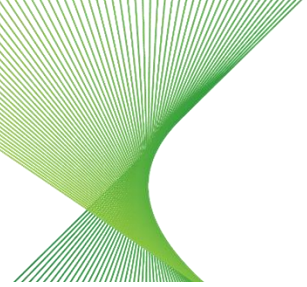


Meeting Minutes

Victoria NSW Interconnector West



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| Meeting title: | VNI West Community Consultative Group Meeting 4 | Date: | 20 March 2024 |
| Location: | Moulamein Bowling Club | Time: | 10:00am – 12:00pm |
| Chairperson: | Brendan Blakeley | | |
| Attendees: | | | |
| VNI West Project Team - Transgrid | | | |
| Colin Mayer | Project Director | | |
| Geoff Hudson | Environment Manager | | |
| Joel Annett | Community and Stakeholder Manager | | |
| Ben Doran | Land and Property Manager | | |
| Reem Nasr | Community and Stakeholder Advisor / Secretary VNI West CCG | | |
| Nikki Hansell | Land Access Officer / Place Manager | | |
| VNI West Community Consultative Group | | | |
| Trevor Clark | Yanco Creek and Tributaries Advisory Council | | |
| Michael Chalmers | Ricegrowers' Association - Wakool Branch | | |
| Bob Crawford | Yanco Creek and Tributaries Advisory Council | | |
| Bruce Rollinson | Landholder | | |
| Alison Glenn | Bunnaloo Branch, NSW Farmers | | |
| David Crew | Yarkuwa Indigenous Knowledge Centre | | |
| Sarah Ryan | Murray River Council | | |
| Peter O'Shannassy | Murray Local Land Services | | |
| Gary Stoll | Murrumbidgee Council | | |
| Apologies | | | |
| Leon Atkinson | Cummaragunja Local Aboriginal Land Council | | |
| Donald Bull | Landholder | | |
| Mark Dalzell | Edward River Council | | |
| Farid Faiz | Engineering Manager | | |
| Michael Johnson | Program Director, Stakeholder Relations, Major Projects | | |
| Anthony Jones | Deniliquin Local Aboriginal Land Council | | |
| John Kerr | Moama Local Aboriginal Land Council | | |
| Mick Lalor | NSW NPWS | | |
| Paul McFadyen | Community Engagement Lead, Place Management, Transgrid | | |
| Shannon Sampson | Community member | | |

Acknowledgment of Country

On behalf of the group, Brendan Blakeley acknowledged the Wamba Wamba and Barappa Barappa/Pereppa Pereppa, Traditional Owners of Deniliquin and its surrounding areas.

Meeting proceedings

| Agenda item | Summary notes |
|--|---|
| <p>1. Welcome, introductions and housekeeping and review of previous minutes</p> | <p>Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and attendees introduced themselves.</p> <p>Chair reviewed action items from previous meeting.</p> <p>Joel Annett advised that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rewording the final report to be clearer regarding the renewable zones requiring 30km buffers on page 38 of the Draft Route Report • On 13 October 2023 Council advised Transgrid of its intention to dispose of the airstrip. Transgrid also confirmed in early March the property remains for sale. Transgrid has revised the preferred route in the area (for reasons not relating to the airstrip) that mean the preferred route is now around 3.5km north of the airstrip • Transgrid did not extend the consultation period. Two individual requests were received to extend consultation. One at the previous CCG and the other on the final day of consultation. Transgrid advised it would still consider late submission. • Update maps moving forward to reflect changed status of Werai State Forest - Completed • Mental health third party provider to be sent out with minutes for distribution. - Completed |
| <p>2. Top line feedback – Draft Route Report Presentation Q and A</p> | <p>Joel Annett provided an outline of the feedback received in response to the draft route.</p> <p>Michael Chalmers (MC): How Far North is the line going?</p> <p>JA Outlined the key feedback themes heard through the submissions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proximity to Moulamein • Alternate connection to EnergyConnect • Ecological and Heritage impacts • Socio-economic impacts • Visual impacts • Consultation • Impacts on agriculture • Landowner compensation <p>JA outlined high level responses to each of these key themes (refer to slide 9)</p> <p>Multiple questions were posed from the group which are noted below:</p> <p>Q. What kind of line is it from Four Corners from Dinawan?</p> |

