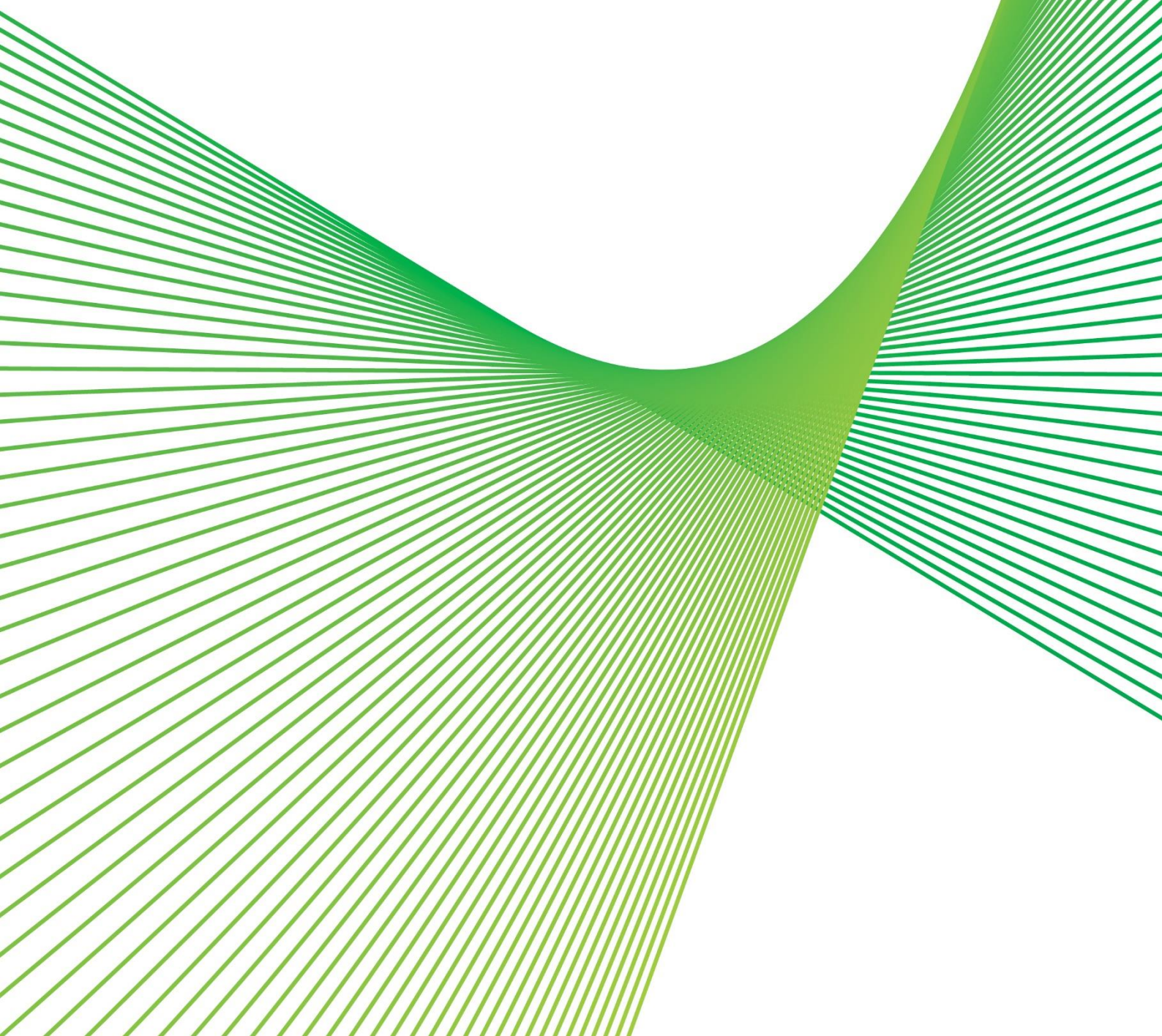


# Frequently Asked Questions

Mount Piper to Wallerawang Transmission Line Upgrade Project

Updated August 2025



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## General

Question	Answer
What is Transgrid?	<p>Transgrid owns and operates the high voltage transmission network in NSW and the ACT, with connections to Victoria and Queensland. Our network currently consists of over 13,000 km of high voltage transmission wires and 121 substations.</p> <p>We are leading the transition to Australia's clean energy future. The traditional coal system that served our country for decades is nearing the end of its life, to be replaced by wind and solar generation.</p> <p>Further information is available <a href="#">here</a>.</p>
What is the Mount Piper to Wallerawang Transmission Line Upgrade Project (the Project)?	<p>The Mount Piper to Wallerawang Transmission Line Upgrade Project (the Project) will see a new 330 kV transmission line established between our existing substations at Mount Piper and Wallerawang, on the lands of the Wiradjuri people.</p> <p>The Project will strengthen and reinforce the grid in the State's Central Tablelands region, helping to ensure that power from the Central-West Orana Renewable Energy Zone (CWOREZ) can be reliably transmitted to consumers.</p>
What is a Renewable Energy Zone (REZ)?	<p>REZs are the equivalent of modern-day power stations. They combine:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• new renewable energy infrastructure, including generators (such as solar and wind farms)</li> <li>• storage (such as batteries and pumped hydro)</li> <li>• high-voltage transmission infrastructure.</li> </ul> <p>By connecting multiple renewable energy projects and electricity storage, these REZs capitalise on economies of scale to deliver cheap, reliable, and clean electricity for homes and businesses in NSW.</p> <p>More information on REZ can be found <a href="#">here</a>.</p>
What is the CWOREZ?	<p>The NSW Government's Electricity Strategy and Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap plans to deliver the state's first five REZs. This builds on the NSW Transmission Infrastructure Strategy and supports the implementation of the Australian Energy Market Operator's Integrated System Plan.</p> <p>The NSW Government is in the development phase for the first REZ in the Central-West Orana region, which is around Dubbo and Wellington on the land of the Wiradjuri, Wailwan and Kamilaroi people.</p> <p>The CWOREZ will be serviced by new transmission network infrastructure, including transmission lines and energy hubs, which will transfer power generated by solar and wind farms to electricity consumers.</p>
Why is the Project needed?	<p>The development of the Central West Orana REZ (CWOREZ) has created a demand for more electrical infrastructure to facilitate the growth in electricity generation in the Central Tablelands area.</p> <p>The Project is needed to allow increased capacity and power flows generated by the new renewable energy generators coming online.</p>

