

VNI West Community Consultative Group

Meeting 9 – 08 May 2025
Deniliquin

Acknowledgement of Country

We would like to acknowledge the Wiradjuri, Wamba Wamba, Perrepa Perrepa and Yorta Yorta people as the custodians of the lands and waters on which we meet today.

We pay respect to Elders past and present.



Agenda

| Time | Agenda item | Time allocated | Presenter |
|----------------|--|----------------|------------------|
| 9:45 – 10:00 | Morning tea | 15 mins | |
| 10:00 – 10:10 | Welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none">Acknowledgement of CountryIntroductionsHousekeeping and review of previous minutes | 10 mins | Brendan Blakeley |
| 10:10 – 11:10 | What are you hearing? | 60 Mins | Brendan Blakeley |
| 11:10 – 12:00 | Project Director's update <ul style="list-style-type: none">Property Update – Ben DoranEnvironment Update – Geoff HudsonCommunity benefits update – Paul McFadyen | 50 mins | Colin Mayer |
| 12:00 – 12:50 | General discussion | 50 mins | Brendan Blakeley |
| 12:50 - 1:00pm | Wrap up and close | 10 Mins | Brendan Blakeley |

Review of Meeting 8 minutes and action items



Action items

| Agenda item | Description | Person responsible | Status |
|--------------------------|--|--------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Welcome | ACTION: Update Meeting # 7 Minutes to reflect Old Mans Plains feedback. | Secretary | Closed |
| 3. Project Update | ACTION: Update on Community Investment and Benefits initiatives scoping process. | Paul McFadyen | Today's meeting (Project Update) |
| 4. EIS Update | ACTION: Provide contextual data regarding Social Impact Assessment engagement | WSP | Today's meeting |
| | ACTION: Provide definition of categories from Visual Impact Assessment Guidelines | WSP | Today's meeting |
| | ACTION: Include direction on photomontages for reference | WSP | Today's meeting |
| | ACTION: Confirm if there are minimum guidelines around the distance between the end of an airstrip and transmission lines. | WSP | Today's meeting |
| 5. What are you hearing? | Future agenda item: Biodiversity offset program | Secretary | Open |



Actions arising: EIS Update

- **Social Impact Assessment:** *Numbers / context updated 31 March 2025*

| Stakeholder group | In person interviews first field campaign | In person interviews second field campaign | In person interview March 2025 | Phone and online interviews | Online Survey | Total |
|--|---|--|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|-------|
| Councils | | | | 3 | | 3 |
| Landholders directly affected by project footprint | 2 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 2 | 12 |
| Neighbouring landowners within 2.5km of the project | | 5 | | | 5 | 10 |
| Community members and representatives of community organisations | 9 | 3 | 1 | | 12 | 25 |
| First Nations people | 1 | | | | | 1 |
| Local businesses | | 2 | | | 4 | 6 |
| Public services (e.g. emergency services, health services) | 1 | | | | | 1 |
| Total | 13 | 12 | 2 | 8 | 23 | 58 |

Landholder context:

- 35 landholdings hosting infrastructure (Dinawan to NSW-VIC border)
- 18 directly affected landholders approached for interview

Community context:

- A further 18 people were approached to participate, but declined or did not respond.

Actions arising: EIS Update

- Visual Impact Assessment Guidelines

Performance objectives for each assessable viewpoint

High visual impact: **avoid**, unless project justification
(materiality, design not feasible, create significant obstruction)

Moderate visual impact: **reasonable and feasible**.
(mitigation to consider important views / sight lines, proportionate to the scale of impact, reduce impact while not creating unacceptable visual impact for others).

Low and very low visual impact: **no mitigation**

Performance objectives based on visual impact matrix, which assesses the **visual magnitude** and **visual sensitivity**.