| Agenda item | Summary notes |
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| | <p>A. From Dinawan West is a 330kv – Dinawan East will have the capacity to go to 500Kv</p> <p>Q. What about the 220kv from Coleambally? What are you doing with that? How does it interface with the project?</p> <p>A. The 220kv will not be changed – the new 330kv will run parallel</p> <p>ACTION: Prepare diagrammatic map of EnergyConnect/VNIW showing old and new</p> <p>Q. If the future proofing is to allow an increase in voltage why wasn't it just built at that? Is the future proofing a physical thing? They build the structures at 500kv but just operate at 330kv? If they build it to 500kv why operate at 33kv?</p> <p>A: Humelink is 500kv from south of Sydney to Wagga, approved and fully funded.</p> <p>The Chair asked the group if they felt that the feedback received by Transgrid was a fair summary of what they have heard in their local communities.</p> <p>AG: The Town Hall at Moulamein was constructive. The bit we're missing is from Murrabit to Moulamein, they're being hung out to dry. Their infrastructure is completely different to that of farms in the north. They're being heavily impacted. Get a Google map up and put the line on it so people can get a better sense of how it impacts them.</p> <p>JA: The next step is to do that. Let's produce what we think is the line and talk to you about what that looks like on your property.</p> <p>AG: They've talked to you about moving it, but at a group level there might be a bit more discussion.</p> <p>JA: We're meeting with landowners in the border area this afternoon.</p> <p>Michael Chalmers (MC): Will you broaden the area of impact with compensation?</p> <p>JA: Four changes were made to the route as a result of feedback:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Adjusted the preferred route to the west and north of the township of Moulamein to increase the minimum distance to around 6 kilometres to the north of the centre of town, keeping the line away from homes. This will also increase the distance between the proposed transmission line and Moulamein-Wanganella Road at its western end, avoiding multiple crossings of Billabong Creek b. Modify a section of the alignment to the west of the Cobb Highway north of Wanganella-Moulamein Road to shorten line length and move the route further away from a number of residences to the south of this roadway c. Expand the final preferred route option at the eastern end of the proposal to give the final alignment the flexibility to consider future renewable developments in this area. d. Refine the area of investigation for the NSW/Victorian border crossing. <p>AG: you're avoiding a lot of infrastructure and houses there</p> |

| Agenda item | Summary notes |
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| | <p>Trevor Clark (TC): So you're missing Billabong Creek altogether, Tchelery Road. You're right away from the Creek.</p> <p>Bruce Rollinson (BR) at the Eastern end with the widening at Dinawan, is it allowing for two options or predominantly one to the South?</p> <p>AG: Is there any intensive agriculture in the area around Dinawan?</p> <p>Bob Crawford (BC): The ISP says nothing will happen in terms of wind farms until 2040. Why would a wind farm develop a wind farm? Just look at the proposed 2040 map and what we're thinking about now and they're quite different. You've got a very expensive line that needs to be put in the best possible place – bugger the wind farms</p> <p>ACTION: Why does the Draft 2024 ISP not show approved wind generation around Dinawan?</p> <p>BC: Where the line crosses Robb Road and go 42 degrees east you would find there's nothing in the road until you get to the EnergyConnect line. The distance is the shortest distance.</p> <p>JA: Network resiliency is an issue. Going up to EnergyConnect would result in three separate easements.</p> <p>BC: I would argue to the AER that EnergyConnect was done prematurely. This is a project that is actionable. It's the significant thing. The distance is the critical thing. I maintain we should rationalise this thing, AEMO talks of one thing, AER talks of crossing the river, the shortest route, the MCA was all superfluous to the decision.</p> <p>Colin Mayer: We're not introducing anything new to this project.</p> <p>BC: I want the most efficient connection.</p> <p>MC: What's the timeframe for getting down to 200m?</p> <p>JA: We will be starting pretty quick. In the next couple of weeks.</p> <p>Geoff Hudson: The Scoping Report (the application to start the EIS) is at 1km. But we need a smaller path to carry out studies and surveys on.</p> <p>TC: Where are the wind farms going to hook into?</p> <p>JA/GH: Dinawan is the main hub for connection.</p> |
| <p>3. Property Acquisition process Presentation Q and A</p> | <p>Ben Doran introduced himself and his team's role on the project. He outlined their activity in the corridor since July last year (2023).</p> <p>AG: Is that in the corridor?</p> <p>BD: Across the corridor with about half the landowners in the draft route itself.</p> <p>Ben stepped through the process of Land access and Biosecurity (Slides 12-13)</p> |