Question	Answer
The Project has been declared Critical State Significant Infrastructure (CSSI). What does that mean?	<p>CSSI projects are declared when a project is essential for NSW for economic, environmental and social reasons.</p> <p>You can read the Government's CSSI announcement <a href="#">here</a>.</p>
Who is EnergyCo?	<p>The Energy Corporation of NSW (EnergyCo) is a statutory authority established under the Energy and Utilities Administration Act 1987 and is responsible for leading the delivery of Renewable Energy Zones (REZs) as part of the NSW Government's Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap (the Roadmap).</p> <p>The Roadmap sets out the NSW Government's vision to coordinate investment in electricity transmission, generation, storage and firming infrastructure and transform the NSW electricity system into one that is cheap, clean and reliable.</p> <p>In 2020, EnergyCo was appointed as the Infrastructure Planner for the State's first five REZs in the Central-West Orana, New England, South-West, Hunter-Central Coast and Illawarra regions.</p> <p>It is responsible for ensuring that the new network infrastructure is developed to connect the CWOREZ to the existing grid, delivering affordable electricity to NSW.</p> <p>To achieve this outcome, EnergyCo is leading the delivery of the Project which has been approved by the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces. More information about EnergyCo can be found <a href="#">here</a>.</p>
What is the connection between EnergyCo and Transgrid?	EnergyCo has appointed Transgrid to coordinate the delivery of complementary upgrades to Transgrid's existing infrastructure network.
When is the project proposed be completed?	Project completion is expected by 2028.
What are the expected project benefits?	<p>The project will deliver a range of benefits for customers in NSW including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Cheaper electricity</b> – improving the affordability of electricity for consumers by increasing supply and driving down electricity prices</li> <li>• <b>Improved reliability</b> – by delivering large amounts of new energy and, strengthening and reinforcing the grid in the local region</li> <li>• <b>New local jobs</b> – opportunities for local workers and businesses during construction</li> <li>• Reduced emissions and a greater mix of renewable energy in the National Electricity Market.</li> </ul>
How is Transgrid giving back to the community?	<p>We aim to create positive and lasting relationships with our local communities. It's part of our commitment to building a sustainable future.</p> <p>Transgrid's Community Partnership Program represents a starting point in our strategy to support communities. The program supports local, grassroots initiatives by providing grants in areas where our assets are located or under development. It is designed to help not-for-profit groups to deliver initiatives that</p>



