

1.1 HumeLink Wagga Wagga Cootamundra Gundagai Community Consultative Group: 4th Meeting 6 April 2022

Time	11:30am – 1pm
Date	06/04/2022
Attendees	<p>Chair: Brian Elton</p> <p>Secretariat: Ella Burgess</p> <p>Transgrid CCG members: Elli Baker, Tim Edwards, Naomi Rowe</p> <p>Transgrid presenters; Daniel Burn, Sumaya Osman</p> <p>Community members: Serena Hardwick, Rodd Kendall, Matthew Dombrovski, Daniel Brear, Peter Lawson</p> <p>Landowner and Community Advocate (Observer): Rod Stowe</p> <p>Deputy Landowner and Community Advocate (Observer): Barbara El-Gamal</p> <p>Observers: Dr Joe McGirr (State Member for Wagga Wagga),, Sherrie Anderson (Transgrid), Heather Wagland (Transgrid)</p>
Apologies	Cheryl Penrith
Meeting location	Quest Apartments, Wagga Wagga
Meeting materials	Presentation
Purpose of meeting	Meeting 4

Item	Discussion Summary	To note
Welcome and Acknowledgement of Country	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The meeting commenced at 11:29am. - The Chair welcomed all and gave an Acknowledgement to Country. - Introductions, background from community, landowner and organisation Community Consultative Group (CCG) members. - Dr Joe McGirr, State Member for Wagga Wagga was present as a contributing observer. - Introductions and involvement in the project from the representatives of the Transgrid HumeLink project team. 	
Minutes and Matters Arising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No comments made on the previous minutes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Transgrid to circulate the link to the SEARs to the CCG.

	<p><i>The minutes of the previous meeting have been endorsed by the Chair and posted to the Transgrid website.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Matters arising were noted as being discussed in the agenda for the meeting. 	
<p>HumeLink Project Update</p>	<p>Elli gave an update on the project milestones and timeline.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - See slide 5 for the timeline of the HumeLink project. - Transgrid has now received the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) that will inform the EIS. - The 200m corridor refinement has recently been announced, however small areas along the route still remain under analysis. Over the next few weeks conversations are commencing with landowners. <p>Elli gave an update on GHD's Options Assessment Report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Transgrid received the results from the report a few weeks ago but did not disclose the results as they wanted to contact all landowners before the report was made public. The GHD report was made public on Friday 1 April 2022. - The scope of the report was to compare the routes at Tumut North, Blowering and Kosciuszko (Option 2F). <p>The Chair called for questions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A community CCG member commented that the values placed in the report on the environment and social impact were not aligned with the value the community placed on these matters. It was suggested the environment and social impact seem to be of little importance in the report, yet in reality these factors have the biggest impact on local people and communities. - Community CCG members noted their confusion associated with the social impact heads of consideration, the values and weighting placed on and about various aspects within the report. For example, prime agricultural land was labelled as a medium constraint while federal or state-owned land was labelled as a significant constraint. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The link to the GHD Options Assessment report can be found here - The link to the fact sheets on each route refinement decision can be found here Tumut, Bannaby, Green Hills and Pejar Dam.

- Elli noted that it was Transgrid's role to find the route between the three nodes of least impact. The GHD report was not completed in a Transgrid framework nor undertaken with a Transgrid methodology. Elli noted that Transgrid had no influence over the scores or weighting of the report.
- Elli stated that the GHD report was separate to Transgrid's decision making process and Transgrid cannot answer why GHD scored various aspects the way they did.
- ACTION: 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.
- A community CCG member commented that one would expect that there would be a consistent model applied across the various energy corporations.
- Sumaya responded that there are multiple ways in which corporations approach a report like this. The approach is often workshopped with various experts debating the values that are given to each aspect such as social impact and environment. Regarding biophysical strategic agricultural land, which is also referred to as prime agricultural land, it was determined to be a medium constraint as it will still be possible to crop or graze on the land and there is no agreed mapping of this land type. In contrast, the state and federally owned national parks and state forests will be cleared, and in the case of state forests unable to be replanted in the easement, therefore changing the land use.
- A community CCG member noted that the social impact always seems to be valued differently between Transgrid and the local community who these changes impact. It was noted that biophysical strategic agricultural land had a lower weighting but a much larger impact on local people.
- A community CCG observer commented that all the negatives in the report related to Option 2F seem to be related to the fact that the route is going through a national park. It was noted that it seems as though plenty of weighting is given to wilderness areas, national parks and reserves, when

even the Minister Matt Kean has made comment about advocating for the use of public land. It was noted that if all the negatives of Option 2F relate to it going through public land, another discussion needs to be had.

