

# HumeLink Community Newsletter

December 2023

## What is HumeLink?

HumeLink is one of Australia's largest energy infrastructure projects connecting renewable energy sources to the grid, increasing availability and market competition and helping to put downward pressure on energy prices in Australia.

The project consists of 365 kilometres of 500 kV overhead transmission lines connecting Wagga Wagga, Bannaby and Maragle, and new or upgraded infrastructure at four substations.

HumeLink is critical to bringing more affordable, reliable and renewable energy to the grid and is a priority project for the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) and the Commonwealth and NSW Governments. HumeLink is subject to the approval of the Australian Energy Regulator.

To view HumeLink's interactive route map go to [transgrid.com.au/humelink](https://transgrid.com.au/humelink).

## In this issue:

Project footprint total length update

Planning approvals update

Holiday period

## HumeLink preferred route



Figure 1: HumeLink preferred route.



## Project update

### Project footprint total length update

Following ongoing investigations and consultation with impacted landowners in August this year, Transgrid determined that the alternate western route through Green Hills State Forest is the most viable route for HumeLink.

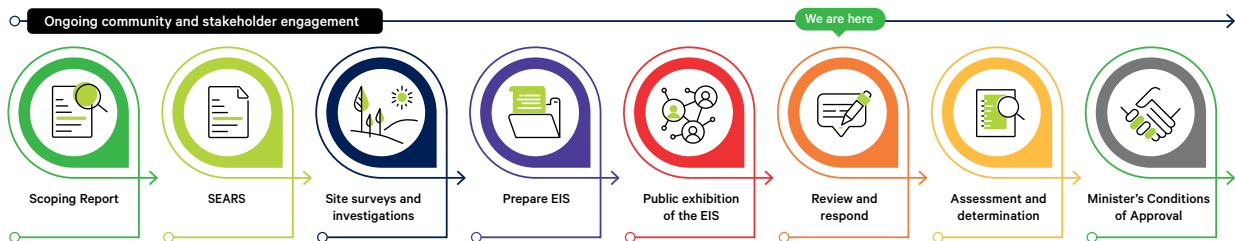
The Green Hills route replaces the original eastern route through the Gilmore Valley south of Wondalga, and will remove some private landowners from requiring an easement, reducing the community and visual impact of the transmission towers.

As a result, the HumeLink project footprint now has an adjusted total transmission line length of 365 kilometres, compared to the original 360 kilometres. While this is an increase in total length of the project, the project route significantly reduces impacts to 10 private landowners and aligns with NSW Government principles on placing transmission infrastructure on public land where feasible.



### Next stage – review and respond

HumeLink Environmental Planning Approvals Pathway



### Planning approvals update

Following the completion of the HumeLink Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) public exhibition, the NSW Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) has provided Transgrid with the submissions received. The HumeLink team has commenced reviewing the submissions and is preparing a Submissions Report which will be lodged with the DPE and published on the [DPE Major Projects Planning Portal](#) in early 2024.

As the project has progressed, we have also identified a number of amendments and refinements related to design and construction methodology and in response to stakeholder feedback and submissions. These amendments and refinements are being assessed and reported on in an Amendment Report.

The Submissions Report and Amendment Report will cross reference one another and should be read in conjunction. Both documents will be submitted to the DPE concurrently.

Following the lodgement of the Submissions and the Amendment reports, the DPE will continue with the determination of the project. We expect to have a decision on the project in mid-2024. If approved, we will follow the Conditions of Approval set by the NSW Minister for Planning and Public Spaces and the Commonwealth Minister for the Environment.

Outlined below are a few key amendments and refinements we will be assessing over the coming months. For more information, please read the Construction factsheet on the [HumeLink website](#).

#### Access tracks

Access tracks will be needed to provide safe access to work sites during construction of the project. Both existing and new access tracks will be required to connect the project footprint, including the proposed construction compounds and accommodation facilities, to the existing road network. The project will require both temporary and permanent access tracks.

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Temporary access tracks will only be required during construction, however, permanent access tracks will be needed in some locations to ensure access to the transmission line easement during operation.

In some instances, existing access tracks might require road improvement work to facilitate safe access for heavy vehicles. This may include minor maintenance work, road widening, drainage work, regrading or resurfacing, and vegetation pruning or removal.

Transgrid is continuing to engage with impacted landowners to negotiate access requirements as part of the property negotiation process. Access agreements will be documented in the individual Property Management Plans. Transgrid is reviewing and refining the access tracks that will be needed to deliver the project. Assessment of potential impacts from the proposed access tracks is currently underway and outcomes of this assessment will be included in the Amendment Report.

### Construction compounds

All major projects, like HumeLink, require temporary compounds to support construction. The construction compounds accommodate a range of facilities such as laydown areas, site offices, amenities, parking and construction support facilities such as equipment storage, maintenance sheds, chemical/fuel storage and stockpile areas.

Fourteen temporary construction compounds were assessed as part of the EIS. The ongoing design and

construction refinements have identified that a number of these will no longer be required. The HumeLink team is currently assessing potential additional sites, which will be assessed and included as part of the Amendment Report.

### Worker accommodation facilities

While only one worker accommodation facility was assessed in the EIS, Transgrid identified a potential accommodation shortage across the project footprint. This concern has been raised previously during EIS engagement with the community and stakeholders, and in some EIS submissions, mainly from local councils. Specifically, concern has been raised on potential impacts on short-term accommodation for tourists, the rental market and housing affordability.

The establishment of temporary accommodation facilities for HumeLink would manage the potential impacts on short-term accommodation in nearby townships.

Each facility will include accommodation for workers, a common meal room, room for leisure/entertainment and vehicle parking. The proposed accommodation facilities will be co-located with some of the construction compounds.

The locations of new accommodation facilities will be assessed in the Amendment Report and we will continue to consult with the community and stakeholders on this throughout the assessment.



**Image:** Example of a worker accommodation facility from [Project Energy Connect](#).



### Local business register

If you have a business in the local government areas along the HumeLink project footprint and are interested in working with the HumeLink project, we would love to hear from you.

Simply register your business and we will share your details with our delivery partners. The local business register will also be the project teams' first port of call when we are

looking to procure goods and services at various stages of the project.

If you are a local business interested in working on HumeLink register your business [here](#).



### Join our mailing list

To keep up to date with the HumeLink project, join our mailing list to receive updates via our digital newsletter.

To join click [here](#) or scan the QR code.



### Holiday period

As we approach the end of the year, the HumeLink team wishes you a safe and happy holiday.

The HumeLink team will be away on break from Monday, 25 December 2023 until Friday, 5 January 2024 and will have minimal staff available. If you contact us with

a routine enquiry throughout this time via 1800 317 367 or at [humelink@transgrid.com.au](mailto:humelink@transgrid.com.au) we will get back to you when we return.

For emergencies please contact **1800 027 253** or visit the [Transgrid website](#) for more details.

### Acknowledgement of Country

Transgrid acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of this great land. We recognise and acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the first explorers, scientists, farmers, astronomers, and storytellers.

We pay respects to the people, the Elders both past and present and celebrate the diversity and successes of Aboriginal peoples and their ongoing connections to the lands and waters where we work and live.

## Connect with us

Transgrid is committed to working with landowners and communities through the development of HumeLink. Please connect with us for more information.



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