

Waddamana to Palmerston Transfer Capability Upgrade

Engagement Report August 2025



Powering a
Bright Future

Acknowledgment of Country

TasNetworks acknowledges the palawa (Tasmanian Aboriginal community) as the original owners and custodians of lutruwita (Tasmania).

TasNetworks acknowledges the palawa have maintained their spiritual and cultural connection to the land and water. We pay respect to Elders past and present and all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.



You will see this icon used in this document to highlight culturally significant landmarks of the Tasmanian Aboriginal community.

The outer arches represent the nine aboriginal tribes, the original custodians of the land. The imperfect circles represent these tribes gathering at a meeting place, reflecting deep connections to Country and tradition.



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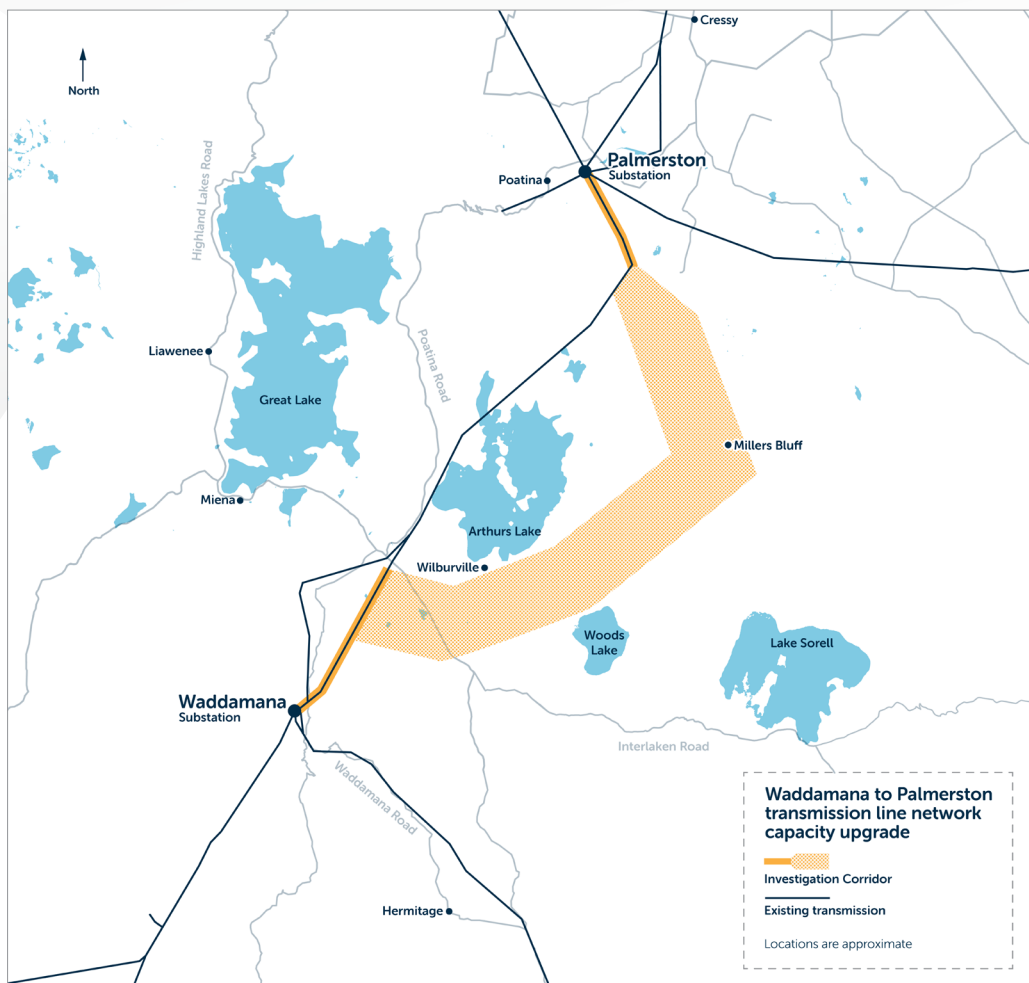
Project overview

TasNetworks currently operates two transmission lines between its Waddamana and Palmerston substations. These lines are critical for energy security in Tasmania as they provide the only transmission link between the north and south of the State.

The Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) confirmed that the capacity upgrade for the infrastructure between Waddamana and Palmerston (WA-PM) is a critical component for a national transition to renewable energy. This was recognised as part of the 2024 Integrated System Plan (ISP).

