Time	5 to 7:30 pm
Date	15/02/23
Attendees	Chair: Brendan Blakeley
	Secretariat: Ella Burgess
	Transgrid CCG members: Nathan Rhodes, Michael Johnson
	Transgrid project member attendees: Tammy Sinclair, Cameron Whittington, Somaya Osman
	Community members: Ian Robson, Paul Sturgess, Frank Galluzo, Pippa Quilty, Hansie Armour, Peter Crowe, Clr Julia Hamm, Rebecca Tobin, Lee Kingma, Jessica Reynolds
	Landowner and Community Advocate (Observer): Barbara El Gamal (Deputy)
Apologies	Sarah Roche, Phil Clements, Rod Stowe, Naomi Rowe, Jessica Pearce
Meeting location	Valmar Support Services
Meeting materials	Presentation
Purpose of meeting	Meeting 10

1.1HumeLink Snowy Valley Community Consultative Group: 10th Meeting
15 February 2023

Item	Discussion Summary	To note
Welcome and	- The meeting commenced at 5:03pm.	
Acknowledgeme nt of Country	 The Chair welcomed all and gave an Acknowledgement of Country. 	
	 The Chair acknowledged there were a number of observers present and outlined how the CCG would operate. 	
	- The Chair introduced himself as the incoming Chair for 2023 and noted it was his first meeting as the Chair of the HumeLink CCG.	
	- The Chair noted apologies and those standing in as proxy.	
	- The Chair asked the community CCG members and the team from Transgrid to introduce themselves and their role in the HumeLink project.	
Minutes and Matters Arising	- The Chair called for comments on the previous minutes.	
	No comments were noted, and the minutes were endorsed.	
HumeLink Progr ess Update: key	Michael gave an overview of HumeLink's key dates.	

dates

See slide 6 of the presentation for an update on HumeLink's progress.

- At the end of 2022, many technical studies neared completion as the EIS (Environmental Impact Statement) progressed and early works funding was approved by the AER.
- In the coming weeks of 2023, the preferred delivery partners for HumeLink will be announced.
- In mid-2023, the EIS is planned to go on Public Exhibition.
- The approval of the EIS is expected to occur in 2024. The EIS has to be approved at both the State and Federal level.
- Construction is expected to begin in late 2024.
- A CCG member asked how Transgrid proposes to complete the EIS if the teams have not been granted access to all of the country along the route.
- Sumaya responded that majority of the studies in the EIS do not require access to the entire route. The only study that requires access to the whole footprint of the route is for the Heritage Assessment. The other studies use methodologies based on modelling that requires access to selected samples of land to sense check data. A predictive model is used to assume what will be most likely found at certain sites.
- A CCG member commented that at best it sounds as though the studies are a "guestimate."
- Sumaya noted that the project has accessed almost 70% of the entire route footprint for the Heritage Assessment. The modelling has been checked very frequently out in the field. The modelling has been used to test areas where the project team has not been able to access the land. The project team has a good idea of what is out there.
- A CCG member asked how the EIS can be started if the final route has not been determined.
- Sumaya noted that the project is based on a concept design and the technical studies completed to date. The EIS assesses the 200m corridor.
- A CCG member stated that the 200m corridor has not been determined for the whole route.
- Sumaya noted that Transgrid are in discussions with the regulators about this matter.
- A CCG member asked if the route has been discussed with the regulators in terms of the RIT T process? **TAKEN ON NOTICE.**