Reference: NSW DPHI Transmission Guideline – Technical Supplement for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (2024)

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| High visual impact | <p>This level of impact should be avoided unless the proponent can justify that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">all reasonable efforts have been made to avoid the impact and alternative project designs are not feasible or would be unlikely to materially reduce the impact,all reasonable mitigation options have been considered, andthe proposed mitigation measures would effectively mitigate the impact and would not result in a significant obstruction of views |
| Moderate visual impact | <p>Public road viewpoints</p> <p>As far as is reasonable and feasible, the proponent should seek to reduce moderate visual impacts to road users.</p> <p>Appropriate mitigation options include vegetation or other screening. Mitigation should only be considered if it would not obstruct important views and sight lines, could be confined to a relatively small area (i.e. vegetation screening would not be required for several hundred meters along a transport corridor) and where agreed with the relevant road authority.</p> <p>All other private receivers and public viewpoints</p> <p>Visual impact mitigation should be implemented within the project corridor and/or offered to the affected landowner and should be proportionate to the scale of impact.</p> <p>There is no expectation this mitigation should eliminate the view of the development entirely, but it must reduce the impact to an acceptable level and not create unacceptable visual impacts to other receivers.</p> |
| Low and very low visual impact | <p>No mitigation required</p> |

Table 9. Visual performance objectives, p.33

Actions arising: EIS Update - photomontage

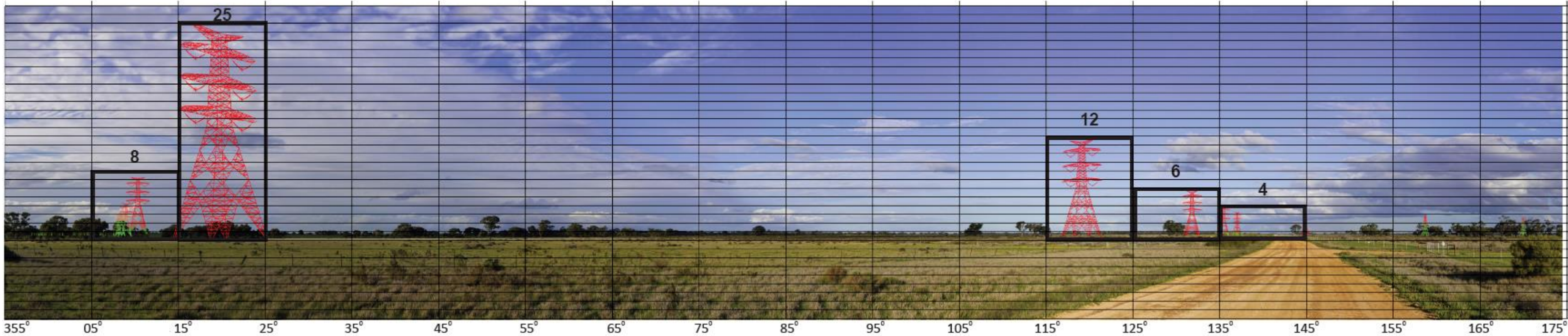
Viewpoint 03: View east from Cunninyeuk Road

Photomontage with magnitude tool overlay



Actions arising: EIS Update - photomontage

Photomontage with project in silhouette, magnitude tool overlay and occupied cell count



Detailed viewpoint assessment:

| Distance to development | Viewpoint type | Viewpoint sensitivity | Scenic quality | Overall sensitivity | Occupied cells | Magnitude rating | Impact level |
|-------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|----------------|---------------------|----------------|------------------|--------------|
| 50 metres | Local road | Very low | Low | Very low | 55 | Very high | Moderate |

Viewpoint location plan:



VNI West Landscape and visual impact assessment

Appendix E: Victorian/NSW border to Dinawan substation - Public viewpoint, detailed assessment