AEMO is responsible for operating Australia's National Energy Market (NEM) in the best interests of Australian energy consumers. The ISP maps the optimal path for transmission developments in the National Energy Market (NEM) and shows that projects like the proposed network capability upgrade between WA-PM are required for the development of the lowest-cost pathway to reaching Australia's net-zero emissions targets.

TasNetworks has started work on investigating potential upgrades to expand the transmission network to increase both energy capacity and security. At this early stage of the Waddamana to Palmerston project the scope is less defined. As a result, there is less certainty on the route and who could be impacted.



Purpose of engagement

The purpose of this early engagement is to gain insights into the local area—its values, needs, and priorities—by listening to those who know it best: the people who live and spend their time there.

Engaging meaningfully with stakeholders and the broader community from the outset helps us to achieve better outcomes for everyone involved. Early conversations allow us to uncover local knowledge that may not be otherwise accessible, assess potential social impacts and manage associated risks, and build trust by demonstrating that community voices matter and make a difference.

We acknowledge that those directly affected, such as nearby residents and interested community groups, may have different concerns than the broader community. Our goal is to ensure that all voices are heard and considered. TasNetworks seeks to meet a best-practice engagement approach, making it easy for

people to access information and share their views.

TasNetworks also recognises that differing perspectives are a natural part of any major initiative. Our engagement approach aims to share clear, balanced, and credible information, while also listening to and incorporating informed community feedback.

The findings from our engagement will play a key role in the Project Assessment Draft Report as part of the Regulatory Investment Test for Transmission (RIT-T) process, led by the Australian Energy Regulator (AER).

Our commitment is to address complex issues openly and honestly from the beginning. We are clear about what aspects of the project the community can influence and aim to lead the conversation with transparency and respect.

Ultimately, our goal is to create meaningful opportunities for early involvement, laying the groundwork for trust, participation, and collaboration throughout the life of the project.

Engagement summary

How we have engaged

Engagement has been undertaken with directly and indirectly impacted stakeholders and community members in the areas impacted by WA-PM. While this includes statewide stakeholders and communities, the predominant focus includes the local government areas of:

- Northern Midlands
- Central Highlands

A program of engagement specific to finding out more about concerns, issues and priorities has been carried out.

Who we have engaged with

Landholders x 40

Community members x 65+

Community groups

- NTAG (No Turbine Action Group)

Local government authorities

- Central Highlands council
- Northern Midlands council

State Government

- Minister for Energy and Renewables
- ReCFIT – Renewables, Climate and Future Industries Tasmania

Recreational groups x 3

- The Big Den – hunting lodge
- Mountain Bikes Tasmania
- Fly Fishers Club of Tasmania

Project energy proponents

- Ark Energy (St Patricks Plains Wind Farm)

Online survey x 22

To better understand community perspectives, we launched an online survey inviting locals to share their thoughts. Twenty-two responses were received from a diverse mix of community members, offering valuable insights into their concerns, priorities, and expectations for the project.

Survey responses collected during May and June provided insights into the local community and their perspectives on the Waddamana to Palmerston project area.



Breakdown of community

Status

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Shack owner | 9 |
| Permanent resident | 9 |
| Farmer | 2 |
| Regular visitor | 2 |

Area visitation frequency

Status

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Visit annually | 1 |
| Visit quarterly | 1 |
| Visit monthly | 9 |
| Visit weekly | 2 |
| Permanently reside | 9 |

