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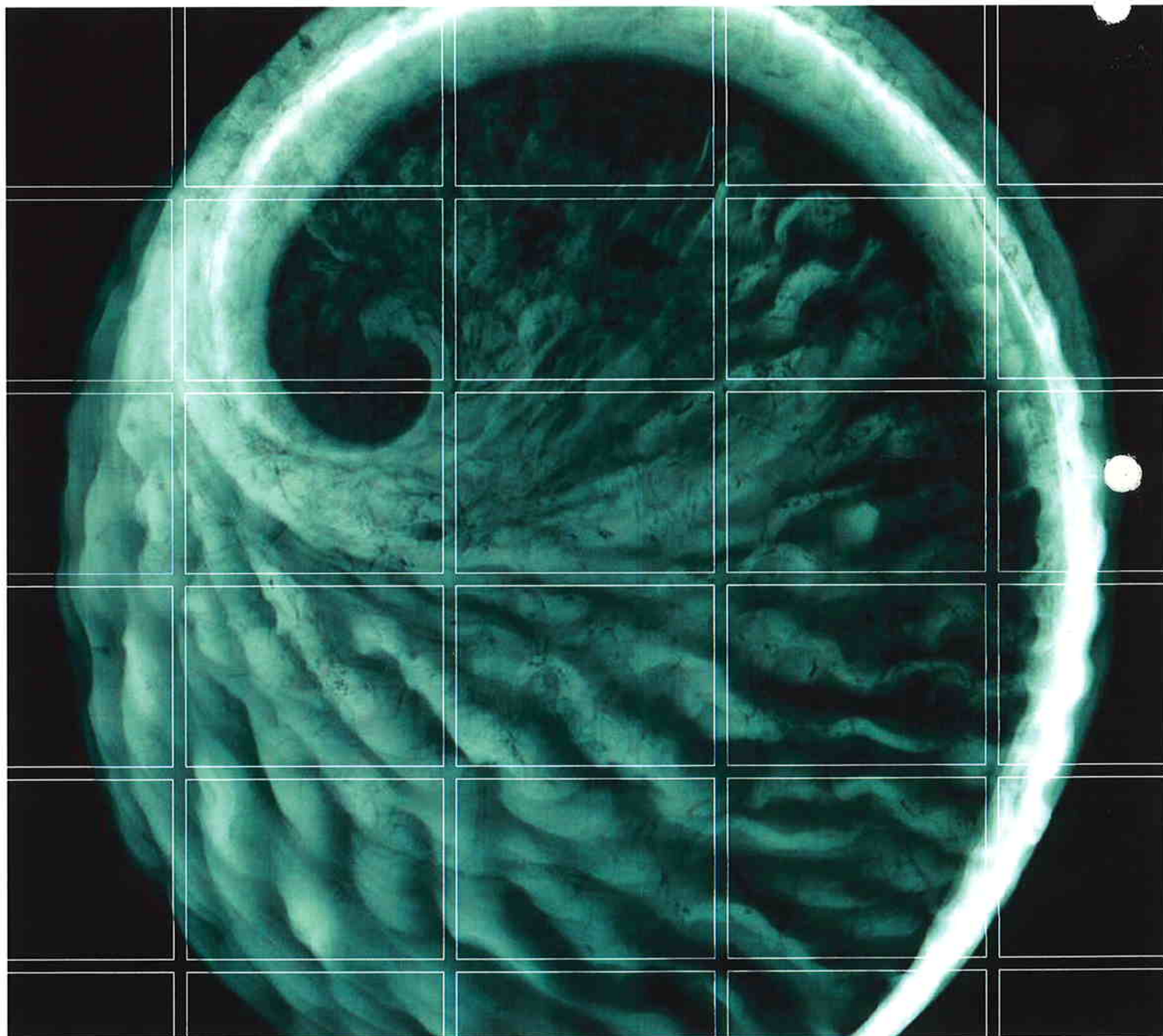
0051706

February 2008

for Country Energy

Project Description Report

Proposed Lismore to Mullumbimby Electricity Network Upgrade



Country Energy

Proposed Lismore to
Mullumbimby Electricity
Network Upgrade
Project Description Report

February 2008

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Country Energy

Proposed Lismore to Mullumbimby Electricity Network Upgrade Project Description Report

February 2008

Reference: 0051706

For and on behalf of Environmental Resources Management Australia	Approved by: Christine Allen	Signed: 	Position: Senior Planner	Date: 11 February 2008
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This report has been prepared in accordance with the scope of services described in the contract or agreement between Environmental Resources Management Australia Pty Ltd ACN 002 773 248 (ERM) and Country Energy. The report relies upon data, surveys, measurements and results taken at or under the particular times and conditions specified herein. Any findings, conclusions or recommendations only apply to the aforementioned circumstances and no greater reliance should be assumed or drawn by Country Energy. Furthermore, the report has been prepared solely for use by Country Energy and ERM accepts no responsibility for its use by other parties.

