

## HumeLink Upper Lachlan Yass Valley Community Consultative Group: 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting 5 July 2022

<b>Time</b>	12 - 2pm
<b>Date</b>	05/07/2022
<b>Attendees</b>	<p>Chair: Brendan Blakeley          Secretariat: Ella Burgess          Transgrid CCG members: Tim Edwards, Naomi Rowe          Transgrid speakers: Daniel Burn, Carl Charlier          Transgrid project member attendees: Gordon Taylor, Nathan Rhodes, Tammy Sinclair          Guest speakers: Brendan Nelson, Independent Peer Review, MacroPlan          Community members: Cr Adrian Cameron          Deputy Landowner and Community Advocate (Observer): Barbara El Gamal          Observers: Darryl White (Transgrid)</p>
<b>Apologies</b>	Ian Robson, Andrea Strong, Cr Pam Kensit, David Banham, Tyronne Bell, Catriona McCauliffe
<b>Meeting location</b>	Yass Council Chambers
<b>Meeting materials</b>	Presentation
<b>Purpose of meeting</b>	Meeting 5

Item	Discussion Summary	To note
Welcome and Acknowledgement of Country	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The meeting commenced at 12:06pm.</li> <li>- The Chair welcomed all and gave an Acknowledgement to Country.</li> <li>- The Chair noted the lack of community attendance at the meeting and confirmed that the meeting would not constitute a full CCG meeting.</li> <li>- The Chair asked the team from Transgrid to introduce themselves and their role in the HumeLink project.</li> <li>- The new Transgrid team members in attendance included:</li> <li>- <i>Gordon Taylor, Executive General Manager, Major Projects</i></li> <li>- <i>Nathan Rhodes, Acting Project Director, HumeLink</i></li> <li>- Also in attendance was Brendan Nelson from MacroPlan who would be conducting</li> </ul>	

	<p>an independent review of Transgrid's route alignment process.</p>	
Minutes and Matters Arising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No comments made on the previous minutes.</li> </ul> <p><i>The minutes of the previous meeting have been endorsed by the Chair and posted to the Transgrid website.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Matters arising were noted as being discussed in the agenda for the meeting.</li> </ul>	
HumeLink Project Update	<p>Naomi gave an update on the HumeLink project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- See slide 6 of the presentation for a project update on HumeLink's milestones.</li> <li>- A CCG member asked how Brendan's work relates to the route refinement as it has already been determined.</li> <li>- Naomi responded that Brendan is looking at key areas of the route refinement and applying a certain criteria, in particular the Bannaby and Tumut areas where they are adjacent to the Greenfield State Forest.</li> <li>- Naomi confirmed 106 offer letters have been distributed to impacted landowners. The offer letters have progressed in a phased approach to ensure the Transgrid team is available to have meaningful conversations around the information received. This ensures there is enough resourcing available to meet the landowners' needs.</li> </ul>	-
Update on the undergrounding feasibility report	<p>Dan gave an update on the undergrounding feasibility report timeline.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- See slide 16 of the presentation for an update on the undergrounding feasibility report timeline.</li> <li>- The Chair noted the work Andrea Strong had contributed to the HumeLink Undergrounding Steering Committee.</li> <li>- In mid-June the Transgrid received the final Undergrounding Report for HumeLink, by independent consultants GHD and Stantec. The report was published on Transgrid's website, without endorsement from the HumeLink Steering Committee.</li> <li>- The Steering Committee raised a number of concerns with the report, mainly around costings. GHD have now provided new figures which the Steering Committee are still questioning.</li> </ul>	-

- The Steering Committee met with GHD this week to review the HVDC cable installation component of the cost assessment in The HumeLink Project - Underground report. All parties agreed that additional cost analysis was required, and an independent expert review is underway.
- The Steering Committee will meet regularly over the coming weeks and continues to work towards finalising the report.
- A CCG member commented that the impression given was that the report was pulled from the website due to lack of consultation.
- Naomi responded that the report has been taken down to give the Steering Committee more time to review it and provide ample feedback.

Dan provided an overview of the next steps for the undergrounding feasibility report.

See slide 9 of the presentation for an overview of next steps.

- Dan noted that agreement with between the Steering Committee and GHD about next steps is necessary.
- Nathan noted the independence of the report must hold true to the integrity of the report.
- The Chair commented that the discussions that have been had to date speak to the commitment by the community members to bring themselves up to speed on the complex technical nature of the information. If the report is released, that should not imply endorsement by the Steering Committee.

#### Route refinement

Naomi gave an update on the route refinement

- Since March Transgrid has been progressively refining the route in response to a number of alternate options put forward by local communities, particularly around Bannaby and Tumut North.
- Transgrid has a preference for a route and recognise the sensitivity. For those reasons, it is important an alternate body evaluates how the decisions were made and give an independent opinion.

- Transgrid asked Brendan from MacroPlan to consider and analyse the community submissions, letter, photos and items received. Transgrid intends to identify if there is a situation where valid and fair criticism may exist on the route.

Brendan gave an overview of his role, experience and experience so far on the project. He can make recommendations from his observations that can be fed into the route decision and Environmental Impact Study (EIS).