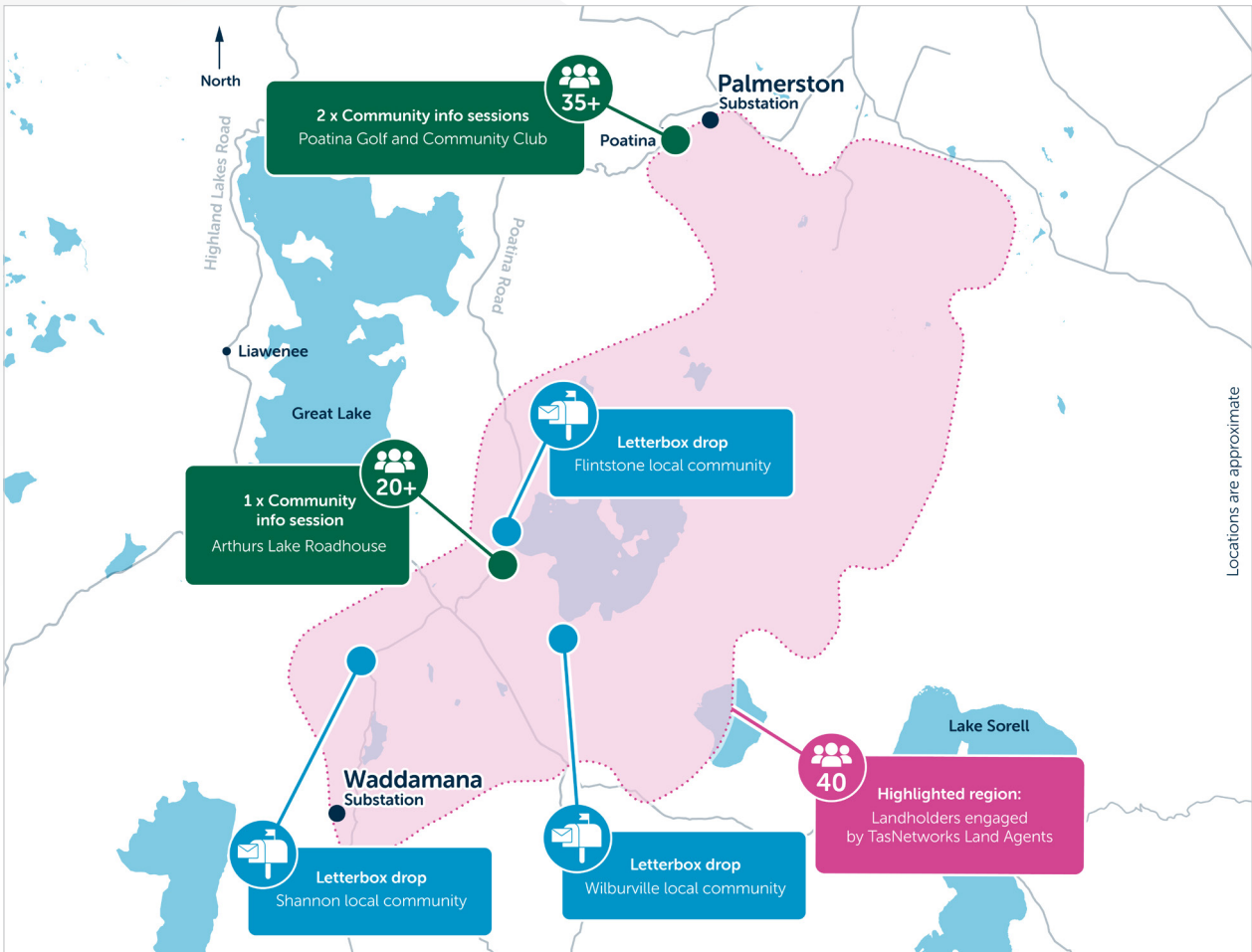
Use of area (multiple choices)

Status

| | |
|---------------------------|----|
| For relaxation and quiet | 16 |
| Holiday | 6 |
| Recreation (hunting) | 10 |
| Recreation (fishing) | 11 |
| Walking/hiking/climbing | 7 |
| Farming | 7 |
| Employment/earning income | 5 |
| Volunteering | 1 |

Where we have engaged

The following map shows the geographical area of landholder and community engagement for the WA-PM project.



| Activity | Location | Engagement |
|--|--|---|
| Land Agent Meetings | Face-to-face and phone calls | 40 Landholders engaged |
| Community pop-up meeting | Poatina Golf and Community Club (x 2 events) | 35+ Individuals engaged |
| Community pop-up meeting | Arthurs Lake Roadhouse | 20+ Individuals engaged |
| Online survey | TasNetworks hosted | 22 responses received |
| Letterbox drop | Shannon local community | 10 Q&A flyers distributed |
| Letterbox drop | Flintstone local community | 100+ Q&A flyers distributed 10 Ad hoc face-to-face |
| Letterbox drop (Supported by Arthurs Lake Roadhouse RPO) | Wilburville local community | 25+ Q&A flyers distributed |
| WA-PM public webinar | TasNetworks hosted | 7 online participants |
| WA-PM project website | TasNetworks hosted | Ongoing |
| TasNetworks social media | Facebook | Ongoing |

What we have heard

The proposed transmission project, including potential upgrades and a new greenfield corridor, has generated significant concern and mixed reactions among landholders and stakeholders across the Central Highlands and Northern Midlands regions of Tasmania. While some support the project's broader renewable energy goals, many express reservations about its local impacts.

