

## 1.1 HumeLink Snowy Valley Community Consultative Group: 9<sup>th</sup> Meeting 14 December 2022

<b>Time</b>	5 to 7 pm
<b>Date</b>	14/12/2022
<b>Attendees</b>	Chair: Brian Elton Secretariat: Ella Burgess Transgrid CCG members: Naomi Rowe, Nathan Rhodes, Michael Johnson Transgrid project member attendees: Tammy Sinclair, Cameron Walters Community members: Ian Robson, Paul Sturgess, Frank Galluzo, Pippa Quilty, Sarah Roche, Hansie Armour, Phil Clements Landowner and Community Advocate (Observers): Barbara El Gamal (Deputy)
<b>Apologies</b>	Lee Kingma, Rod Stowe
<b>Meeting location</b>	Tumut Valley Motor Inn
<b>Meeting materials</b>	Presentation
<b>Purpose of meeting</b>	Meeting 9

Item	Discussion Summary	To note
<b>Welcome and Acknowledgement of Country</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The meeting commenced at 5:03pm.</li> <li>- The Chair welcomed all and gave an Acknowledgement of Country.</li> <li>- The Chair asked the community CCG members and the team from Transgrid to introduce themselves and their role in the HumeLink project.</li> </ul>	
<b>Minutes and Matters Arising</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Previous comments received on the minutes were taken into account in the revised minutes from CCG meeting 8.</li> </ul> <p><i>The minutes of the previous meeting were left open to receiving comments until 21 12 2022.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A CCG member asked for further explanation of the biodiversity offset process to be included in the November meeting minutes.</li> <li>- <b>ACTION:</b> Ella to revise the November meeting minutes and include further detail regarding the biodiversity offset process.</li> </ul>	

**HumeLink Progress  
Update: key  
dates**

Naomi gave an overview of HumeLink's key dates.

See slide 6 of the presentation for an update on HumeLink's progress.

- Naomi commented that the most crucial update is that at the end of 2022, the EIS program is continuing preparation as technical studies near completion.
- Engagement in early 2023 will focus on the EIS.
- Key updates for early 2023 include the appointment of a delivery partner for the substations and the transmission lines.
- Stakeholder consultation with landowners has moved through the stages around notifying about easement locations. The Transgrid team is progressing the development of the PMPs with individual landowners.
- Transgrid wants to work with local communities to identify the best ways they would like to receive information about the EIS and associated technical studies.
- A CCG member commented that in the past it has been mentioned that the EIS would be finalised after the State Election and asked if this is still the case.
- Naomi responded that one of the reasons the finalisation date has been vague is because there were a number of options Transgrid was considering which would impact the overall timing of the EIS. The intent is to have the EIS on public exhibition in the first half of 2023. Nathan's goal is to have the EIS on exhibition in April, however it may not be for another month or so.
- The Chair confirmed the EIS would not be finalised until after the State Election.
- Naomi confirmed that when the timings of the EIS release were certain, they would be communicated with the CCG. The exhibition period will be for between four and six weeks.
- A CCG member asked how the EIS can be completed if Transgrid cannot access private properties for the technical studies.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Naomi responded that Transgrid then has to assume a presence and take a very conservative approach.</li> <li>- The Chair noted that if the State and Federal governments deem there is not enough information, the EIS cannot proceed.</li> <li>- Nathan noted that currently along the route they have approval from approximately 80% of landowners to enter their properties to conduct studies.</li> <li>- The Chair added that additional conditions can be placed on the project before construction proceeds.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Regulatory and procurement update</b></p>	<p><b>Regulatory and procurement update</b></p> <p>See slide 9 of the presentation for an update on regulatory and a contingent project application update.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The AER has granted HumeLink \$360 million of funding so far, and the team must prove that the funding is being spent prudently.</li> <li>- In the global market, there a security of supply issue given that every country is decarbonising, Transgrid is working to lock in equipment to address that risk.</li> <li>- In addition to receiving approval from State and Federal governments and the AER, Transgrid needs to through its own internal processes to mobilise funding that has been recovered from the AER. Construction is due to commence in 2024, a 2-year build will follow.</li> <li>- Before the end of the year, the procurement partners will be narrowed down to two.</li> <li>- Regarding land acquisition, approximately 10% of the total project funding is allocated to land acquisition. The project must be at a certain degree of accuracy to prove the economic benefit of spending that amount of money to the AER.</li> <li>- Nathan reinforced the accelerate timelines that AEMO has recently enforced on the delivery of HumeLink. HumeLink needs to be energised by mid-2026.</li> </ul> <p>Procurement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Nathan noted that the delivery partners will not only be engaged on HumeLink but</li> </ul>	

