

# What we heard

AusNet is committed to listening to and engaging with the community and other key stakeholders as it works through the Gippsland Renewable Energy Zone™ project (G-REZ™). ▸



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In July 2022 AusNet officially launched the Gippsland Renewable Energy Zone (G-REZ), Victoria's first industry-led Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) project.

A REZ in Gippsland will act as the extension cord for new renewable energy developments in the region, coordinating the delivery of renewable energy and providing a link to the Latrobe Valley's existing energy infrastructure.



## Engagement to date



**250+**  
community members provided feedback at the pop-ups



**2500+**  
unique visitors to the G-REZ website



**11,000+**  
project updates sent



**56**  
feedback pins added to the online map



**7 x**  
community pop-up events

- 2** x Traralgon
- 2** x Sale
- 2** x Rosedale
- 1** x Yarram

# Our engagement activities

**In July 2022, we held seven community pop-ups in areas close to the preferred transmission route to get the community's feedback on the project.**

In addition, our project website ([grez.com.au](http://grez.com.au)) launched in July and was supported with an online digital engagement space. At the time of launch, our website featured an interactive map of the preferred route that allowed users to drop pins to identify places of significance or provide feedback about specific locations. A community survey was also available on our website which sought feedback regarding Victoria's

energy transition and the role and importance of transmission infrastructure including projects such as G-REZ.

Landowner engagement continued during this time and will remain ongoing. A summary of community feedback we have received and how this will help shape the G-REZ project is provided on pages 3 and 4.

## What we heard

A summary of the key themes we heard during our face-to-face community pop-ups and our online engagement is provided in the following table.



## What we're doing

The G-REZ team values all feedback it has received to date and is committed to considering this as we continue to shape the project.



## What we heard



## What we're doing



### Preference for underground transmission

- A strong preference for transmission infrastructure to be developed underground to not impact the visual amenity of the area.
- Concerns regarding the limitations that overhead infrastructure may impose on farming activities.

- ✓ We recognise that there is a strong preference from the community for transmission infrastructure to be developed underground. We will continue to undertake further work to investigate the suitability of developing the G-REZ infrastructure underground.
- ✓ We're continuing to meet with landowners proposed to host G-REZ infrastructure to understand how they use their property and how we may be able to adjust the route to better coexist with existing farming practices.

### A general understanding of the need for the project and support for renewable energy development in Gippsland

- There is a need for a coordinated approach to new transmission infrastructure in Gippsland to minimise impacts and maximise benefits to the community.
- Interest in alternatives to traditional lattice towers such as monopoles or underground transmission options.

- ✓ We're continuing to investigate the infrastructure options available to develop the project. For overhead transmission this includes monopoles and utilising two single circuit towers rather than one taller, double circuit tower.
- ✓ By developing transmission infrastructure capable of transporting energy from numerous renewable energy developments, we hope to support the success of these projects and economic opportunities for Gippsland while offering a coordinated solution for transmission.

### Health and environmental concerns

- Concerns about the fire risk posed by transmission infrastructure.
- Concerns about the stability of overhead infrastructure.
- Concerns about possible health implications associated with new transmission infrastructure including an increase in electric and magnetic fields (EMF).

- ✓ We're committed to understanding the concerns of the community and other key stakeholders in relation to fire and EMF. We will provide individuals with access to independent information regarding the EMF and fire risk associated with transmission infrastructure.
- ✓ AusNet will undertake a comprehensive geotechnical assessment across the proposed route and at each tower location to understand the geotechnical conditions and design the footing appropriately to ensure the stability of the tower and that it is in accordance with Australian design standards.

### The need for energy security

- There is a need to ensure new renewable projects can meet baseload energy requirements before coal-fired power generation is retired.

- ✓ The G-REZ project supports energy security by providing the appropriate transmission infrastructure to support new renewable energy generators in getting their energy from where it is made to where it is needed.

### Desire to understand how the preferred route was chosen and what alternatives were considered

- A number of questions were asked about why the preferred route didn't go through the Holey Plains State Park, mirror the existing Basslink transmission line or link into Loy Yang Power Station.

- ✓ We recognise that there is a desire to understand how the preferred route for the G-REZ project has been determined. Please visit [grez.com.au/faqs](http://grez.com.au/faqs) for more information about how AusNet selected the current transmission route for the G-REZ project.

## What we heard



## What we're doing



### More engagement about the project

- The community wants more information about the project and to continue engagement through the design and approvals phase.

- ✓ We are committed to ongoing engagement with landowners proposed to host G-REZ infrastructure, immediate neighbours, the broader community and other key stakeholders as we work through the G-REZ project. We'll be hosting further community pop ups in the coming months once the environmental referrals for the project have been published.

Visit [grez.com.au](https://www.grez.com.au) and sign-up to keep up to date with the latest from the project.

### Protecting flora and fauna

- A desire not to have any detrimental impact on local flora or fauna which are an important part of the natural landscape of Gippsland.

- ✓ We'll be undertaking environmental surveys over the coming months to gain a better understanding of the flora and fauna species within the project area and how the project can minimise the impacts on these.

### Local industry and jobs

- Interest in local employment opportunities working on G-REZ and other renewable energy projects in Gippsland.
- A strong preference for the industry to use the local workforce where possible.

- ✓ G-REZ is committed to supporting local jobs and employment wherever possible. It has employed a local engagement team in Gippsland as well as procured a number of services locally. AusNet will continue to give preference to local contractors and service providers as it progresses the project.

## What's next?

- AusNet is continuing to engage with landowners, neighbours, the broader community and other key stakeholders as we work through the G-REZ project.
- We have further pop ups planned for September 2022 as well as a webinar to provide further information about our environmental referrals.
- We're committed to continuing to share the feedback we receive through these engagement activities and how we're considering this.

## For more information

Visit [grez.com.au](https://www.grez.com.au) to register your details and keep up to date with the latest on G-REZ.



## Contact Us

AusNet is committed to providing many opportunities for locals to share their knowledge about the area and provide feedback. For more information, or to speak to a member of our team, contact us via:

[grez.com.au](https://www.grez.com.au) 1300 360 795 [info@grez.com.au](mailto:info@grez.com.au)

**AusNet**