Project transmission line corridor

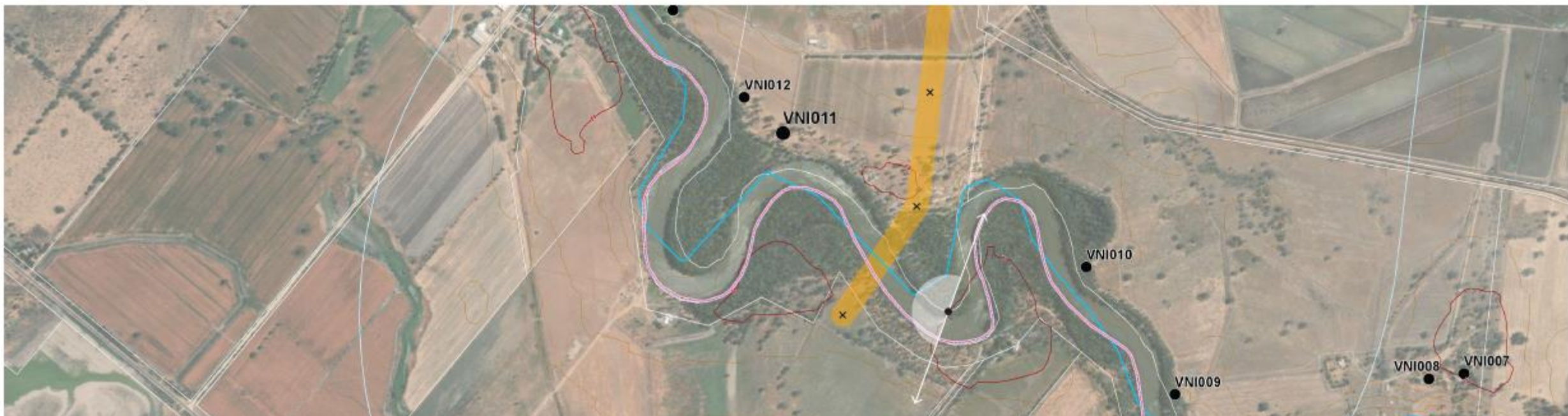
Actions arising: EIS Update – Murray River photomontage

3. Murray River: Views from Murray River, eastern campsite

Existing view - 180 degree panorama



Viewpoint location plan



Actions arising: EIS Update – Murray River photomontage

3. Murray River: Views from Murray River, eastern campsite

180 degree panorama with transmission line structures shown in silhouette



Photomontage



Actions arising: EIS Update – Edward River photomontage

5. Edward River: Views southwest towards the river crossing

Existing view - 180 degree panorama



Date: April 2025 I-11

Photomontage - including indicative transmission structure locations



110° 120° 130° 140° 150° 160° 170° 180° 190° 200° 210° 220° 230° 240° 250° 260° 270° 280° 290°

Actions arising: EIS Update – Edward River photomontage

5. Edward River: Views southwest towards the river crossing



Photomontage detail - cropped to about 50mm focal length

Actions arising: EIS Update

- Aviation assessment methodology

| Question tabled at Meeting # 8 | Transgrid response at Meeting # 8 | Confirmation |
|---|--|---|
| There will probably be at least 1km between the airstrip and the transmission line in the example shown, is there minimum guidelines around the distance between the end of an airstrip and transmission lines? | License aerodromes have Obstacle Limitation Surface (OLS) exclusion zones around runways to avoid encroachment of development. There are no guidelines for unlicensed airstrips. In these situations consultation with owners of affected airstrips is required to assess impacts to operations and identify management measures. | Response provided at Meeting # 8 is accurate. |

What are you hearing?

Brendan Blakeley



Project update



Project Update

Expressions of Interest

Works package – Dinawan Substation and Network Upgrade of Line 51 at Wagga

- Expressions of Interest complete.
- Transgrid is assessing EOIs for selection to participate in Request for Tender (RfT) process.
- Delivery Partner for this package of work to be appointed by end of 2025.