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INTRODUCTION

1

1.1

BACKGROUND

Country Energy proposes to undertake an environmental assessment to gain approval for the Lismore to Mullumbimby electricity network upgrade (the Project). Country Energy is seeking Concept Approval for the project under Part 3A of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act and Project Approval for specific parts of the project, referred to in this application as *Phase 1*. In summary the Project for which Concept Approval is being sought includes the installation and operation and upgrade of 66kV and 132kV electricity transmission lines, construction of two new substations and upgrading of five substations between Lismore and Mullumbimby, via Ballina, on the NSW Far North Coast (refer to *Figures 1.1 and 1.2*).

Country Energy is seeking Concept Approval for the Project. Where the alignment and/or site selection is finalised, Project Approval is sought concurrent to the Concept Approval.

Country Energy is seeking Concept Approval for:

1. Construction of substations:

- a. 132/11kV substation at Brunswick Heads, and
- b. 132/11kV substation at Suffolk Park.

2. Construction of transmission lines:

- a. 132kV transmission line from the Mullumbimby to Ewingsdale 66kV transmission line to the Brunswick Heads substation;

- b. 132kV transmission line from the Lismore 132/66kV substation to join to the Alstonville to Ballina 66kV transmission line near Alstonville;

- c. 66kV transmission line from Lismore South 66/11kV substation to the proposed Lismore University 66kV switching station; and

- d. two underground 66kV transmission lines from Lismore 132/66kV substation to Lismore South 66/11kV substation.

3. Upgrade of substations:

- a. Mullumbimby 132/66/11kV substation to 132/11kV;
- b. Ewingsdale 66/11kV substation to 132/11kV;
- c. Lennox Head 66/11kV substation to 132/11kV;

- detail the Project environmental risks and provide a preliminary justification for the proposed focus of the EAR.
- provide the statutory framework under which the assessment will be prepared; and
- outline the key components of the Project;
- provide a background for the Project;

This document has been prepared to:

PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

1.2

Full details of *Phase 1* works will be outlined in the Environmental Assessment Report (EAR)

Environmental Resources Management Australia Pty Ltd (ERMA) has been commissioned by Country Energy to prepare the Project Application for this Project. Following receipt of the Director-General's requirements, an EAR will be prepared and submitted to the Minister for Planning for concept approval and Phase 1 project approval.

- 4. a and b.
 - 3. a, b, c, d and e; and
 - 2. b, c and d.
- Country Energy is seeking Project Approval for *Phase 1* of the project which is likely to include the following specific tasks from those listed above:

- 66kV transmission line from the Mullumbimby 132/66/11kV substation to the Ballina 66/11/kV substation, to 132 kV; and
 - 66kV transmission line from the Ballina 66/11kV substation to join to the new 132kV transmission line identified in 2(b) above, to 132kV.
4. Upgrade, including any necessary realignments or deviations of transmission lines:
- Lismore 132/66kV substation;
 - Lismore South 66/11kV substation; and
 - Ballina 66/11kV substation to 132/66/11kV.

In November 2007 Country Energy submitted a request to the Minister for Planning for a project specific order to be made under Section 75B of the EP&A Act and to authorise the lodgement of a Concept Plan for the Project. A

A line route selection study (LRS) has been undertaken, including desktop and on-ground investigations. These investigations examined a number of route options and concluded that much of the electricity network upgrade can be accommodated in existing cleared transmission line routes, therefore minimising environmental and social impacts of the Project.

Country Energy has identified the need for augmentation of its electricity supply network in the Lismore, Ballina, Ewingsdale and Mullumbimby areas to cater for long-term demands. The Far North Coast is one of the fastest growing areas of New South Wales with the population expected to increase by 26% to 289,000 over the next 25 years (Department of Planning, 2007). Due to this significant population increase, upgrade and expansion of electricity services in the region is required to ensure a safe and reliable supply in the future.

PROJECT HISTORY

1.5

The Project area is a broad corridor as illustrated on *Figures 1.1 and 1.2*. All of the electricity network upgrade will be contained within this corridor. Existing transmission line routes will be used where possible.

The Project Area is located on the Far North Coast of NSW approximately 800 kilometres north of Sydney. It is situated within the localities of Mullumbimby, Brunswick Heads, Ewingsdale, Suffolk Park, Lennox Head, Ballina Alstonville and Lismore.

REGIONAL SETTING AND PROJECT AREA

1.4

The Country Energy product range includes bottled gas, internet services and energy efficiency advice. Country Energy also provides reticulated natural gas to 24,200 customers in southern New South Wales and water and sewerage services to 10,000 customers in far west New South Wales.

Country Energy manages Australia's largest power supply network across 95 per cent of New South Wales' land mass and offers retail electricity in five states and territories.

