerable to housing stress and homelessness. The strategy is relevant considering potential impacts of the Project on housing access and affordability in the local area.

Reference Document	Description and Application to the Project
Tasmanian Visitor Engagement Strategy (Department of State Growth, 2016).	The Tasmanian Visitor Engagement Strategy aims to ensure that Tasmania's way of engaging with visitors will continue to evolve to ensure visitors have the best travel experience while in Tasmania and are inspired to share their experience after they leave. The strategy is relevant considering potential impacts of the Project on tourism values (e.g., visual impact, recreation).
Tasmania's Population Policy – planning for our future (Tasmanian Government, 2024e).	The Tasmanian Population Policy aims to better prepare for and manage future population changes as a shared responsibility across all levels of government. The policy is relevant considering the potential for major projects to contribute to population change (through drivers such as jobs and economic growth).
Tasmania's 2030 Visitor Economy Strategy (Tasmanian Government, 2024f).	The strategy provides a collective longer-term vision for Tasmania through to 2030. The strategy is a plan for growth and a plan to manage growth sustainably, ensuring that the visitor economy continues to have a positive impact on our environment, economy and way of life. The strategy is relevant to the consideration of potential Project effects and in particular potential opportunities that may be codeveloped through the Major Projects Local Benefit Sharing (LBS) Strategy.
Tasmanian Building and Construction Training Policy (Tasmanian Government, 2021)	This policy is designed to help maintain and support sills in the building and construction industry, and to contribute to the performance of the Tasmanian economy. Building and construction projects valued at $250 000 or more which are undertaken or contracted by a Government agency, and government-funded civil construction works, equal to or in excess of $5 million in value, need to comply with the requirement. The policy has informed the workforce development component of our contractor requirements and additional social management responses presented in the SIA.
Regional	
Hobart and Southern Tasmania Local Jobs Plan (Workforce Australia, 2024).	The Local Jobs Plan sets out the training and employment challenges and priorities of the region, and associated strategies that will drive the design and implementation of projects to address these challenges. Priorities include opportunities for collaboration, and improving employment opportunities for youth, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities.

Reference Document	Description and Application to the Project
Local	
Central Highlands Municipal Emergency Management Plan (CHC, 2021).	The Central Highlands Municipal Emergency Management Plan describes emergency management arrangements that reduce risks to the community and mitigate the impact and effects of any emergency in the municipality. As a landowner, HT is recognised as a key partner to the implementation of emergency management arrangements. Dam failure is also recognised as a risk to the municipality.
Central Highlands Destination Action Plan 2016-2019 (Destination Southern Tasmania, 2016).	The Destination Action Plan for the Central Highlands identifies priority strategies and actions to enhance the region's tourism industry. HT assets and history, including the Tarraleah Village, are recognised as a key part of the visitor experience in the Central Highlands. Actions include developing the Central Highlands brand with consideration to HT heritage and experience.
Derwent Valley Youth Strategy (DVC, 2025c).	The DVC's Youth Strategy outlines how the Council will work with stakeholders to advance opportunities and increase support for young people in the Derwent Valley community. Themes include pathways to support education and employment. The Tarraleah Redevelopment Project presents opportunities for supporting young people, particularly regarding training and employment opportunities.
Derwent Valley Destination Action Plan 2016-2019 (Destination Southern Tasmania, 2016a)	The Destination Action Plan for the Derwent Valley identifies priority strategies and actions to enhance the region's tourism industry. HT is identified as a key collaborator for implementing the priority actions. Developing new product related to hydropower assets to support the Derwent Valley brand is identified as an opportunity for the region.

Appendix B Impact significance assessment methodology

Table B-1 Social impact significance matrix

		Magnitude level				
		1	2	3	4	5
Likelihood level		Minimal	Minor	Moderate	Major	Transformational
A	Almost certain	Low	Medium	High	Very High	Very High
B	Likely	Low	Medium	High	High	Very High
C	Possible	Low	Medium	Medium	High	High
D	Unlikely	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High
E	Very unlikely	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium

Source: DPE 2023a,b

Likelihood

Table B-2 Defining likelihood levels of social impacts

Likelihood level	Meaning	Probability
Almost certain	Definite or almost definitely expected (e.g. has happened on similar projects)	91%-100%
Likely	Impact or opportunity is likely to occur	61%-90%
Possible	Impact or opportunity may occur, but not likely	21%-60%
Unlikely	Impact or opportunity not expected	6%-20%
Very unlikely	Impact or opportunity extremely unlikely, may only occur in extreme and exceptional circumstances	<5%

Source: Modified from DPE 2023a,b

Magnitude

Table B-3 Dimensions of social impact magnitude

Dimensions	Details needed to enable assessment
Extent	• Who specifically is expected to be affected (directly, indirectly, and/or cumulatively), including any vulnerable people? Which location(s) and people are affected? (e.g. near neighbours, local, regional, future generations)
Duration	• When is the social impact expected to occur and for how long will it occur for? Is it temporary or permanent?
Intensity or scale	• What is the likely scale or degree of change (e.g. mild, moderate or severe)
Sensitivity or importance	• How sensitive/vulnerable (or how adaptable/resilient) are affected people to the impact, or (for positive impacts) how important is it to them? What is their capacity to cope with or adapt to change?
Level of concern/interest	• How concerned/interested are people about the impact or opportunity?

Source: DPE 2023a,b

Table B-4 Defining magnitude levels for social impacts

Dimensions	Assessment criteria
Transformational	• Substantial change experienced in community wellbeing, livelihood, infrastructure, services, health, and/or heritage values'; permanent displacement or addition of at least 20% of a community.
Major	• Substantial deterioration/improvement to something that people value highly, either lasting for an indefinite time, or affecting many people in a widespread area.
Moderate	• Noticeable deterioration/improvement to something that people value highly, either lasting for an extensive time, or affecting a group of people.
Minor	• Mild deterioration/improvement, for a reasonably short time, for a small number of people who are generally adaptable and not vulnerable
Minimal	• Little noticeable change experienced by people in the locality.