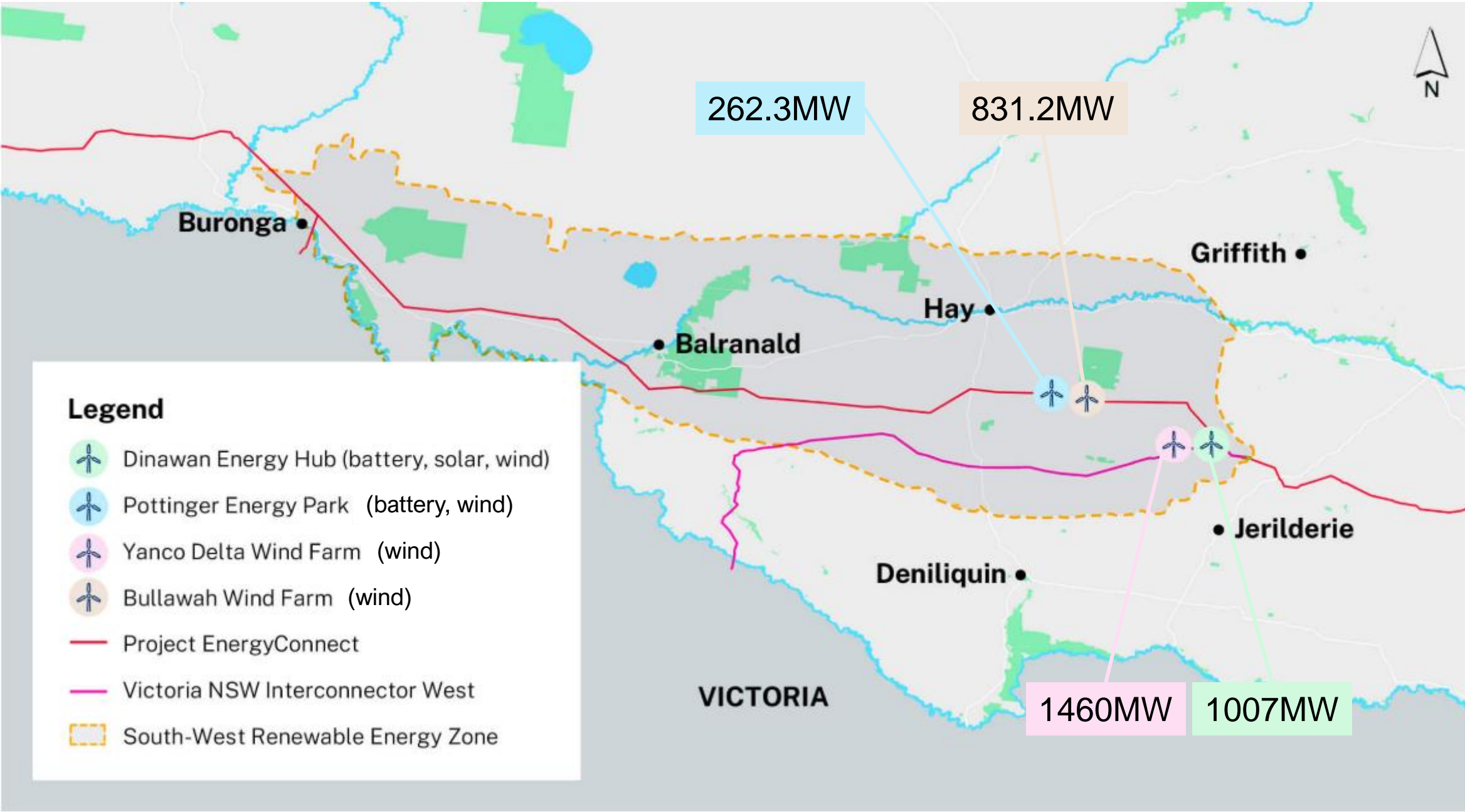
Environmental Impact Statement

- Final reviews of documents and technical studies in progress.
- On track for EIS lodgement to Department of Planning, Housing & Infrastructure (DPHI) by late July 2025.
- EIS on public exhibition in **August 2025**.

Energy Network Update

EnergyCo South West REZ

- EnergyCo announced its South West REZ Access Scheme in late April 2025
- Four renewable projects with a combined generation capacity of 3.56GW, powering 1.6 million homes per year.
- The projects also include 700MW of battery storage.

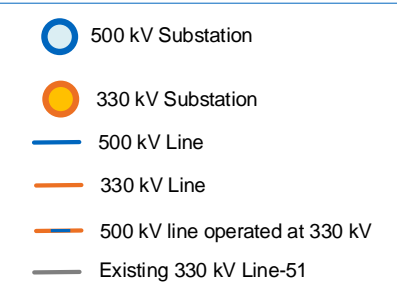


Source: Media release, NSW Minister for Energy & Climate Change, and map published on www.energyco.nsw.gov.au

Energy Network Update

Generation to Transmission: Transgrid’s pathway to increasing network capacity

Interconnectedness of HumeLink, EnergyConnect, VNI West and upgrade to Transmission Line 51, and generation sources.



