

Whitsundays Network Upgrade Project Update



October 2022

We're laying the foundation to build greater resilience in the Whitsunday's electricity network.

Cannonvale substation expansion

Ergon Energy Network is investing in the future of the Whitsundays with a major project that will support the community's power needs now and for years to come.

Work has commenced on a \$27.5 million upgrade of the electricity network that supplies around 8,000 homes and businesses in the Whitsundays.

We are refurbishing and expanding the Cannonvale substation to connect a new 66,000-volt powerline, which will be built from the Cannonvale substation to Jubilee Pocket, Mt Rooper and Shute Harbour.

The first stage of the project - the substation expansion - will include building new electricity feeder bays and a new modular control building, as well as refurbishing the electrical and communications equipment in the current substation.

Local contractors Copp and Co. were awarded the civil works tender to prepare Ergon's land at the rear of the Cannonvale substation for the yard's expansion. This work started in August - see Figure 1 - and it's great to see the project is supporting jobs in the local community.

Community engagement

We know that construction work of this nature comes with a level of disruption, which is usually felt most by those closest to the works. We are genuinely committed to engaging with the affected residents, as well as the broader community, and to working together on solutions to minimise the impact during

the construction phase of this critical project for the Whitsundays.



Fig 1 – Early civil works to level substation yard extension.



Fig 2 – Ergon's Project Manager discusses the project with a local resident.

Because everyone can be impacted by projects in different ways, we have been engaging with our neighbours explaining how the works will be delivered

and discussing any areas of concern they may have – see Figure 2.

During the initial clearing works, dust was reported to be a concern to nearby residents, so to mitigate this we increased the number of water trucks on site to dampen dust – see Figure 3.



Fig 3 – Water trucks dampen the worksite to mitigate dust

We also erected fencing with a fabric layer to screen the worksite from adjacent neighbours, helping to keep out dust, reduce worksite noise and improve privacy while works are underway – see Figure 4.

These temporary measures will eventually be replaced later in the project by permanent fencing around the substation yard.



Fig 4 – Fabric material on construction fencing helps to mitigate dust and noise.

With the earthworks to level the block now complete, a 'capping layer' of road base has been laid to cap the base earthworks. The exposed areas around the slab have been turfed, which will further assist to mitigate dust from the sub layer - see Figure 5.



Fig 5 – The area around the slab is turfed to mitigate dust and erosion.

Although after a thorough environmental assessment we have had to clear an area on the block for the substation expansion, we are always looking for ways to reduce our impact. Timber which is suitable for construction purposes is going to be repurposed by a local timber miller.

While no protected fauna or breeding sites were identified during the environmental assessment process, we have also set aside some tree trunks with hollows and are seeking permission to place them on the adjacent property to provide additional wildlife habitat.

Copp and Co. have worked quickly to complete this initial phase of works at the Cannonvale substation – see Figure 6.

The site is now ready for stage 2 of the substation works, which will include installing drainage and relocating a Council sewer line.



Fig 6 – The site is ready for stage 2 construction work to begin.

We expect the civil works tender for this next stage of construction, to be awarded in October, with work recommencing on site in late October. We will be able to share more detail about the construction schedule when the contract is awarded.

Planning the powerline duplication commences

Planning the construction of the underground sections of the 66,000-volt cable, running from the Cannonvale substation to Shute Harbour, has also commenced – see Figure 7.



Fig 7 – The 66,000-volt powerline route between Cannonvale, Jubilee Pocket, Mount Rooper and Shute Haven substations.

Construction of a new high-voltage powerline takes meticulous planning and a lot of engagement with a range of stakeholders.

The project team have scoped the powerline route and are now working closely with stakeholders like the Whitsundays Regional Council and local landholders to plan how this phase of the project will be delivered – see Figures 8 and 9.



Fig 8 – Ergon Designer scopes the powerline route along the Airlie Beach foreshore.



Fig 9 – The project team and local landholder discuss line route options and the construction approach.

In a major tourist destination, we know that the timing and approach to delivery of the project will be important.

We have been speaking with businesses along the Airlie Beach foreshore about the project, the type of work that will be involved, and some of the impacts that can be expected when construction commences. Together we have been identifying what is important to the businesses, so that wherever possible we can incorporate these considerations into our plans.

Many of the businesses were pleased to hear about our early collaboration with Council and our forward planning to install electrical conduit – the poly pipes that the electricity cable will run through – during earlier development of the foreshore. With the foresight to install the conduits along a large portion of the foreshore during the earlier Council foreshore development, businesses, locals, and visitors can expect less disruption during this phase of work on our network upgrade project.

Because the conduits were installed some time ago, and there is from time-to-time vehicular access associated with events along the foreshore, we will have to confirm they remain structurally sound. To do this, we will open the conduits and run a camera through them to confirm their integrity, before pulling the high-voltage cable through later in the project.

We are planning to complete these integrity checks during October and November, avoiding the Whitsundays Music Festival and having the checks completed before the Christmas school holiday peak begins.

Project construction schedule

While we will continue to provide regular updates as the project progresses, below are some of our key project activities and their scheduled delivery timeframes:

Stage	Activity and timeframe
Substation and Line Route Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalise substation design (Oct 2022) Finalise powerline design (Oct 2022)
Substation Civil Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Substation yard civil construction (completed Sep 2022) Construction of stormwater drainage (Oct 2022) Relocation of Whitsunday Regional Council sewerage line (Oct-Nov 2022) Construction of electrical equipment in substation yard (commencing Oct 2022 to early 2023)
Cannonvale Substation Control Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction of modular communications building (underway) Transport substation building to Cannonvale (January 2023) Install new outdoor equipment and structures (Feb – July 2023) Install new concrete poles at the front of substation (May 2023) Completion and demobilisation from site (February 2024)
Community Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform community of project (Mar-Apr 2022) Meet with directly affected customers (Aug-Sep 2022) Distribute project newsletters (ongoing) Update community on project progress and construction impacts (ongoing) Consider community feedback (ongoing)

Note: Construction dates are subject to change. We will notify the community of any changes to the schedule through regular updates. The project will close over the Christmas/ New Year period.

Getting in touch with us

To keep up to date on the project, to provide feedback, or to **register for future updates via email or SMS**, scan the QR code or visit our project web page [Whitsundays network upgrade - Ergon Energy](https://www.ergon.com.au/whitsundays-network-upgrade). You can also contact our Senior Community Engagement Advisor, Kate Austin on 1300 653 055 or email us at: NetworkProjectEngagement@energyq.com.au