Themes heard through engagement include:

- **Preference for existing corridor:** Most stakeholders prefer upgrades to occur within the existing transmission corridor, citing reduced environmental impact, lower cost, and fewer disruptions to farming, tourism, and recreation.
- **Engagement and communication:** While early engagement is appreciated, stakeholders request clearer information, ongoing updates, and more tailored consultation. Some landholders, especially those without digital access, require alternative communication methods.
- **Opposition to greenfield corridor:** Strong opposition exists to a greenfield route due to its potential to fragment productive land, interference with wind farm infrastructure, and impact areas of ecological and cultural significance.
- **Distrust of TasNetworks:** Several landholders report historical grievances with TasNetworks, citing poor communication, lack of transparency, and substandard work. There is scepticism about whether decisions have already been made without genuine consultation.
- **Compensation and property value:** Some landholders feel that historically, compensation offers are inadequate and fear significant devaluation of their properties if a greenfield corridor is chosen. Concerns include visual amenity, land use restrictions, and the possibility of compulsory acquisition of land.
- **Environmental and cultural heritage risks:** Stakeholders emphasise the need for rigorous



environmental assessments and cultural sensitivity where the greenfield corridor intersects areas with threatened species, eagle nests, and indigenous heritage sites.

- **Fire safety and access:** Concerns about fire risk, emergency access, and mobile reception in remote areas were raised, particularly by local fire service volunteers and land managers. With several noting that whilst they realise 'mobile coverage' is not a TasNetworks responsibility, they have cited it relating to workforce safety and emergency communications.

Stakeholder diversity

TasNetworks has consulted a broad cross-section of stakeholders, including:

- Recreational landholders and shack owners
- Large-scale farmers and forestry operators
- Eco-tourism developers
- Renewable energy proponents and opponents
- Fire service volunteers and land managers
- Indigenous and conservation advocates.

Each group brings distinct priorities, from land use protection and environmental stewardship to infrastructure planning and community benefit.

Voices of the community

Feedback gathered from community events, landholder visits and an online survey.

"I need irrigation for my livelihood and power outages dramatically reduce income every time they happen."

"New power lines would impact the environment with the clearing of flora, road building and impact to fauna... This would cause scarring of the landscape that is fragile."

"Presumably power outages would shut down mobile phone and internet communications. Lack of communications would be a nuisance."

"Visual impact in the area and limit unwanted development."

"The intrusion of temporary workforces brings social disruption and affects affordability of rental accommodation."

"Many endangered flora and fauna present in the Highlands... High likelihood of Aboriginal artefacts along the rivers particularly the Shannon River."

"Impacts on amenity and lifestyle - people live here for a reason for example the natural beauty of the environment and quietness."

"Do not destroy the local scenery or wildlife for the benefit of other states or overseas investors. Transparency and honesty with the residents."

"Greater mobile phone coverage and internet capacity. In my opinion this would be the most significant benefit to the entire community and visitors."

"Improved access to medical treatment and ambulance services... local communities must also benefit from investment to enhance the health and wellbeing of the area."

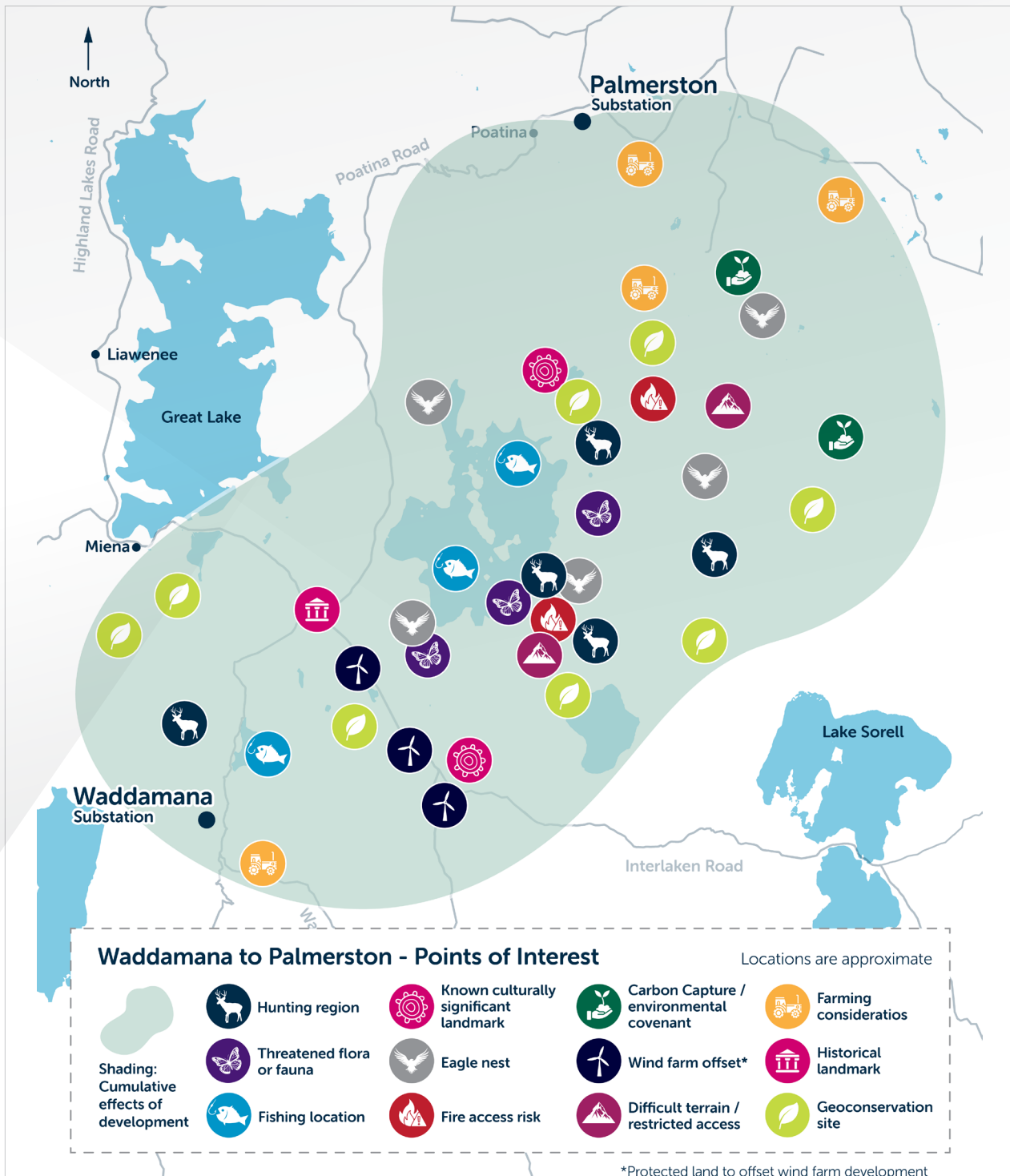
"Being taken seriously and not subject to token 'Tick the Box: We consulted' processes."