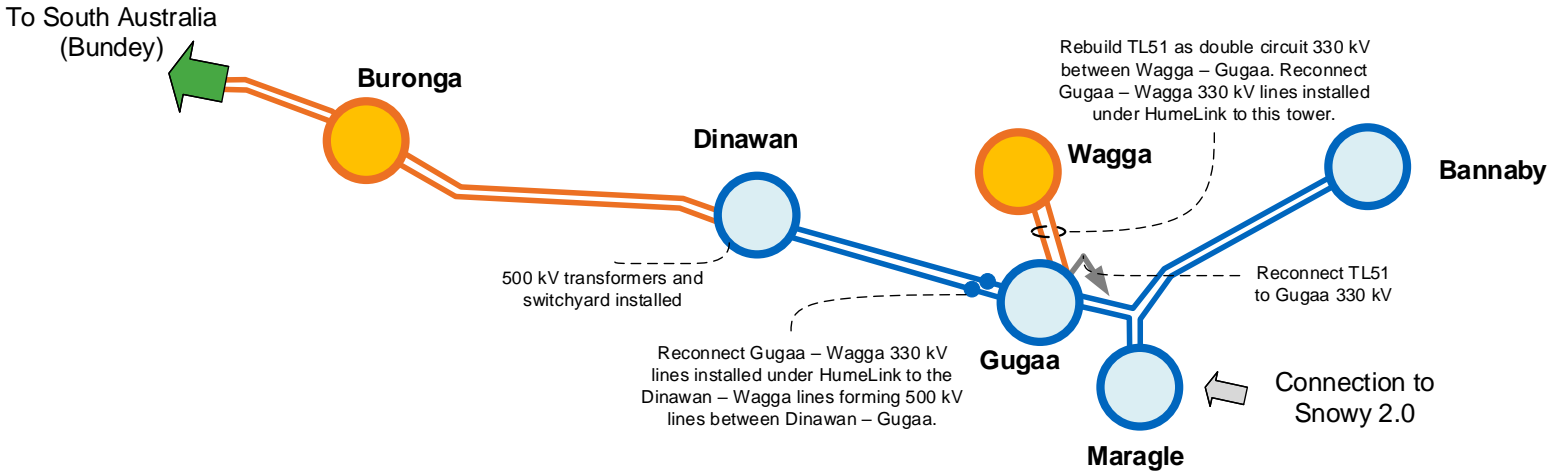
| Project completion | Network map | Description |
|-------------------------|-------------|---|
| EnergyConnect completed | | EnergyConnect links Dinawan Substation to Wagga Substation at 330kV, with capacity of 500kV. Transmission Line 51 continues to operate between Wagga Substation and Tumut. |
| HumeLink completed | | HumeLink 500kV connects Bannaby, Maragle and Gugaa substations. HumeLink to construct 500kV lines between Gugaa Substation and Wagga Substation, and initially operate at 330kV. |

Energy Network Update

Project completion

VNI West: Dinawan substation and Line 51 upgraded

Network map



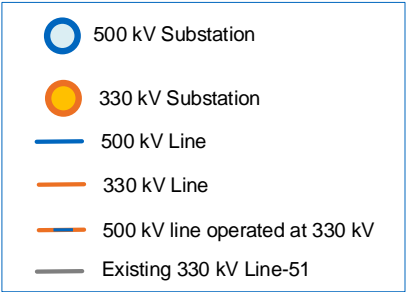
Description

VNI West upgrades Dinawan substation to 500kV, and connects Wagga Substation to Gugaa substation at 330kV.

Line 51 (Tumut) reconnected at Gugaa substation.

HumeLink and EnergyConnect join at 500kV.

Snowy 2.0 connects to Maragle.



EnergyConnect 500kV tower adjacent to Wagga Substation



Energy Network Update

| Project completion | Network map | Description |
|--|-------------|--|
| South West Renewable Energy Zone connected | | Generation permitted to connect to the network under the EnergyCo SW REZ Access Scheme able to connect. |
| VNI West: Interconnection to Victoria | | VNI West completed between Dinawan, Kerang and Bulgana. Provides 500kV connection from Bannaby (HumeLink) to Melbourne: via HumeLink, EnergyConnect, VNI West and Western Renewables Link (Victoria). |

Opportunity to realise benefits of renewable energy generation before interconnection is completed, through incremental growth / progression of 500kV network.