Country Energy is a leading Australian energy services corporation owned by the New South Wales Government, with around 3,925 employees serving more than 870,000 customers.

COMPANY PROFILE

1.3

project specific order and authorisation for the lodgement of a concept plan was issued on 1 February 2008. A copy is included in Annex A.

A Planning Focus Meeting (PFM) was held on 4 December 2007. This was attended by local and State Government stakeholders. The discussion at the PFM has informed this application. Country Energy intends to lodge a Project Application with the Department of Planning.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT

1.6

The Project involves both the construction of new transmission lines and substations and upgrading of existing transmission lines and substations. The majority of the upgrade works will be located in areas where there is an existing cleared transmission line route or disturbed substation site. In areas where there new substations and transmission lines are required detailed environmental assessments, as described in Table 4.1, will be undertaken.

The Project Area includes extensive areas of cleared agricultural land, residential and rural residential areas, potential future residential areas, National Parks and Nature Reserves as well as significant wetlands and waterways. Some sections of Project Area are affected by potential flood inundation and high risk for potential acid sulphate soils.

There are a number of areas that are potentially sensitive in terms of ecology, heritage or located are near residences. These areas are identified on Figures 1.1 and 1.2 as areas of potential environmental constraints and are discussed in Section 4.

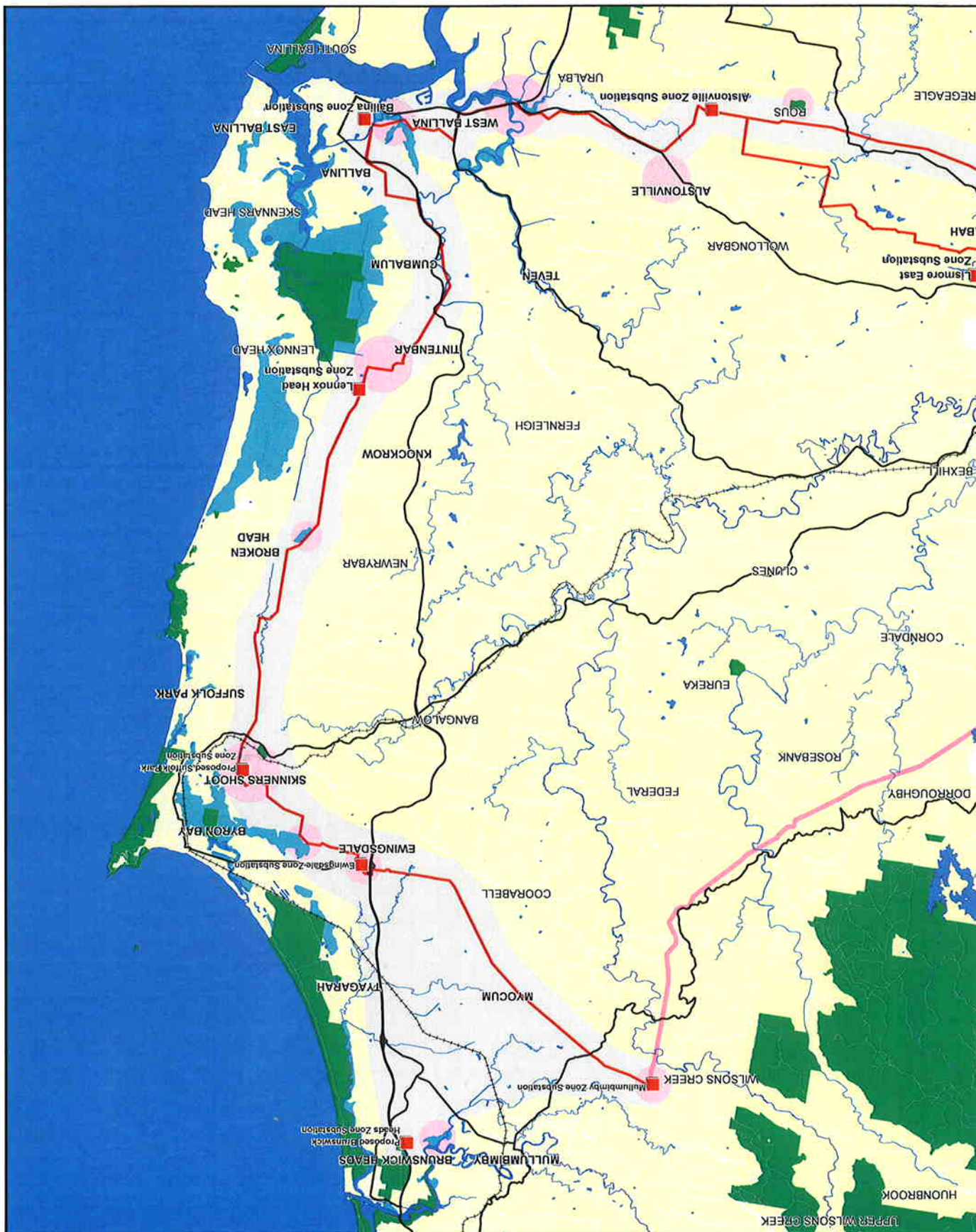


Figure 1.2
 Section
 Ballina to Mullumbimby

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2

Figures 1.1 and 1.2 indicate the corridor that forms the Project Area and the location of existing electricity infrastructure within the Project Area. The project is described in detail in the following sections.

