

HumeLink Upper Lachlan Yass Valley Community Consultative Group: 3rd Meeting

Time	12 – 2pm
Date	17/02/2022
Attendees	Chair: Brian Elton Secretariat: Ella Burgess Transgrid: Elli Baker, Craig Stellan, Tim Edwards, Naomi Rowe, Daniel Burn, Matthew Armstrong Community members: David Banham, Andrea Strong, Catriona McAuliffe, Tyrone Bell, Russell Erwin, Ross Hickey Deputy Landowner and Community Advocate (Observer): Barbara El-Gamal Amplitude Consultants: Les Brand (attended part meeting) Observers: Samantha Willoughby (Transgrid)
Apologies	Scott Montgomery, Julie Rogers, Clr Pamela Kensit, Brett Redman
Meeting location	Yass Valley Council Chambers
Meeting materials	Presentation
Purpose of meeting	Meeting 3

Item	Agenda Topic	Discussion Summary	To note
1	Welcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The meeting began at 12:10pm. - The Chair welcomed all and gave an Acknowledgement to Country. - Introductions and involvement in the project from the representatives of the Transgrid HumeLink project team. - Introductions, background from community, landowner and organisation Community Consultative Group (CCG) members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Elli Baker is the new HumeLink Project Director. - Craig Stellan, Transgrid Executive Manager Works Delivery attended in place of Brett Redman, Transgrid CEO. - Naomi Rowe is the new HumeLink Community Engagement Lead. - Apologies: Brett Redman, new Transgrid CEO due to COVID,

			Clr Pamela Kensit, Scott Montgomery, Julie Rogers
2	Minutes and Matters Arising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No comments made on the previous minutes. <p><i>The minutes were previously adopted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Matters arising were noted as being discussed in the agenda for the meeting. 	
3	HumeLink Project Update	<p>Elli gave an overview of the HumeLink project update.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - See slide 5 of the presentation for a timeline of the HumeLink project. - At the end of 2021 Transgrid completed the Regulatory Investment Test – Transmission (RIT-T). Option 3C was identified as the preferred option with the highest net market benefit. - It was noted that there are sections of the route corridor that remain yet to be finalised. - The project team has been strengthened with a number of new additions in recent months. - The EIS Scoping Report has been published. The Department of Planning will now prepare the Secretary’s Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs). Transgrid expects the SEARs to be issued in approximately four weeks. The SEARS set down the range of technical studies required to be undertaken and impacts required to be assessed for the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), including community and stakeholder engagement requirements. - In February Transgrid sent letters to some landowners confirming their being in/out of the preferred 200m study corridor after finalisation of the narrowing of the corridor in some sections from 1km to 200m. By mid-2022, the remainder of the preferred 200m study corridor is expected to be communicated to affected landowners. - 161 letters were sent to landowners over the last week indicating whether or not the properties are impacted by the final study corridor or not. It was noted Transgrid only sent letters to properties in which they were certain are impacted by the 200m corridor. As the complete 200m corridor has not been defined, this has left a lot of landowners in the area anxious. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - See the link to the Scoping Report - The Scoping Report informs both the Secretary’s Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) and the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) - The SEARs specify what issues must be addressed by the proponent within the EIS. - EIS and SEARs to go on agenda for the next meeting to be reviewed by the CCG. - Transgrid to provide the CCG with a diagram explaining the relationship between planning and regulatory approvals and how they work together. - Independent community and landowner representatives: Rod Stowe:

- In early 2023 the EIS is expected to go on Public Exhibition.

The Chair called for questions.

- Organisation CCG members asked what landowners should do if they have not received a letter?
- Elli answered that landowners should call the on the ground Place Managers.
- The Chair noted that if landowners felt uncomfortable calling Transgrid Place Managers the practise is to communicate through Barbara El-Gamal or Rod Stowe, the Independent Landowner and Community Advocates.
- Community CCG members noted that there was a dispute regarding the addendum to the PACR surrounding the costs that were included for the transmission lines. The community felt the costs outlined in the PACR were inconsistent with AEMO's indicative transmission line costs. Biodiversity costs between Option 1C-new and 3C were also noted by community CCG members as being inconsistent.
- Community CCG members noted that they have submitted a response to the regulator, and the Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner.
- Elli noted that submissions made to the Energy Infrastructure Commissioner are passed on to Transgrid for response.
- Community CCG members noted the main objective of the response was that the conclusion of 3C being optimal has been made, however community members noted that impacts to landowners have not been taken into consideration when evaluating these costs. Community CCG members noted that AEMO left out the competition benefits in the draft ISP.
- Community CCG members asked the project team if there is a process for them to submit a response to the Scoping Report.
- Naomi noted that the Scoping Report informs both the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) and the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and is more of a description about what the project team plan to do.
- Naomi confirmed that there is no formal consultation process that exists for the Scoping Report.