Property update



Property Update

- **All formal Offer Letters** issued to directly affected landowners in February / March 2025.

Letters issued under Section 10A, including compensation offer, option deed.

- **Negotiations** commenced in accordance with the *Just Terms Act*.
- **Landholders are generally engaged** across the project.
- We again ask all landholders to **obtain their own legal and valuation advice**.

Transgrid covers reasonable fees for landholders in seeking legal and valuation advice.



Environment update



Water supply strategy

Estimated 1.25GL water required during construction. Final volumes to be confirmed during detailed design.

| Volume | Use | Likely Sources |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1.12GL non-potable water | Dust Suppression Civil works | On-site water sources (sediment basins, rainwater tanks) |
| | | Surface water via existing WAL allocation (subject to agreement with landholder/irrigation trust) |
| | | Raw water supply (Murray Irrigation, Coleambally Irrigation) |
| | | Groundwater via existing WAL allocation (subject to landholder agreement) |
| 133ML potable water | Temporary Worker Accommodation | Town water supply: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Edward River Council (Deniliquin)• Murrumbidgee Council (Coleambally)• Riverina Water (Forest Hill) |
| | Concrete batching | Purchase from third-party commercial supplier |
| | | On-site treatment of non-potable water |

Strategy developed in consultation with Councils (Edward River Council, Murray River Council, Murrumbidgee Council), Irrigators (Coleambally Irrigation Co-Operative Ltd, Murray Irrigation) and Riverina Water.

Biodiversity: Farm Management EOI

Concord property

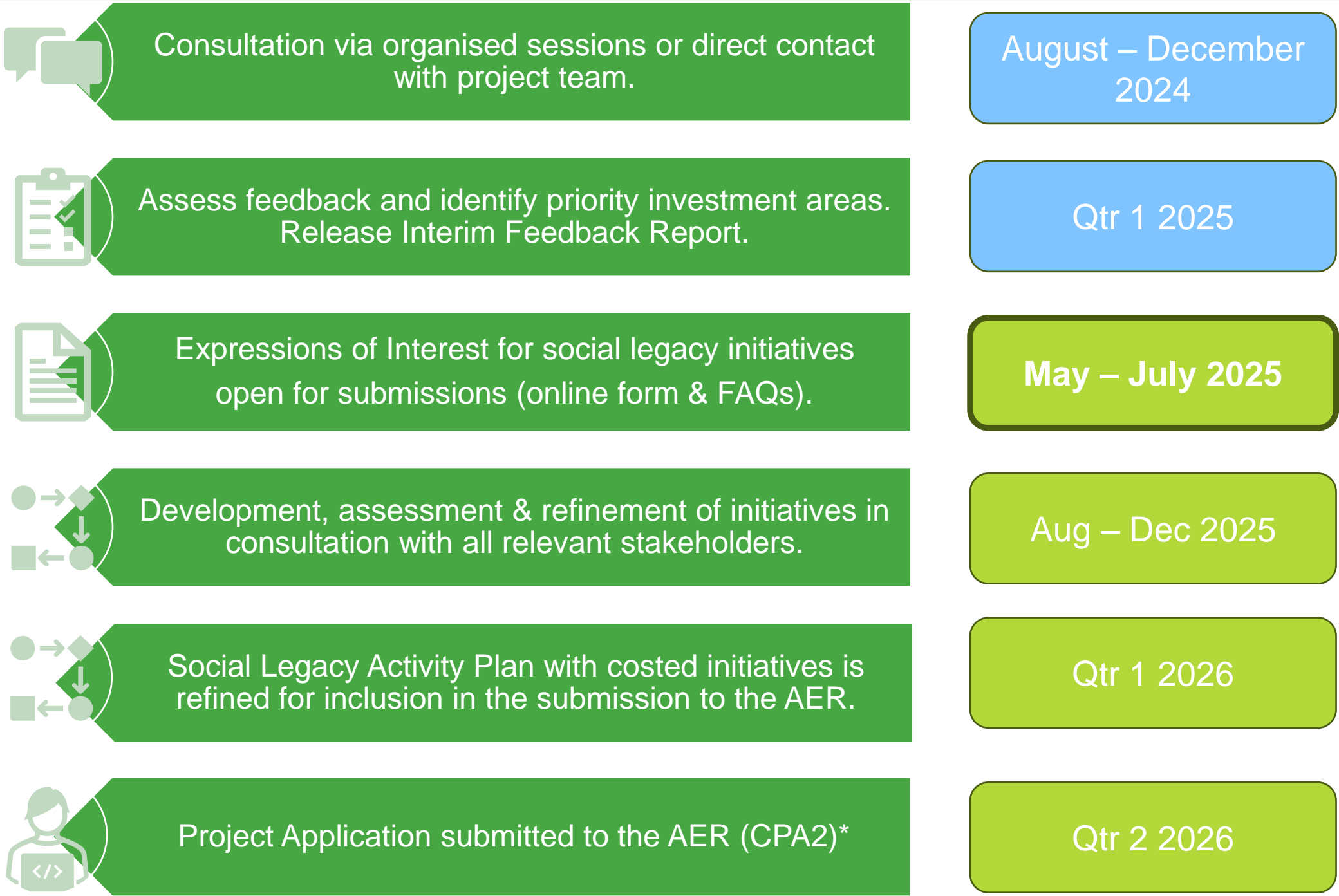
- Approx size: 1489 hectares
- 654 hectares (43%) is agricultural farmland suitable for grazing
- Remaining 835 hectares (57%) is native vegetation, suitable for Biodiversity Stewardship Agreement (BSA). However, BSA won't occur until 2028.
- **Transgrid is planning to undertake farm management of the property to ensure that biodiversity value of the property does not degrade further and therefore reduce the ecological value of the asset.**
- Expressions of Interest currently being sought from Indigenous businesses / Registered Aboriginal Parties for farm management (Indigenous Land Management).