Question	Answer
	<p>will have a tangible and lasting impact on local communities. We do this in a way that demonstrates respect for those who were here before us, as well as for future generations.</p> <p>Recipients of the three rounds of CPP grants for the project area were announced in early 2023, late 2023 and early 2024. To learn more about previous grant recipients, visit: <a href="https://transgrid.com.au/partnerships">https://transgrid.com.au/partnerships</a> or contact our team at <a href="mailto:cpp@transgrid.com.au">cpp@transgrid.com.au</a>.</p>

## 1. Approvals and process

Question	Answer
What is the regulatory pathway this project has followed?	<p>Federal and state government regulations require all major infrastructure projects to undergo a robust environmental assessment before they are considered for approval.</p> <p>The first step in the regulatory process required a preliminary assessment of project's potential environmental impacts. This Scoping Report was submitted to the DPHI in April 2024, and the DPHI subsequently issued the Project's Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs). The SEARs set out the matters that must be investigated as part of the EIS and provided the basis of the requirements, including the specialist studies that must be conducted to inform the EIS. A total of 15 specialist studies were required to identify potential impacts from the Project, and to propose measures to avoid or mitigate those impacts.</p>
What are SEARs?	<p>The SEARs identify and specify matters which must be investigated as part of the Environmental Impact Statement and essentially form its terms of reference. It includes the requirements for both the NSW and Commonwealth Governments. The NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) has issued Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) for the Mount Piper to Wallerawang Transmission Line Upgrade project. DPHI seeks input from relevant government agencies to consider their requirements for the project before issuing SEARs.</p>
What do you mean by EPBC Act approval?	<p>Transgrid submitted a referral to the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act). The EPBC Act is Australia's main environmental law and provides a legal framework to protect matters of National Environmental Significance.</p> <p>The Minister invites public comment for each referral regarding whether the proposed action is a controlled action. Under section 74(3) of the EPBC Act, proposed actions are open for comment. The referral for the Mount Piper to Wallerawang Transmission Line Upgrade Project is <a href="#">available here</a> and the reference number is 2024/09855.</p> <p>After consideration of Transgrid's EPBC Referral, the Commonwealth DCCEEW will identify whether our project is a 'controlled action' and if it will require Commonwealth Approval.</p>

<p>What is included in the environmental assessment?</p>	<p>The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) has been prepared to respond to the SEARs. The Project is informed by specialist studies that identify the potential impacts to the environment and communities and propose measures to avoid or mitigate those impacts. Impacts are considered at construction and operation. For each environmental matter, an assessment has been undertaken to inform the EIS. The specialist studies completed include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Biodiversity</li> <li>• Historical heritage</li> <li>• Noise and vibration</li> <li>• Water resources</li> <li>• Aviation</li> <li>• Bushfire</li> <li>• Land use and agriculture</li> <li>• Social impacts</li> <li>• Aquatic ecology</li> <li>• Economic</li> <li>• Aboriginal heritage</li> <li>• Visual amenity</li> <li>• Contamination</li> <li>• Traffic and transport</li> <li>• Hazard and risk</li> </ul>
<p>What is the public exhibition of the EIS?</p>	<p>The EIS exhibition period provides the community an opportunity to read the EIS document, seek clarification and provide feedback directly to the DPHI. The EIS exhibition process is run by the DPHI and submissions are made directly to the DPHI during the public exhibition period. DPHI determines the time period that the EIS must be placed on public exhibition. During the EIS exhibition period you will be able to provide feedback on the EIS directly to the DPHI. The collective sentiment of the submissions received are used to guide the final determination, as well as any approval conditions for the Project.</p> <p>View the EIS and specialist studies online <a href="#">here</a>.</p>
<p>Can I make a submission to the EIS?</p>	<p>Local community members, councils, stakeholders, community groups and organisations are encouraged to view the EIS during the public exhibition period and to have their say by making a submission. Once you have reviewed the EIS materials you will be able to provide feedback on the EIS directly to the NSW government. Submissions can be made individually or as a group. There are a range of ways you can have your say, including options to provide submissions both online or hard copy. However, it is important to note the EIS exhibition process is run by the DPHI and submissions must be sent directly to them during the exhibition period. Submissions can be made online via the NSW Major Projects Planning Portal or provided directly via Australia Post.</p>
<p>How do I make an online submission?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Visit the NSW DPHI Major Projects Planning Portal <a href="#">here</a></li> <li>2. Create a Major Projects account by clicking the 'Sign in' button</li> <li>3. Once logged in, click 'Make a Submission'</li> </ol>

