

Cooperative Living – an Alternative Development

The Narara Ecovillage Cooperative was set up in 2012 and purchased the 64 hectare Gosford Horticultural Institute property in 2013



A lot of work has been done since then and today many houses have been built and over a hundred people living on site and a second stage in progress.

The community's vision is to demonstrate a way to live in an environmental social and economically sustainable way. The Cooperative has a governance model that ensures everyone's needs and concerns are considered and decisions taken guided by the wisdom of the group.



Housing for the village encourage small low cost housing built with good thermal performance , low water consumption and low energy consumption. There are no aesthetic design restrictions and innovation , recycling and locally sourced materials encouraged.



Services for the community are also implemented in an innovative way. Both potable water and non potable is supplied to each household. The potable water is sourced from the Central Coast Council supply and the non potable water is from a large onsite dam. Sewage is collected in a buffer tank and pumped into Council's main sewer system.

The electricity supply to the village uses a single high voltage connection , a 430kWh battery and 7kw average solar panels on every house. This is managed by an embedded energy retailer, NEV Power, a subsidiary of Narara Ecovillage Cooperative. The single high voltage connection was selected as it enables large exports of power which would not be possible if conventional individual connections were used. There are currently 67 connections with capacity to grow to 120 customers when stage 2 is fully developed.

On normal sunny days NEV exports 1000kwh of power which is sold through a wholesale energy provider. The purchase of the battery was assisted by a grant from ARENA and stores some of the excess power from the solar panels and provides the power for the village at night and during power outages. NEV is planning a time of use billing system that will provide cheap power during the day and higher rates when running on the battery.

The embedded network sidesteps the electricity marketing problems allowing the whole community to make best use of locally produced power, similar to a household with solar and battery. Full details can be obtained from the link below.

<https://nararaecovillage.com/>