Source: DPE 2023a,b

Appendix C SIA consultation scope and outcomes

Table C-1 SIA specific engagement activities

Stakeholder	Engagement purpose	Mechanism	Timing
Bronte Village	• Provide information about the Project and EIS process and enable community members to contribute their Project views • Validate social baseline data and understand impacts/opportunities from Cattle Hill Wind Farm experience	• Pop-up stall at Bronte Park Annual General Meeting	• Dec 2024
Broader community	• Provide information about the Project and EIS process. • Enable community members to contribute their views on the scope of potential social impacts and opportunities	• Participation in pop-up engagement events	• March/April 2023
	• Collect information on social baseline values	• Community survey • Participation in pop-up engagement events	• July – October 2023
Central Highlands Council	• Provide information about the Project and EIS process • Enable Council representatives to raise Project issues and or concerns • Validate social baseline data and understand potential impacts and opportunities	• Briefing sessions to staff and elected representatives	• June 2023 • June 2024
Derwent Valley Council	• Provide information about the Project and EIS process • Invitation for Council representatives to raise Project issues and or concerns, understand issues and opportunities in workforce development	• Phone calls and email updates.	• 2023 ongoing
Health Action Team Central Highlands (HATCH)	• Provide information about the Project and EIS process • Understand issues and concerns and validate social baseline data including service delivery information	• In-person and on-line meeting	• September 2023 • February 2024

Stakeholder	Engagement purpose	Mechanism	Timing
Inland Fisheries	• Validate social baseline (recreational fishing at Lake King William and Mossy Marsh)	• Phone calls and email	• Regular/ongoing
Anglers Alliance	• Provide information about the Project and EIS process • Enable members to contribute their views on the scope of potential social impacts and opportunities • Validate social baseline data	• Presentation at AGM	• October 2023
Trout Guides and Lodges Association Tasmania	• Provide information about the Project and EIS process • Enable members to contribute their views on the scope of potential social impacts and opportunities • Validate social baseline data	• Attendance at AGM	• Annually
Ambulance Tasmania	• Provide information about the Project and EIS process • Identify potential issues and concerns • Validate social baseline data	• Telephone briefing	• October 2023
Tasmanian Fire Services[1]	• Provide information about the Project and EIS process • Identify potential issues and concerns • Discuss LBS Strategy opportunities	• In person briefing session	• July 2024
Derwent Catchment Project	• Provide information about the Project and EIS Process • Identify issues and concerns • Discuss LBS Strategy opportunities	• In-person project briefing	• March 2023
Skills, training, workforce development	• Provide information about the Project, anticipated workforce needs, and EIS Process • Inform skills and training policy development and design of training and participation programs	• Attendance at various industry committees and roundtables at a local, state and federal level • Briefing sessions and meetings with a range of organisations including the	• February 2022 – ongoing

Stakeholder	Engagement purpose	Mechanism	Timing
	• Social baseline validation including identifying marginalised groups in the study area, barriers to labour force participation and opportunities to collaborate to enhance participation	Clean Energy Council, UTAS, Tas TAFE, RECFIT, Infrastructure Tasmania, Home Base, Civil Construction Federation, South Central Workforce Network	
Department of Education, Children and Young People (DECYP)	• Project update and workforce arrangements to support state government decisions regarding the future of Ouse District School. • Social baseline validation	• On-line meeting	• March 2025
Jobs Tasmania (Department of State Growth [DSG])	• Provide information about the Project and EIS Process • Social baseline validation • Inform opportunities to retain workforce demobilising from the New Bridgewater Bridge project in Hobart	• Briefing session	• October 2023 • March 2024
Skills Tasmania (Department of State Growth [DSG])	• Provide information about the Project, anticipated workforce needs, and EIS Process • Inform state-wide workforce planning needs, skills and training policy development and design of training and participation programs • Govern skills and training funding dispersed via the Energising Tasmania fund	• Representation on the Tasmanian Energy and Infrastructure Workforce Advisory Committee • Representation on the Advisory Committee overseeing the design of Tas TAFE's Renewable Energy Centre of Excellence	• 2021 – ongoing
Department of State Growth	• Provide information about the Project and EIS Process • Discuss Lyell Highway Corridor Strategy	• Briefing session	• November 2024
Social procurement organisations	• Provide information about the Project and EIS Process • Social baseline validation including identifying marginalised groups, existing social enterprise activities and identifying project opportunities	• On-line and in person briefings	• December 20243 ongoing

Stakeholder	Engagement purpose	Mechanism	Timing
Tasmanian Aboriginal People and Tasmanian Aboriginal Organisations	• Seek participation in Project specific engagement • Share information about Hydro Tasmania's Commitment and Action Plan program and the Major Projects program including Tarraleah Redevelopment • Identify key priorities for consideration in the Commitment and Action Plan and the Major Project's First Nations Participation Plan	• In-person and on-line meetings • On-line survey • Telephone calls and email correspondence	• June 2024-March 2025
	• Share cultural heritage information and involve in cultural heritage management processes	• In-person engagement in cultural heritage surveys and in cultural heritage discovery and management processes at Tarraleah	• 2023 ongoing
Aboriginal Heritage Officers and Trainees	• Share cultural heritage information and involve in cultural heritage management processes	• In-person engagement in cultural heritage surveys and in cultural heritage discovery and management processes at Tarraleah	• 2024 ongoing

Notes 1. Bradys Lake, Ouse and Great Lakes Brigades, and Bradys Lake State Emergency Service

Appendix D Social baseline supporting information

D1 Overview

Appendix D presents supporting information for Section 7 Existing social environment. Appendix D includes a range of supporting data and additional description of key socio-economic conditions in the SIA study area. The information is presented in thematic order consistent with the structure of Section 7 Existing social environment.

D2 Population and demographic characteristics

Table D 1 Population change by census period, regional study area

Geography	Population 2011	Population2016	Population, 2021	Population change 2011-2021 (No.)	% Change 2011-2021	Population change 2016-2021 (No.)	% Change 2016-2021
Central Highlands LGA	2,262	2,141	2,520	258	11.4%	379	17.7%
Derwent Valley LGA	9,704	10,021	10,942	1,238	12.8%	921	9.2%
Regional study area	11,966	12,162	13,462	1,496	12.5%	1,300	10.7%
Tasmania	495,354	509,965	557,571	62,217	12.6%	47,606	9.3%

Source: (ABS, 2011; ABS, 2016 and ABS, 2021).

Table D 2 LGA population projections 2023-2053 (medium series), regional study area and State, 2024

Geography	2023	2053	Population change (No.)	% Population change
Central Highlands LGA	2,595	2,618	23	0.9%
Derwent Valley LGA	11,341	12,739	1,398	12.3%
Tasmania	573,156	641,045	67,889	11.8%

Source: (Department of Treasury and Finance, 2024).

