

1.1 HUMELINK UPPER LACHLAN YASS VALLEY COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE GROUP: SECOND MEETING

Time	5pm – 7pm
Date	17 November 2021
Attendees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Chair: Brian Elton – Secretariat: Ella Burgess – CCG: Clr Pamela Kensit, Julie Rogers, Andrea Strong, Catriona McAuliffe (Alternate), Russ Erwin, Transgrid: Tim Edwards, Fleur Laurence – Deputy Landowner and Community Advocate (Observer): Barbara El-Gamal – Independent Landowner and Community Advocate (Observer): Rod Stowe – Observers: Samantha Willoughby (Transgrid), Daryl White (Transgrid)
Apologies	Tyronne Bell, Ross Hickey, Scott Montgomery, David Banham
Meeting location	Yass Valley Council Chambers
Meeting materials	Presentation
Purpose of meeting	Second Meeting
Attachments to minutes	Question tracker, presentation

1.2 AGENDA

Item	Agenda topic	Discussion summary	To note
1	Welcome, Acknowledgment of Country and apologies	<p>Welcome:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The meeting began at 5:01pm. • Welcome from the Chair, introductions, background from community, landowner and organisation Community Consultative Group (CCG) members. • Introductions and involvement in the project from the representatives of the Transgrid HumeLink project team. • The Chair outlined the scope of the meeting and noted that undergrounding, the scoping report, and compensation were all substantial agenda items. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apologies: Tyronne Bell, Ross Hickey, Scott Montgomery, David Banham. • It was noted Ella Burgess was Acting Secretariat in place of Katie Casson. • The Chair noted that the conversations around undergrounding, compensation and the scoping report would serve as opening conversations to be further deliberated with the CCG moving forward.
2	Minutes of the last meeting	<p>General housekeeping:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chair talked to the late distribution of the October meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to the atypical timing of the October and November meetings as well as some unforeseen

Meeting minutes

minutes, presentation and question tracker.

The Chair called for comments and questions on the previous meeting minutes

- Community members of the CCG expressed concern over who reviews the meeting minutes before they are sent out to members.
- The Chair reassured the group that Transgrid will only be making technical changes. The Chair will be reviewing all Transgrid's changes.
- The CCG noted that notes the Secretariat take are to be objective.

Expectations for the circulation of meeting materials moving forward:

- The Chair proposed a timeline for the issuing of the meeting minutes moving forward.
 - The Secretariat to draft the meeting minutes within four working days of the meeting.
 - The minutes will then be checked by Transgrid for technical accuracy only within two working days.
 - Community CCG members will then have three working days from receipt for comment.
 - The Chair and Secretariat will then review and incorporate all comments and questions within three working days of receipt.
 - When Transgrid receive the final minutes, they are to be placed on the project website within one day of receipt.

The Chair called for consensus on the proposed timeline for distribution of the meeting minutes.

- The proposed timeline was adopted.

Comments on the meeting minutes

circumstances, the distribution of the meeting minutes was delayed.

- CCG members are to respond to the question tracker between CCG meetings.
- As there are three CCGs that occur consecutively, the standard two-week turnaround time for the minutes was agreed to be extended as per the outline of the proposed timeline.
- Any changes Transgrid makes to the meeting minutes of a technical nature are to be tracked and noted to provide the community with transparency.
- The October ULYV CCG October meeting minutes are to be amended based on comments received via email from Community CCG members.

Meeting minutes

- Comments on the meeting minutes received from Community CCG members were noted. The Chair confirmed that the October meeting minutes would be amended.
- Comments received about the cross-section diagram in the September Transgrid information update were noted. The Chair noted that the information pack was distributed in September prior to the October meeting. Members noted that it is important the diagram shows an accurate representation of the height of the towers.
- Transgrid acknowledged the diagram had the potential to be misunderstood.
- Transgrid will redo the diagram if it is misleading for use in any future communications.

The Chair called for comments and questions.

- None were noted from the group.

3 Undergrounding

Presentation:

Tim provided an overview of the undergrounding study.

- During the October meeting, Community CCG members expressed desire to further understand the process of undergrounding and how they could be involved in the process.
- Transgrid is commissioning a project specific independent study to understand the feasibility of undergrounding.
- Transgrid is in the process of developing the scope and are looking for community input.
- The study is aimed for completion by the end of the first quarter 2022.

Tim provided an overview of what undergrounding is.