	<p><b>4. Find Mount Piper to Wallerawang Transmission in the list of projects</b></p> <p><b>(a)</b> Select whether you will be making a personal submission or on behalf of an organisation</p> <p><b>(b)</b> Disclose any reportable political donations</p> <p><b>(c)</b> Decide whether to include your personal information in your submission</p> <p><b>(d)</b> Make a brief statement on whether you support or object the proposal</p> <p><b>(e)</b> Fill in the online submission form. Your submission can be either typed or uploaded as a pdf.</p> <p><b>(f)</b> Agree to the terms and conditions and submit.</p> <p>For additional support, visit the 'Make a Submission' page:  <a href="http://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/have-your-say">www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/have-your-say</a></p>
How do I make a postal submission?	<p>In your submission, you must include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Your name and address (provide this information in a separate cover letter if you want your personal details to be withheld from publication)</li> <li>2. The application name: <b>Mount Piper to Wallerawang Transmission</b></li> <li>3. The application number: <b>SSI-70279722</b></li> <li>4. A brief statement on whether you support or object the proposal</li> <li>5. The reasons why you support or object the proposal</li> <li>6. A declaration of any reportable political donations made in the previous two years (further information about political donations visit the Donations and gift disclosure page).</li> </ol> <p>To post your submission:</p> <p>For the submission to be received, both the submission and mailing envelope must be addressed to the nominated contact person or team listed on the project page. For Mount Piper to Wallerawang, this is:</p> <p>Erin Matarazzo  Application number: SSI-70279722  Locked Bag 5022  Parramatta NSW 2124</p>
What does the project approval process involve?	<p>At the conclusion of the exhibition period, all submissions will be posted on the Planning Portal website. A summary report with responses will be developed by Transgrid and posted on the Planning Portal for public viewing. Following this, a final assessment of the EIS including feedback will be undertaken by the DPHI and a determination made. If approval is granted, a report outlining Conditions of Approval for the next stage of the Project will be given by the NSW Minister for Planning and Public Spaces.</p> <p>Once the Minister has made a decision, the Australian Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEE) reviews the determination and makes a decision about whether to approve the proposal along with any conditions of approval.</p>

When is construction likely to start?	Subject to the NSW and Commonwealth Government planning approvals, construction would commence in late 2026 and be completed by late 2028.
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## 2. Environment and maintenance

Question	Answer
Will trees be removed as part of the transmission line?	Extensive environmental studies have been completed to inform the transmission line design and refine the design to identify opportunity to minimise the vegetation removal required. Opportunities to avoid and minimise impacts wherever possible, including consideration of clearing methods and procedures, have been further considered during design development and reported in the EIS.
What's the potential for lightning strikes?	Transmission towers are earthed and are protected against lightning strikes. This means that in the event of a lightning strike hitting a tower it will be safely conducted to ground, unlike lightning strikes to trees that can lead to a fire.
I am worried a new transmission line will start a bushfire. How do you manage bushfire risk?	Our comprehensive maintenance program ensures the network is safe for our people and the community. Our Bush Fire Risk Management Plan outlines our responsibility for managing the potential impact of bush fires on our electricity network assets. The plan outlines hazardous events of concern and describes how we manage the associated risk. This plan is located on the Transgrid website and is available <a href="#">here</a> .
How high will the towers be?	Transmission structures for the project include approximately 28 new steel lattice towers and four steel and/or concrete pole structures. Transmission structures would range in height from approximately 14 m to up to 60 m, however these heights would be subject to detailed design.
How wide will the easement be?	Transgrid will widen the existing 132 kV line easement from 45 m to 60 m and create a new 60 m easement in the section where the transmission line does not follow the 132 kV line easement.  For more information on easements, please refer to our Easement Guidelines available <a href="#">here</a> .