2.1.1

Substation Construction

The proposed electricity network upgrade includes the construction of two (2) new 132/11kV substations at Brunswick Heads and Suffolk Park.

The sites for the Brunswick Heads and Suffolk Park zone substation are yet to be determined. Figure 1.2 illustrates indicative locations. The locations will be confirmed following detailed site selection and assessment process.

2.1.2

Electricity Transmission Line Construction

A new 132kV line is proposed between the proposed new Brunswick Heads substation and the existing Mullumbimby to Ewingsdale 66kV transmission line. The alignment will be determined during detailed assessment.

A new 132kV line is proposed from the existing Lismore 132/66kV substation to the existing 66kV Alstonville to Ballina line. A duplicated 66/132kV circuit is proposed along the existing alignment as illustrated on Figure 1.1. This can be achieved without further clearing.

A new 66kV transmission line is proposed from the existing Lismore South 66/11kV substation to the proposed new (already approved) Lismore University 66kV switching station. This line will follow the existing 66kV alignment from Lismore South substation to Wilsons River and then will follow a new alignment to the proposed Lismore University switching station. Two underground 66kV transmission lines are proposed from Lismore 132/66kV substation to Lismore South 66/11kV substation.

2.1.3 Substation Upgrades

The upgrade of a number of existing substations is proposed to cater for the projected increase in demand for electricity.

Mullumbimby 132/66/11kV substation is proposed to be upgraded to 132/11kV. The disused power station is to be demolished to provide additional land area to accommodate the upgrade.

Ewingsdale 66/11kV substation is proposed to be upgraded to 132/11kV. This will require the replacement of existing transformers only.

Lennox Head 66/11kV substation and Ballina 66/11kV substation are proposed to be upgraded to 132/11kV and 132/66/11kV respectively. This will require the replacement of the existing transformers at Lennox Head and installation of an additional 132/66kV transformer at Ballina.

Additional switch bays at Lismore 132/66kV substation (1 by 132kV and 2 by 66kV) and modifications to the existing switch bays at Lismore South 66/11kV substation are required as part of the upgrade proposal. The upgrade at Lismore South includes the demolition of the disused power station to provide additional land area to accommodate the upgrade.

2.1.4

Electricity Transmission Line Upgrades

The existing transmission line between the Mullumbimby 132/66/11kV substation and the Ballina 66/11kV substation will be upgraded from 66kV to 132kV. (Refer Figures 1.1 and 1.2). Wherever possible this will be accommodated on the existing transmission line route. Alternative alignments are being investigated particularly where areas of potential environmental constraints are identified (Figures 1.1 and 1.2)

The existing transmission line between the Ballina 66/11kV substation and Alstonville will be upgraded from 66kV to 132kV. This will be achieved along the existing alignment of the 66kV line 8507 via west Ballina. This alignment includes an existing crossing of a SEPP 14 Wetland.

STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS

3

This chapter sets out the statutory framework to be considered for the installation and operation of the proposed electricity network upgrade.

3.1

ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT ACT 1979

Part 3A of the EP&A Act details the approval of major infrastructure and other significant projects. It applies to:

"... the carrying out of development that is declared under this section to be a project to which this Part applies:

(a) by a State environmental planning policy, or

(b) by order of the Minister published in the Gazette" (Section 75B).

In November 2007 Country Energy submitted a request to the Minister for Planning for a project specific order to be made under Section 75B of the EP&A Act. This order was published in the NSW Government Gazette on 1 February 2008 and enables the Project to be determined under Part 3A of the EP&A Act. An EAP, which assesses the likely impact of a project on the environment, will be prepared in accordance with Section 75(F) of the EP&A Act.

Table 3.1 summarises legislation relevant to this project.

Statutory Framework

Legislation	Standard / Requirement	Comment
Commonwealth		
Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act)	The EPBC Act requires approval of the Commonwealth Minister for the Environment for actions that may have a significant impact on matters of national importance, or Commonwealth marine environments. The proposal does not include nuclear actions. Country Energy is completing a referral to the Commonwealth Department of Environment and Water Resources to confirm that the project will not have a significant impact on matters protected by Part 3 of the EPBC Act.	
New South Wales		
Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act)	Refer to Section 3.1.	Refer to Section 3.1.

