

Meeting Minutes

HumeLink Construction Reference Group – Wagga Wagga

Meeting Title:	HumeLink West Construction Reference Group	Date:	24 June 2026
Location:	The Discovery Hub, Wagga Wagga	Time:	4:00 PM – 6:00 PM

Chairperson:	Reem Nasr (RN), Transgrid
Attendees:	David Stratton (DS), Community member Sally Manning (SM), Wagga Business Chamber Laura Young (LY), Transgrid Tim Burns (TB), UGL-CPB Joint Venture Chantelle Garrett (CG), UGL-CPB Joint Venture Katia Salazar Reviakina (KSR), Transgrid Patrick Cave (PC) UGL-CPB Joint Venture
Apologies:	Rachel Whiting (RW), Regional Development Australia – Riverina Scott Gray (SG), Wagga Wagga City Council Max Gordon-Hall (MGH), Inspector of Ranges (Ambulance) Superintendent Stewart Alexander (SA), Fire and Rescue

Agenda items

Agenda item	Notes	Decisions / actions
1. Acknowledgement of Country & Welcome	RN acknowledged the Wiradjuri people as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the lands on which a significant portion of HumeLink is being built and acknowledged the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the lands of all those joining via Teams. RN paid respects to Elders past and present.	
2. Welcome and housekeeping	RN welcomed attendees, outlined the agenda, and encouraged questions throughout the session.	

Agenda item	Notes	Decisions / actions
3. Confirmation of previous meeting minutes and review of action items	Reem Nassr (RN) reviewed action items from the previous meeting: 1. Provide workforce histogram – employment data now published quarterly in SIMP reports (complete) 2. Respond to inquiry from Chris Jones regarding biosecurity workshop – Two Transgrid staff attended biosecurity workshop in Hay. (complete) 3. Investigate biosecurity training options – Investigated (complete) 4. Advise community of traffic management changes once stringing plans are confirmed – communicated via letterbox drops, website and notification are letterboxed drops, and Live traffic alerts. (ongoing) 5. Consider mobile electric fencing as mitigation to keep cattle away from packages tower materials – this is an option provided where required for individual properties and negotiated directly with landowners. (ongoing) 6. Rollout of branded project signage – HLW has received relevant Council and Transport for NSW approval. Signage in design and manufacture stage. (In Progress) 7. Reinforce to all project drivers not to travel unnecessarily slow on Livingstone Gully Rd – reinforcement ongoing (ongoing) 8. Livingstone Gully Rd resheet and reseal once Council approval of revised plans is received - on hold. Council prefers works at later stage of project; interim maintenance continues. HLW will proceed with management of the road as per conditions of approval (complete) David Stratton (DS) asked about the timing of the Livingston Gully Road upgrade. Tim Burns (TB) advised that Council has indicated a preference to complete the works once the majority of construction activities are finished, towards the end of the project. DS asked whether interim maintenance would continue. TB confirmed that the project team will continue to monitor conditions, maintain soft spots and undertake ongoing maintenance until all stakeholders agree the road can be fully resheeted. DS asked about the duration of traffic management measures. TB advised that traffic management will remain in place while foundation works and critical activities are underway. Hurdles are being installed as a safety measure to protect road users and project personnel during construction.	

Agenda item	Notes	Decisions / actions
	9. Arrange HLW to post job to Jobs Riverina Murray platform – implemented (complete) 10. All members to help promote TG CPP – completed (complete) 11. Share telecommunications booster site locations – shared (completed) 12. MSW to lock in Mental Health first aid training dates by mid-April – scheduling in progress (In progress) 13. Follow up RFS regarding impact of HLW tower alignment on fixed-wing firefighting on Mount Flakney – ongoing (In progress) 14. Circulate meeting minutes and full action register to all West CRG members – Completed (complete)	
4. Project update and Construction three-month look ahead	Katia Salazar Reviakina (KSR) provided a HumeLink project update. Project overview: • ~365km of 500 kV overhead transmission lines • Approximately 833 towers • New substations at Gregadoo ‘Gugaa’ and Maragle and Bannaby • Substation upgrade at Wagga Wagga • Accommodation facilities at Tarcutta, Kunama, Yass and Adjungbilly • 235 access points • Approximately 609km of access tracks • 143 towers erected, 334 foundations completed, 602 pads completed, 164 towers assembled, 453km of access track constructed, 176 access points completed. Sally Manning (SM): SM asked whether the project is happy with how works are progressing? KSR confirmed the project is happy with progress. TB provided a specific HumeLink West project update: • First infrastructure energised at Wagga Wagga Substation. Noted there will be 2–3-day outages week commencing 29 June 2026 to facilitate more connections. • Additional beds have been added to Kunama and Tarcutta accommodation facilities • The team has hung insulators on the tower in preparation for stringing • Piling is currently underway east of Westbrook Road and continuing to Green Hills State Forest • 234km of access tracks have been constructed	