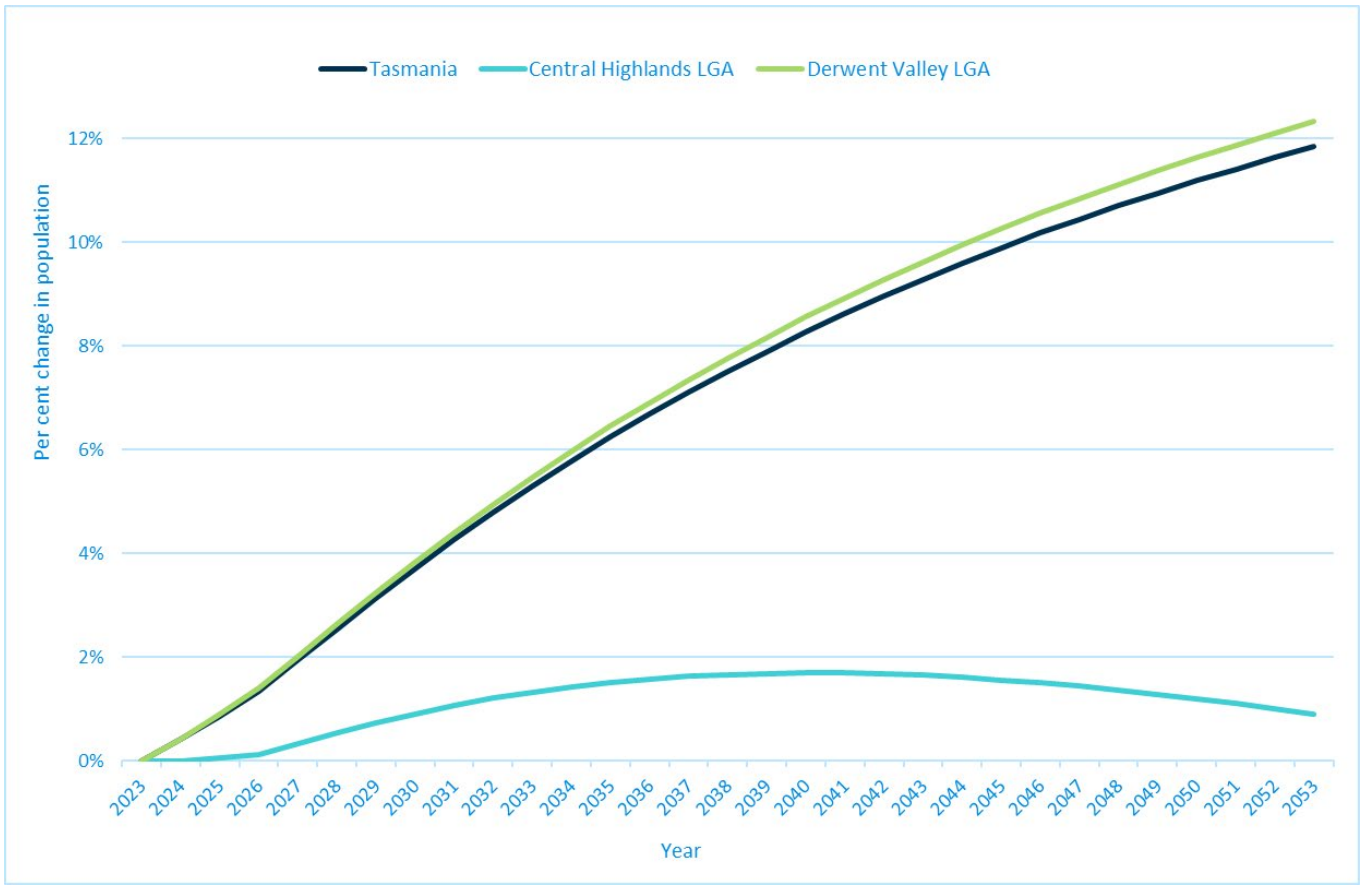

Figure D 1 Projected regional study area population 2023 – 2053 (% change)

Source: (Department of Treasury and Finance, 2024).

Aboriginal and /or Torres Strait Islander Population

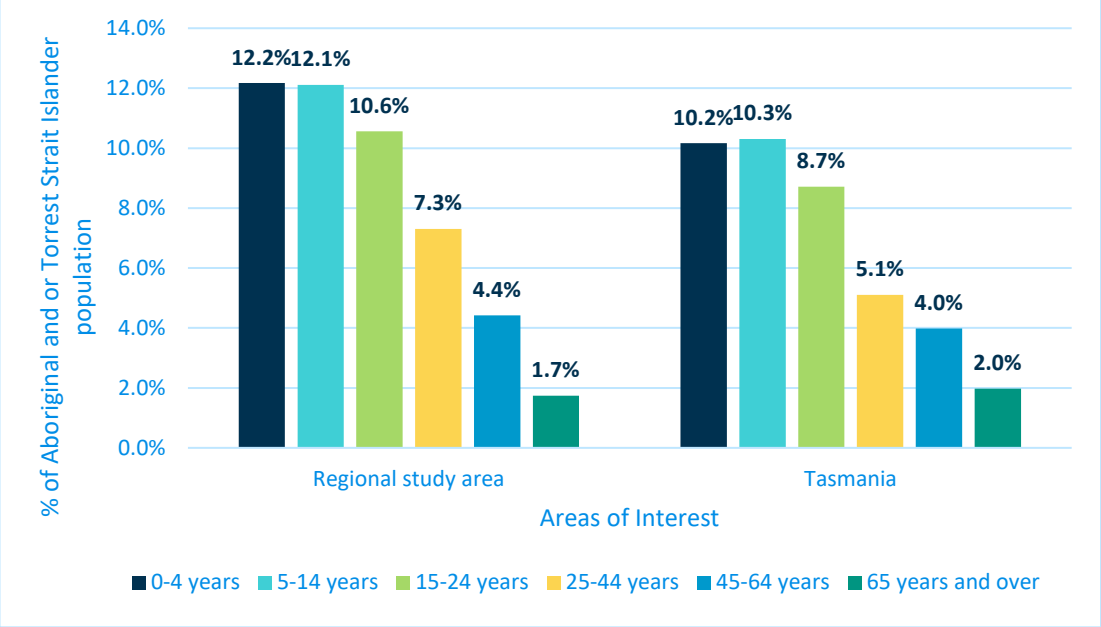

Figure D 2 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander population by age group, 2021

Source: (ABS, 2021).