Community investment and benefits update



Community benefits & investment submission timeline



**Indicative time for a decision by the AER is 6 months.*

Community investment & benefits EOI form

Section 1

Personal details

- Organisation
- Contact person
- Title
- Email
- Address

Section 2

Proposal details

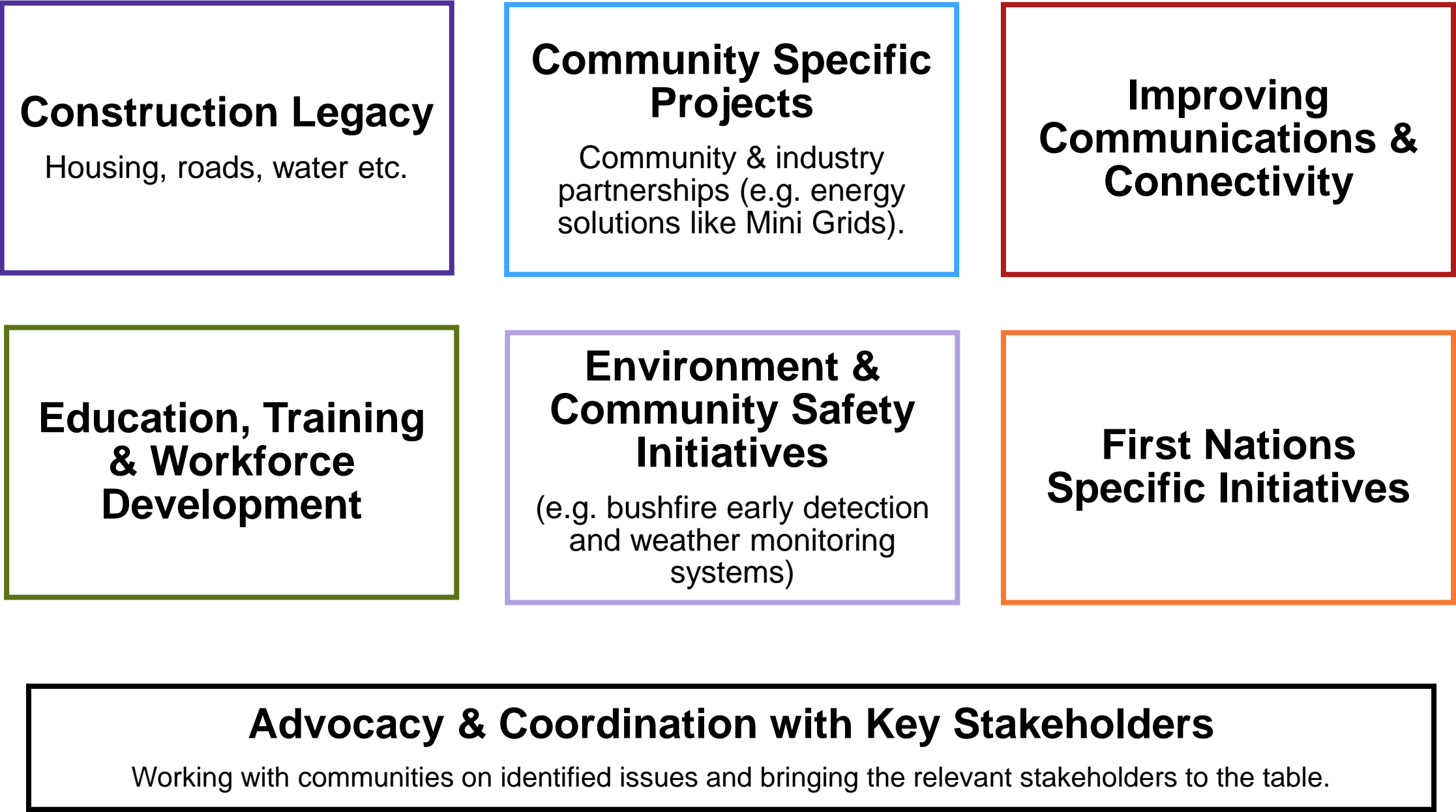
- Initiative name
- Community / locality the initiative would benefit – e.g. Bundure, Conargo, Wanganella, Moulamein, Mallan, etc., or Regional
- Which ‘investment pillar’ does it best fit?
- Summary of initiative, including: Community Need, Sustainability, Delivery and Partners
- Cost / Benefit comparison.

Section 3

Budget details

- Budget for initiative: upfront capital, ongoing expenses
- Other contributions
- Supporting documents

Likely areas of focus to progress



The AER assessment of social legacy initiatives

The AER has highlighted the following key factors for the assessment of initiatives:

- Expenditure for proposed for social legacy activities will be informed by the outcomes of engagement and clearly address community and landholder concerns that may prevent the project progressing. This expenditure should also be tested in consumer engagement.
- Social legacy initiatives will be considered as a package rather than individual activities. In isolation, individual activities may appear efficient, but this does not guarantee the package will be efficient. For example, they may be duplicative or work at cross-purposes.
