



Summary of the Social Impact Assessment

The Middle Creek Energy Hub is a proposed 1,303MWs renewable energy project located approximately 10km east of Wandoan and Guluguba and about 60km north of Miles in Queensland's Western Downs Regional Council Local Government 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 181 wind turbines



Generating up to 1,303MWs of clean energy



Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) up to 800MWh



Up to 300 jobs during construction, 20 ongoing roles



Pre-development fund supporting local community groups since 2023



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 Wandoan and Miles, building upon earlier in-person engagement and data collection for the workers accommodation report.

Host and neighbouring landholders

Health and emergency service providers

- Queensland Police Service, Miles

Education and training providers

- Wandoan State School P&C
- Western Downs Country University Centre (CUC)

First Nations organisation and services

- Goondir Health Services

Housing and accommodation providers

- Wandoan Windmill Village

Social services and community groups

- Wandoan Community Commerce & Industry Inc
- Wandoan Camel Races
- Murilla Community Centre
- Wandoan Housing Association
- Wandoan RSL

Local business and industry groups

- Miles Chamber of Commerce

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	
Workforce management	
All stakeholder groups	• Interest in local employment and skills development opportunities, particularly to support local youth. • Workforce should integrate with the community – expectation that workers shop in town and participation in local clubs, e.g. sporting clubs, and community events.
Health and emergency service providers	• There is an established zero-tolerance policy in Miles for workforce misbehaviour, with clear repercussions from police and developer perspectives for poor workforce behaviour.
Housing and accommodation	
Local business and industry groups	• Prefer camps to be closer to town, allows workers to integrate with the community. • Concerns around housing price increase experienced during the CSG boom which saw many locals being priced out and moving away from the region. • Housing shortages are impacting Miles, Wandoan and the broader region. Potential opportunity for legacy projects around community housing. 'Boom and bust' pricing has been felt throughout the region during previous industry expansions. • Need additional housing in Wandoan. Acknowledgment that Council infrastructure upgrades are needed to support this.
Social services and community groups	
Housing and accommodation providers	
Local business and industry procurement	
Social services and community groups	• Commercial agreements with developers have not always been favourable to small businesses (e.g. unsuitable payment terms). • The region has low unemployment but acute skill shortages, particularly in childcare, aged care, trades and health services. • Existing feedlots and civil contracting, CSG and emerging renewable energy sectors, are creating labour competition.
Housing and accommodation providers	• Wandoan's only FoodWorks receives one weekly restock. While increased trade is good for business, there is potential that this will constrain and take resources away from the local community.

Stakeholder group Summary of key findings

Community and stakeholder engagement

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| All stakeholders | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Important for developers to have a presence/footprint in the community.• Community tired of being over-engaged and recommends developers collaborate on engagement activities.• Pop-in information sessions are not ideal for the community; it is better to have set times outside of business hours.• Community has experienced a lot of change, development and variety of consultation approaches from different industries occurring in the region. |
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Health and community wellbeing

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| All stakeholders | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A mix of small (e.g. community events) and large (e.g. health services) investments, and non-monetary contribution (e.g. volunteering), is required.• Contributions should benefit the broader community, not only to landholders (e.g. grants, local presence, reinvesting resources locally).• Developers reinvesting resources back into the communities they draw from.• Stakeholders raised concerns about fund administration (i.e. Council investing in larger towns instead of small communities where it's generated).• The community lost many families when Xstrata Coal purchased several local properties, increasing land values and causing grief in the community.• Wandoan experiences population fluctuations, with short-term influxes (i.e., project workers and backpackers) followed by declines once construction ends (only a small proportion of workers and their families remain in region).• Long-term workers who settle in the region contribute to community growth.• The community has strong identity and social cohesion, though volunteer workloads often fall on the same people; new residents should be willing to get involved and help out.• Tension between residents hosting infrastructure and those who are not.• Additional workers may further strain on existing limited resources and services (e.g. stock in local shops, doctors and other medical services).• Road deterioration from additional and heavy traffic use is a key concern consistently highlighted by all stakeholders.• Telecommunication service is limited and poor.• Local utilities such as the sewerage treatment plant and water supply will require upgrades if Wandoan is going to grow.• Wandoan needs a permanent doctor; current services are limited to an intermittent visiting doctor twice a week, and the pharmacist plans to retire.• Limited emergency service capacity in Wandoan.• Increase in workforce in town will likely increase the demand on QPS. A strict worker code of conduct is required. |
| Social services and community groups | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A strong need for expanded childcare, hours, facilities and staff. Potential for new small business. The current centre hopes to upgrade a building for after-school care. |
| Host and neighbouring landholders | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• More families with special needs or lower-socioeconomic background are moving into Wandoan, increasing demand for school support and resources. |
| Housing and accommodation providers | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• School enrolments have fallen to around 60–70 students since Xstrata's involvement. Funding is decreasing, concerns about school continuing to operate.• Many students leave for boarding school and do not return due to limited opportunities.• Education, training and recreational options for youth are limited. |
| All stakeholders | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cumulative and coordinated approaches from different developers would be welcome, including cumulative management of impacts and camps, and co-funding critical updates.• There is likely to be a cumulative impact on the road network from gas operations to the west and wind farms being installed to the east. |

Conclusion

Stakeholder feedback from all rounds was directly incorporated into the final analysis and recommendations in the Social Impact Assessment Report. The engagement helped ensure the report gains 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 suitable potential mitigation and benefit enhancement measures from a community context.

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.

Findings from the SIA, Construction Worker's Accommodation Options Report and Workforce Accommodation and Infrastructure Report have been consolidated to assess potential workforce accommodation impacts and solutions.

Cubico worked closely with Western Downs Regional Council (WDRC) throughout the SIA, aligning with Council's *Renewable Energy: Community Benefit System Policy* and the *PSICBOLA Act*. The SIA identified community benefit opportunities consistent with Council policy, and Cubico continues to work closely with WDRC to develop a Community Benefit Agreement.

Potential economic benefits to Queensland and the Darling Downs region

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

Queensland	Darling Downs region
\$464.19 million towards the state economy	\$112.64 million towards the regional economy
2,608 full time jobs created	523 full time jobs created
	\$57.22 million increase in wages and salaries

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

\$25.35 million	towards the state economy each year
20 jobs	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.