D4 Vulnerabilities

Physical health

Table D 3 Self-reported risk factors, 2022

	Central Highlands LGA	Derwent Valley LGA	Tasmania
Obese body mass index (BMI)	77%	77%	62%
Current smoker	18%	18%	15%
Daily/occasional vaping	3%	4%	3%
Single occasion risk drinking (>4 alcoholic standard drinks)	39%	29%	37%
Insufficient moderate/vigorous activity	Na	27%	24%
Did not meet recommended daily vegetable intake	93%	93%	91%
Did not meet recommended daily fruit intake	45%	79%	61%

Source: (PHT, 2024a; PHT 2024b).

Homelessness

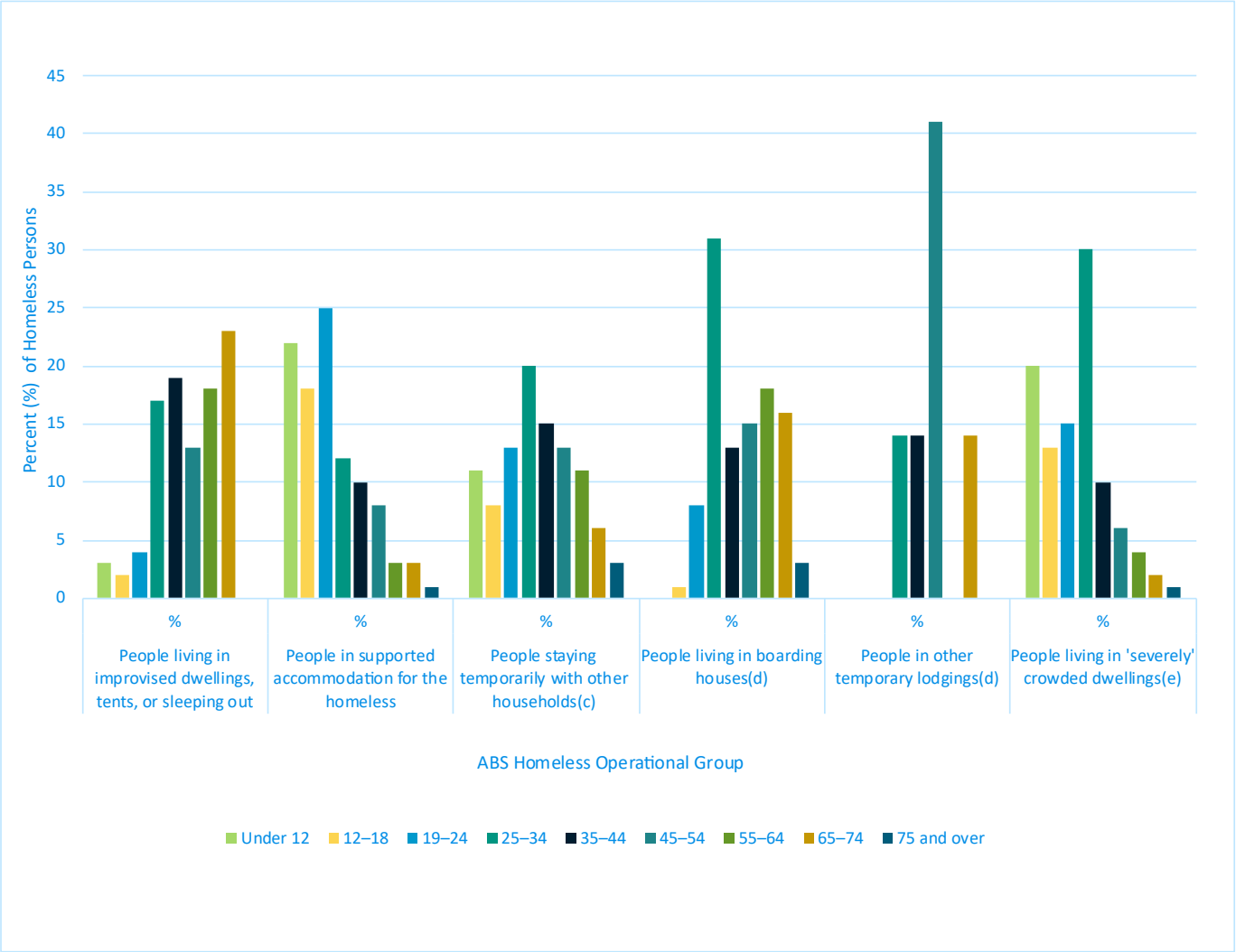

Figure D 3 Rates of homelessness across Tasmania 2021

Source (ABS, 2021b)

D6 Economic and labour force characteristics

Economic activity

Table D 4 Industry sector contribution 2023-2024 – Central Highlands LGA

Sector	Employed (total)	Output ($m)	% of State sector output	Value Added ($m)	Local sales ($m)
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	372	94.51	1.2%	44.21	16.70
Accommodation & food services	178	20.35	1.0%	9.52	7.20
Retail Trade	99	8.94	0.3%	5.56	6.83
Public administration and safety	39	5.94	0.1%	3.21	5.64
Electricity, gas, water and waste services	35	26.02	0.8	7.36	13.17
Mining	31	37.49	1.3%	27.79	0.70
Manufacturing	24	6.04	0.1%	1.82	2.13
Construction	16	40.54	0.4%	10.85	40.45

Source: National Institute of Economic and Industry Research (NIEIR), 2025b.

Table D 5 Industry sector contribution 2023-2024 - Derwent Valley LGA

Sector	Employed (total)	Output ($m)	% of State sector output	Value Added ($m)	Local sales ($m)
Manufacturing	608	183.97	2.7%	51.91	12.21
Health care and social assistance	591	88.66	1.1%	62.91	75.35
Education and training	356	32.02	0.9%	23.71	29.422
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	335	142.02	1.8%	68.02	36.33
Accommodation & food services	300	21.16	1.1%	10.90	17.60
Electricity, gas, water and waste services	195	66.87	2.1	28.23	37.01
Retail Trade	292	26.35	0.9%	16.53	24.07
Construction	187	146.58	1.4%	38.91	146.27

Source: National Institute of Economic and Industry Research (NIEIR), 2025b.