National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 (NP&W Act)	The NP&W Act defines the powers, duties and functions of the DEC relating to all areas reserved as National Park, historic sites, nature reserves, Aboriginal areas, state recreation parks and regional parks.	Section 75U of the EP&A Act excludes projects approved under Part 3A from approval under Clause 90 of the NP&W Act if Aboriginal objects or places will be disturbed or destroyed. A number of locations were identified as requiring further archaeological investigation during the LRS report. Further potential archaeological impact assessment will be undertaken in the EAR as detailed in Table 4.1. There are no new alignments proposed within National Parks or other land reserved under the National Parks and Wildlife Act.
Water Management Act 2000 (WM Act)	The WM Act incorporates the provisions of various Acts relating to the management of surface and groundwater in NSW.	The Project potentially involves construction of transmission lines and substations in undisturbed areas. The EAR will assess the potential impacts to be assessed in accordance with the WM Act.
Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995 (TSC Act)	Projects determined by a statutory authority of the NSW State Government, are required to be assessed in accordance with the TSC Act.	The Project potentially involves construction of transmission lines and substations in undisturbed areas. The EAR will assess the potential impacts to be assessed in accordance with the TSC Act.

Legislation	Standard/Requirement	Comment
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on threatened species in undisturbed areas.

Native Vegetation Act 2003 (NV Act)
The NV Act aims to provide flexibility and incentives for farmers to manage native vegetation, end broad scale clearing (unless it improves or maintains environmental outcomes) and encourage healthy and productive landscapes.

State Environmental Planning Policy 14 - Coastal Wetlands (SEPP 14)
Within SEPP 14 wetlands designated development where it involves clearing, filling, construction of a levy or draining the land. Clearing includes tree removal, lopping and lower storey native vegetation removal (i.e. under scrubbing).

State Environmental Planning Policy 71 - Coastal Protection (SEPP 71)
The aims of SEPP 71 relate to the protection and enhancement of the coastal environment to ensure that the type, bulk, scale and size of development is appropriate for the location and protects and improves the natural scenic quality of the surrounding environment.

Other plans that apply to the site but do not apply to an approved project pursuant to Section 75R of EP&A Act.

North Coast Regional Environmental Plan (NCRP)
The NCRP contains objectives that relate to development on the North Coast. Relevant sections of the NCRP that may be applicable to the route selection include agricultural resources, the natural environment, coastal development, utility services and heritage.

Byron Local Environmental Plan 1988 (Byron LEP)
The Project is located in numerous zones within the Byron LEP. The Project is permissible in all of the applicable zones. Schedule 2 of the Byron LEP lists heritage items of local significance within the LGA.

Legislation	Standard/ Requirement	Comment
<i>Ballina Local Environmental Plan 1987 (Ballina LEP)</i> The Project is located in numerous zones within the Ballina LEP. The Project is permissible in all of the applicable zones.		
<i>Lismore Local Environmental Plan 2000 (Lismore LEP)</i> The Project is located in numerous zones within the Lismore LEP. The Project is permissible in all of the applicable zones.		The Lismore Power Station is listed on <i>Schedule 1 Heritage Items</i> of Lismore LEP. The project involves the demolition of the power station. A heritage impact assessment will be prepared as part of the EAP.

ENVIRONMENTAL RISKS

4

ISSUES IDENTIFICATION

4.1

The environmental assessment process seeks to ensure that all relevant environmental matters are considered and the community and interest groups are consulted throughout the environmental assessment. The environmental assessment will quantify and assess potential adverse impacts and document the likely benefits of the proposal. It will also outline the type of environmental management measures available to reduce adverse impacts and discuss opportunities created by the proposal. The information in the environmental assessment will also provide a basis for future monitoring of the environmental performance of the proposal where necessary.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

4.2

Country Energy acknowledges the importance of engaging all relevant stakeholders throughout the life of the Project, and in particular during the environmental approvals stage.

The objectives for consultation are to ensure stakeholders:

- have access to up-to-date, relevant information regarding the Project;
 - are provided with the opportunity to raise their concerns and have these concerns responded to by Country Energy; and
 - are provided with opportunity to raise suggestions to improve the Project.
- A community consultation strategy has been prepared and enacted for the Project including:
- newsletter updates (2 newsletters have already been distributed to community members that live near or within the Project Area);
 - a question and answer leaflet;
 - a technical leaflet;
 - a 1800 free call number; and
 - meetings with directly affected landholders.

Comments received via email, post and the 1800 number will be logged and considered in the E&AR.

Further consultation is proposed including meetings with directly affected landholders and a possible third newsletter if this is considered necessary.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

4.3

The expected key environmental issues are detailed below. Stakeholders, including local residents and regulatory agencies will be provided with information in relation to these issues at the outset of the Project through discussion about the scope of the Project and at the conclusion of the environmental assessment in regards to the outcomes of specialist findings.