	- A CCG member stated that there are other studies, outside the Heritage Assessment that need to be done on site, e.g. bushfires.	
	 Sumaya reinforced the messaging that most technical studies do require some level of field work, however the only study that requires the entire corridor to be walked is the Heritage Assessment. 	
	- A CCG member asked what happens when something is found.	
	- Sumaya responded that is why the team works very closely with First Nations people to map and mark the route. The primary aim is to avoid the impacts. If you cannot avoid the impacts, mitigation measures must be investigated. Further input from indigenous stakeholders will be needed before construction can begin.	
	Michael gave an update of the regulatory and procurement process.	
	See slides 7 and 8 of the presentation for an update on the regulatory and procurement process.	
	 The total project cost to date as at the end of January 2023 was \$99.5 million. 	
	- The project has spent 27% of the CPA 1 funding.	
	 The project team is currently developing the CPA 2 submission to the AER for second release of project funding. 	
	 Early Contractor Involvement (ECI) - the tendering process has been completed. the project team anticipates to announce the delivery partners in the next few weeks. The route has been divided in half, East and West. Two different contractors will each be awarded one half of the route. Once the winning contractors have been announced, they will develop their construction methodology. 	
Planning and	Planning and Approvals update	
Approvals	Sumaya gave a progress update of the EIS.	
	See slides 10 to 23 of the presentation for an update on the EIS.	
	- The EIS is the culmination of many technical studies that have been ongoing since 2019. Several of the studies are now nearing completion.	
	- The EIS is likely to go on public exhibition in Q3 this year, most likely in September.	
	- Transgrid appointed Aurecon as the specialist consultant to carry out the studies of the EIS.	
	 In mid-2022, the Environmental Protection Agency (the EPA), implemented a requirement for all major projects to appoint a Registered Environmental 	

Assessment Practitioner to review the EIS and determine its adequacy before it is submitted to the Department.

https://pp.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/developmentassessment/registered-environmental-assessmentpractitioner-scheme

- The REAP for the HumeLink EIS is also a specialist from Aurecon.
- The technical reports to inform the EIS are in their final stages of drafting. The EIS will be made of up of 2 parts – the 27 chapters in the body of the report and the appendices with the actual study results.
- Once the entire document has been compiled and has gone through an adequacy check, it will be submitted and go on public exhibition. Transgrid will be obliged to respond to the issues raised within each submission made during the public exhibition.

Planning for engagement activities

- The EIS will go on public exhibition for a minimum of 4 weeks after it has been submitted to the Department. While the EIS is on public exhibition, the community can make submissions to the Department about the project.
- The exhibition process is independent of Transgrid and run by the Department of Planning and Environment.
- The documents in the EIS can be very technical, so the project team is working through ways to make the information more available and easily accessible for the wider community. A number of community information sessions are scheduled throughout the first half of 2023 to provide the community with access to technical members of the project team before the EIS goes on public exhibition.
- The CCG members have received draft fact sheets for their feedback. The draft factsheets will be updated as the EIS progresses. The aim of the fact sheets is to provide an easily accessible form of information on each of the study areas within the EIS.
- The project team has begun work developing a digital version of the EIS, which is a requirement for all significant projects in NSW.
- The digital EIS is more user friendly. It provides summaries of each chapter and provides the option to access the actual chapter in the EIS and associated studies in the appendices.
- The project team has regular meetings with a number of government agencies to keep them abreast of the EIS' progress. Key meetings are with

the Department of Planning and Environment and subsequently, the Biodiversity Conservation Division and Heritage NSW. Through agency engagement, there can be additional study requests beyond the scope of the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs). Heritage NSW has requested Transgrid to carry out a cultural survey along the route which the project team has commenced. The results of the survey may not be ready in time for the public exhibition of the EIS, but the results will be made available when they are complete.

- A CCG member asked which stakeholder groups are being engaged with for the cultural survey.
- Sumaya responded that Transgrid is working with 5 local aboriginal land councils. Expressions of Interest have also been circulated for involvement and so far 26 Registered Aboriginal Parties have requested involvement.
- A CCG member commented that there is a First Nations group in Tumbarumba who would like to be involved.
- ACTION: First Nations stakeholder list to be shared with the CCG.
- Sumaya noted that the assessment is capturing sites and stories that are known within local First Nations communities that may not be known more widely. There may be stories that cannot be shared publicly in the report.
- A CCG member asked if the report will provide an inventory of items found and if there will be values placed on what is found.
- Sumaya responded that the study team is working with First Nations stakeholders to understand the values of what is found.
- Sumaya noted that GHD is carrying out the cultural survey. Transgrid is commissioning the study and their own Indigenous Services team is working with GHD to support the survey.
- A CCG member commented that it is very difficult to keep up with so many different companies doing different pieces of work. The companies involved and what they do needs to be clearer.
- ACTION: Transgrid to provide a chart of all the different companies involved in HumeLink and what they do.
- A CCG member asked about how European cultural significance is being managed.
- Sumaya responded that there is a separate historic assessment that looks at the project's cultural significance from a local, state and national

perspective. Some sites of significance along the route have been brought to the team's attention by landowners.