Labour market conditions

Table D 6 Labour market characteristics, 2021

Locality	Labour Force #	Participation Rate %	Unemployment Rate %
Central Highlands (LGA)	1,050	49.1	5.5
Derwent Valley (LGA)	4,988	55.5	7.4
Tasmania	270,780	58.2	5.9

Source: (ABS, 2021).

Table D 7 Unemployment and labour force participation rates by gender (%), 2021

Township	Unemployment Rate			Youth unemployment rate			Labour force participation rate		
	Male	Female	Total Persons	Male	Female	Total Persons	Male	Female	Total Persons
Central Highlands LGA	5	6.3	5.5	6.8	13.5	10.5	52.1	45.2	49.1
Derwent Valley LGA	8	6.6	7.4	17.9	12.5	15.6	58.6	52.4	55.5
Tasmania	6.4	5.5	5.9	15.3	11.5	13.4	61.2	55.4	58.2

Source: (ABS, 2021).

Educational Attainment

Table D 8 Highest level of schooling completed for persons aged 15 years and over, 2021

Highest year of school completed	Local study area		Central Highlands LGA		Derwent Valley LGA		Tasmania	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Year 12 or equivalent	23	28%	648	31%	2,908	34%	210,747	47%
Year 11 or equivalent	3	4%	160	8%	853	10%	35,615	8%
Year 10 or equivalent	29	36%	725	35%	3,156	36%	127,077	28%
Year 9 or equivalent	9	11%	187	9%	696	8%	27,694	6%
Year 8 or below	3	4%	106	5%	375	4%	14,954	3%
Did not go to school	3	4%	5	0%	42	0%	2,230	0%
Highest year of school not stated	12	15%	247	12%	637	7%	29,276	7%
Total	81	100%	2,086	100%	8,664	100%	447,596	100%

Source: (ABS, 2021).

Industry of employment

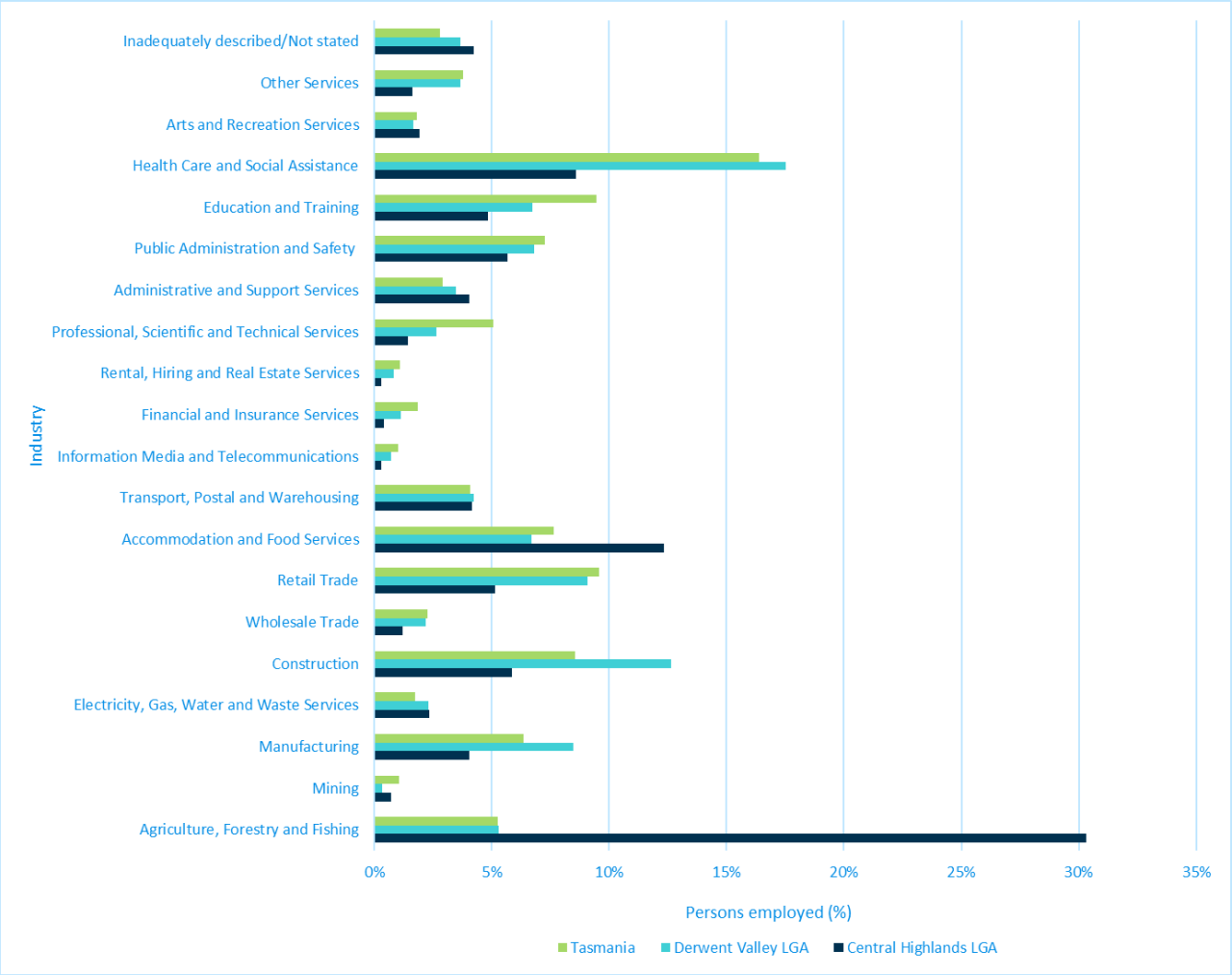

Figure D 4 Regional study areas industry of employment, 2021

Source: (ABS, 2021).

Table D 9 Employment by industry sector relevant to Project construction, 2021

Locality	Electricity, gas, water and waste services	Transport, postal and warehousing	Construction	Professional, scientific, & technical services	Total
Central Highlands LGA	23	41	58	14	136
Derwent Valley LGA	107	196	585	123	1,011
Study Area	130	237	643	137	1,147
Tasmania	4,463	10,368	21,821	12,908	49,560

Source: (ABS, 2021).

