

# HumeLink Community Newsletter

December 2022

## What is HumeLink?

HumeLink is a once in a generation investment in Australia's energy future, increasing the amount of renewable energy that can be delivered to consumers, and helping Australia to move towards a net zero future.

This proposed 500 kV transmission line will connect Wagga Wagga, Bannaby and Maragle and will be one of the nation's largest energy infrastructure projects, with about 360 km of proposed new transmission lines and new or upgraded infrastructure at four substations.

HumeLink is critical to bringing more affordable, reliable and renewable energy to the grid as Australia transitions to a clean energy future. HumeLink is a priority project for the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) and the Commonwealth and NSW Governments.

## In this issue:

[Announcements](#)

[Key project areas update](#)

[In the community](#)

[Feature story: Environmental Impact Statement](#)



## Announcements

### Local Business Register

The HumeLink Local Business Register was launched in November to boost project spend within the HumeLink area. We are interested in hearing from sole traders and businesses in the region that could provide products and services including; engineering, design, general trades, administration, Indigenous and support services, catering, accommodation, graphic design and printing.

The Register will be shared with major construction contractors as planning progresses and opportunities arise. The Register will also be the project team's first port of call when looking to procure goods and services at various stages of the project.

[Register your business here or scan the QR code.](#)

### Community information EIS webinars

In November, the community engagement team hosted several community information webinars which introduced and updated community members on the progress of the EIS. These webinars were a first in a series of upcoming engagement focused on the technical studies involved in the EIS. If you are interested in learning more about what was presented in these webinars, you can find the slides on the [HumeLink webpage](#).



## Key project areas update

### Technical

Geotechnical investigations are taking place along the HumeLink corridor. The investigations will inform the detailed design, including route alignment, location and the engineering of towers to ensure structural stability. Walkover inspections began in September in State Forests and on private properties. In November, we began collecting rock and soil samples, which will continue until mid-2023.



**Picture:** Snow at Bago State Forest during geotechnical investigations, November 2022.

Geotechnical investigations have now been completed at Bannaby Substation. Soil and rock samples

were taken to understand the ground conditions for engineering at the substation and surrounds. The crew completed this work ahead of schedule, despite wet weather conditions.

For more information, see the [Geotechnical Investigations Factsheet](#).

### Commercial

In October 2022, Transgrid announced the three shortlisted design and construction [partners](#). All three are reputable Tier 1 delivery partners with strong experience delivering major infrastructure projects in regional NSW. The delivery partners have demonstrated experience in supporting sustainability, local jobs, and First Nations participation.

The successful proponents have now proceeded to the next phase of the selection process which consists of a series of workshops with Transgrid to develop the best solution for the community, landowners, the electricity network and consumers.

There's more information in [Transgrid's media release](#).

### Community investment

HumeLink has committed an inaugural donation of \$20,000 to the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal (FRRR) for flood recovery and disaster preparedness. The funds are proposed to support local, small, not-for-profit organisations in highly impacted communities in Southern NSW via [FRRR's Strengthening Rural Communities: Prepare and Recover](#) program.

### Community engagement

The HumeLink Community Consultative Group (CCG) meetings were held in Snowy Valley and Upper Lachlan on 23 November and in Wagga Wagga on 24 November. CCG meeting minutes are uploaded onto the [HumeLink website](#). The CCGs were on the 14 December in Upper Lachlan and Snowy Valley.

To stay up to date with HumeLink's upcoming engagement subscribe to our [project updates](#).

### Environmental

The environmental team is currently undertaking technical studies to understand the project's potential environmental, economic and social impacts. These studies include:

- Biodiversity
- Historic heritage
- Aboriginal heritage
- Social
- Economic

- Land use and property
- Agricultural land
- Landscape character and visual amenity
- Noise and vibration
- Traffic and transport
- Bushfire risk
- Electric and magnetic fields (EMF)
- Aviation safety
- Hydrology and flooding

- Surface water and groundwater
- Soils, geology and contamination
- Air quality
- Greenhouse gas (GHG) and climate change risk
- Sustainability.

For more information on the Environmental Impact Statement, please see our feature story in this issue.



## In the community

---

### Community Partnerships Program

Transgrid invests in a variety of initiatives, such as education, environmental sustainability, safety and wellbeing, and programs that energise communities through Indigenous, rural, or women-centred activities.

