

NARRABRI LATERAL PIPELINE

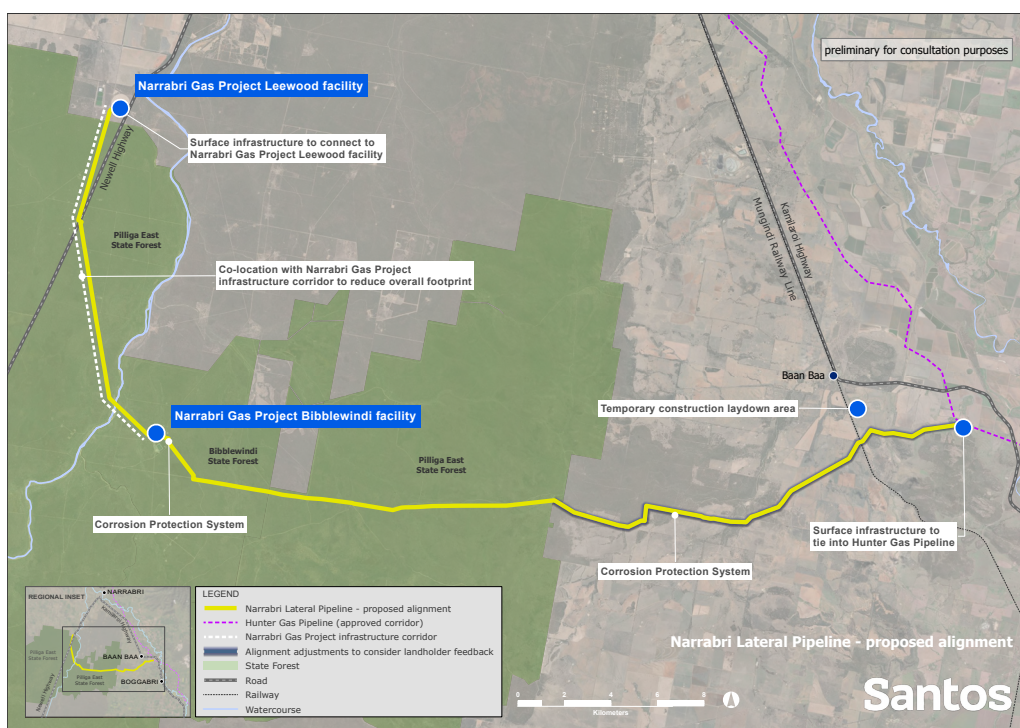
AN IMPORTANT LINK IN NSW'S ENERGY FUTURE

Natural gas is an essential part of NSW's energy mix and its ongoing production is required to ensure safe, reliable and affordable electricity well into the future. Santos has committed 100 per cent of gas from its Narrabri Gas Project (NGP) to the domestic market. Once completed, the project is expected to supply up to half of the state's natural gas needs, delivering energy security for the region and putting downward pressure on gas and electricity prices for households, manufacturers and businesses.

NARRABRI LATERAL PIPELINE

To connect the NGP to the Hunter Gas Pipeline (HGP), Santos is finalising plans for the Narrabri Lateral Pipeline (NLP).

The NLP will provide the 'missing link' for the transmission of natural gas to the existing NSW transmission network near Newcastle. The proposed pipeline will connect the gas processing facility at Leewood (approximately 20 kilometres south west of Narrabri), traverse south east via the Bibblewindi facility, and end at the approved HGP (located approximately 5.5 kilometres south east of Baan Baa). The project will bring economic benefits to Narrabri and surrounding regions, including between 150 and 200 jobs. The NLP is an underground pipeline, approximately 50 - 60 kilometres in length. While the pipeline will be buried, there is some associated infrastructure that will be above ground, such as marker signs and corrosion protection systems, which support the safe operation and maintenance of the pipeline.



NARRABRI LATERAL PIPELINE

KEY FEATURES

The key operational features of the project include:

- buried in accordance with the relevant Australian Standard - AS 2885 - Pipelines - Gas and liquid petroleum
- an underground steel gas transmission pipeline with a diameter of up to 20 inches and a nominal gas capacity (flow rate) of up to 200 terajoules/day
- a permanent easement approximately 30 metres wide
- supporting above ground infrastructure, including:
 - two scraper stations, used for access to the pipeline for internal cleaning and inspection
 - corrosion protection system
 - pipeline marker signs.

CONSTRUCTION

The project footprint will include a construction Right of Way (ROW) and additional temporary work areas such as laydown areas, stockpiles and truck turnarounds.

Where possible, areas approved for use as part of the NGP will be used to support the construction of the NLP project to minimise its footprint.

Construction duration is approximately 12 weeks in any one location from clearing of vegetation to commencing rehabilitation.

Temporary workspaces (such as stockpile and laydown areas) will be established to facilitate construction.

During construction, Santos is proposing to undertake activities on a 21 days on, seven days off roster. This roster will reduce the overall construction timeframe of the project, maximise the use of the workforce during mobilisation periods, and provide flexibility to program a range of work activities.