D7 Social Infrastructure and services

Table D 10 Primary and Secondary Schools in the regional study area, 2025

Geography	School Name	Location	Type	No. students	School attendance rate (%)	School ICSEA value
Central Highlands LGA	Bothwell District High School	Bothwell	Government, K-12	86	84	912
Derwent Valley LGA	Fairview Primary School	New Norfolk	Government, K-6	290	83	889
	Glenora District School	Glenora	Government, K-12	218	78	903
	Molesworth Primary School	Molesworth	Government, K-6	144	87	980
	New Norfolk High School	New Norfolk	Government, 7-12	326	68	888
	New Norfolk Primary School	New Norfolk	Government, K-6	206	79	922
	St Brigid's Catholic School	New Norfolk	Non-government, Prep-6	187	89	973
	Westerway Primary School	Westerway	Government, K-6	42	82	916

Source: (ACARA, 2024).

Community services

Table D 11 Key community infrastructure and services

Facility type	Facility / Service
Parks, sporting, and recreational facilities	Hamilton Recreation Ground Hamilton Tennis Court Gretna Sports Oval Bothwell Recreation Ground Bothwell Swimming Pool Tarraleah Golf Club New Norfolk Sports Centre and Swimming Pool Derwent Valley Sport and Recreation Centre Tynwald Park The Esplanade (Derwent Valley) Gleeson Park Granton Reserve
Community halls and centres	Hamilton Town Hall Ouse Town Hall Ellendale Town Hall Westerway Town Hall Miena Community Centre Great Lake Community Centre

Facility type	Facility / Service
	Steppes Hall Bothwell Town Hall Bothwell CWA Hall Derwent Valley Community House
Library	Ouse Community Library LINC Tasmania Bothwell New Norfolk Library
Places of worship	St Peter's Anglican Church, Hamilton Immaculate Conception Catholic Church, Ouse St John the Baptist, Ouse St Colman's Catholic Church, Ellendale St James Church, Hollow Tree St Matthews Anglican Church, New Norfolk St Peter's Catholic Church, New Norfolk Energiser Church, New Norfolk

Source: (CHC, 2019; Google Maps, 2024).

Hospital services

Table D 12 Hospitals in proximity to the Project site

Hospital	Distance from the Project site by road (163pprox..)	Type of service
New Norfolk District Hospital	94km	• Public, small • 14 sub-acute beds • No emergency services
Calvary Lenah Valley Hospital	127km	• Private, large • Approx. 400 beds • Emergency services Monday-Friday
Royal Hobart Hospital	128km	• Public, major • Approx. 500 beds • Emergency services 24/7
Hobart Private Hospital	128km	• Private, large • Approx. 146 beds • Emergency services 24/7

Source: (Healthdirect Australia, 2023).

Emergency services

Table D 13 Tasmanian Fire Service

Tasmanian Fire Service		
The Tasmanian Fire Service (TFS) is governed under the Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Management. Firefighters employed at the TFS work out of four career brigades: Hobart, Launceston, Burnie and Devonport. The closest career brigade to the Project site is the Hobart Fire Station, which is approximately 128km away. Brigades are notified of emergency incidents by the TFS call receipt and dispatch centre, which is located at the TFS headquarters in Hobart. Incident responses are initially coordinated by the TFS under local arrangements. Depending on the scope and scale of the incident, management may be escalated to regional or state-wide emergency management structures. Volunteer brigades operate throughout urban, rural and regional Tasmania. The closest volunteer fire stations to the Project site are listed in Table 47. During consultation the local volunteer fire brigade highlighted ongoing difficulty recruiting volunteers and noted a significant difference between the number of 'registered volunteers' and the number of volunteers that can respond to a fire/incident. This low number of volunteers is in part due to the aging population.		
Fire service	**Distance from Tarraleah power station by road (approx.)**	**Type**
Bradys Lake Fire Station	13km	Small, volunteer station
Ouse Fire Station	40km	Small, volunteer station
Hamilton Fire Station	53km	Small, volunteer station

Source: (Tasmania Fire Service, 2023).

Table D 14 Tasmania Police

Tasmania Police		
Tasmania Police is governed under the Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Management. The Tasmania Police force is split into three regional district commands: Southern, Northern and Western. The study area is located within the Southern district. The closest police services to the Project site are detailed below. The three police stations listed below are located within the Bridgewater police division (Tasmania Police, 2023).		
Fire service	**Distance from Tarraleah power station by road (approx.)**	**Fire service**
Hamilton Police Station	52 km	Hamilton Police Station
Liawenee Police Station	66 km	Liawenee Police Station
Bushy Park Police Station	78 km	Bushy Park Police Station

Source: (Tasmania Fire Service, 2023).

Table D 15 Ambulance Tasmania

Ambulance Tasmania
The nearest ambulance station to the Project site is at Wayatinah, which is a volunteer-run service. Other nearby stations are located at Ouse (~40km away from the Project site) and Ellendale (~60km away from the Project site) (Department of Health, 2023a). The ambulance station at Ouse is a single branch station with a paramedic rostered on day shift and on-call out-of-hours, with volunteer support. The Ellendale ambulance station is also a volunteer only station. There are volunteer-only Ambulance stations in Bothwell, Wayatinah. A Single Branch Station (with day-shift rostered paramedic) is located at Miena, which is within the Central Highlands municipality but serviced through the North East Ambulance Tasmania region. Engagement outcomes highlight the importance of the Ouse Ambulance Station service to local communities and the value they place on this service being retained. With the lack of GP services in town, the presence of the Ambulance Station gives locals some peace of mind.

Source: (Department of Health, 2023a).

Table D 16 State Emergency Service

State Emergency Service		
The State Emergency Service (SES) Tasmania is a volunteer-based professional emergency services organisation, who is equipped to respond to a range of emergencies and aid in rescue activities (Department of Police, Fire & Emergency Management, 2023). The organisation is governed under the Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Management. The Project site is within the Southern Tasmanian SES Region. The SES Southern Regional Headquarters is in Hobart, and a number of units are located throughout the region as outlined below.		
SES Unit	**Distance from Project site by road (approx..)**	**Primary role/s**
Central Highlands (Bradys Lake)	13km	Road crash rescue
Derwent Valley (New Norfolk)	94km	Road crash rescue with a secondary role of storm damage response
Brighton (Brighton)	101km	General Rescue Unit providing storm, flood and general response

Source: (Department of Police, Fire & Emergency Management, 2023).