- Community CCG members further underscored the significance of social impacts on individual landowners and community being misrepresented. Landowners, particularly farmers will be impacted by the wholesale changes in the operation of their land. It was noted that there should be an increase on the value placed on social impacts.
- Naomi asked community CCG members to define what social impacts look like to them.
- Community CCG members responded that social impacts are many and vast, including; visual amenities, the impacts on neighbours, impacts on tourism which is gradually becoming more and more prominent in regional Australia, particularly as landowners attempt to diversify their income.
- ACTION: Transgrid to request that GHD make the finer details of the weighting in the report clear to the CCG as well as what the heads of consideration are and what weighting they give each head of consideration.
- An organisational CCG member noted they would like to see the economics of the decision unpacked as well as why the preferred route also happens to be the cheapest route.
- A community CCG member asked at what cost the cheapest route is the best option when you take ongoing social impacts into consideration.
- Community CCG members reinforced that it is critical to gain an understanding of why national parks have been given so much value in the report compared to private land.
- Elli noted that she presumes that the scales used would not be relative to the three route options, rather the scales would be part of a broader framework used for many projects.

- A community CCG member commented that a residential home within 500m of the transmission lines will be impacted over a lifetime. Airspace and aircraft will also be significantly impacted. Transgrid needs to analyse what the use of the airstrip is, not simply know if it privately or publicly owned. The airstrip could be a critical piece of infrastructure on private land. It was noted that GHD should also make the multiplier they used known to the CCG, because it is hard to interpret how the scores were calculated in the GHD report without the multiplier.
- ACTION: Transgrid to request the value of the multiplier from used in their report.

Elli gave an update on Transgrid's route refinement process.

- The GHD report has partly informed Transgrid's decision determining the preferred route.

Route refinement decision – Tumut

- See slide 9 of the presentation for an overview of the Tumut route refinement decision.
- Transgrid has determined that the Tumut North option is the preferred route. Landowners now not included in the preferred route as well as those now included in the preferred route have been contacted.
- Broadly, Transgrid took three categories into consideration; social license, network resilience and cost.
- Transgrid have analysed the number of residences within 500m of the corridor as well as chosen a route that would have a lesser bushfire risk.
- Elli explained the concept behind network resilience and explained that there is greater risk when all lines are paralleled instead of including some differentiation between the lines to lessen the risk.
- Elli noted that at this stage the costs that Transgrid has determined for the route options are estimates. The costs across the three options have been completed on the same basis so all options can be compared.

Route refinement decision – Bannaby

- See slide 10 of the presentation for an overview of the Bannaby route refinement decision.
- Similar to the decision made regarding Tumut, an option was requested by locals and landowners to be explored that went through more national park. Taking this route would result in moving away from a particular group of residences, however would impact a similar number of residences elsewhere. The alternate route also had higher environmental and bushfire risk. The costs for the two routes were the same.

Route refinement decision – Pejar Dam

- See slide 11 of the presentation for an overview of the Pejar Dam route refinement decision.
- Transgrid made the decision to move the transmission line north instead of traversing through the middle of the dam. This has benefited the local recreation users of the dam and well as local residences. The cost of this decision was higher, but Transgrid noted the significant benefit the decision would have for community recreation.

Route refinement decision – Green Hills

- See slide 12 of the presentation for an overview of the Green Hills route refinement.
- The decision to alter the route through the State Forest has resulted in 0 residences being impacted instead of 5. Again, the decision will cost Transgrid more, but they see greater value in impacting 0 residences rather than 5.

The Chair called for questions.

- A community CCG member asked what the property costs are for the Tumut North option.
- Elli noted that the costs produced by GHD are estimated easement acquisition costs as well as potential impacts to the rest of the holding if it is damaged.
- A community CCG member asked how much compensation is planned to go to the State Forest.