During the seven days off, limited activities may be undertaken on site.

Work is proposed between 6am and 6pm. Some essential activities, such as the construction of trenchless crossings and transport of oversized materials, may be required beyond 6pm. Work outside the recommended standard working hours will be subject to approval by the NSW Government and in consultation with affected landholders.

Pipeline construction is planned to proceed in a continuous linear process at a typical rate of around 2.5 kilometres per day, however this will be dependent on the terrain and weather.



ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (EIS)

Santos is committed to minimising environmental impacts of its operations and activities and is currently preparing an EIS for the NLP to support the application for project approval. Santos will apply the avoid, minimise and mitigate principles at all times.

WHAT IS AN EIS?

On 9 December 2022, the NLP was declared Critical State Significant Infrastructure (CSSI) by the NSW Government.

As CSSI status, the project is subject to approval by the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces under Part 5, Division 5.2 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (NSW) (EP&A Act).

An EIS is a document required to support the application for all major projects in NSW. It assesses the potential environmental, economic and social impacts of a proposed project. An EIS helps the community, government agencies, and decision-makers understand the project's benefits and implications to make informed decisions.

The EIS for the NLP project is being developed in accordance with the [Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements](#) (SEARs) prepared by the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure and with reference to the [State Significant Infrastructure Guidelines](#).

SOCIAL

Santos is committed to creating a positive legacy and building capacity in the communities it operates. The project will support a construction workforce of 150 to 200 personnel, with a peak of approximately 160.

Santos proposes to accommodate the main construction workforce at existing workforce accommodation facilities in Narrabri and Boggabri.

Operation of the pipeline will require a small workforce, consisting of field and control room staff. Field staff will be based in Narrabri while the control room staff will likely work from Santos' Brisbane office.

A social impact assessment is being prepared as part of the EIS. The social impact assessment will identify potential social impacts and benefits that may result from constructing and operating the project. In accordance with the Social Impact Assessment Guidelines (DPE, 2023) for major projects, targeted consultation has been undertaken to inform the social impact assessment. These face to face and virtual meetings with key local stakeholders have been used to validate and gather information to develop an understanding of the existing community and identify potential social benefits and impacts resulting from the project. This consultation will also be used to inform the development of mitigation and management measures.

NOISE AND VIBRATION

Santos is preparing a noise and vibration impact assessment to assess the potential impacts as a result of the construction and operation of the project.

This includes noise monitoring in the project area to quantify the existing noise environment and consideration of construction road traffic noise.

Based on the results, noise and vibration management and mitigation measures will be implemented as part of a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). This will include details of arrangements for consultation with affected residents.

Once the pipeline is operational, noise from the project will be limited to maintenance activities that would be of short duration, and impacts would be negligible. No other noise impacts are anticipated from the operation of the underground pipeline.

MINIMISING ENVIRONMENTAL AND COMMUNITY IMPACTS

Santos has sought to ensure the pipeline position aligns with existing or approved infrastructure corridors where possible, to minimise the amount of vegetation clearing and land disturbance required.

Trenchless crossing techniques are proposed to be used where feasible to avoid impacts to important biodiversity corridors at Bohena, Little Sandy and Tulla Mullen Creeks.

Consultation with individual landowners has resulted in the proposed pipeline being placed primarily along property boundaries or fence lines and in consideration of an individual property's agricultural and land use activities.

Consultation and refinements of the pipeline alignment with individual landowners will be ongoing.

TRAFFIC

A traffic and transport impact assessment is being prepared to assess the potential impacts of constructing and operating the project on transportation networks.

During construction, project vehicles will use the existing road network (including highways, local roads and State Forest roads), to access the construction working area for the pipeline.

The design has included an allowance for trenchless crossings at locations where the pipeline alignment crosses the Newell Highway and the combined crossing of Werris Creek - Mungindi railway and the adjacent Curracabah Road. This will reduce or remove potential impacts on traffic movements in these locations.

At this stage, the volume of vehicle movements generated by the project is expected to be minor and is expected to have a negligible impact on the adjoining road network performance or road safety, provided appropriate traffic control measures are implemented.

Traffic and access management and mitigation measures will be implemented as part of a CEMP. The Plan will detail processes to minimise traffic, access delays and disruptions. The Plan will be developed in consultation with relevant stakeholders.

Once the pipeline is operational, a routine operation and maintenance program will be implemented that will include aerial and/or ground inspections and remote monitoring. The impact of vehicle activity associated with the operation of the pipeline is expected to be negligible.



BIODIVERSITY

While vegetation clearing activities will be required to provide a level, safe and efficient construction working area, the design and location of the project has been optimised to minimise its footprint and reduce potential impacts for biodiversity generally.

This includes avoiding or minimising impacts on vegetation mapped as having high biodiversity value.

A Biodiversity Development Assessment Report is being prepared in accordance with the Biodiversity Assessment Method 2020 (DPIE, 2020) and the project SEARs to assess the potential construction and operational impacts of the project on State and Commonwealth listed species and communities.

