

# Summary of what we heard for the Social Impact Assessment

The Marmadua Energy Park is a proposed 700MW renewable energy project located approximately 22km from Tara and 37km from Dalby, within Queensland's Western Downs Regional Council area.

The engagement undertaken for the Social Impact Assessment Report builds on prior project engagement, as well as two phases of targeted community engagement activities undertaken for the Construction Worker's Accommodation Options and Workforce Accommodation and Infrastructure Reports.

The Social Impact Assessment Report incorporates the findings of all engagement activities undertaken for the project.

### Engagement objectives

Following the substantial engagement already conducted for the project, the primary objectives of this engagement were to:

- gain insights on the current local context, including community values, aspirations, characteristics, and trends
- understand the potential social impacts and opportunities of the project from the perspective of stakeholders
- collect stakeholder input on potential mitigation and benefit enhancement measures.

### The project at a glance:



Up to 100 wind turbines



Generating up to 700MW of clean energy



Potential for Battery Energy Storage System (BESS)



Up to 300 jobs during construction, 15 ongoing roles



Pre-development fund supporting local community groups since 2024



Construction to start 2027  
Operations from 2030

## Stakeholders consulted

Throughout October 2025, individual and focus group discussions were conducted virtually via phone or Microsoft Teams with a range of stakeholders in Dalby, Tara and Weranga, building upon earlier engagement and data collection for the workers accommodation report.

### Local government

- Western Downs Regional Council

### Landholders

- Host landholders
- Nearby and neighbouring landholders

### Health and emergency services

- Weranga Fire Services
- Goondir Health Services
- Dalby Fire Department
- Queensland Fire Department, Queensland Ambulance Service and Queensland Police Service

### Community members, groups and organisations

- St Vincent de Paul
- Tara Neighbourhood Centre
- Local community members

### Education, employment and training providers

- Tara Shire State College
- Western Downs Country University Centre (Chinchilla)

### Local business and industry

- Business owners
- Toowoomba and Surat Basin Enterprise

## SIA engagement – key themes

The below table provides a summary of key engagement findings across relevant key SIA matters.

Stakeholder group	Summary of key findings
<b>Workforce management</b>	
All stakeholder groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Shortage of skills needed for the project and in other sectors, e.g. specialist education, childcare, etc.</li><li>• Clear skills signaling from developers could help align school curriculum and promote traineeships.</li><li>• Support for localised apprenticeship block via TAFE or partner upgrades.</li><li>• Education stakeholders noted gaps in TAFE and training facilities and highlighted opportunities to support attracting trade instructors and developing a local facility for apprentices and trainees to complete their practical courses.</li><li>• Challenges in recruiting staff due to wage competition with resource industries.</li><li>• Locals with relevant skills could work on the project, e.g. vegetation clearing.</li></ul>
<b>Housing and accommodation</b>	
All stakeholder groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tara's rental and housing market is saturated. Real estate trends show increased demand post-COVID19 pandemic.</li><li>• Mixed views on new housing developments in Tara. Some desire additional housing to improve availability and affordability for locals, however others want to avoid housing speculation experienced in Roma, Wandoan and Gladstone that accompanied major industry development.</li><li>• Limited capacity for short-term accommodation.</li><li>• Construction workers may compete with seasonal farm workers and contractors for accommodation.</li><li>• A sizeable waiting list for housing among First Nations people and rising rental prices due to past CSG boom affecting First Nations residents.</li><li>• Opportunities to support development of affordable housing in Tara.</li><li>• Limited housing constraints the ability to attract skilled and specialist workers to move to the area, e.g. trade instructors.</li><li>• Suggestion for subsidised housing for trade instructors, apprentices, and technicians.</li></ul>

## Stakeholder group Summary of key findings

### Community and stakeholder engagement

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|--------------------------------------|--|
| Nearby and neighbouring landholders  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Nearby and neighbouring landholders expressed discontent with project engagement. Request for transparent project information and tailored visual simulations for neighbours.</li></ul>  |
| Social services and community groups | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lessons learned from CSG industry including community reference groups.</li><li>• Recommendations to have a dedicated, locally-based Social Performance representative.</li><li>• Use existing communication channels, e.g. Murilla Community News, Country Caller, neighbourhood centre noticeboards, printed flyers at libraries and community group meetings.</li><li>• Face-to-face presence at markets and shows is valued.</li></ul> |

