

# Meeting Minutes

HumeLink Construction Reference Group - Yass

<b>Meeting title:</b>	HumeLink East Construction Reference Group	<b>Date:</b>	3 December 2025
<b>Location:</b>	HumeLink East Yass Workers Camp	<b>Time:</b>	10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

<b>Chairperson:</b>	Reem Nasr (RN), Community Engagement Lead, HumeLink
<b>Attendees:</b>	Gill Elphinston (GE), Regional Development Australia – Southern NSW & ACT Terry Cooper (TC), Yass Valley Council Kazi Mahmoud (KM), Upper Lachlan Shire Council Margot Shannon (Margot S), Yass Valley Business Chamber Marcayla Stopp (Marcayla S), Onerwal LALC Insp David Cowell (DC), Hume Police District, NSW Police Ian McGrath (Ian M), Community member Katrina Nixon (KN), Community member Chris O'Brien (COB), Transgrid Kirsty Hogarth (KH), HumeLink East Jacques Coetzee (JC), HumeLink East Bruce Wear (BW), Transgrid Isobel Manchee (Isobel M), Transgrid
<b>Apologies:</b>	Alec Brown, Transgrid Martin Joyce, Transgrid Samantha Willoughby, Transgrid Pejar LALC Anne-Maree Clarke, Community member Insp. Krystaal Hinds, RFS Southern Tablelands Belle Green, NSW Ambulance

## Agenda items

Agenda item	Notes	Decisions / actions
1. Draft Terms of Reference & Code of Conduct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>RN provided an overview of the Construction Reference Group and its purpose. No issues were raised by attendees regarding the Terms of Reference or Code of Conduct.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Meeting frequency to be quarterly with the next meeting scheduled for March 2026.</li><li>Hybrid meeting format approved: all</li></ul>

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		<p>meetings to offer both in-person and online attendance options.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Code of Conduct noted: CRG members are not to provide comment to media on behalf of the group.</li> <li>• Meeting minutes will be circulated to members for review and comment before finalisation.</li> </ul>
<p>2. Project overview &amp; update</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BW presented project overview covering project scope, substation usage, construction zones and completion timeline.</li> <li>• JC provided detailed updates on construction zones, noting that work has progressed from southern to central zones and piling commenced this week in central zones.</li> <li>• Margot S queried tower heights on varying elevations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- JC explained that engineers design tower heights based on terrain requirements and noted different tower types are utilised</li> <li>- Margot S noted that the Bookham tower pad has been under construction for three weeks.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• JC provided statistics on access track construction, access points and tower pad progress, emphasising that tracks are only built where necessary to minimise impact to environmental and landowners.</li> <li>• JC and BW spoke on delivery of materials, noting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 28 towers worth of steel has arrived in Australia for the South construction zone</li> <li>- The towers are shipped as individual parcels and go directly to site which reduces vehicle movements on roads</li> <li>- Strong biosecurity protocols are in place for containers with a three-day turnaround in Sydney.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• JC discussed stringing operations, noting:</li> </ul>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stringing for HumeLink East will commence April 2026 in Southern zones</li> <li>- Each assembly crew will be composed of 9 people</li> <li>- There are strict exclusion zones maintained to preserve site safety, meaning only necessary personnel can enter or work within the area.</li> <li>• MS queried construction timeframes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- KH said tower assembly and erection takes 3 weeks and directed MS to <a href="#">fact sheet</a>.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
3. Construction look ahead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• JC presented a three-month lookahead, detailing the sequential construction process: civil works, followed by access points, tracks and tower pads. Approximately 12 sites are operating concurrently in the central zone, with northern sites located off main roads. Local contractors are being engaged for these works.</li> </ul> <p>RN called for questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Road closures:</b> KN enquired about notification of road closures to local residents. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- JC clarified that no road closures are required currently for tower and pad construction as work is conducted on private land with landowner cooperation.</li> <li>- KH noted lane closures will be necessary down the track for stringing operations and hurdle installation, requiring road occupancy licenses. Residents will be notified.</li> <li>- JC confirmed the Hume Highway will be crossed once using stop-go traffic management rather than full closure.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Crookwell camp:</b> KN asked about shaded accommodation area near Crookwell on project map displayed on presentation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- KH apologised as map was not updated.</li> <li>- KH explained that the Crookwell camp is no longer proceeding as an assessment reduced capacity from 300 to 160 workers. The area is now being used as a laydown facility.</li> <li>- Following community consultation and focus groups with no concerns raised, workers are now being housed in local</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Road maintenance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HLE to see to infill of pothole near the cemetery on Childowra Road due to road safety concerns.</li> </ul> <p><b>Vehicle management and worker conduct</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DC to hold sessions with workers regarding vehicle and community behaviour.</li> <li>• Transgrid and HLE to provide quarterly updates on local employment numbers.</li> </ul> <p><b>Communications</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HLE to conduct physical letterbox drop of SMS program rollout notification.</li> </ul>