	<p>on various Transgrid projects in across the NEM.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The main objective for the two ECI Contractors, (one for each contract package), is to select partners who demonstrate the greatest potential to deliver the best value for money in an accelerate timeframe.</li> <li>- Nathan gave a high-level outline of the criteria for selecting HumeLink’s delivery partner: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Organisation and key personnel</li> <li>o Technical and delivery approach</li> <li>o Critical resources and sourcing security strategy</li> <li>o Environment and community investment</li> <li>o Collaboration</li> <li>o Commercial alignment.</li> </ul> </li> <li>-</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Design update</b></p>	<p><b>Design update</b></p> <p>Undergrounding</p> <p>See slides 12 to 14 of the presentation for a design update.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Chair gave an update of the outcomes of the most recent HumeLink Undergrounding Steering Committee meeting.</li> <li>- The Chair noted that the version of the GHD report with tracked changes was circulated the week before the CCG meeting and Transgrid’s official response was circulated the day before the CCG meeting.</li> <li>- The Chair noted that after liaising with Les Brand from Amplitude Consultants, an additional Steering Committee meeting would be convened to evaluate the two documents together. Comments from the Steering Committee would then be fed back to the CCGs.</li> <li>- A community Steering Committee member commented that after looking at the GHD report with tracked changes the Steering Committee’s position is that the GHD report is flawed, and the Committee does not endorse it. The report now has 52 outstanding issues. The Committee</li> </ul>	

was very disappointed that it took four months to receive the GHD report with tracked changes, only for there to be an increase in the number of outstanding issues.

- The Chair responded that the Undergrounding conversation would happen during the Steering Committee meeting later in the week.

#### Route refinement

Nathan gave an overview to the context behind the Bannaby route review.

- Six months ago in conversations with the Bannaby Residents Action Group (BRAG), Nathan committed to refining the route from Bannaby to Tumut.
- Transgrid has completed an analysis and risk assessment of the Southern route option through Tarlo River National Park. The engineering studies were re-done to create a like for like comparison between the two options.
- The two options were equal in terms of impact, apart from impacts to the environment. Transgrid met with the NSW Department of Planning and Environment to determine the feasibility of all impacts as well as other agencies to try and consider other work arounds. Transgrid is very cognisant of the community impacts for both options and pursued an investigation into the second route in good faith.
- A CCG member asked how many landowners are impacted between Maragle and where the new line comes out of Green Hills.
- Nathan responded that there are no additional private landowners impacted by the route, as the additional impacted stakeholders are State Government owned.
- The Chair noted that Phil Clements, CEO of Softwoods Working Group was not consulted about the additional route.
- There are planning considerations for both routes that will be put into the EIS.
- A CCG member asked how many landowners would be impacted where the newline comes out of Greenhills.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Nathan responded that there are no additional landowners, all additional impacted areas are owned by the State Government.</li> <li>- <b>ACTION:</b> outline the length of the new route.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Stakeholder Engagement &amp; Community Investment</b></p>	<p><b>Stakeholder Engagement &amp; Community Investment</b></p> <p>See slide 20 of the presentation for an update on stakeholder engagement and community investment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Naomi noted that over the last few months, extensive consultation on compensation and the EIS has been underway. The sessions were designed to develop a baseline understanding of the HumeLink project as the project team prepares for more detailed conversations as the EIS progresses.</li> <li>- The project team has also prepared feedback forms for those who engage in the in-depth sessions on technical studies that will inform the EIS.</li> <li>- Transgrid has had a number of meetings with local councils in relation to local road impacts, accommodation options for workers and broader project updates.</li> <li>- Transgrid has met with both State and Federal Ministers to provide them with project updates, including that of undergrounding etc.</li> <li>- There has been significant planning for information sessions in 2023.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>EIS and construction update</b></p>	<p><b>EIS and construction update</b></p> <p>See slides 22 – 34 of the presentation for an update on the EIS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Naomi gave an overview of the EIS and the different parts that make up the full study for the benefit of the observers in the room.</li> <li>- The EIS team are currently completing site surveys and investigation as they prepare technical reports.</li> <li>- In early 2023, the team will be moving to progress preparation of the EIS for public exhibition following the State Election.</li> <li>- The Chair commented that the difference in the EIS process is that it is not jut</li> </ul>	