- A CCG member asked what may happen if sites of significance have not been communicated to the project team.
- Sumaya responded that if the sites are listed on registers the team will know about them. If the site is of significance and it has not been communicated to Transgrid via the engagement to date, landowners are strongly encouraged to contact their Land Access Officer and alert them of items or places of value.
- Sumaya added that when the studies are made public, tables of all significant sites will be provided.
- A CCG member commented that certain trees are planted that are significant to agricultural operations on the farm and also to families that have lived there for a long time and will continue to live there.
- Sumaya responded that from a heritage perspective, there are definitions that need to be met.
- A CCG member stated that farmers plant trees on their properties that they want to last for 100 years but Transgrid will not see them as heritage, but to the farmer it is creating heritage and a legacy. The word heritage doesn't seem to link back to value. Transgrid will be removing hundreds of trees that are of significance for future generations. It is important that city people doing this work understand how country people see things.
- Sumaya responded that those conversations need to be raised with the Land Access Officers.
- The Chair summarised from the discussion that members wanted to let Transgrid know that for local communities, heritage is a complex matter, and it is about more than buildings and dwellings. There are other things that are important like the family members who planted trees generations ago, places where people have gathered over time, but also

about leaving a legacy for the future. These values EIS chapter update - Landscape Character and Visual Impact Assessment Conversations with Land Access Officers. See slides 13 – 17 of the presentation for an overview and purpose of the landscape character and visual impact assessment.

- A CCG member commented that the corridor goes through very diverse types of land, will all the fact sheets be applied to different lands and are the values derived from the same basis? The CCG member added that some landowners have already received their letters of offer, but they have not gone through the process of identifying the value of various things on their properties.

- Sumaya responded that when you receive the letter of offer, there is also the Property Management Plan (PMP), which works to capture the issues on the land and how landowners operate their business. The PMPs will be provided to the contractors. However, if the information isn't shared with Transgrid, they can't know it.
- Sumaya noted that there are more fact sheets to be issued. The assessments in the EIS cover all the different land uses along the corridor but they will not place a value on them, instead they look at how various land uses are impacted by the project. The project team has identified most impacts within 500m of the proposed line. For the viewpoint assessment, the team has assessed impacts within 1km, for the landscape assessment the team has assessed impacts within 10km.
- A CCG member commented that from the window of where the CCG meeting was being held it was possible to see their property, therefore every house in Tumut will be able to see the towers. The impacts of the towers will change the setting for a whole town.
- A CCG member added that an 80m tower will be seen from up to 50km away. Given that they will placed in undulating country in the Snowy Valleys, they will be seen from further away.
- A CCG member commented that it would be good to see alternative tower designs. It would be reassuring to see Transgrid be on the front foot and take initiative rather than letting the community angst build up and then do something.
- Nathan responded that this is being looked at and the options are being explored. He noted that for some people a mono-pole tower (a type large single pole) has a greater visual impact than a lattice tower as they are concrete and very wide at the base.
- A CCG member commented that although putting the new line adjacent to an existing line can seem like Transgrid is lessening the impact and impacting less people, the cumulative impact of multiple lines on single properties can be very negative for our operations and outlook.
- Sumaya responded that Transgrid is required to look at the cumulative impacts in the EIS.
- A CCG member requested to have more information on the actual towers **TAKEN ON NOTICE.**

- A CCG member stated that Transgrid always make reference to "other options" but nothing is ever clear as to what they are.
- A CCG member added that in terms of visual impacts to private dwellings, Transgrid needs to understand that the dwelling is not just the residence, but the entire farm where landowners spend the majority of their time.
- Sumaya responded that Transgrid has software that will demonstrate what the visual impacts will be wherever you are on the property. Depending on the landscape, the perception of the impact can change.

EIS chapter update - land use and property assessment

See slides 18 - 20 of the presentation for an update on the land use and property chapter of the EIS.