Brendan's initial observations included:

- Transgrid has evolved in terms of maturity, considering early on in the project it is clear there was not enough resourcing for a project of this scale. The resourcing was not there to ensure an adequate level of comprehensiveness in the reviews and criteria being applied to the route selection. Community input at this level is critical.
- There are two Government regulators who operate this space, the Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) and the Australian Energy Regulator (AER). Both regulators focus on different aspects, DPE on people, place, the community and environment and AER on cost, efficiency and the end price for the consumer. Big energy projects such as HumeLink have to find the balance to address standards set by both regulators.
- Community involvement is critical as HumeLink is a State Significant Development, however there is no "magic bullet" solution as there are various components that must be taken into consideration before the final cost such as environmental, community and technical factors.
- In more recent times, there has been a lot of work done by Transgrid in contested locations and there are some refinements that could be done in relation to community. For future projects the community must be actively involved from the beginning to give everyone more comfort in the decisions being made.
- The use of public versus private land is a clear issue and where possible should be something advocated for, however in other

locations putting the route through public land will increase impacts on other communities, there is a need to look at this route refinement holistically.

- The quality of the data available has increased since the inception of the project. Early engagement on the project was not favourable and the data was not available to provide evidence-based recommendations. The project is in a different space now and there is quality data available to give evidence-based reasoning. There is a strong need for further community engagement.
- The value of agricultural land and whether it is as valuable as other land in the corridor needs to be given greater consideration. Continued and transparent engagement with the community will provide everyone involved with a level of comfort.
- Brendan noted that his aim is when the EIS is finalised, from his review, there will be enough evidence that all routes have been considered.
- A CCG member asked if there are many contested areas along the refined route.
- Brendan noted that two thirds of the route is not contested. There are some areas of significance where a house, community or State Forest may be located. Visual amenity concerns have been raised which can be appreciated.
- All the information provided by landowners has been investigated by Transgrid and relevant parties, although the due diligence may not have been completely communicated with the wider public.

Naomi noted that Transgrid has received many questions via multiple channels regarding GHD's weighting criteria, InDeGo. The response required to those questions is very technical, so they will be addressed with in a written response.

#### Next steps

- Naomi noted that Transgrid are receiving recommendations from Brendan and will be working through them.
- Brendan commented that the EIS is under development, there are many areas where

	<p>the route is not being contested and work is progressing well. Brendan noted his hope for the progression of the route refinement is that when the route does have to traverse through a community they are aware of where it is going before the EIS goes out.</p>	
Compensation	<p>Carl Charlier introduced himself as the Commercial Manager for HumeLink and gave an update on compensation process and calculation.</p> <p>Special Benefit Payment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The NSW Government has been investigating strategic landholder payments to recognise landholders who host transformational transmission projects. Transgrid has been working with government to explore these options.</li> </ul> <p>Annualised Easement Payments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Annual easement compensation payments have been investigated. There are challenges, including financier requirements. As a result Transgrid are focusing efforts on working with government on the special benefit payment.</li> </ul> <p>From late July Transgrid will hold up to 12 webinars with landowners to discuss the compensation process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- See slides 14 - 16 for an overview of the easement acquisition and negotiation process.</li> </ul>	
Planning and approvals	<p>Naomi gave an update on the EIS Planning Pathway</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Technical specialists have been out on the field as well as completing desktop assessment modelling.</li> </ul> <p>Naomi gave an update on EIS engagement activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- See slide 21 for an overview of upcoming pre-EIS engagement activities.</li> <li>- A CCG member commented that the sooner EIS engagement is undertaken the better. If you were to ask people in the community, one in ten people would know what HumeLink is.</li> </ul>	
Update on community engagement	<p>Naomi gave a summary of the results from the social impacts and opportunities workshops that occurred after the last CCG meetings.</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- See slide 23 for a summary of the needs/impacts and opportunities.</li> </ul>	
Agenda setting for subsequent meetings	<p><b>Next meetings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A meeting in August was mentioned, however the one CCG member in attendance noted he would not be available in August.</li> </ul> <p>October</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Wednesday 12</li> </ul> <p>December</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Wednesday 7</li> </ul>	
<b>Meeting close</b>	The meeting closed at 1:40pm.	

<b>Action</b>	<b>Status or comment</b>
Secretariat is to follow up with members on administrative details including signed Code of Conduct Agreements and sharing of contact details.	Ongoing
Transgrid to institute the \$50 reimbursement for eligible members	Ongoing
Transgrid to provide CCG members with a diagram presenting how planning and regulatory processes relate	Underway
Transgrid to provide a timeline/diagram of HumeLink progress as it currently stands and a timeline of HumeLink progress if undergrounding or Option 2F are deemed feasible	Underway
HumeLink EIS and SEARs to be circulated to CCG members	Underway
Transgrid to follow up with GHD for more insight into their value scoring methodology and reasoning, including the difference in value between agricultural land compared to State Forest.	Underway
Transgrid to follow up with GHD for more insight into the social and environmental matters included in its model InDeGo (Infrastructure Development Geospatial Options), how they are weighted and the scoring methodology.	Underway
Transgrid to request the value of the multiplier from used in their report.	Underway
Transgrid to provide the CCG with technical information explaining how the structural integrity of the transmission lines is maintained in windy conditions.	Underway
Transgrid to confirm with the CCG if any of the transmission 500kv lines between Bannaby and Bayswater have come down.	Underway
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