| Agenda item | Summary notes |
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| | <p>The Chair clarified that Land Access Agreements – to allow access for studies and surveys – doesn't bind a landowner to anything. It just enables access for the studies to proceed.</p> <p>AG: And you're still looking for people to sign up?</p> <p>BD: Yes, within the preferred Route</p> <p>Ben went on to outline the steps of acquisition along with a description of how the Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991 works for directly impacted landowners (Slides 14-15).</p> <p>AG: In regard to direct impact, is that only for a landowner with a tower?</p> <p>BD: No, it's the lines as well as the towers. And it's not just land value, it's disturbance to your operations.</p> <p>CM: And it's not just the easement, but if your property hosts access tracks and access for maintenance.</p> <p>AG: When you say six months genuine consultation, does that mean you're going to go here and there etc (i.e. defining the route on the map)</p> <p>BD: No, by the time we get to that stage, that level of detailed planning of where the route will go will have been done.</p> <p>AG: I would assume that farming programs (timing of farming activities) up in the north with livestock would be different to cropping?</p> <p>BD: Yes, and this all feeds into the valuation which is why you need your own valuation.</p> <p>ACTION: Send Easement and Acquisition Guidelines to group</p> <p>BD: We actively avoid compulsory acquisition and make a genuine attempt to negotiate.</p> <p>AG: If we're negotiating within the 6-month period, is there going to be a fair and equitable effort to appease? What happens if they are genuinely difficult to get on to?</p> <p>BD: If there is an issue it falls back onto the principles of genuine and reasonable.</p> <p>MC: What's the minimum allowable proximity to dwellings?</p> <p>QUESTION ON NOTICE: What's the minimum allowable proximity to dwellings?</p> <p>The Chair asked if specialist valuers for operational valuations were necessary?</p> <p>BD: Any decent valuer who is based in the region should have a good working knowledge of farms and farm operations, and we cover all reasonable costs associated with seeking advice. However, if it were to go to the Valuer-General these principles (Just Terms Act) would be applied much more strictly.</p> <p>The new Strategic Benefits Payment commences three months from energisation.</p> <p>BR: Why only 20 years on that one?</p> <p>JA: This is a new government policy, so we can feed that view straight back to government.</p> <p>BR: I was just wondering if you could negotiate? When does CPI kick in? Is the \$10,000 from 2022?</p> <p>AG: I'm guessing the government has got the taxation part sorted out?</p> |