- Fleur has been collecting questions from the community about undergrounding received through multiple feedback channels to help inform the brief for the independent study.
- The brief will need to cover all community related issues and concerns.
- Not enough information about undergrounding has been made available to the community.
- The CCG noted that it has been very hard to receive transparent and consistent information from Transgrid.
- The Community CCG members have received a Formal Proposal for an independent undergrounding study.

Meeting minutes

- Overhead transmission lines carry alternating current (AC). Direct Current (DC) is also used for undergrounding.
- Transgrid will be investigating the feasibility of both AC and DC underground.
- There are some precedent examples of DC underground transmission in Australia.
- For either AC or DC transmission underground, the cables will require the excavation of a cable trench, the installation of conduits and back fill.
- The number of cables and size of the trench will be determined by a number of factors including the required circuit rating, depth and ability of natural soils to dissipate the heat.
- DC transmission underground requires less cable in the ground than AC however, there is a large cost associated with connecting DC to AC transmission above ground.
- Underground transmission may require road access for the majority of the route.
- Joint bays are required, and they may be spaced every 800 – 100 metres. A 10 metre by 3 metre concrete box (joint bay) is indicative of size largely underground would be required to install cables underground. Note that this indication is provided to capture joint bay dimensions, but the number of co-located joint bays is dependent on the final cable design.
- The CCG will determine a representative for the Steering Committee amongst themselves.
- Transgrid will consider the request to provide a list of potential consultants that will be on the selection panel for the independent study within 5 business days of the CCG meeting.
- The Community members of the CCG will talk to Amplitude Consulting and ask if they will consider being on the Steering Committee.
- The Chair noted that the brief is aimed to be drafted by the end of 2021.
- The Community members of the CCG will consider nominating a group representative and a technical consultant to the Steering Committee
- Community CCG member to send the Kyeamba manifesto and the comment on Transgrid's response.

Discussion

- In response to a question, Transgrid noted that often joint bays are completely buried underground, however there are exceptions. There are also access points to the pit for

Meeting minutes

inspection that need to be accessible.

- The Community members of the CCG noted that this was a pleasing answer as the joint bays would not be blotting the landscape.
- Transgrid noted that the joint bays can be prefabricated, however the design is driven by a number of factors including minimising potential construction impacts.
- Transgrid noted that undergrounding does introduce significant disturbance.

Questions and responses have been outlined in the attached Question Tracker.

The Chair led a conversation around the CCG's involvement in the undergrounding process.

- There is obvious skepticism within the CCG about Transgrid's intentions with the undergrounding study and questioning if it is just a *tick box exercise*.
- The Chair noted that there is also a proposal for a community led Undergrounding Study.
- The Chair outlined his experience on a project of a similar nature and how the community were able to be involved and influence a study.
- The Chair proposed a process to ensure the community's continued involvement and influence over Transgrid's independent undergrounding study:
 - Each CCG will nominate a member to join a Steering Committee for the Undergrounding Study
 - The Steering Committee will assist in compiling the brief, assist in the selection of the

Meeting minutes

consultant, and jointly manage the study with Transgrid.

- When the draft brief has been compiled, it will be available to all Community CCG members for comment.
- The CCG will have the option to engage a technical consultant that would be appointed by the community and advise the Steering Committee. Transgrid will pay for the chosen independent consultant
- The Chair noted that there was unanimous support for this process from the other CCGs.

The Chair called for comments and questions.

- The Community members of the CCG noted that they have engaged an engineer who has done pro bono work for the CCG.
- The CCG has approached Amplitude Consulting (Amplitude) via the engineer to perform an independent undergrounding study and received a Formal Proposal.
- The Chair noted that if Amplitude would like to provide advice to the CCG, that is welcomed.
- It was noted the CCG would like Amplitude Consulting to be considered to undertake the undergrounding study.
- There is concern amongst Community members of the CCG that Transgrid will engage a large consultancy who does repeat work for them. Members feel as though this will limit the consultancy's ability to remain independent.
- The CCG will return to Amplitude to ask them if they will consider sitting on the Steering Committee or being considered by Transgrid to undertake the independent study.

Meeting minutes

- The Chair noted that the proposed process incorporates checks and balances within it. The brief has the potential to answer the questions the community put forward.
- Transgrid described the process through which they establish their panel to choose the consultant who will undertake the independent study.
- In response to a comment, the Chair noted that the proposed process is an attempt to create a fair and even-handed process.
- Community members asked what influence the undergrounding project will have on the current options for overhead transmission lines. Transgrid noted that if undergrounding proved to be a viable option, then they have an obligation to consider it. Community members noted that direct and indirect, social, and environmental costs should be considered as well. Governments overseas have come to the conclusion that undergrounding is ultimately the cheapest option when all costs are considered.
- The Chair assured the CCG that his role is to ensure the group's concerns are not dismissed.
- It was noted that the other two CCGs agreed to the proposed process and the ULYV CCG does not want to delay their decision making.
- The Chair made clear that the suitability of the consultant representative advisor on the Steering Committee that the CCG select is purely up to the CCG's prerogative and Transgrid will have no input on that decision.
- The independent consultant that the community chooses for the Steering Committee would be paid for by

Transgrid. Some concerns were raised about the extent to which this may impact their independence.