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	<p>accommodation in Goulburn. This change was discussed with council to ensure there were no issues with accommodation demand.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Laydown facilities:</b> CO sought clarification on laydown facilities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- JC explained these are areas for equipment storage and line hardware including insulators and fuel supply- similar to the Faulder Avenue facility in Yass.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Road maintenance:</b> Extensive discussion occurred regarding road maintenance and deterioration and was identified as the area most likely to cause problems for communities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- KN expressed concern about increased traffic on Woodhouselee Road</li> <li>- JC attributed this to the project needing to utilise materials from the Crookwell wind farm laydown area to support tower pad construction activities.</li> <li>- Margot S raised concerns about road impacts and requested information on maintenance timelines. General road safety concerns were raised due to heavy vehicle movements, particularly when accessing sites via narrow, unsealed roads, and dust generation issues were discussed, especially in dry and hot conditions. Heavy vehicles degrade the surface, creating visibility hazards for road users and dust pollution for nearby residences. Impacts include air quality concerns, dust entering water tanks and potential harm to roadside vegetation. Once roads are degraded, even light vehicles contribute to ongoing dust problems.</li> <li>- CO and JC noted that HL has had independent property condition surveys conducted, and all roads will be reinstated to their previous or improved condition at the conclusion of the project.</li> <li>- This was identified as an area of concern due to consent conditions only requiring roads to be restored post-project, leaving construction-period maintenance unaddressed. This issue is common across state significant projects and is a key source of complaints.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- JC acknowledged that project activities have contributed to road impacts and explained that HLE is currently liaising with council on a road maintenance program. An agreement with council is being negotiated, in which HLE will provide funding to Council for road maintenance, with Council to oversee works. A specific timeline, however, cannot be provided.</li> <li>- TC indicated, subject to funding, Council intends to engage contractors for road maintenance as they lack capacity.</li> <li>- GE expressed concern that contractors already engaged by the project may be asked to undertake additional road maintenance work.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; JC acknowledged that Snowy Valleys Council is concerned about contractor availability. RN confirmed coordination with council to schedule maintenance work during gaps in project activities.</li> <li>&gt; JC confirmed for Margot S that contractors can be used from other areas.</li> </ul> </li> <li>- JC explained that Council engagement is preferred as Council has greater authority to conduct works on local roads without requiring road occupancy licenses. The actioning of complaints and reports of deterioration can be streamlined by going directly to Council, providing a single point of contact.</li> <li>- KH explained that the construction of access tracks and tower pads represents the peak period for vehicle movements due to the transport of gravel. In contrast, steel deliveries occur via float transport only once or twice per tower, placing significantly less pressure on local roads. JC confirmed that helicopters will be used for stringing activities, further reducing road traffic impacts.</li> <li>- Margot S reported a pothole near the cemetery on Childowra Road at a blind corner requiring vehicles to move to the opposite side of the road.</li> <li>• <b>Vehicle management and worker conduct:</b> DC raised concerns regarding project vehicle speeding with previous projects in the area e.g. windfarms.</li> </ul>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- JC explained that all project vehicles are equipped with tracking devices. This was actioned following Council feedback regarding vehicle speeding from previous projects and has been working well. Vehicle tracking monitors speed and sudden braking, among other things. Cameras are also currently being installed inside project vehicles to monitor driver behaviour inside the car. Transgrid and contractors receive reports on driver performance.</li> <li>- The primary risks are driving fatigue due to extensive travel distances.</li> <li>- When complaints are received, specific vehicles are identified and tracking data is downloaded.</li> <li>- CO inquired about subcontractor vehicle identification. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; JC confirmed subcontractors carry identification numbers but do not have the same tracking systems.</li> </ul> </li> <li>- DC expressed intention to hold sessions with workers regarding vehicle and community behaviour.</li> <li>- JC reported that approximately 70 people are currently accommodated at the Yass camp at any given time, which will increase during stringing and tower erection phases. Stricter measures will be implemented as numbers increase, with the prohibition of alcohol being brought into camp from town and curfew restrictions commencing at New Year.</li> <li>- The camp will never reach full 300-person capacity, however, as worker movements are cyclical in nature and southern zone workers are accommodated at Adjungbilly (which currently has a high occupancy due to works centring in the South).</li> <li>- Ian M inquired whether crews are specialised or transferable between teams. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; JC confirmed that significant training has been undertaken to transfer skills and employ local workers. Construction teams will continue work during reinstatement phase following tower erection and stringing.</li> </ul> </li> <li>- GE requested figures on local employment numbers and enquired on worker transport</li> </ul>	