Agenda item	Notes	Decisions / actions
	• Next month, HLW will be constructing the hurdle over the Hume Highway • The concrete batch plant at Cullinga Park Lane will be demobilised over next couple of months • Trial controlled blasting is underway to aid in constructing the tower foundations. • The project is taking many deliveries of construction material such as pile cages, steel and stringing conductor • Clearing is nearing completion with works focused on Line 1 between Elliot Way and Browns Rd. • Nest boxes and glider poles have been installed. 40 gilder crossing have been identified by ecologist. Notes the importance of this work to the project. • HLW will be conducting aerial stringing using helicopter and drones • OSOM deliveries are nearly complete with 6/7 transformers and 1/4 reactors delivered to Gugaa substation and only 4 transformers and 2 reactors are still to be delivered at Maragle substation. DS noted he had observed several OSOM deliveries and commented that they appeared to be well managed. TB agreed and acknowledged that the delivery contractor is performing well. SM asked how frost conditions affect construction activities. TB advised that fog or frost conditions can delay the start of work, as crews must wait until conditions clear to ensure safe operations. Photos of recent works were displayed. • Tower foundations: TB noted how disturbance has been minimised by constructing foundations on smaller bench platforms rather than large flat pads. This approach reduces the overall environmental footprint. • Accommodation facilities: TB noted approximately 70 beds have been added to the facilities. • Maragle substation: TB noted Substations are progressing well, with concrete works approximately 80% complete. Construction is now transitioning to earthing and installation of electrical equipment. DS asked what approach is being used for blast walls. TB advised that two types of structures are being implemented: fire walls using hebel panels, and precast blast walls supported by galvanised universal columns.	

Agenda item	Notes	Decisions / actions
	SM asked why larger accommodation camps are required. TB advised that the increase in camp size is to accommodate the growth in workforce. • Wagga substation: TB identified where HumeLink West works are occurring and the location of new bays. Works are scheduled to be completed before end of year. • Gugga substation – TB noted gantries are continuing to be erected. DS identified the location of the reactors in the project imagery, which TB confirmed. DS asked whether Line 51 will supply Wagga Wagga. TB confirmed that the network will be interconnected from the start of Project Energy Connect through to Bannaby, with Line 51 contributing to supply into Wagga Wagga. DS asked whether all towers are galvanised. TB confirmed that all towers are galvanised and undergo a dulling process to reduce reflectivity.	
6. Stringing methodology	Patrick Cave (PC) presented on stringing methodology for HumeLink West. • PC delivered a presentation on stringing methodology and introduced key terminology. • PC explained that the transmission line operates as a three-phase system, with each cross arm carrying four conductors. The project is using aluminium-core steel-reinforced conductors, with four conductors per cross arm. Earth wires and optical ground wire (OPGW) are installed to provide lightning protection and communication capability. Insulators are used to separate the conductors from the tower structures and prevent electrical flow to the towers. DS: DS asked about the lifespan of the glass insulators. PC advised that insulators typically have a lifespan of 20–25 years, depending on environmental conditions, and are maintained and replaced as required. • Spacers are installed to maintain separation between conductors, and fittings connect the various components. Two main tower types are used: suspension and tension structures. • PC noted that the project involves approximately 3,900 km of conductor, earth wire and OPGW combined.	Action: RN to share the landowner (LO) guide outlining tower types and clearance requirements with CRG members. Action: RN to confirm the minimum height clearance requirements (including the 5.2 m query for HumeLink).