- The Chair acknowledged the above concerns and noted there is an expectation that all potential consultants will be highly professional. The consultant will remain independent, and a short Terms of Reference would be established.

The Chair asked if there was consensus on the proposed process.

- Some members wished to further consider their position others supported the Chair's proposal.

Questions and responses have been outlined in the attached Question Tracker.

4 HumeLink Scoping report

Scoping report

Tim provided an overview of the scoping report.

- Objectives and purpose of the scoping report are as outlined on slide 11 of the November presentation.
- The key issues and other issues identified in the scoping report are listed on slide 12 of the November presentation.
- The issues of biodiversity and heritage were explained in more detail on slide 13 of the November presentation.
- Transgrid is aiming to submit the scoping report by late 2021. Submitting does not mean route refinement and updated environmental information cannot be revisited. Transgrid will continue to refine and reiterate the report the route inclusive of information along the route.

- Transgrid will issue the scoping report to the CCG members when it is finalised.
- The preamble of the scoping report will make its purpose around feedback from stakeholders clear. Though the scoping report will be made publicly available, its key purpose is to receive feedback from government agencies on the content and methodology within the report.
- Transgrid will be alerting the community when the report is available.
- Counselling services for impacted community members can be made through the details available online.

Discussion

- In response to a question, it was confirmed that the social and mental health impacts of the project will be addressed in the Issues section of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).
- Transgrid confirmed that they have put in place a number of measures to be proactive providing support to the community such as setting up a free independent counselling service. Place Managers have also been actively promoting the free counselling service.
- Community member of the CCG expressed concerns over what the safe distances are between residents and transmission lines. International examples were mentioned.

The Chair called for comments and questions.

- No questions or comments were noted from the group.

- Book an appointment by calling Assure on 1800 808 374, or you can request an appointment online, <https://assureprograms.com.au/book-an-appointment/>

5 Compensation

Compensation

Tim gave an overview of compensation updates

- See slide 16 of the November presentation for an overview of the compensation updates
- Transgrid has received preliminary legal advice that alternative payment arrangements are possible under the Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991.
- The legislation does not prevent Transgrid from offering compensation as a series of annual payments.
- Transgrid is now considering how annual payments could work within our regulatory framework, and to ensure we identify potential issues that need to be resolved.

- Transgrid to confirm if the model will change from a one-off payment to an annual payment, and if the term "acquisition" will still be relevant or if another term will be used.
- Transgrid to confirm if the voluntary acquisition process will still be the same and what will be included from the Act's perspective.
- [Landowner brochure](#) with the current acquisition milestones to be circulated with the final minutes.
- Transgrid encourage all interested community members to sign up to HumeLink's direct mailing list via: list.humelink@transgrid.com.au to receive project updates and information.

Meeting minutes

- Transgrid remains committed to identifying a workable solution that will provide payment method optionality for easement affected landowners.
- Transgrid will work with the AER to acknowledge the prudent and efficient expenditure of annual payments.
- Transgrid is also committed to working with NSW Government as they consider additional options to change legislation to improve outcomes for easement affected landowners.
- Transgrid noted that there will be further discussion as the matter about compensation develops.

Discussion

- Community CCG members commented that nothing was mentioned about community compensation.
- Transgrid noted that what they were presenting to the group, was to do with the Just Terms Act as there had been concerns about it raised during the October CCG meeting.
- The CCG noted that the current \$5,000 community grants were not considered to be enough.
- The Chair noted that the compensation element spoken about during the meeting does not address community compensation and nor was it meant to.
- Community CCG members explained that there is a view in the community that Transgrid is not compensating those neighbouring the transmission line. CCG members noted that these people have not been consulted with even though there could be a potential decrease in their land value.

- The Chair outlined that there were three clear levels of concern; direct land owners, adjoining neighbours and the broader community.
- Transgrid confirmed that the majority of their engagement focus has been on those within the study area. They are working to broaden their engagement scope.
- Community CCG members suggested that Transgrid find the actual addresses of impacted neighbours and send them informative collateral that shows what Transgrid are planning on building.
- Transgrid noted that those on their mailing list receive all project updates and information.
- The Chair commented that the CCGs are information conduits that report back to the community and any interested stakeholders.