### Local business and industry procurement

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|--------------------------------------|---|
| Nearby and neighbouring landholders  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Local businesses expressed interest in supplying to the project but raised concerns about barriers to entry and project messaging about targeting larger firms in Brisbane due to limited capacity locally.</li></ul> |
| Industry groups and businesses       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Local crane and civil works operators could scale up if given head contract opportunities.</li></ul>  |
| Social services and community groups | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lessons learned from CSG construction, e.g. engage local contractors, buy local, etc.</li></ul>   |

### Health and community wellbeing

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|------------------------|---|
| All stakeholder groups | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Concern about road safety impacts and traffic disruption during construction.</li><li>• Need for improved road and telecommunications infrastructure and electricity stability.</li><li>• Concern about increased bushfire risk. Several large bushfires in the region in recent years. Some affected residents are still living in temporary housing.</li><li>• Interest in improved water security and access for Weranga, including investigation of a groundwater bore near the fire station.</li><li>• Need for improved transport services in Weranga, including school bus access and a community shuttle bus service.</li><li>• Impacts on neighbouring landholders including change to way of life, rural amenity and livelihood. Construction impacts including traffic, noise, dust, lighting and large number of construction workers. Operational impacts including change to landscape character (turbines obstructing rural, agricultural views), noise, contamination and interference with aerial cropping and mustering activities on neighbouring farms.</li><li>• Concern regarding unequal distribution of impacts and benefits between host landholders and nearby and neighbouring landholders.</li><li>• Concern that community benefit funds would be invested in areas and communities not directly impacted by the project.</li><li>• Interest in further details on the neighbour benefit program.</li><li>• Concern about environmental impacts and desire for support for local environmental and wildlife rescue programs.</li><li>• Concern that turbines may affect aerial firefighting and emergency medical flights (LifeFlight).</li><li>• Tara hospital is good for minor emergencies; residents travel to Dalby or Toowoomba for specialist services. Limited mental health services locally, especially face-to-face support. Goondir trialling virtual telehealth delivery using tablets to support health self-management.</li><li>• Proposal for legacy infrastructure investment in Tara Showgrounds</li><li>• Consider scholarship-linked accommodation for specialist staff to stabilise education services.</li><li>• Housing incentives could be extended to operational workforce roles.</li><li>• Suggestion to co-design fund governance structure with community before council negotiation.</li></ul> |
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## Conclusion

Stakeholder feedback was directly incorporated into the final analysis and recommendations in the Social Impact Assessment Report. The engagement helped ensure the report is informed by insight into the local context, including community values, aspirations, characteristics, and trends; demonstrates an understanding of the potential social impacts and opportunities from the perspective of stakeholders; and presents potential mitigation and benefit enhancement measures.

## What's next?

Cubico is committed to putting the Western Downs community first. Our approach aims to build strong, lasting partnerships, empower the community to shape local benefits and ensure the social and economic outcomes of the project extends well beyond its operational life. The Social Impact Assessment (SIA) identified community benefit opportunities which will inform the development of a Community Benefit Agreement for the Marmadua Energy Park. This agreement is intended to help ensure the project delivers positive, long-term outcomes that reflect local priorities.

While the SIA and Community Benefit Agreement mark an important point in the engagement process for the development application, we see engagement as ongoing and continuing throughout the life of the project. If the project proceeds, we will carry forward the SIA's commitments during development, construction, operation and decommissioning, making sure issues are identified early and worked through together.

This will include regular updates to the community, ongoing conversations with Council and key stakeholders, active involvement locally, and continued opportunities for feedback. What we hear through this engagement will help shape decisions and guide our work as the project progresses.

## Potential economic benefits to Queensland and the Darling Downs region

The below data provides the expected economic contributions of the Marmadua Energy Park, averaged **per year** across the **construction** period (2028–2030).

Queensland	Darling Downs region
<b>\$279.47 million</b> towards the state economy	<b>\$67.82 million</b> towards the regional economy
<b>1,569</b> full time jobs created	<b>315</b> full time jobs created
	<b>\$34.45 million</b> increase in wages and salaries

The below data provides the expected economic contributions during the project's **operational life**:

<b>\$25.35 million</b>	towards the state economy each year
<b>15 jobs</b>	new and ongoing jobs created



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*Cubico recognises the First Peoples of this nation and their ongoing connection to culture and country. We acknowledge First Nations Peoples as the Traditional Owners, Custodians and Lore Keepers of the world's oldest living culture and pay respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.*