- Following up on an earlier CCG members comment, the Chair asked if the land use and property assessment looks at the cumulative impacts of multiple power lines on a property? **TAKEN ON NOTICE**
- A CCG member asked if trees used on the property for operational purposes - shade and wind shelter will be included in the assessment.
- Sumaya responded that those kinds of aspects would be included in the PMP.
- A CCG member stated that using forestry land for the route means total removal of trees in the easement and loss of production for the life of that line. The route proposed for Greenhills goes through the best forest in NSW and an estimated 250,000 tonnes of material per cycle will be lost over a 30 year timeframe. The CCG member added that by 2035, Australia will be importing 250,000 house frames. There will be additional impacts further down the supply chain. This needs to be included in the economic analysis of the project.
- ACTION: Sumaya to follow that information up.
- A CCG member commented that if the route went underground, the footprint would significantly decrease.
- A CCG member added that forestry corporations have good data, but farmers don't have the same kind of data but food security is at just as much of a

EIS chapter update – agricultural land assessment

See slides 21 - 23 of the presentation for an update on the agricultural assessment update.

- A CCG member stated that their family runs a stud on impacted land. Their operations are impacted in various ways. The staff on the farm will need to travel at least 12 times each per day under the lines during calving. Staff will have health concerns about this. They also noted it is not feasible that there will be contractors and construction on the property without significant disturbance to the operations.
- A CCG member raised the issue that impacts to soil and erosion will also be significant. The soils as they are, are ancient and there are already problems with land slips before there is even any infrastructure.
- Sumaya responded that there is a separate soil assessment and acknowledged that erodibility is an important issue to be managed.
- A CCG member commented that in France there is a study that shows the negative impacts of EMF on dairy cows and asked about impacts to studs. They also stated that this may impact on ability for producers to export animals to the EU.
- A CCG member added that Australia spends approx. \$6 billion on biosecurity each year, HumeLink will be a huge biosecurity risk. They asked for more information on how the biosecurity risks will be mitigated. It was further added that the noise disturbance to the livestock will be ongoing as the towers make a constant loud sound. In terms of construction impacts, some farmers do not have another paddock to move their stock to, how will they be appeased? Moving the stock to another property is a biosecurity risk and primary producers are concerned about this.
- Sumaya responded that the environmental assessments have been ongoing in the field since 2019 but acknowledge that this is small scale in comparison to the construction impacts. The biosecurity concerns have been raised with the construction partners and Transgrid wants them present to the CCG in person when they have been officially appointed. Some of the landowners have biosecurity plans within their PMPs already.
- Sumaya responded to the EMF query, that the project team asked a specialist to look at research on the impacts of EMF on livestock and none were detected. The team is not aware of the French EMF study and Sumaya asked the CCG member if they could send this information through to her.
- ACTION: CCG member to send the French EMF study through to Sumaya.
- A CCG member referenced the original 330kv lines built in the 1960s. It was mentioned by the community member that the team who constructed

	those powerlines had commissioned a study on the genetic impacts of power lines.
	- ACTION: the CCG member to send through any information on this study if available.
Design update	Design update
-	Nathan gave an update on undergrounding. Transgrid has provided their formal response to the Seenslidg 25 with the project and based on the costs of undergrounding, Transgrid will not be progressing undergrounding for HumeLink. Transgrid will be working with AEMO at a national level to progress undergrounding for future projects.
-	Rebecca Tobin, community member on the Undergrounding Steering Committee responded to Nathan's update on undergrounding, noting the community's disappointment in the way Transgrid handled their own response and making the original GHD report public when it had not been viewed properly by the Steering Committee. Transgrid's response to the Steering Committee was sent as a final to various MPs, when it was still in its draft form and had not been viewed by the Steering Committee.
	This was also compounded by happening just before Christmas when group members were looking at going on break and spending time with family. It was noted, this was the time when Transgrid could have been transparent and distanced themselves from the GHD report which was flawed and not endorsed by the community at all. Instead, they doubled down on the same messaging which was received months too late.
	Rebecca noted the report as its stands, still doesn't address serious concerns and misleads government and other stakeholders as to the cost of undergrounding. It is up to Transgrid to advocate for undergrounding with government. The community and Transgrid could be working together to advocate to AEMO and others for changes.
	The release of the final response to the report earlier this week didn't follow agreed procedures either. The whole process has been disappointing and only created more distrust. Rebecca also requested steering committee members have access to the recording of the pre-Christmas meeting.
-	Michael responded that Transgrid acknowledges the community members' dissatisfaction and frustration. There were two clear mistakes that occurred on

Transgrid's behalf. The first was that the report was sent to government representatives by mistake when it was still in draft form. As part of Transgrid's process, they share updates with government representatives, so they are aware of matters if constituents approach them. Transgrid apologises for the mistaken final on that copy, it should have read draft. The plan was to always consult with the Steering Committee.