4 Engagement

Timeline

- Fleur provided an update on the engagement timeline.

Discussion

- Community CCG members commented on the timing of discussing acquisition with land holders, while the undergrounding study is being completed.
- Transgrid noted that project outcomes still need to be achieved so the undergrounding study can be genuinely considered.
- The Chair reiterated that the timing of the undergrounding study is important because the key issues need to be identified. There is also support for the study to go ahead from the other CCGs.

- As the October CCG meeting was held three weeks prior to the November meeting, there were few updates. See slide 4 of the November presentation for an overview of the HumeLink update.
- Fleur's contact details: fleur.laurence@transgrid.com.au

Questions and responses have been outlined in the attached Question Tracker.

7 December Engagement

December Engagement

Fleur provided an overview of upcoming engagement in December 2021.

- See slide 17 of the November presentation.

The Chair called for additional questions and comments on the scoping report.

- No questions or comments were noted from the group.

- Transgrid will not be conducting any planned engagement activities over the holiday break.

8 Discussion and general business

The Chair called for other items of business.

Reimbursement

- The Chair is of the opinion it is appropriate to reimburse members for out-of-pocket expenses such as fuel.
- CCG members from organisations and Council representatives who are already paid will not receive the reimbursement.
- A \$50 Eftpos voucher for each Community member of the CCG was generally agreed on.
- The CCG noted that everyone who has a meeting with Transgrid is losing time.

Discussion

- A Community CCG member commented that the time being given up is also time that could be spent productively and \$250 per hour would be fairer.
- The Chair responded that it was made clear during the recruitment process for the CCGs that it was a voluntary process and a \$50 voucher

- Transgrid is to institute the \$50 Eftpos voucher for eligible members right away.
- Transgrid to confirm to the CCG if neighbouring landowners will be compensated.

Meeting minutes

for fuel was a good will act from Transgrid.

The Chair asked if there was consensus on the proposed process.

- The process for reimbursement was generally accepted by the CCG.

Next agenda items

- Route changes

Discussion

- Community members of the CCG noted it would be wise for Transgrid to consider the expectation for compensation to be high and this should be considered in budgets.

7 Meeting close

- The meeting closed at 6:50.

The Chair closed the meeting and thanked attendees for their time and input.

- The next CCG meeting will be held in late January 2022.

1.3 OPEN ACTIONS

Action	Status or comment
Secretariat is to follow up with members on administrative details including signed Code of Conduct Agreements and sharing of contact details	Underway
Transgrid is to make contact with local Aboriginal community members and improve its current consultation process	Underway
Transgrid are to institute the \$50 Eftpos voucher for eligible members	Underway
Landowner brochure with the current acquisition milestones to be circulated with the minutes.	Underway
Transgrid to confirm if the voluntary acquisition process will still be the same and what will be included from the Act's perspective	Underway
Transgrid to confirm if the model changes from a one-off payment to an annual payment, if the term "acquisition" still be relevant or if another term will be used	Underway
Transgrid to alert and issue the Scoping Report to CCG members when complete	Underway

Meeting minutes

Community CCG member to send the Kyeamba manifesto and the comment on Transgrid's response	Done
The CCG will talk to Amplitude Consulting and ask if they will consider being on the Steering Committee or being on panel to be considered to undertake the independent undergrounding study	
Transgrid will consider the request to provide a list of potential consultants that will be on the selection panel for the independent study within 5 business days of the CCG meeting.	Done
The CCG will determine a representative for the Steering Committee amongst themselves	Underway

1.4 NEXT MEETING

Item	Agenda topic
1	Compensation
2	Undergrounding
3	Scoping report
4	Scope for the three different corridor routes

1.5 CLOSED ACTIONS

No.	Action	Status or comment
7	Interactive map for landholders and the community is to be shared with the CCG.	Complete
9	Transgrid is to share deep dive information and proposed engagement activities for undergrounding options.	Complete
10	Transgrid to make the contact details for members of their Community Team available to the CCG.	Complete
11	The Chair to call CCG member who needed to be caught up to speed on undergrounding.	Complete

HumeLink UPPER LACHLAN YASS VALLEY Community Consultative Group

Meeting minutes

12	The October ULYV CCG October meeting minutes are to be amended based on comments received via email from CCG members.	Complete
----	---	----------

Meeting minutes endorsed by the CCG Chair, Brian Elton 3/12/21