Transgrid. It provides an opportunity to prosecute the comments made in the planning process by both State and Federal governments.

- The Chair noted the technical studies have to be completed by experts and signed off by independent experts to ensure they have met the SEARs.
- Naomi noted that Transgrid will come back to the CCG with a program of what the EIS engagement will look like.
- A CCG member asked if Transgrid could provide summary slides, such as those supplied in the presentation for technical topics in the EIS – **TAKEN ON NOTICE.**

#### Noise mitigation

- As part of the technical studies, three areas have been identified as areas of interest and outlined in the SEARs – construction, operational and road noise and vibration of the project.
- Noise areas and sensitive receivers are identified. Noise loggers determine the existing noise before any infrastructure or construction is in the area. The noise loggers determine where noise levels may be exceeding requirements and any mitigation steps that may be needed.
- A CCG member asked how many testing sites there are.
- Naomi responded that there are sites along the whole route. There are 12 catchments along the route with various testing sites in each catchment.
- A CCG member asked what the catchments are.
- Naomi responded that the catchments are defined by topography and the baseline noise that exists at the moment.
- **ACTION:** provide the CCG with an example of a noise and vibration catchment.
- **ACTION:** provide an explanation of the noise monitoring process and how the noise machines work.
- A CCG member asked if the noise machines are located near residences.
- Naomi confirmed in some areas, the noise machines are located at residences if it is

near a noise source. It is best practise to have the noise machine placed away from residences so the background noise of the house is not picked up.

- A CCG member asked what that means for landowners.
- Naomi noted that if a site is identified as a sensitive receiver, Transgrid will determine the source of the noise, the amount of noise, the direction in which the noise flows and what the Department has determined to be an acceptable noise limit. Transgrid has to the work with the landowner to implement noise mitigation measures such as acoustic treatments and double-glazing windows.
- During construction, the noise will be temporary so noise will be mitigated using various onsite controls.
- A CCG member asked how noise will be mitigated for farmers whilst they are working. Farmers do not stay at the residence all day, but rather spend time all over the property.
- **ACTION:** Transgrid to dedicate an agenda item during a CCG in 2023 to noise and bring an acoustic expert in.
- Naomi commented that in many instances the noise is best addressed at the source. If residual noise remains, then mitigation measures can be determined.
- A CCG member asked if noise monitors will remain post construction – **TAKEN ON NOTICE.**
- A CCG member commented that common discourse is that 330KV lines make no noise, however it was noted they do.
- Naomi responded that different people have different noise tolerances, and the team have to go by people's lived experiences.
- The technical information of the studies will be made available in the EIS, not necessarily the benchmark noise.