- The AER needs to be satisfied that Transgrid has identified prudent and efficient expenditure to gain a social licence.

Engagement update



Engagement activity

EnergyCo planning a SW REZ Major Project Roadshow, including:

- EnergyCo
- Department of Primary Industries & Regional Development
- Renewable developers for Dinawan Wind/Solar Farm, Yanco Delta Wind Farm, Bullawah Wind Farm and Pottinger Wind Farm
- Transgrid.

Plan:

- Presentations from Renewable Developers
- DPIRD: Business resilience and readiness workshops
- **Transgrid to attend events and networking sessions**

Planned dates: Tuesday 27 May – Friday 30 May 2025

Presentations / Workshops (EnergyCo / DPIRD / Developers):

- Tues 27 May – Buronga
- Wed 28 May – Hay
- Thurs 29 May – Deniliquin
- Fri 30 May – Griffith



General discussion



Wrap up and close



Next meeting

- Next meeting (# 10) on calendar is Wednesday 16 July.
- Would like to propose date change to hold meeting in first week of July (Wednesday 2 July or Thursday 3 July).

WHY?

- Engage with members early on the proposed rollout of the EIS Exhibition.
 - Provide advice on the EIS to be displayed.
-
- Following meeting (# 11) is scheduled for (nominally) Wednesday 17 September.
Would adjust to **Thursday 18 September**. Meeting would follow end of EIS exhibition period.

Meeting close

Thank you for your time

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