Flora and Fauna

4.3.1

Investigations to date have included a desk top assessment to identify vegetation types in the Project Area and the likely presence of endangered flora and fauna species. This assessment was followed up with a preliminary site assessment. This work supported the line route selection process and has identified areas of potential environmental constraints (refer *Figures 1.1* and *1.2*). Detailed flora and fauna assessment will be undertaken wherever additional clearing is required and in areas of potential environmental constraints.

Historical Heritage

4.3.2

Both the former Lismore Power Station and the Mullumbimby Power Station are listed as having heritage significance. The former Lismore Power Station is listed on the *Schedule 1* of the Lismore LEP as well as Country Energy's *Section 170* Heritage and Conservation Register. The former Mullumbimby Power Station is listed on *Schedule 2* of the North Coast RFP and *Schedule 2* of the Byron LEP as well as Country Energy's *Section 170* Heritage and Conservation Register.

The Project includes the demolition of both the former Lismore and Mullumbimby Power Stations. Country Energy is currently investigating options to initiate a project for the community aimed at preserving the historic electricity generation infrastructure contained within the power stations. It is noted that this historic infrastructure is not currently accessible to the community. Therefore this presents an opportunity to make it available in an appropriate and safe location (i.e. museum, display hall).

Detailed heritage impact assessments will be prepared for both former power stations to be included with the E&AR.

4.3.3 Aboriginal Heritage

A preliminary desktop Aboriginal heritage investigation was undertaken during the LRS process. This investigation included a search of the Department of Environment and Climate Change (DECC) Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System (AHIMS) and a review of relevant local environment and history of land use information.

A further detailed Aboriginal heritage assessment, including consultation with local Aboriginal groups, will be undertaken during the preparation of the EAR. This assessment will focus on areas where disturbance is proposed, the SEPP 14 wetland areas and any areas identified as significant through the AHIMS search and consultation with the local aboriginal groups.

4.3.4 Electric and Magnetic Fields (EMF)

Some sections of the existing and new electricity line routes pass through residential areas or close to rural dwellings. The effects of electric and magnetic fields (EMF) on human health are not currently fully understood. Therefore, when siting new electrical infrastructure, Country Energy works with the community and adopts a prudent avoidance approach in accordance with the Electricity Networks Association (ENA) in order to minimise the EMF levels at the receptor points. It is expected that the proposed upgrade of the existing 66kV power lines to 132kV will likely result in a reduction in EMF levels. Country Energy will appoint an independent expert to assess potential EMF impacts for inclusion in the EAR.

Potential options for locating electricity transmission lines away from residences will be investigated during preparation of the environmental assessment report.

4.3.5 Waste and Contamination

The EAR will address waste management issues associated with the project. This will include consideration for general construction phase and operational waste generation and disposal, along with specific issues such as the appropriate removal and disposal of asbestos waste pertaining to the demolition of the power stations.

A preliminary assessment of potential soil and/or water contamination issues associated with the proposed project works and sites will be undertaken to identify any necessary mitigation measures or potential remediation requirements. This will include, but not be limited to, consideration of PCB oil contamination at existing substation and power station sites, and management of acid sulphate soils.

Table 4.1 contains a risk assessment of the potential environmental risks identified for this project. This risk assessment is intended to guide the level of assessment undertaken in the EAR. It is important to note that all risk ratings are based on the proposed activity taking place with no management measures in place.

Table 4.1 Environmental Risk Assessment

Environmental Risk Area	Sub Topic	Identified Environmental Risks Associated with the Project	Level of Risk	Proposed Scope of Works for Environmental Assessment	Justification
Ecology	Impacts to flora and fauna as a result of the construction of the Project.	Vegetation removal which may result in the disturbance or loss of habitat of threatened flora or fauna species, populations or ecological communities.	Medium	Detailed flora and fauna assessments will be undertaken in areas of potential environmental constraint (refer <i>Figures 1.1</i> and <i>1.2</i>) and areas where additional clearing is to be undertaken. The impacts of the Project on threatened flora or fauna species, populations or ecological communities will be assessed.	Where possible, the project will be constructed within existing cleared transmission line routes. The proposed assessment will focus on sensitive areas and areas of additional disturbance. This scope of works is considered appropriate.
Aboriginal Heritage	Impacts to Aboriginal heritage values as a result of construction or operational activities.	There are a number of Aboriginal heritage objects or places within or close to the Project area. The area surrounding SEPP 14 wetlands is also of interest in terms of potential Aboriginal heritage items.	Medium	Detailed Aboriginal heritage impact assessments, including consultation with relevant local Aboriginal groups, will be undertaken in areas identified in the AHIMS search as known sites, in SEPP 14 wetland areas and in areas to be disturbed that are identified as significant by the local aboriginal community. No further Aboriginal heritage investigations will be undertaken outside the above mentioned areas.	Where possible, the project will be constructed within existing cleared transmission line routes and ground disturbance will be limited. The proposed assessment focus on sensitive areas and areas of additional disturbance. This scope of works is considered appropriate.