## 3. Transmission line route selection

Question	Answer
How is a transmission line route identified?	Transgrid applies a structured route selection process when identifying proposed options for transmission lines, which is influenced by stakeholder and community input throughout.  The Project developed a multi-criteria analysis relevant to the local area, investigated and assessed a number of different factors when investigating routes that included:



Question	Answer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social and community views</li> <li>• Aboriginal heritage, including significant cultural heritage sites</li> <li>• Biodiversity including flora and fauna</li> <li>• Other environmental features like soils and hydrology</li> <li>• Intensive agriculture</li> <li>• Impacts to the community and local industries</li> <li>• Licensed airstrips</li> <li>• Engineering e.g., where it can be built and length of corridor</li> <li>• Alignment to existing infrastructure like roads and power lines</li> <li>• Hazards such as bushfire and extreme weather</li> <li>• Cost constraints</li> <li>• Network resilience</li> <li>• Topography, the features of the land e.g., gradient, valleys, rivers</li> <li>• Land use considerations, including existing or planned use for agriculture, tourism and industry.</li> </ul> <p>The final assessment of route options was accompanied by early field studies where possible.</p>
What route options did Transgrid investigate exactly?	A detailed explanation on each of the 11 route options investigated can be located in the Preferred Route Report, located on the Transgrid website available <a href="#">here</a> .
Do you consult on route options?	<p>Yes, consultation with landholders and the local community plays a key role in our decision-making process.</p> <p>Transgrid recognises the vital role that landowners and the community have in the planning and delivery of our projects. We are committed to talking to the community to help us shape the best possible solution.</p> <p>The proposed route option was released for consultation in late 2022.</p>
Can you put the transmission line underground?	<p>Undergrounding high voltage electricity lines refers to the installation of electrical cables in underground conduits, as opposed to the traditional method of installing overhead power lines supported by poles or towers.</p> <p>While undergrounding has some advantages, such as reducing the visual impact of power lines, there are a number of factors determining the suitability of undergrounding of transmission lines that need to be considered. These factors include delivery timeframe, cost considerations, social considerations and environmental issues.</p> <p>There are also technical aspects to consider when designing and constructing transmission line infrastructure including voltage levels to be transmitted, the distance of the line being installed and the terrain and environment that is crossed. While underground transmission lines are often chosen to reduce visual impact, their installation can still have environmental impacts.</p> <p>See page 27 of the Preferred Route Report available <a href="#">here</a>.</p>
Can you use the existing transmission lines?	No. The Central West Orana Renewable Energy Zone (CWOREZ) will generate a significant amount of electricity. The existing transmission lines (132 kV) running from Mount Piper to Wallerawang does not have the capacity to cater for the

Question	Answer
	additional electricity generated from the CWOREZ.
Why was Option B-4 selected as the preferred route?	<p>Transgrid listened to feedback from community and stakeholders in identifying and assessing routes for this project and are grateful for feedback provided.</p> <p>After careful assessment and consultation, Transgrid selected a preferred route that utilises part of an existing 132 kV transmission line easement and lines between Mount Piper and Wallerawang. The selected route minimises visual impact for community and the local township and balances landowner preferences and various constraints including engineering, constructability, environmental impacts and cost, to ensure that the outcome is prudent and efficient.</p> <p>The route will traverse primarily through the Gardens of Stone State Conservation Area (SCA) and Centennial Coal land, which has been predominately disturbed by past activities. Environmental offsets will help mitigate this impact. In particular it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• impacts the smallest number of landowners compared to other options</li> <li>• utilises the existing easement as far as possible</li> <li>• has the least impact on private properties</li> <li>• minimises impacts on the Gardens of Stone SCA (compared to other options within the SCA), and therefore potentially minimises biodiversity impacts; and</li> <li>• is more cost-effective when compared to an underground transmission line.</li> </ul>
Now the preferred route has been decided is there any way that it will change?	<p>After careful assessment and consultation, Transgrid have identified a preferred route. Transgrid has followed a comprehensive environmental assessment process to help refine the design and identify measures to further reduce the project's impacts. All Critical State Significant Infrastructure (CSSI) projects must be accompanied by an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The SEARs set out the matters that must be investigated as part of the EIS and provided the basis of the requirements, including the specialist studies that must be conducted to inform the EIS. A total of 15 specialist studies have been completed to identify potential impacts from the Project.</p> <p>You will be able to provide feedback on the EIS during the public exhibition period. The project team will widely consult during this period to ensure community and stakeholders can actively participate in the exhibition and submissions. After a minimum exhibition period of 28 days, Transgrid will then review all entries provided to DPHI.</p> <p>A summary report with responses will be developed by Transgrid and posted on the DPHI's website for public viewing. Following this, a final assessment of the EIS including feedback will be undertaken by DPHI and a determination made. If approval is granted, a report outlining Conditions of Approval for the next stage of the project will be given by the NSW Minister for Planning and Public Spaces.</p>
What happens if the line comes through my property? How will I be compensated?	<p>If an easement is identified as required over your land, we will discuss the acquisition process with you directly.</p> <p>The property acquisition process occurs over many months. After meeting with you, or making reasonable attempts to arrange a meeting, we provide a letter of intention or an offer to purchase an easement over your land.</p>