rod.stowe@iinet.com.au

Barbara El-Gamal
barbara.el-gamal@transgrid.com.au

- The general HumeLink community email address is HumeLink@transgrid.com.au
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- The Chair noted that the CCG can submit feedback on the Scoping Report via Rod Stowe or Barbara El-Gamal.
 - The Chair noted that in the Wagga Wagga Cootamundra Gundagai and the Snowy Valley CCG meetings, concerns were raised that some issues were not included in the Scoping Report and this has been acknowledged by Transgrid.
 - CCG Community members asked if there is a process to contact the Department of Planning and Environment to submit a response to the Scoping Report.
 - The Chair confirmed there is no formal process, however community members can engage with the Department if they wish to do so. It was reiterated that the purpose of the Scoping Report is to help the Department inform the criteria and parameters of the EIS and SEARs.
 - Tim noted that the role of the Place Managers is to be the touch point with every impacted landowner. Place Managers' sole role is to liaise with landowners and take the feedback from landowners.
 - A community CCG member commented that Transgrid are giving the impression that the "deal has been done."
 - Organisational CCG members expressed that landowners have concerns about the engagement process and the messages they are receiving in face to face meetings that have occurred over the last few months.
 - The Chair noted that there is a strong commitment from Transgrid to better their engagement.
 - Naomi requested that if any of the CCG members have examples of recent consultation and engagement that has not been of a good enough standard to forward her the details.
 - Naomi noted that the perception she has heard from community members is that Transgrid appears not open to receiving commentary and considerations as the Scoping Report is missing items and there is no formal process for response to the Scoping Report.
 - Community CCG members noted that in previous discussions, Transgrid made a commitment to reapply the RIT-T if undergrounding is deemed feasible.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Craig noted that because both options have the same electrical outcome, undergrounding will not trigger a reassessment of the RIT-T. - Tim noted that is consistent with the way in which the scoping for the undergrounding study has been developed. - Dan noted that at the request of Amplitude Consultants, there are other options included in the undergrounding study which have like to like solutions based on what exists with the RIT-T. - Tim explained that Option 2F and the Undergrounding Study are still progressing and moving forward, however due to project delivery timeframes (energisation by 2026), the current preferred route needs to continue to be progressed while 2F/Undergrounding are being explored. This does not prejudice the outcomes of the undergrounding study / Option 2F should they be found in whole or part feasible. The findings of the undergrounding study / Option 2F will be fed into the project development process and future project deliverables. 	
4	Engagement Update	<p>Naomi gave an update of the Draft Engagement Strategy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - See slide 9 of the presentation for an overview of the Draft Engagement Strategy (the strategy). - There are four pillars that the strategy has been built on. The strategy also incorporates all 20 recommendations that came out of the Stowe Report. - Each pillar continues to have its own strength and dedicated engagement action plan. The pillars are all connected and rely on the application of each other to be effectively applied. - Social legacy was highlighted as a key area in which the CCG can inform the way in which Transgrid funnels resourcing into long term outcomes for the area. - Transgrid is aware that there is much work to be done and wants to work with the community and the CCG to deliver successful engagement throughout the delivery of the project and well beyond into the future. - The Chair noted that there are two key messages outlined by the CCG during the meeting, 1. Transgrid needs to win social license and 2. the usual kinds of community benefits will not be good enough, broader community 	

benefit and investment is required. Those two key messages sit behind the emphasis for social legacy.