Agenda item	Notes	Decisions / actions
	- Equipment used during stringing includes winches, tensioners, drum stands, spacer carts, cranes, press heads and tractors. PC outlined the stringing process: - Stringing is carried out in sections known as “pulls”, typically spanning 5–7 km of completed towers - Winch and brake sites are established at each end of the pull - Where crossings occur (e.g. roads or third-party infrastructure), mitigation measures such as hurdles and traffic management are implemented (approximately 7–8 major hurdles required across the project) - A helicopter or drone is used to install the initial draw wire between towers - The draw wire is then used to pull in the conductors using winch and tensioner systems - Once installed, conductors are sagged and tensioned to meet clearance requirements - Spacer installation is undertaken using spacer carts or, where suitable, helicopter-assisted methods PC noted that installation of the draw wire typically takes approximately 7–8 minutes per tower. Helicopter-assisted spacer installation may significantly improve efficiency, with up to 400–500 spacers installed per day compared to slower ground-based methods. DS asked how minimum conductor clearance is determined during stringing. PC advised that clearance requirements are determined through detailed engineering design, incorporating multiple environmental and operational factors. DS asked about clearances at the lowest point of sag, particularly for large vehicles. PC advised that the safe approach distance at the lowest point is approximately 13 metres, ensuring adequate clearance. DS asked whether stringing activities would impact heavy vehicle movements or landowner large vehicle movements. PC confirmed that any area that is crossed by a vehicle is identified and the crossings are designed to maintain sufficient clearances and avoid impacts to traffic. RN noted that guidance on clearances and land use requirements is available on the Transgrid website and is provided to landowners at project completion.	

Agenda item	Notes	Decisions / actions
	DS noted that a clearance of under 5.2 metres would typically require notification for heavy vehicles. Chantelle Garrett (CG) advised that requirements vary depending on the type of activity within the easement. RN confirmed that the project team will check the clearance requirements and email the Landowner guideline.	
7. Workforce, accommodation & local capacity	Chantelle Garrett (CG) provided a workforce, accommodation and local capacity update. • 3,000 workers inducted - 630 are local or regional workers • 43 apprentices and trainees directly employed, working across substations, assembly and erection crews, site administration, stringing and civil construction • Two pre-employment programs with trainees working onsite; 8 trainees for Civil Construction; 8 trainees for Certificate II in Overhead Transmission Lines; 9 locally based people joined the pre-employment program • 16 apprentices enrolled in Certificate III in ESI Transmission Overhead • Current recruitment focus is Qualified Certificate III in OHTL Lines workers for stringing • CG noted that there have been minimal changes since the previous meeting. There are currently 156 contracts in place, with approximately 50 awarded to local suppliers. DS asked whether one of the contractors listed was not a local supplier. CG advised that this had previously been reviewed, however confirmed she would follow up and provide clarification. DS asked whether Kennedy's earthworks crew had been involved in the project. PC confirmed that Kennedy's had undertaken work on monopoles and foundation pads. • \$82m spent with local & regional businesses • \$13.4m spent with Indigenous businesses	Action: CG to confirm and clarify which supplier is not classified as local.
8. Community investment and engagement	Chantelle Garrett (CG) provided a community investment and engagement update. • NRMA has successfully delivered over 250 driving lessons to date as part of its collaboration with HumeLink West, supporting participants in gaining essential driving skills and independence. • Our Under 25 trainees continue to make strong progress, actively engaging in both onsite and classroom-based	

Agenda item	Notes	Decisions / actions
	training. Collectively, trainees have completed more than 175 hours of classroom learning, demonstrating a solid commitment to building their skills and knowledge. • The She Can Too Scholarship program is also delivering positive outcomes. Our 12 scholarship recipients have utilised approximately 22.75% of their allocated funding on essential items such as technology, school forums, uniforms and stationery. Two students have completed year 12 and have gone on to university to study Chemical Engineering and Nursing. HLW Community Investment and Benefit Program • HumeLink West funded four projects • Tarcutta Recreational Grounds Infrastructure Improvement Plan: Project manager selected. Scope confirmed. Grid connection in design followed by Crown Lands submission. • Batlow Multi-Purpose Leisure Hub: Project manager engaged. Scope confirmation and concept design for development application and Crown Lands approval in progress. • Adelong Golden Gully Caravan Park Accommodation: Preferred supplier nominated and development application submitted to council. • Carcoola Children's Centre at Tumbarumba: Delivery subcontractor engaged. Design completion target July, followed by development application submission. Construction start target October 2026. Noted recent smaller community initiatives • Batlow Show • Community First Aid training • Tarcutta Campdraft • Police Girls Program Tarcutta facility tour • Tarcutta and Humula public schools Tarcutta facility tour • School holiday program, Batlow and Humula • Community markets • CiderFest • Batlow Library service • Tumut SES equipment donation • Talbingo Women's Shed & Batlow Library Biggest Morning Tea donations	
9. Transgrid Community	Reem Nasr (RN) provided update on Transgrid Community investment and benefits program	Action: RN to provide further information on