- The second mistake at that time was uploading the report onto a staging website that was able to be accessed publicly and it should not have been. This was a technical error and Transgrid apologises and has made changes to their procedures.
- Rebecca noted that Transgrid made the same mistake several times and the community will not accept Transgrid's apology. The release of the final response was the same. Members only received the report an hour before it was on the website. This wasn't the way to treat people who had given 13 months of their time to being on the Steering Committee. The community has no trust for Transgrid and the only way they will win back any trust is if HumeLink is undergrounded.
- A CCG member commented that Transgrid needs to apologise to Les Brand from Amplitude Consultants. Amplitude was not asked to perform a costing for undergrounding and in Transgrid's original response it referenced his study which puts Transgrid at corporate risk.
- Nathan responded that he had spoken with Les.
- A CCG member commented that Transgrid had to underground cables around the Special Activation Precinct and asked for an excursion to the site could be organised. **TAKEN ON NOTICE**.
- A CCG member commented that the costing for undergrounding has been reduced from 10 times the price of overhead to approximately 2.3 times the price, but nowhere in the reports is there evidence on value being placed on the environment and social impacts. The community need a wholistic cost benefit analysis or a dollar value given to the full range of negative social, environmental and economic impacts. Just comparing additional construction costs is too narrow.
- A CCG member further added that their farming operations will lose 7 generations of sheep genetics or have to de-stock, resulting in significant economic impacts. They asked how and where these types of impacts are accounted for.

- A CCG member commented that if Transgrid has to start compensating neighbours and everyone who can see the line, it may as well be undergrounded.
- A CCG member asked how the delay of Snowy 2.0 will impact HumeLink.
- Nathan responded that bringing Snowy 2.0 into the system is important, however HumeLink is an important to connection for other projects and the transition to renewables not just Snowy 2.0

Nathan gave an update on route refinement.

Cameron gave an overview on Neara.

See slides 26 – 28 of the presentation for an update on Neara.

- The CCG expressed strong concerns about the visual impacts of the power lines as shown in the Neara model.
- A CCG member commented that the community asked Transgrid to develop something like this in 2020 and the team is only now showing the community this software.
- Nathan responded that in 2020, this software was not available and a concept design needed to be developed to be put into the program. The concept design for HumeLink was only finalised 3 months ago.
- He estimated the distance between the lowest powerline and the ground as shown in the Near simulation is approximately 15m.
- A CCG member commented that the powerlines are going to leave Tumut looking like a bird cage. The impact of this surrounding the town will be immense, and it will change the town forever.
- A CCG member asked the project team where the community investment is. It was noted that the project is half way through and the community has not seen anything in terms of genuine legacy.
- Another CCG added that being given a "used" workers village after 3 rounds of work doesn't relay constitute a community legacy.
- Nathan responded that it's a top priority. The project team is investigating opportunities for improved telecommunications infrastructure. This and other opportunities will be part of an ongoing discussion with the community. It is important to hear from communities what they want to see as a legacy.
- A CCG member commented that the project is half way through, the community benefit projects should be halfway through as well. The CCG member noted in his view Transgrid and AEMO aren't competent or

	up to the task of delivering this project given the time that the time it takes for anything to be done or followed through.	
Property	Property	
	Michael gave an update on property.	
	See slides 30 and 31 of the presentation for an update on property.	
	- A CCG member commented that is still unclear what is meant by reasonable costs.	
	 Nathan responded that it is different for each property. 	
	- A CCG member asked what happens to the state government payments after 20 years. In the last 12 years rural rates have increased by 137% in Snowy Valleys and the payments should reflect that.	
	 Nathan responded that Transgrid advocated for this payment scheme, and they will pass this feedback on. 	
	- A CCG member commented that land value is not equal so the payments per km should not be equal.	
Stakeholder	Stakeholder Engagement & Community Investment	
Engagement & Community	Michael gave an update on community engagement.	
Investment	See slides 33 and 34 of the presentation for an update on stakeholder engagement and community investment.	
	- A CCG member commented that often the community hear nothing from Transgrid and then they are bombarded with emails. It was added that if they are drop in sessions, the Transgrid team should be there, regardless of if anyone RSVPs or not.	
	- A CCG member referenced a community information session done in Tumbarumba outside the supermarket that was very successful.	
	- A CCG member commented that they want NEARA images at the information sessions, not photo montages.	
	 Michael commented that part of the reason Transgrid wants to implement an RSVP process is so they know what community members want to learn about and they have the right people there. 	
	- A CCG member commented that the sessions also need to be advertised in local newspapers and on local radio.	
	- A CCG member commented that they had been told the sessions were not for landowners.	
	- The Chair clarified that the sessions were open to all community members.	