Question	Answer
	<p>This letter represents the start of a minimum six-month negotiation period that is required under Section 10A of the Just Terms Act.</p> <p>If an easement is needed, we negotiate with landowners for at least 6 months to acquire the land by agreement. If an agreement can't be reached through negotiation, we have the authority to acquire land. Compulsory acquisition is a last resort and most acquisitions happen through negotiation.</p>
Who did Transgrid consult?	<p>Transgrid identified stakeholders who would reasonably be expected to have an interest in the project or be directly or indirectly impacted by possible route options and Transgrid's operations in the region. Once we identified stakeholders, we focused on effective and meaningful engagement to inform and support our decision making.</p> <p>To obtain feedback, a number of stakeholders were contacted for their direct input. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project partners</li> <li>• MPs</li> <li>• Local Councils</li> <li>• Traditional Owners and other Aboriginal Groups</li> <li>• Industry bodies</li> <li>• Energy regulator / operator</li> <li>• Impacted landowners</li> <li>• The community</li> </ul> <p>For more information on the stakeholders we consulted and the timeline, please refer to our Preferred Route Report available <a href="#">here</a> and Consultation Outcomes Report available <a href="#">here</a>.</p>

## 4. Feedback

Question	Answer
How do I give my feedback or get further information about the project?	<p>Transgrid recognises the vital role that landowners and the community play in the planning and delivery of our projects. We are committed to ensuring all stakeholders have the opportunity to have their say in the development of this Project.</p> <p>We encourage you to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share your feedback and ideas at community information sessions and scheduled meetings.</li> <li>• Email us via <a href="mailto:network.solutions@transgrid.com.au">network.solutions@transgrid.com.au</a> or call our community hotline on 1800 222 537.</li> <li>• Visit our webpage for project updates and to subscribe to receive the latest news.</li> </ul>
Concerns or complaints	<p>You can contact our Community Engagement Team on Transgrid's general community number 1800 222 537 and email <a href="mailto:network.solutions@transgrid.com.au">network.solutions@transgrid.com.au</a>.</p>

	<p>Furthermore, you have the right to take your complaint to an external agency with jurisdiction, such as the Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner (AEIC) and the Energy &amp; Water Ombudsman NSW (EWON). Both the AEIC and EWON will receive complaints from members of the community and present them to Transgrid for response.</p> <p>In instances where we have received a complaint via the AEIC or EWON, we will seek to respond as quickly as possible and manage the matter in accordance with their complaints management processes.</p> <p>You can contact the Energy &amp; Water Ombudsman NSW (EWON) on phone 1800 246 545 or fill in an online complaint form at <a href="http://www.ewon.com.au">www.ewon.com.au</a>.</p>
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## 5. Nuclear power generation

Question	Answer
Would plans for nuclear power at Mount Piper Power Station change the project?	<p>Transgrid is delivering the transmission infrastructure identified as critical to enabling the Commonwealth and NSW governments' clean energy vision.</p> <p>The Mount Piper to Wallerawang Transmission Line Upgrade Project will strengthen and reinforce the grid in the State's Central Tablelands, supporting the delivery of new generation from the NSW Government's Central-West Orana Renewable Energy Zone.</p> <p>Transgrid will continue to consult residents, landowners, community organisations, First Nations people, local councils and other key stakeholders as we continue to plan this critical transmission infrastructure.</p>
How would nuclear power generation affect Transgrid's operations and projects?	<p>As a Transmission Network Service Provider (TNSP), Transgrid is agnostic on where generation comes from.</p> <p>Our role in the energy system is to ensure the safe delivery of energy from where it is generated to where it is needed.</p> <p>Right now, Australia is undertaking one of the most ambitious and rapid clean energy transitions in the world. We are in a vertical take-off - making the grid fit for renewables - as fast as possible. Securing the grid depends on timely delivery of transmission.</p> <p>To deliver Australia's energy targets we must ensure the supporting transmission infrastructure is in place.</p> <p>At Transgrid we are squarely focused on delivering priority projects for the Federal and NSW governments including EnergyConnect, HumeLink and VNI West and augmenting the existing network to enable REZ projects.</p>