Agenda item	Notes	Decisions / actions
Investment and Benefits Program	Landscape rehydration • RN noted that three 'communities of practice' are being established across the project alignment. These will involve a range of activities, including field days and demonstration sites. DS asked whether the program is being delivered through Landcare groups. RN confirmed that the program is being delivered in partnership with Landcare groups, including Kyeamba Landcare and Upper Lachlan Landcare. DS noted he had not been aware of the Kyeamba Landcare activities. RN acknowledged the feedback and noted that feedback from recent sessions has been positive. DS asked whether the program is based on research from the Hunter Valley. RN advised that the Mulloon Institute's initial project site is located near Canberra. The program focuses on improving water retention in the landscape, supporting drought resilience and improving overall land management outcomes. Mental health and resilience programs • RN noted that the program is working collaboratively with local communities to deliver events and training. This includes engaging with communities to understand local needs and tailor support accordingly. • Mental Health First Aid training sessions are currently being delivered, with upcoming sessions planned in Tumut and Yass. RN encouraged members to suggest additional community groups that may benefit from these programs. DS asked what types of activities are included in the community wellbeing program. RN advised that these activities are designed as informal community gatherings to understand local needs and identify opportunities to support wellbeing initiatives. DS asked how the Tumbarumba school breakfast program was established. CG advised that the initiative was identified through a previous staff member who became aware the school required support. HumeLink West is assisting through practical measures, including providing supplies and support via a local IGA account. CG noted additional community initiatives being explored, such as supporting agricultural education activities and local programs through the Batlow Hub.	the Landscape Rehydration Program to CRG members.

Agenda item	Notes	Decisions / actions
	DS noted that some initiatives appeared unique and queried whether similar support would be provided to other communities. RN encouraged members to share any ideas or requests related to mental health and wellbeing, noting that the program aims to respond to community-identified needs where possible. Telecommunications program • Three telecommunications repeater sites have been installed on existing towers, including two in the Upper Lachlan area and one in the Snowy Valleys. • RN noted that significant analysis is required to determine suitable sites for additional installations, including areas such as Book Book currently under consideration. Site selection considers a range of factors, including: - availability of an appropriate Telstra signal - proximity to existing towers - road networks and traffic volumes; - identified mobile black spots; - tower suitability and structural integrity - topographical constraints DS asked whether engagement has occurred with the Rural Fire Service (RFS). RN confirmed that engagement with RFS has taken place and feedback is being incorporated into site selection. DS asked whether the repeaters are directional. RN confirmed that the boosters are directional, with overlapping coverage depending on alignment. Each unit typically provides coverage of approximately 2–3 km. RN noted that Telstra is currently the primary network considered, based on its network coverage and infrastructure footprint in the region.	
10. Next steps and close	Reem Nasr (RN) asked for any final questions and closed out meeting. DS asked whether additional community site visits/bus tours to Gugaa Substation could be made available for local community members. TB confirmed that the project team would be open to organising additional site visits in the future. DS noted that the use of water tankers on local roads has been well received by the community.	

Agenda item	Notes	Decisions / actions
	DS observed that the increased presence of traffic controllers has been a positive improvement. DS asked about the process for initiating infrastructure connection requests (point of connection). RN advised that the process involves formal scoping and submission of connection enquiries.	

Actions

Agenda item	Description	Responsibility
6. Stringing methodology	Share the landowner (LO) guide outlining tower types and clearance requirements with CRG members. Confirm the minimum height clearance requirements (including the 5.2 m query for HumeLink).	Reem Nasr
7. Workforce, accommodation & local capacity	Confirm and clarify which supplier is not classified as local.	Chantelle Garrett
9. Transgrid Community Investment and Benefits Program	Provide further information on the Landscape Rehydration Program to CRG members.	Reem Nasr

Minutes prepared by: Laura Young

Date prepared: 24 June 2026

Minutes approved by: Reem Nasr, Chairperson

Date approved: 07 July 2026