Environmental Risk Area	Sub Topic	Identified Environmental Risks Associated with the Project	Level of Risk	Proposed Scope of Works for Environmental Assessment	Justification
Historical Heritage	Impacts to listed heritage structures/values within the Project Area.	Both the former Lismore and Mullumbimby Power Stations are listed in local and regional planning instruments as having heritage significance. It is proposed that both heritage items be demolished as part of the Project.	High	Country Energy is investigating options for initiating a project for the community to preserve the historic power generation infrastructure and make it accessible to the public. Detailed heritage impact assessments will be prepared for both the former Lismore and Mullumbimby Power Stations.	Country Energy will aim to preserve the historic infrastructure and the Project will not impact on any other listed heritage items and, therefore, the scope of work is considered appropriate.
Noise	Construction and operational noise impacts	Construction noise associated with traffic and the establishment of infrastructure within the Project area may generate noise impacts to nearby sensitive receivers. Noise generated by electrical infrastructure may impact on nearby sensitive receivers.	Medium	Calculations of predicted noise levels at surrounding residences will be made for the construction/establishment phase of this project. These will be conducted in accordance with DECC policy, and will include vehicle movements, machinery and other noise sources associated with the construction phase of the project as well as ongoing noise generated by electrical equipment.	Minimal construction and operational noise will be generated by the Project, therefore the scope is considered appropriate.
Air Quality	Dust and particulate matter.	Construction activities have the potential to generate dust and particulate matter.	Low	Appropriate mitigation measures will be recommended to minimise impacts to air quality as a result of construction works. No air quality monitoring is proposed.	Minimal air quality impacts will be caused by the Project, therefore the scope is considered appropriate.

Environmental Risk Area	Sub Topic	Identified Environmental Risks Associated with the Project	Level of Risk	Proposed Scope of Works for Environmental Assessment	Justification
Surface Water	Local and regional surface water quality	Contamination of surface water resources resulting from construction works or operation.	Low	Appropriate mitigation measures will be recommended to minimise impacts to surface water quality as a result of construction works. No water quality monitoring is proposed.	It is very unlikely that the construction or operational phases of the Project will result in impacts to local surface water, therefore the proposed scope of works is considered appropriate.
Traffic and Transport	Vehicle movements generated by the project	During the construction phase of the Project vehicle numbers, particularly heavy vehicles are likely to increase in and around the Project area.	Low	Appropriate mitigation measures, including the requirement to prepare a traffic management plan, will be recommended to minimise impacts to traffic as a result of the Project.	The increase in traffic levels will be primarily during the construction phase of the Project for the delivery of electrical equipment and will be short term and temporary only. Very minimal increases in local traffic will result once the Project is operational.
Visual	Residences within and close to the Project Area.	Negative visual impacts associated with the construction/ upgrade of transmission lines and substations.	Low	A visual impact assessment will be prepared to determine the impacts of the Project on the surrounding visual environment. The visual assessment will focus on areas where new substations and transmission lines are proposed and areas where vegetation clearing is required.	Much of the works will be undertaken along existing electricity transmission line routes and within existing substation sites. Visual impacts in these areas will be minimal.

Environmental Risk Area	Sub Topic	Identified Environmental Risks Associated with the Project	Level of Risk	Proposed Scope of Works for Environmental Assessment	Justification
Socio Economic Considerations	Economic benefits to the local and regional communities as a result of the electricity network upgrade.	Socio economic impacts associated with a loss of land value, health impacts and land use constraints resulting from the Project.	Low	Document the reliance of the community on a reliable electricity supply for residential and business use and the need for the supply to meet predicted future demands; assess potential social and economic impacts (positive and negative) associated with the project; and provide management measures.	The proposed overview of potential socio-economic impacts is considered to be appropriate as the socio-economic impacts of the Project are likely to be generally positive.
Waste	Construction and operational waste.	Potential pollution of the surrounding environment from general rubbish, human waste, construction waste, fuels, oils and chemicals.	Low	Appropriate mitigation measures will be recommended for the storage and disposal of all waste associated with the project.	As the Project is likely to only produce minimal amounts of waste the scope is considered appropriate.
Contamination	Soil and water contamination	The construction phase of the project will involve excavation, use of heavy machinery and installation of electrical plant and equipment. There is the potential for fuel/ oil spills, sedimentation of waterways and chemical spills or overuse.	Medium	Appropriate mitigation measures will be provided for the use and storage of fuels, oil and chemicals during both the construction and operational phases of the Project. Mitigation measures will also be provided in relation to erosion and sedimentation control and management of acid sulfate soils.	This level of assessment is considered appropriate given the risk level assigned.
		Demolition of the former power stations may require asbestos removal.		Recommendations for any potential detailed site assessment and remedial plans considered necessary will be provided in the EAR with regard to potential contamination issues.	
		There is the potential for			