Table D 17 Westpac Rescue Helicopter Service

Westpac Helicopter Service
The Tasmanian Westpac Rescue Helicopter Service, operated by Rotor-Lift, is available to facilitate a medical evacuation (medivac) in an emergency. The helicopter service can transport patients directly to the Royal Hobart Hospital, Mersey Community Hospital, or North-West Regional Hospital. As of January 1, 2023, the Launceston General Hospital Helipad has been temporarily relocated due to updated Civil Aviation Safety Authority regulations. The Launceston Airport is currently being used as a landing site whilst a new hospital helipad is constructed (Department of Premier and Cabinet, 2023). Engagement with emergency service personnel and volunteers has highlighted that due to weather conditions across the Central Highlands plateau, air-borne recovery cannot be guaranteed and should not be relied upon.

Events and attractions

Table D 18 Key Events and attractions in the regional study area

Geography	Key events	Key attractions
Central Highlands LGA	Highlands Bushfest (annual) The Hamilton Show (Annual)	Tarraleah Estate National Parks Waddamana Power Station

Geography	Key events	Key attractions
		Great Lake and surrounds The Wall in the Wilderness Ratho Farm Australasian Golf Museum Lawrenny Estate Distillery Hamilton Heritage Museum
Derwent Valley LGA	Derwent Valley Autumn Festival (Annual, cancelled in 2020, 2021 and 2022 due to COVID-19) Derwent Valley Writers Festival (Inaugural event in 2022) New Norfolk Market (Weekly)	Aardvark Adventures Tassie Bound Adventure Tours Salmon Ponds Hatchery, Garden and Museum Willow Court Asylum Ghost Tours The Agrarian Kitchen Eatery New Norfolk Distillery Derwent Estate Winery

Source: (CHC, 2024; DVC, 2024a).

D8 Housing and affordability

Table D 19 Anglicare Australia snapshot of housing affordability in Southern Tasmania, 2024

Cohort	Household Type	Income Type	Max weekly rent	Number of affordable and appropriate properties In Tasmania	
				No.	%
Young people	Single (18+)	Youth Allowance	$102	0	0
	Single (in a share house)	Youth Allowance	$102	0	0
Single Adults	Single	JobSeeker Payment	$126	1	0
	Single (21+)	Disability Support Pension	$192	0	0
	Single	Minimum Wage	$229	37	5
Older people	Single	Age Pension	$192	16	2
	Couple (no children)	Age Pension	$276	2	2
Single parents	Single, two children (one <5, one <10)	Parenting Payment single	$273	0	0
Couples with children	Couple, two children (one <5, and one <10)	Minimum wage + Parenting Payment (partnered) + FTB A and B	$417	10	7%

Source: (Anglicare Australia, 2024).

Occupancy of housing

Table D 20 Dwelling occupancy rates, 2021

Locality	Occupied Private Dwellings		Unoccupied Private Dwellings	
	No.	%	No.	%
Local study area	31	19%	138	86%
Central Highlands LGA	1,012	39%	1,570	61%
Derwent Valley LGA	4,102	92%	353	8%
Tasmania	218,412	88%	29,185	12%

Source: (ABS, 2021).

Appendix E Cumulative impacts project list

Project	LGA/Region	Description	Significance	Status[1]
Whaleback Ridge Renewable Energy Project	West Coast, NW Tasmania	The Whaleback Ridge Renewable Energy Project, located around Lake Pieman near Zeehan in western Tasmania, will involve the establishment of up to 500 wind turbine generators, with a Projected generating capacity of 3,000 MW (Infrastructure Partnerships Australia, 2020). The Whaleback Ridge Renewable Energy Project is located approximately 2hr 30mins from Project site.	Declared major Project. 4,500 jobs during construction, 550 permanent jobs Projected.	Pre-approvals
St Patricks Plains Windfarm	Central Highlands	The St Patricks Plains Wind Farm proposal involves the installation of 47 wind turbines across a number of rural properties in the Central Highlands of Tasmania. The project is an extension to the Cattle Hill Windfarm. The project area is approximately 10 km south-east of Miena and 25 km north of Bothwell and located within Tasmania's candidate Central Highlands renewable energy zone (Ark Energy, 2024b).	Up to 200 full-time jobs for construction, and up to 20 jobs for operations.	In appeal with TASCAT
Cellars Hill Wind Farm (Landholder Co-operative)	Central Highlands	The Project is a grid connected wind farm with potential capacity up to 350MW. It will potentially be accompanied by a battery energy storage system (BESS) and electricity infrastructure (such as a switchyard and substation) to facilitate connection into existing transmission infrastructure. Construction to commence in 2027.	Up to 200 construction jobs and 14 ongoing jobs during operation.	Pre-approvals
Gordon Power Station Refurbishment - Hydro Tasmania	Strathgordon, West Coast Tasmania	Refurbishment of the turbines at the Gordon Power Station in Tasmania south-west. Project is ongoing for several years.	~ 50 workers	Underway
West coast refurbishment program - Hydro Tasmania	West Coast, Tasmania	Refurbishment of power stations on the Anthony-Pieman, King and Yolande hydropower schemes. Project due to commence in 2027 and ongoing for several years with a workforce of up to 80 additional workers	Up to 80 additional workers	Pre-approvals
North West Transmission Developments (NWTD)	North West Tasmania	The NWTD Project is proposed to create 240km of new and upgraded overhead transmission lines and other energy infrastructure. It is aimed to unlock a pipeline of future renewable energy Projects in the region. The Project is currently at the design and final investment decision is currently scheduled for 2024 (TasNetworks, 2024).	1,600 Projected Tasmanian jobs at peak construction together with Marinus Link.	Pre-approvals