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	<p>to and from locations (specifically the 9-person tower crews).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; JC confirmed that workers in tower erection and stringing crews will be transported in minibuses from camp to work locations rather than individual vehicles.</li> <li>• <b>Communications:</b> KH outlined that an SMS program is being developed to assist community members in planning their journeys around project activities. A broader communications campaign will be implemented. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- GE requested physical letterbox drops to encourage SMS program registration.</li> <li>- Margot S encouraged including information in the Chamber breakfast and providing handouts.</li> <li>- JC emphasised that major activities such as speed reductions on the Hume Highway will receive extensive communications.</li> <li>- Margot S enquired about direct phone contact availability.</li> <li>&gt; CO and KH confirmed the 1800 number connects callers to call system staff who then classify and pass on call information to either HLE or TG, with response timeframes in place.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
4. Agenda setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RN solicited input on future agenda topics and information requirements, providing driver behaviour and road maintenance as an example.</li> <li>• Margot S raised concerns about fire management strategies, and wants to see it included in agenda, particularly regarding tree clearing and wood disposal. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- JC explained that wood disposal is determined by landowner preference. Fire management measures include fire trailers and minimum 20,000-litre water tanks positioned around work sites.</li> <li>- CO emphasised that fire safety is taken seriously, with ongoing discussions with RFS and adherence to fire warnings.</li> <li>- DC requested direct contacts for safety officers, managers and supervisors as well as information on main work locations. He</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TG and HLE to provide quarterly communications plan including face-to-face and online channels, with schedule of planned activities for member review.</li> <li>• GE to provide contact details for local groups that Transgrid/HumeLink East should engage with.</li> <li>• Transgrid to enhance publicity for 1800 contact number and report on types and volumes of enquiries received.</li> </ul>

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	<p>also requested monthly updates on community issues in the area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; RN suggested DC attend monthly interface meetings, which TC confirmed he is welcome to join.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Margot S sought information about community benefit contributions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- RN provided an overview of the Community Investment and Benefit Program (CIBP), noting the process is near completion with announcement of successful HumeLink East projects anticipated before Christmas. Provided funding structure and outline of total funding available, including funding going towards telecommunications connectivity across the alignment. CO emphasised the importance of legacy outcomes and noted Transgrid assistance with grant writing to support community applications.</li> <li>- GE requested information on telecommunications project release timeline and signal booster locations.</li> <li>- RN indicated implementation will be phased across the entire project potentially extending to 2027.</li> <li>- RN outlined additional community programs including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Mental health program delivered through Grand Pacific Health to provide support to community via referral services and training</li> <li>&gt; Landscape rehydration project in partnership with Mulloon Institute, establishing demonstration sites and capacity building for landowners on water runoff management.</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Isobel M noted the Community Partnerships Program.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• GE raised questions about social cohesion with workers. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- JC confirmed workers are encouraged not to wear high-visibility clothing in town and to park on side streets rather than in public parks.</li> <li>- DC expressed desire to build strong relationships with project managers to assist with worker management, referencing past issues with windfarm</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HLE to provide agreement with Yass Valley Council regarding road maintenance.</li> <li>• HLE to provide in place agreement with ULSC.</li> <li>• Fire management to be included as standing agenda item.</li> <li>• RN requested Ian M consult his network of landowners regarding their concerns and provide feedback for agenda incorporation.</li> <li>• Transgrid/HLE to provide contact details for safety officers, managers and supervisors as well as information on main work locations to DC.</li> <li>• DC to attend monthly interface meetings.</li> <li>• RN to provide standing report/ update on the community projects being rolled out by HLE - black spot upgrades, mental health program, landscape rehydration project with Mulloon Institute.</li> </ul>



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	<p>projects. RN agreed to facilitate connections between DC and managers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ian M noted that all personnel have been respectful on his property. JC highlighted the project's diverse workforce culture and emphasis on employing people with commonalities to landowners.</li> </ul>	
5. Meeting close	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minutes to be distributed within 7 days.</li> <li>• Members have 7 days to provide feedback on minutes.</li> <li>• Next meeting scheduled for March 2026.</li> </ul>	

#### Actions

Agenda Item	Description	Responsibility
Draft Terms of Reference & Code of Conduct	Circulate meeting minutes to members for review and comment before finalisation.	RN
Construction look ahead	Infill pothole near cemetery on Childowra Road due to road safety concerns.	HLE
	Hold sessions with workers regarding vehicle and community behaviour.	DC
	Provide quarterly updates on local employment numbers.	KH
	Conduct physical letterbox drop for SMS program rollout notification.	KH
Agenda setting	Provide quarterly communications plan including face-to-face and online channels, with schedule of planned activities for member review.	KH
	Provide contact details for local groups that Transgrid/HumeLink East should engage with.	GE
	Enhance publicity for 1800 contact number and report on types and volumes of enquiries received.	TG
	Provide agreement with Yass Valley Council regarding road maintenance.	HLE
	Provide in place agreement with ULSC.	HLE
	Include fire management as a standing agenda item.	RN
	Consult network of landowners regarding concerns and provide feedback for agenda incorporation.	Ian M
	Provide contact details for safety officers, managers and supervisors and main work locations to DC.	KH

Agenda Item	Description	Responsibility
	Attend monthly interface meetings.	DC
	Provide a standing report/update on the community projects being rolled out by HLE.	RN

Minutes prepared by: Isobel Manchee

Date of distribution: 19/12/2025

Minutes approved by: Alec Brown

Date approved: 12/01/2026