| Agenda item | Summary notes |
|------------------------------------|---|
| | QUESTION ON NOTICE: When does CPI commence on the Strategic Benefits Payment? |
| 4. Community Legacy – Focus Groups | <p>JA outlined focus group plan to talk to communities about community benefits. The plan is to run focus groups in each location with both landowners and community groups/service providers to canvas needs and gaps that could be addressed by the plan.</p> <p>BC: But the people in town won't be affected?</p> <p>Action: Sarah Ryan to provide list of organisations to contact</p> <p>BR: I'm on the communications bandwagon. Let's get better coverage.</p> <p>CM: Transgrid is the fifth largest telecommunications company in Australia, Our Commercial arm, Lumea also supports telecommunications rolls outs.</p> <p>We have to argue to the regulator that the demand is there, and that it's a prudent and efficient investment. That's why it's really important that we get feedback from you.</p> <p>The Community Partnerships Program opens next week for a month, and provides grants of up to \$5000 for not-for-profit organisations that are local to our planning, operations, and major project areas. The link below provides access to the applications form.</p> <p>ACTION: Distribute information to the CCG about the CPP</p> <p>https://www.transgrid.com.au/community/community-partnerships-program</p> |
| Wrap up and close | <p>Chair: Thanked members for their input and let them know he would be calling each of them individually to seek feedback on their experience of the group.</p> <p>He asked that members pencil in June 2024 at Wanganella for the next meeting.</p> <p>He also asked members to continue to think about community benefits.</p> <p>He also requested that if members wanted presentations on other aspects of the project to have a chat with him or Reem.</p> |

Action items

| Agenda item | Description | Person responsible | Status |
|---|--|--------------------|-------------|
| 2.Top line feedback – Draft Route Report Presentation Q and A | ACTION: Prepare diagrammatic map of EnergyConnect/VNIW showing old and new | Secretary | In progress |
| 3. Property Acquisition process Presentation Q and A | ACTION: Send Easement and Acquisition Guidelines to group | Secretary | In progress |
| | QUESTION ON NOTICE: What's the minimum allowable proximity to dwellings? | Geoff Hudson | In progress |
| | QUESTION ON NOTICE: When does CPI commence on the Strategic Benefits Payment? | Secretary | In progress |

| Agenda item | Description | Person responsible | Status |
|-----------------------------------|--|--------------------|-------------|
| 4.Community Legacy – Focus groups | Action: Sarah Ryan to provide list of organisations to contact | Sarah Ryan | In progress |
| | ACTION: Distribute information to the CCG about the CPP | Secretary | In progress |

Resources

| Item | Link |
|---|--|
| Preferred Route Report | https://www.transgrid.com.au/media/5whhsuo2/vni-west-preferred-route-report-march-2024.pdf (PDF 4.7MB) |
| Draft Route Report | https://www.transgrid.com.au/media/1vbfkt2d/vni_west_draft_route_report-29-january-2024.pdf (PDF 23.3MB) |
| Preferred Corridor Report | https://www.transgrid.com.au/media/0wue2k4h/vni-west-preferred-corridor-report-october-2023.pdf (PDF 3.66 MB) |
| Draft Corridor Report | https://www.transgrid.com.au/media/af5d3pry/ps135761-env-rep-001-reva_corridor_rpt_v2-2.pdf (PDF 39.34 MB) |
| Regulatory Investment Test for Transmission Documents | https://www.transgrid.com.au/projects-innovation/vni-west#Regulatory-Investment-Test-for-Transmission--RIT-T- |
| State Significant Infrastructure | https://pp.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/development-and-assessment/state-significant-infrastructurestate-significant-infrastructure |
| Assure Programs | <p>The service is confidential and anonymous. Transgrid does not receive any information about who uses these services.</p> <p>There is no cost to landowners in accessing this service.</p> <p>How to make an appointment</p> <p>You can book an appointment by calling Assure on 1800 808 374, or you can request an appointment online.</p> <p>When you call Assure, please let the team know that you are from Transgrid, and the business unit is “Landowners.” This will ensure you are able to get the support you need. You are not expected to provide the reason – this is a conversation saved for your session with the psychologist.</p> <p>In addition, the NSW Centre for Property Acquisition has free support and counselling services available to any landowners affected by an acquisition. For more information, call 1300 029 146 or visit their website.</p> |

Attachments

| Attachment | Format |
|------------------|--------|
| Glossary | PDF |
| Transgrid Slides | PDF |

Next meeting

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|------------------|------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Date: | Wednesday, 5 June 2024 | Time: | 10:00am – 12:00pm |
| Location: | Wanganella | Chairperson: | Brendan Blakeley |