#### Roads – Management and Mitigation

- Work is being completed to determine how large scale items and light vehicle movements will occur along the route.



- Transgrid is identifying areas of traffic impact and determining areas where significant construction will be occurring.
- Transgrid is working with local and state governments to determine where transmission infrastructure may be crossing over roads etc.
- Currently workshops are occurring with councils and technical teams to identify road interactions and the management of road area. This is an important exercise to feed into management and repair of the roads.
- The Chair asked about impacts farm access roads.
- Naomi responded that farm access roads and alike are being managed in the individual PMPs.
- The Chair noted that when all road impacts are identified, the budget can then be allocated towards road upgrades and maintenance.
- A CCG member asked what provisions are in place for landowners during and after construction?
- Individual provisions will be outlined in the PMP. Following construction, operational and maintenance set ups will have a different set up because there will be less vehicle movements and requirements.
- A CCG member asked how traceability will operate.
- Naomi responded that the project team is looking at a number of different options, so the landowner has knowledge available to them in real time. There will be work done via the land access officer before anyone enters a property. The monitoring tools Transgrid is currently investigating look at people movements in real time or allow the owner to define certain areas where the team cannot enter. If the area is entered, the project team and the landowner are alerted. Different properties will have different needs, and each plan will need to be customised.
- Naomi noted that there has been feedback about how this has not been managed well by windfarms and

Transgrid is committed to implementing this well.

- Transgrid has outlined in contracts and requirements for their contractors the requirements to demonstrate transparency and the consequences of not adhering to the requirements.
- A CCG member asked how landowners will be notified about what will be happening and when. Landowners do not want to be on the phone all of the time.
- Naomi responded that the project team are looking into a notification system, however various landowners have different methods of how they prefer to be notified. Transgrid is looking into multiple mechanisms to make processes clear and easy to navigate.
- Nathan added that mobile coverage is an issue that Transgrid is still working to contend with.
- A CCG member commented that the technology Transgrid moved forward with will need an element to keep track of traceability.
- The Chair emphasised that it is not the landowner's responsibility to ensure enforcement.
- A CCG member asked if Transgrid has anything in place for existing transmission lines. It was noted that in January 2022, the lines needed to be restrung and there was no communication who or when from Transgrid would be entering their property. The CCG member put in multiple requests for the local roads that Transgrid had damaged to be repaired and there has never been any follow up – **TAKEN ON NOTICE.**

#### Visual impact

- As part of the HumeLink Landscape Character and Visual Impact Assessment for the EIS, a number of photomontages will be included from selected private and public viewpoints.
- Stage 1, the Preliminary Assessment has been completed.
- Stage 2, the Detailed Assessment is currently underway.