"More infrastructure for tourism. Bike trails, walking tracks etc."

Region specific insights

The following map shows some of the key insights from known values and stakeholders relating to a broad range of concerns and interests: from difficult terrain, endangered species identification, and areas of cultural significance.

This local knowledge is invaluable to the project and helps identify the interests relevant and important to these local communities.



Next steps

Progressing through the regulatory process

TasNetworks is working through the Regulatory Investment Test for Transmission (RIT-T). The purpose of this process is to determine the preferred option to meet an identified need. Typically, for projects that are not progressed via the Integrated System Plan, the RIT-T follows a three-stage consultation process.

As this project is an ISP project, the Project Specification Consultation Report (PSCR) stage is not required, and the first deliverable is the Project Assessment Draft Report (PADR).

Project Assessment Draft Report (PADR)

As part of this stage, we conduct a cost-benefit analysis of options deemed 'credible' to identify the preferred solution and publish the cost-benefit analysis in a PADR that:

- Is made available to stakeholders for at least six weeks
- Identifies the preferred option through an economic assessment of credible options.

TasNetworks must release the PADR before 28th February 2026.

As part of the PADR submission a supporting document will be included which will reflect the insights and information gathered from interested stakeholders and community. This document will mirror insights from this interim report and will include any additional information and insights that may be identified between the release of this report and the final PADR submission.

Continuing engagement

TasNetworks will continue engagement throughout the course of the project, including the period between this report and the submission of the PADR. As a result, we are looking to maintain connections with all our stakeholders, and the community through this time.

There are several ways that you are able to stay up to date on the project:

Website

The 'Waddamana – Palmerston' project page provides information on all aspects of the project and can be accessed at tasnetworks.com.au/wa-pm

Mailing list

The project has a mailing list that intends to provide updates to registered members. If you would like to join this mailing list, you can sign up via the 'Waddamana – Palmerston' project page at tasnetworks.com.au/wa-pm

Public events

We are committed to engaging with the community and will be holding further information sessions in the region as the project progresses. Upcoming engagement opportunities can be found at tasnetworks.com.au/wa-pm

Community engagement events (after the PADR)

Following the release of the PADR, TasNetworks will host additional community events to communicate the selected option and gather feedback.

As the project progresses, both in-person and online events will be held to share updates and engage with stakeholders until completion.

Event details will be published on the TasNetworks website, promoted via social media, and shared with Central Highlands and Northern Midlands councils to ensure broad community access.

Contact us

We are committed to making improvements to our engagement approach. Let us know how we can better understand what is important to you and what we need to consider to achieve the best outcomes for the environment, landholders, and community.

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