Transgrid's Community Partnerships Program offers grants of up to \$5,000 for not-for-profit organisations that are local to our planning, operations and major project areas. In the latest round of the program, a total of 25 organisations were awarded just under \$100,000.

The next round of the Community Partnerships Program will open in early 2023. For more information and previous grant recipient stories, go to [Transgrid's Community Partnerships webpage](#).

### 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 on break from 24 December 2022 until 6 January 2023. If you have any questions please contact the HumeLink team on 1800 31 73 67 (free call) or [humelink@transgrid.com.au](mailto:humelink@transgrid.com.au)

**To find out more about the HumeLink Project, please scan the QR code to visit our website.**



## Feature story: Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

---

### What is the EIS process?

HumeLink is a priority for the Australian Energy Market Operator and the Commonwealth and NSW Governments. HumeLink has also been declared a Critical State Significant Infrastructure (CSSI) project.

CSSI projects have state significance due to size, economic value or potential impacts.

All CSSI development proposals must be accompanied by an EIS. An EIS assesses the potential environmental, social and economic impacts of the project in rigorous detail.

On 11 February 2022, Transgrid submitted a Scoping Report to the NSW Department of Planning and Environment (DPE). The Scoping Report describes the project and outlines an early assessment of potential impacts.

DPE reviewed the Scoping Report and on 15 March 2022, and issued the [Secretary's environmental assessment requirements \(SEARs\)](#). The SEARs identifies matters which must be investigated as part of the EIS. The SEARs essentially form the EIS' terms of reference.

The [NSW Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979](#) and [Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000](#) form the statutory framework for environmental assessment and planning approval in NSW.

Additionally, the Commonwealth Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water has determined this project is a controlled action under the [Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999](#) as it has potential impacts on [Matters of National Environmental Significance](#).

The EIS will continue to progress over the coming months and go on public display in 2023. The community will have the opportunity to provide submissions on the EIS to DPE, which will be responded to by the project team. A Submissions Report containing the responses will form part of the final documentation that is given to the NSW and the Commonwealth Governments for their consideration.

The EIS will be prepared under the Bilateral Agreement between the NSW and Commonwealth Governments meaning that there will only be one EIS prepared. However, the project will require separate environmental approvals from both the NSW and Commonwealth Governments to progress to construction.

Over the coming months, the team will provide updates on the EIS as technical assessments are undertaken and the technical reports are finalised by industry specialists.

If you would like to find out more about the regulatory and environmental approvals process please see the planning and approvals pathway on the next page.

## HumeLink Environmental Impact Statement Planning Pathway



### Scoping Report

#### What's involved

Scoping Report with a preliminary assessment of the potential impacts from the project submitted to the NSW Department of Planning and Environment (DPE)



### SEARS

#### What's involved

DPE issue the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirement (SEARs)



### Site surveys and investigations

#### What's involved

Undertake site surveys and investigations to inform the draft EIS technical reports



### Prepare technical reports

#### What's involved

Prepare technical reports to inform the draft EIS



### Prepare EIS

#### What's involved

Finalise technical reports and prepare draft EIS



### Public exhibition of the EIS

#### What's involved

Public Exhibition period for community and stakeholders to provide feedback on HumeLink and make a submission to DPE



### Review and respond

#### What's involved

EIS reviewed and submissions considered. Submit Submissions Report to DPE



### Assessment and determination

#### What's involved

Final assessment of the EIS.

EIS required to be approved by the NSW and Commonwealth Government under Assessment Bilateral Agreement



### Minister's Conditions of Approval

#### What's involved

HumeLink receives Ministers' Conditions of Approval which outline the requirements for next project stages. A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) will be developed and submitted to DPE for approval before construction

We are here

### Community and stakeholder engagement

Receive feedback from community and stakeholders as part of the project decision making process

## Connect with us

Transgrid is committed to working with landowners and communities through the development of HumeLink. Please connect with us if you need any information.



1800 31 73 67 (free call)  
[humelink@transgrid.com.au](mailto:humelink@transgrid.com.au)  
[transgrid.com.au/humelink](https://transgrid.com.au/humelink)

HumeLink Community Engagement Team,  
PO BOX A1000, Sydney South, NSW 1235

**Privacy statement:** Transgrid recognises the importance of privacy and protecting the personal information it holds, uses and discloses in line with the Privacy Act. It is committed to protecting personal information and handling personal information responsibly and in accordance with its obligations.