## Neara

- Neara is a physics-enabled digital twin software platform that builds 3D interactive models of critical infrastructure networks and assets. This modelling provides the ability to run real world scenarios, assess current and future risk and prioritise maintenance and disaster response.
- A CCG member asked if the Neara Modelling will be available in time for when the EIS is on exhibition – **TAKEN ON NOTICE.**
- A CCG member noted that the local community has been asking for this for a long time. Regarding the photomontages, will the images in the EIS be taken from the worst visually impacted areas?
- Naomi responded that the areas with the most significant visual impact will be included as well as range of topographies and environments.
- A CCG member asked if townships that are visually impacted are included and how Transgrid determines what is actually visually impacted.
- Naomi noted that a visual expert can be brought to the meetings to explain the process.
- The Chair noted that there is no point in taking images of the least impacted areas because that is very transparent to the government.
- Nathan added that the modelling is a 12-month project and very complex. The infrastructure has very strict security provisions so getting these kinds of tools organised takes a lot of time. It is hoped that by the New Year, the project will have some new clearances and targets. That is above and beyond what is required.
- A CCG member commented that it would save time if Transgrid pre-empted the questions CCG members would ask, as many of them are simple.
- Barbara noted that this point adds further reasoning to the need for a briefing paper to be supplied to the groups prior to each CCG meeting being held.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A CCG member commented that Transgrid keeps talking about minimising the impact and working with landowners to look at structures etc. The easiest way to minimise impacts to landowners is to put the route underground.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Other business</b></p>	<p><b>Other business</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Chair noted that the team will recruit a member with RFS experience for the CCG.</li> <li>- A CCG member commented that is not clear in the information provided by Transgrid how professional fees are paid for.</li> <li>- Naomi responded that the tricky area in navigating the communications is ensuring that relationship between the landowner and the lawyer is direct, without any interference from Transgrid.</li> <li>- The Chair reaffirmed that Transgrid needs to provide confirmation of the kinds of professional services that will be paid for and the quantum that gets paid for and the method.</li> <li>- A CCG member commented that local landowners are generally financially conservative people, and this is a big deal for them.</li> <li>- Naomi responded that Transgrid can work through ensuring the messaging is clearer. The language around what is reasonable needs to improve and we understand that a one size fits all approach does not work.</li> <li>- A CCG member commented that the unknown nature of it all, is creating a lot of angst.</li> <li>- A CCG member commented that lumpsum payments should be tax free because they are forced payments.</li> <li>- Naomi noted that issue has been raised several times and Transgrid is escalating it.</li> <li>- A CCG member commented that the local community keep receiving emails from the "HumeLink Engagement Team" which is not personal and insulting.</li> <li>- A CCG member commented that those who taking the transmission infrastructure</li> </ul>	

	should be the first offered biodiversity offsets.	
<b>Next meeting</b>	<b>Next meeting</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Chair thanked the members for their engagement to date, noting this would be his last CCG meeting.</li> <li>- The next meeting will occur on 15 February 2023.</li> <li>- The meeting closed at 7:08pm.</li> </ul>	

<b>Action</b>	<b>Status or comment</b>
HumeLink EIS and SEARs to be circulated to CCG members	Completed
Transgrid to provide the CCG with technical information explaining how the structural integrity of the transmission lines is maintained in windy conditions.	Completed
Transgrid to respond to the Steering Committee’s letter and the 52 outstanding issues within 4 weeks of the meeting.	Complete
Transgrid to supply the exact number the 2022 undergrounding figures were based on	Completed
Transgrid to check the parameters for covering ecology studies for landowners	Underway
Transgrid to supply their proposed biosecurity processes for the geotech investigations.	Completed
Transgrid to supply revised Option Deed	Completed
Transgrid to supply the revised Property Management Plan	Completed
Transgrid to outline how the procurement process will minimise impact on local communities	Completed
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 determine if there are barriers to technological advancements with undergrounding cables	Underway
Secretariat is to follow up with members on administrative details including signed Code of Conduct Agreements and sharing of contact details.	Underway
Transgrid to institute the \$50 reimbursement for eligible members	Underway
Transgrid to request the value of the multiplier from GHD used in their report.	Underway
Transgrid to supply the difference in route length between the original Bannaby to Tumut option and the alternate option that was considered	Underway

Transgrid to email confirmation that Transgrid will not be doing an official review of the route in Yass.	Underway
November meeting minutes to include further detail regarding the biodiversity offset process.	Completed – more information will be supplied at the next CCG
Length of the additional route considered between Bannaby and Tumut to be outlined	Underway
Transgrid requested to provide summary slides for each topic of the EIS	Underway
Transgrid to provide the CCG with an example of a noise and vibration catchment	Underway
Transgrid to provide an explanation of the noise monitoring process and how the noise machines work	Underway
Transgrid to answer if the noise monitors will remain post construction of the route	Underway
Transgrid to dedicate an agenda item during a CCG in 2023 to noise and bring an acoustic expert in	Underway
Transgrid to determine in the Neara modelling will be ready in time for when the EIS is on public exhibition	Underway