The design has included an allowance for trenchless crossings at three locations where the pipeline crosses Bohena Creek, Little Sandy Creek and Tulla Mullen Creek. This will avoid the need to clear sensitive riparian vegetation along the creek edges, and avoid impacts to the natural pathway of the watercourses, noting that the majority of watercourses in the project area do not contain permanent water. Feasibility of trenchless crossings will be confirmed following geotechnical investigations.

The working area will be narrowed where required to avoid or minimise impacts to environment, heritage and landholder constraints where possible, depending on site specific conditions.

Seasonal surveys have been conducted since 2022 to collect and verify the baseline data to confirm what is present on the ground. Consultation with the Biodiversity Conservation Directorate is being conducted to discuss methodology and survey approaches. This has included agreeing an approach for managing the assessment of impacts along sections of the pipeline alignment that were severely burnt during bushfires in December 2023.

The findings of these surveys have been used to refine the pipeline alignment, to avoid impacting on known threatened ecological communities or species where possible.

ABORIGINAL CULTURAL HERITAGE

An Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report (ACHAR) is being prepared in accordance with the project SEARs.

The ACHAR will identify the Aboriginal heritage values within the project area and assess the potential impacts of the project on Aboriginal heritage, both tangible and intangible, in accordance with the Code of Practice for the Investigation of Aboriginal Objects in New South Wales (DECCW, 2010).

During March and April 2023, Aboriginal community members and peak bodies were invited to register their interest in being consulted on the project. Consultation with Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs) has commenced and is ongoing in accordance with Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Consultation Requirements for Proponents (DECCW, 2010). RAPs include the registered native title claimants (the Gomeroi People) and Local Aboriginal Land Councils.

RAPs have been consulted in finalising the methodology for the assessment and management of cultural heritage. Aboriginal heritage assessments have been carried out with cultural heritage knowledge holders in the field to inform and assist the development of cultural heritage management recommendations. Following completion of field surveys, and collation of discoveries, recommendations and other information about cultural heritage will be documented in the draft ACHAR which will be provided to the RAPs for their review and comment. The ACHAR will form part of the EIS.

REHABILITATION AND OPERATION

The pipeline will be buried in accordance with AS 2885 - Pipelines - Gas and liquid petroleum.

Post construction, Santos will rehabilitate the construction footprint to as close as possible to its preexisting state and to match surrounding landforms. Topsoil collected and stored prior to construction will be used to assist with the regeneration process. Normal agricultural activities will be able to continue over the pipeline easement. In areas with woody vegetation, rehabilitation over the pipeline would comprise non-woody ground layer, to allow access and prevent damage to the pipeline. Signs will be placed at regular intervals to indicate the presence of the buried pipeline.

Within private properties, rehabilitation would be undertaken in consultation with each landowner. The pipeline will be operated in accordance with the relevant statutory approvals, AS 2885 and the *Code of Environmental Practice* (Australian Pipelines and Gas Association Ltd, 2022).



Rehabilitation progress: pipeline right of way, GLNG, Queensland

NEXT STEPS

Santos will collate and consider the feedback received during this consultation program. The feedback we receive will help inform the finalisation of the EIS and technical specialist studies. We will keep the community and landholders updated as the project progresses.

The Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure will exhibit the EIS and invite public submissions as part of the assessment process. The EIS will also be referred to a number of key government agencies for their review. Santos will prepare a response to any issues raised in these submissions. The response to submissions will be provided to the NSW Government for their consideration in assessing the project.

For further information or to provide feedback throughout the assessment process, please contact us.

EPBC ACT ASSESSMENT

In February 2025, the Australian Government has determined the NLP to be a 'controlled action' requiring assessment and approval under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act 1999 due to potential impacts on listed threatened species and communities (sections 18 and 18A of the EPBC Act). The NLP project will be assessed under the bilateral agreement with the NSW Government, with a single Environmental Impact Statement prepared for public comment addressing both Commonwealth and State matters.

The NLP EPBC Referral (2024/10050) is available on the Commonwealth EPBC Public Portal or the NLP website.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Understanding feedback from the local community and stakeholders is critical to the success of the NLP project and the associated Narrabri Gas Project and Hunter Gas Pipeline.

We value what you have to say and have created multiple opportunities for community engagement since the project was announced in November 2022, including:

- Project update and community information sessions
- Face to face meetings with directly impacted landholders
- Briefings with Local Aboriginal Land Councils and Native Title parties
- Monthly newsletter that we encourage people to sign up to by emailing info@huntergaspipeline.com.au
- Community shopfront at 125 Maitland Street, Narrabri.

HAVE YOUR SAY

Santos is inviting feedback from the local community to inform the EIS for the Narrabri Lateral Pipeline.

CONTACT DETAILS

To find out more information about the project:

Free call: 1300 427 546

Email: info@huntergaspipeline.com.au

Website: huntergaspipeline.com.au