- The Chair noted that this is a draft framework and Transgrid wish to consult on it during workshops in early April.
- Community CCG members asked what the timeframes around the draft strategy will be.
- Elli noted that feedback Transgrid received during their time on the ground as well as what Place Managers have heard from landowners across the corridor is being pulled together. The strategy will remain an iterative document, but foundational pillars will be developed following consultation. Elli noted a focus of the project team is to leave a legacy where the community is in better shape than when Transgrid arrived in the area, skills and training will be a big part of that legacy. Ensuring land is revegetated will also be a key focus. Elli noted that Transgrid wants to hear what outcomes are important to landowners and the community via consultation.
- Organisational CCG members noted that previous Native Title is an important aspect the project team must consult on and associated compensation.
- A request was made from an organisational CCG member to directly consult with them on matters surrounding Native Title and consultation with impacted Indigenous communities
- Elli confirmed that Transgrid would like to engage with the CCG member. It was noted Transgrid are currently working with a local Indigenous business to ensure the project team are moving forward in the right direction.
- Organisational CCG members noted that often big projects like HumeLink promise many things as they come to local areas and nothing ends up being delivered.
- Elli expressed her commitment to delivering on targets and ambitions. Elli gave an example of a previous project she managed that exceeded all targets for the community.
- Organisational CCG members noted that Transgrid needs to sit down with their organisation to discuss Indigenous engagement for HumeLink. The member noted that over the years they have worked on a number of different Transgrid projects and HumeLink is the first one where communication has not been

		<p>clear, there are a lot of properties who are unaware of what is going on.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Chair noted Transgrid needs to meet with the organisational CCG member before the workshops in early April. - Organisational CCG members noted that it is not just their Country, but Transgrid needs to engage with all Indigenous people who's Country it is. - It was noted that Transgrid should have multiple resources for Indigenous engagement, not just one. - Brian noted that Transgrid is not trying to buy social licence at the expense of landowners. Social license is different in that it is about building trust. 	
5	<p>Undergrounding Feasibility Report</p>	<p>Presentation slide 7</p> <p>Dan provided an update on the Undergrounding Study</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Alongside the Steering Committee, Transgrid has gone through the process determining what was requested in the Request for Quote (RFQ). - Transgrid approached three consultants and received offers from GHD and WSP. With guidance from the Steering Committee and Amplitude Consultants, GHD was the chosen consultant. Both offers were broadly very good, however GHD's experience surrounding HVDC was better than what WSP proposed. There is one item associated with environmental studies that they are working with GHD to include in their study. - Les noted that there has been a lot of work completed by both Amplitude and the Steering Committee to reach this point. Les noted that GHD will produce the right options through the study. - Les explained that in the selection of the consultant, it was noted the team put forward by GHD had some significant HVDC experience, which was bolstered by the inclusion of Stantec – a reputable company associated with HVDC. - Tim noted that mid April is the target date for GHD to complete the Undergrounding Study. - The Chair thanked those on the Steering Committee and Amplitude Consultants for their ongoing and committed work towards the Undergrounding Study. It was noted that the Steering Committee significantly improved the RFQ. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There will be an Inception Workshop between the Steering Committee and GHD on Friday 25 February at 1pm.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A community CCG member also on the Steering Committee commented that the process has worked well and noted that Amplitude’s advice to the community members was particularly valuable. - The Chair noted that Amplitude’s role as an independent advisor to the Steering Committee has worked well. - Organisational CCG members noted that there are a lot of sections in the area that are heavy with rock and the results will be interesting. 	
6	<p>Other matters of business and agenda setting for subsequent meetings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organisational CCG members noted that one source of anxiety for farmers is not being able to plan for the future, particularly as they do not know what compensation will look like. A small business cannot operate well with so many unknowns. It was asked if compensation will be part of the engagement strategy and if there is a timeframe to give local farmers indicative timings. - Tim noted that there has been significant work going on in the background surrounding compensation as Transgrid has investigated how this approach can be implemented across its projects company wide. When Transgrid has an update, the CCG will be informed. - The Chair noted that in the last meeting Transgrid received legal advice that it was possible to apply compensation in other ways rather than a one-off payment. - Organisational CCG members asked about compensation decision timeframes. - Craig noted that the decision maker is the NSW Government. There is the project in the Central West that will require a decision on compensation by October which will set precedent for other projects. Transgrid have not heard from various authorities other than the acknowledgement that compensation associated with energy infrastructure is an issue. - Tim noted that the current compensation regime requires Transgrid to compensate landowners within a regulated environment that places downward pressure on costs. For this reason, there is a different compensation outcome compared with alternatives from proponents operating outside the regulated environment. - Craig noted that these conversations have been going on within EnergyCo. It is front of mind 	

that the current compensation model does not work for those who occupy hosting land.