Project	LGA/Region	Description	Significance	Status[1]
Heybridge Convertor Station and Shore Crossing - Marinus Link	Burnie, NW Tasmania	Marinus Link is a proposed 1500 MW capacity electricity and telecommunications interconnector between Tasmania and Victoria. The project will bring more interconnection with the National Energy Market that will unlock the State's renewable energy and storage resources and provide further connection with mainland Australia (Marinus Link, 2024).	200 construction jobs at peak construction. Construction phase over 2 years. 45% local (NW Tasmania), 30% elsewhere in Tasmania, 17% interstate.	Pre-approvals
Cethana Pumped Hydro Energy Storage Project	Northern Tasmania	Proposed 750 MW Pumped Energy Storage project located on the eastern side of the existing Lake Cethana in the Kentish Council area. A final investment decision is anticipated for 2026.	350 jobs during construction	Pre-approvals
Macquarie Point Multipurpose Stadium, Hobart	Macquarie Point, Hobart - Tasmania	Development of a 23,000-seat multipurpose stadium at Macquarie Point with an estimated $715m investment (Tasmanian Planning Commission, 2024; KPMG, 2024).	Project of State Significance 1,221 FTE job years with a peak of 588 concurrent FTE jobs.	Pre-approvals
North East Wind	Dorset, NE Tasmania	North East Wind, is intended to generate up to 1,260 megawatts of renewable electricity and includes up to 210 wind turbine generators, internal roads, marine landing and wharf facility, operation and maintenance facility, meteorological masts, internal transmission lines and battery storage, plus temporary facilities for construction (Tasmanian Government, 2024; ACEN Australia, 2024).	Declared major Project. 400 jobs during construction, 65 operational jobs projected.	Pre-Approvals
Incat	Derwent Valley	Tasmania-based shipbuilder Incat is doubling its production capacity with the acquisition of a second site located northwest of Hobart. The expansion is part of the company's anticipated demand for sustainable shipping as it develops the world's largest electric ferry. The new shipbuilding facility is part of a planned major economic hub in Southern Tasmania. The additional facility will permit Incat to double its workforce and production capacity (The Maritime Executive, 2024; Department of Premier and Cabinet, 2024).	Construction to commence in 2026. Anticipate additional +500 jobs over the next three years.	Pre-Approval

Project	LGA/Region	Description	Significance	Status[1]
Bell Bay Powerfuels Project	George Town, NE Tasmania	The Bell Bay Powerfuels Project is proposed to deliver a green hydrogen and green methanol production facility in Bell Bay. It is expected to produce 200-300 thousand tonnes of green methanol per year. HT has signed a term sheet with Bell Bay Powerfuels for the sale of the decommissioned Bell Bay Power Station (CSIRO, 2024; Gameng, 2024).	500 jobs during construction, 300 direct and indirect permanent jobs projected.	Pre-Approvals
HIF eFuels Facility	Waratah-Wynyard, NW Tasmania	HIF Tasmania will be the first commercial scale e-Fuels facility to be built in Australia. It is expected to produce approximately 20 gallons of E-fuels per year (CSIRO, 2024b).	Nearly 200 permanent jobs Projected.	Pre-approvals
Guildford Wind Farm	Waratah-Wynyard, NW Tasmania	The Guildford Wind Farm is proposed for an area within Surrey Hills estate, east of Waratah in Tasmania's north-west. With a generating capacity of up to 300 MW, it is proposed to consist of up to 80 wind turbines (Ark Energy, 2024).	Information not available.	Pre-approvals
Jim's Plain Wind & Robbins Island Renewable Energy Parks	Circular Head, NW Tasmania	The Jim's Plain Renewable Energy Park will involve the construction of a wind farm at Jim's Plain in northwest Tasmania, located about 23 km west of Smithton. It will have an estimated generating capacity of up to 200 MW from up to 31 turbines, as well as up 40 MW from solar energy. The Renewable Energy Park will be connected to the Tasmanian transmission network via a 220 kV overhead transmission line, extending from Robbins Island to Hampshire, via Jim's Plain. The Robbin Island Renewable Energy Park will be a wind farm development on the privately-owned Robbins Island, located off the northwest coast of Tasmania. The Project is expected to be undertaken in two stages with a total generating capacity of 900 MW from a maximum of 122 turbines. Stage 1 has a generating capacity of up to 340 MW, with stage 2 subject to the development of Marinus Link. The development will be connected to the Tasmanian transmission network via a 115 km high voltage 220 kV overhead transmission line connecting to Hampshire via Jim's Plain (to connect UPC Australia's other development in the area) (ACEN Australia, 2024a).	Up to 400 jobs at peak during construction; up to 65 operational jobs for over 30 years.	Pre-approvals (noting Jim's Plain Wind was approved in 2020)
Hellyer Wind Farm	Burnie, NW Tasmania	The Hellyer Wind Farm is proposed for a remote area of the Burnie City Council area, approximately 5km south-west of Hampshire and 30km south of Burnie. It is proposed to consist of 48 wind turbines, with an output capacity of up to 300 megawatts (Ark Energy, 2024a).	Information not available.	Pre-Approval

Project	LGA/Region	Description	Significance	Status[1]
ReNu Energy – Countrywide Hydrogen (solar farm)	Brighton / Bridgewater, Launceston and Devonport, Tasmania	Countrywide Hydrogen selected Tasmania as a showcase location for its initial projects, it is currently progressing two 5MW (initially) electrolyser production facilities with refuelling, and a third refuelling site to provide comfort in securing statewide access to hydrogen. Countrywide Hydrogen's Tasmanian hydrogen production projects are located at transport hubs servicing Hobart (at Brighton/Bridgewater), Launceston (at Western Junction), and Devonport (at Wesley Vale) servicing the ports of Burnie and Devonport. These locations also offer the opportunity to decarbonise Tas Gas's natural gas network by blending hydrogen into their system to reduce carbon emissions. ReNu Energy has also entered into a long-term power purchase agreement for 100% of the output from a 9.95 MW solar farm to be built by Climate Capital at Wesley Vale in northern Tasmania (ReNu Energy, 2024).	Information not available.	Pre-construction (funding approved from Tasmanian Government)
Hydrogen Devonport Project	Latrobe, NW Tasmania	The Hydrogen Devonport Project would supply renewables-based hydrogen to the domestic market throughout the north of the State. As a 5 MW electrolyser Project powered by hydro and wind power, it would be located at Wesley Vale (approximately 10 kilometres east of Devonport) where land has been secured (CSIRO, 2024a).	Information not available.	Pre-approvals – Front-end Engineering Design studies

Source: (Infrastructure Partnerships Australia, 2020; Marinus Link, 2024; TasNetworks, 2024; Tasmanian Planning Commission, 2024; KPMG, 2024; Tasmanian Government, 2024; ACEN Australia, 2024; The Maritime Executive, 2024; Department of Premier and Cabinet, 2024; Ark Energy, 2024b; CSIRO, 2024; Gameng, 2024; CSIRO, 2024b; Ark Energy, 2024; ACEN Australia, 2024a; Ark Energy, 2024a; ReNu Energy, 2024; CSIRO, 2024a.)