Environmental Risk Area	Sub Topic	Identified Environmental Risks Associated with the Project	Level of Risk	Proposed Scope of Works for Environmental Assessment	Justification
Electric and Magnetic Fields health. (EMF)	Effects of EMF on human health.	The effects of EMF on human health are not fully understood and therefore a prudent avoidance approach is adopted by Country Energy. The upgrade of the 66kV power line to 132kV is expected to result in a reduction in EMF levels. Some sections of the Project area have a high potential acid sulfate soil risk. Once operational, the main contamination risk arises from large volumes of oil stored in transformers and underground containment tanks.	Low	Country Energy will commission an independent expert to assess potential EMF impacts of the project. Where the electricity transmission line route is located in residential areas or close to dwellings potential options for relocating the line will be investigated. No EMF monitoring or testing is proposed. This level of assessment is considered appropriate as Country Energy works with the community and adopts a prudent avoidance approach in accordance with the Energy Networks Association (ENA).	

Annex A

Project Order



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Mr Ken Stonestreet
Group General Manager
Networks and Infrastructure
Country Energy
PO Box 718
QUEANBEYAN NSW 2620

Dear Mr Stonestreet

Proposed Lismore to Mullumbimby Electricity Network Upgrade – Application of Part 3A of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979

I refer to your letter dated 25th October, 2007, which requested that an Order be made by the Minister for Planning, under section 75B of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act), for the Lismore to Mullumbimby Electricity Network Upgrade and that, under section 75M of the EP&A Act, the Minister authorise the submission of a concept plan.

For your information, the Minister made an Order on 23rd January, 2008. The Order was gazetted on 1st February, 2008, and a copy of the gazetted Order is attached. The Minister has also authorised the submission of a concept plan for the project.

Please contact me if you would like to discuss this matter.

Yours sincerely

Neville Osborne

1/2/08

Neville Osborne
Manager, Water and Energy
Major Infrastructure Assessment

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ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT ACT 1979

ORDER

I, the Minister for Planning, in pursuance of section 75B(1) of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, do, by this my Order declare that the development described in Schedule 1 is a project to which Part 3A of that Act applies.

In my opinion the development described in Schedule 1 is of State or regional environmental planning significance.

Dated this 23rd day of January 2008.

FRANK SARTOR, M.P.
Minister for Planning,
Sydney

SCHEDULE 1

Development by Country Energy for the purposes of upgrading the electricity supply network in the Lismore, Ballina, Ewingsdale and Mullumbimby areas to achieve a 132 kV network, located within the local government areas of Ballina, Lismore and Byron (the "Project"), and involving:

1. construction of the following substations:
 - (a) 132/11kV substation at Brunswick Heads;
 - (b) 132/11kV substation at Suffolk Park;
 2. construction of the following transmission lines:
 - (a) 132kV transmission line from the Mullumbimby to Ewingsdale 66kV transmission line to the Brunswick Heads substation;
 - (b) 132kV transmission line from the Lismore 132/66kV substation to join to the Alstonville to Ballina 66kV transmission line near Alstonville;
 - (c) 66kV transmission line from the Lismore South 66/11kV substation to the proposed Lismore University 66kV switching station;
 - (d) two underground 66kV lines from Lismore 132/66kV substation to Lismore South 66/11kV substation;
 3. upgrade of the following substations including:
 - (a) Mullumbimby 132/66/11kV substation to 132/11kV;
 - (b) Lennox Head 66/11kV substation to 132/11kV;
 - (c) Lismore 132/66kV substation (construct additional switch bay for new feeder);
 - (d) Lismore South 66/11kV substation (construct additional switch bay for new feeder);
 - (e) Ballina 66/11kV substation to 132/66/11kV;
 - (f) Ewingsdale 66/11kV substation to 132/11kV;
 4. upgrade, including any necessary realignments or deviations of the following transmission lines:
 - (a) 66kV transmission line from the Mullumbimby 132/66/11kV substation to the Ballina 66/11kV substation, to 132 kV; and
 - (b) 66kV transmission line from the Ballina 66/11kV substation to join to the new 132kV transmission line identified in 2(b) above (via either Teven or West Ballina), to 132kV.
 5. Development for the purposes of the Project including development for any of the following purposes:
 - (a) construction (including demolition) and operation of the Project;
 - (b) demolition of the decommissioned Mullumbimby power station;
 - (c) demolition of the decommissioned Lismore power station;
 - (d) all associated or ancillary works, activities, uses, structures or facilities for the purposes of the Project;
 - (e) access for construction and operation of the Project, including access for pedestrians, public transport and vehicles;
 - (f) environmental management and pollution control for the Project;
 - (g) any realignment, modification, demolition or replacement of the existing transmission or distribution lines for the Project;
- but not including preliminary works (including surveys, test drilling, test excavation and geotechnical investigations) associated with the design, or environmental assessments required for the Project prior to the commencement of construction.

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