- Elli noted that these conversations will continue to occur in parallel to those occurring with impacted landowners.
- Craig noted that if the law does not change, the Just Terms Act exists today as a valuer's process.
- Elli noted that the Valuer General is the final and last resort step in the valuation process if Transgrid and landowners are unable to negotiate an agreement.
- Organisational CCG members noted that Transgrid need to make it very clear that negotiating will occur.
- The Chair noted that if Transgrid needs to access private land, it will be possible for Transgrid to carry out works that will leave the land in a more valuable state.
- Elli noted that moving forward, the project team would like to give people a better understanding of what is coming up and the steps involved.
- The Chair called for questions.
- Community CCG members noted that a flaw with the RIT-T process is that environmental externalities were not taken into account. Once alternative overhead routes are investigated, strong input about environmental issues has been acknowledged but the value of prime agricultural land has not been considered. Nor has mapping of Landcare projects in the area been included. It was noted that those fundamentals need to be included.
- The Chair noted that the Department of Planning and Environment have a map of high value land in NSW.
- Organisational CCG members noted those maps were not accurate not useful.
- Naomi commented that possibly Transgrid could investigate elements or tools that may be in development as a parallel process to the development of the project.
- Community CCG members noted they want details on how biodiversity offsets are calculated.
- Tim noted the number that relates to biodiversity offsets in the PACR is developed by a NSW Government calculator. The number derived from the calculator is used as a starting

		<p>point for a top down estimate that is progressively narrowed down as the impacted sites are narrowed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Craig noted that biodiversity offsets is another payment method the project team want to be more open about with landowners. Transgrid is investigating the options surrounding paying landowners and the Indigenous community for biodiversity offsets on their land rather than putting the money into a NSW Government fund. The NSW Biodiversity Trust is currently the fund that collects the money from biodiversity offsets. Transgrid want to channel those funds back to landowners where part of the landowner’s land serves Transgrid as part of their biodiversity offset. - Organisational CCG members asked if there is a similar calculator used to determine prime agricultural land. - Naomi noted that there is nothing that is used apart from a project being explored by universities. - The next meeting will occur in April before Easter. Workshops surrounding the Draft Engagement Strategy will also occur at that time. - It is requested that CCG members attend the next meeting in person if possible to gain the most out of the workshop and meeting. - CCG members requested that improve AV tech is used. - Meetings will occur quarterly thereafter unless there is an extraordinary event. - Future agenda items will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o What is possible in terms of tailored outcomes for landowners o More focus on the engagement and the social legacy issues. - Transgrid to commit to answering outstanding questions from CCG members in 2021 by Friday 18 February 2022. 	
7	Meeting close	The meeting closed at 1:38pm.	

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 before April.	Underway
Transgrid are to institute the \$50 Eftpos voucher for eligible members	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 supply CCG members with the NSW Government biodiversity calculator	Underway
Transgrid to provide the CCG with a diagram explaining the relationship between planning and regulatory approvals and how they work together.	Underway

Closed actions

Action	Status or comment
Interactive map for landholders and the community is to be shared with the CCG.	Complete
Transgrid is to share deep dive information and proposed engagement activities for undergrounding options.	Complete
Transgrid to make the contact details for members of their Community Team available to the CCG.	Complete
The Chair to call CCG member who needed to be caught up to speed on undergrounding.	Complete
The October ULYV CCG October meeting minutes are to be amended based on comments received via email from CCG members.	Complete
Landowner brochure with the current acquisition milestones to be circulated with the minutes.	Complete

Transgrid to alert and issue the Scoping Report to CCG members when complete	Complete
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	Complete
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.	Complete
The CCG will determine a representative for the Steering Committee amongst themselves	Complete
Community CCG member to send the Kyeamba manifesto and the comment on Transgrid's response	Complete

Closed actions

Action	Status or comment
Transgrid to share information with members of the CCG on the difference between single and double circuit towers, what they look like and their size	Complete
The 20 recommendations outlined in Transgrid's commitment to improve engagement are to be circulated for reference to members – link to report is here	Complete
Interactive map for landholders and the community is to be shared with the CCG	Complete
Transgrid to make the contact details for members of their Community Team available to the CCG	Complete
Transgrid to send CCG members the copy for member recruitment	Complete
CCG members to appoint a representative for the Steering Committee and find a technical advisor	Complete
The Chair to call CCG member who needed to be caught up to speed on undergrounding	Complete
Transgrid to commit to answering outstanding questions from CCG members in 2021 by Friday 18 February 2022	Complete

Minutes as endorsed by Brian Elton, Chair of the HumeLink CCGs.