Next meeting	Next meeting
	Combined CCG meeting
	 The Chair made it very clear that the combined CCG would not be a town hall meeting but would remain as a CCG meeting. The meeting will be bound by CCG code of conduct.
	- Potential location: Gundagai Council chambers
	 The Chair called for input on the upcoming combined CCG meeting -suggestions included
	- Transgrid wants to test the EIS collateral with the group
	- NEARA images from the Tumut hills and local towns.
	- Undergrounding
	- More detail on the PMP process
	- More detail bushfire risk and mitigations.
	A CCG member asked if consideration could be given to streaming the meeting.
	Other business
	 A CCG member requested a map of the 65 outages caused by the Dunns Road fire.
	 ACTION: Tammy to send through the map the day following the CCG and include the number of times it has been requested for the power to be turned off.
Other business	Questions were taken from several observers in attendance.
Meeting close	The meeting closed at 7:50pm.

NOTE work is being done to look at how actions can be better presented.

Action	Status or comment
HumeLink EIS and SEARs to be circulated to CCG members	Completed
Transgrid to provide the CCG with technical information explaining how the structural integrity of the transmission lines is maintained in windy conditions.	Completed
Transgrid to respond to the Steering Committee's letter and the 52 outstanding issues within 4 weeks of the meeting.	Complete
Transgrid to supply the exact number the 2022 undergrounding figures were based on	Completed
Transgrid to check the parameters for covering ecology studies for landowners	Underway
Transgrid to supply their proposed biosecurity processes for the geotech investigations.	Completed
Transgrid to supply revised Option Deed	Completed
Transgrid to supply the revised Property Management Plan	Completed
Transgrid to outline how the procurement process will minimise impact on local communities	Completed
Transgrid to follow up with GHD for more insight into their value scoring methodology and reasoning, including the difference in value between agricultural land compared to State Forest.	Underway
Transgrid to follow up with GHD for more insight into the social and environmental matters included in its model InDeGo (Infrastructure Development Geospatial Options), how they are weighted and the scoring methodology.	Underway
Transgrid to determine if there are barriers to technological advancements with undergrounding cables	Underway
Secretariat is to follow up with members on administrative details including signed Code of Conduct Agreements and sharing of contact details.	Underway
Transgrid to institute the \$50 reimbursement for eligible members	Underway
Transgrid to request the value of the multiplier from GHD used in their report.	Underway
Transgrid to supply the difference in route length between the original Bannaby to Tumut option and the alternate option that was considered	Underway

Transgrid to email confirmation that Transgrid will not be doing an official review of the route in Yass.	Underway
November meeting minutes to include further detail regarding the biodiversity offset process.	Completed –
Length of the additional route considered between Bannaby and Tumut to be outlined	Underway
Transgrid requested to provide summary slides for each topic of the EIS	Underway
Transgrid to provide the CCG with an example of a noise and vibration catchment	Underway
Transgrid to provide an explanation of the noise monitoring process and how the noise machines work	Underway
Transgrid to answer if the noise monitors will remain post construction of the route	Underway
Transgrid to dedicate an agenda item during a CCG in 2023 to noise and bring an acoustic expert in	Underway
Transgrid to determine if the Neara modelling will be ready in time for when the EIS is on public exhibition	Underway
Transgrid to provide a chart of all the different companies involved in HumeLink and what they do.	Underway
Transgrid to provide more information on the tower details	Underway
Transgrid to send through the map outlining the 65 outages the occurred during the Dunns Rd fire	Underway
First Nations HumeLink stakeholder list to be shared with the CCG	Underway