- ACTION: Transgrid to ask GHD how much compensation is planned to go to the State Forest.
 - A community CCG member asked how the biodiversity offsets have been calculated.
 - Sumaya responded that there is a standard approach and model for calculating biodiversity offsets. The approach requires an approved assessor who takes into account the values given for each type of plant, no matter where they are located. The offset looks at vegetation that would be impacted across the easement. The methodology applied to calculating offsets is the same across each option. The Constraints Map shows the values associated to each plant community.
 - A community member asked how the Constraints Map was applied to the preferred route – TAKEN ON NOTICE.
 - Elli gave an overview of the process that has occurred since 2019 to determine the preferred route.
 - A community member asked which areas are causing the most upset about the route refinement.
 - Elli noted that the two biggest areas of upset are Bannaby and Tumut, both of which have questions surrounding private versus public land use. Elli noted that with both areas, there is no benefit to going through public land as more residences end up being impacted in different areas. In Tumut, if you take Option 2F, the number of people impacted within 500m of the line triples. The increase in the rise of people impacted is due to Yass being populated with an increased number of smaller farms.
 - Community CCG members noted that it seemed possible to avoid the Tumut residents in Option 2F if the route kept going north instead of exiting the park where it is proposed to.
 - Elli stated that all of the routes have undergone significant analysis. Years ago, the team started with a bubble over the area and over the years has narrowed down the areas to defined routes. The routes that Transgrid has presented are not the only routes that Transgrid has investigated.
- The Link to the Biodiversity Offset Calculator can be found here [Biodiversity Offsets Scheme | NSW Environment and Heritage](#)

Update on Planning and Approvals

Sumaya gave an update on the planning and approvals process and timeline.

- See slide 16 of the presentation for an update on the approvals process and timeline.
- Transgrid is currently preparing the EIS, taking into account the guidelines of the SEARs which have just been received.
- The SEARs were noted as being fairly standard, with some details from various governmental agencies including Heritage NSW etc.
- The EIS will be a large and complicated document and Transgrid is interested to hear what the CCG would like to hear about within the EIS report and the technical studies that will inform the report.
- The EIS is an open process in which the public can provide comments on at any stage. Feedback can be given through place managers, the HumeLink hotline 1800 317 367, humelink@transgrid.com.au as well as a formal process that occurs when the EIS goes on public exhibition for six weeks. The feedback received during this time goes directly to the Department of Planning and Transgrid must prepare a report of responses.
- The key general aspects of the SEARs are outlined on slide 17 of the presentation.
- Naomi noted that leading up to the formal EIS process, Transgrid's goal is to incorporate the informal commentary as well. Transgrid would appreciate the CCG's advice about which briefings would be pertinent on certain technical studies to inform the local community as best as possible.
- An organisational CCG member asked if it is possible for the Place Managers to create a report on the engagement outcomes they have heard and report it back to the CCG.
- Naomi noted that could be done but it would be hard for it to be representative of all the different conversations occurring between Place Managers and landowners.
- The Chair noted that the EIS must include a summary of all engagement undertaken.
- Community CCG members noted that they would like to understand how the Place

- The Link to the Department of Planning HumeLink site can be found here - [HumeLink | Planning Portal - Department of Planning and Environment \(nsw.gov.au\)](https://www.humelink.com.au)

	<p>Managers have viewed the process as there seems to be a disconnect between what they hear and what members hear in the CCG meetings.</p>	
<p>Update on the Undergrounding Feasibility Report</p>	<p>Dan gave an update on the Undergrounding Feasibility Report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - See slide 14 of the presentation for an update on the Undergrounding Feasibility Report. - GHD presented their technical findings to both Dan and Amplitude on the morning of the 6th of April 2022 ahead of the meeting with the wider HumeLink Undergrounding Steering Committee on 12 April 2022. - Dan noted there are several technical items that GHD needs to address. The meeting between GHD, Dan and Amplitude was aimed at ensuring the engineering solution will be what the community wants, so that GHD can then work through the costs and impacts. - The route options in the Undergrounding Feasibility Report are similar to those outlined in the route refinement slides. - The final report is due on 10 May 2022. - A community CCG member, also on the Steering Committee, noted that having Amplitude as advisors has helped the community members on the Steering Committee enormously and helped them engage in the discussions. - An organisational CCG observer asked what the scope of the Undergrounding Feasibility Report is. - Dan responded that it is aimed to investigate undergrounding as an option holistically as well as the feasibility of implementing undergrounding as a solution in some areas. - An organisational CCG member asked if the Steering Committee process has given enough understanding of what the engineering is trying to achieve for the landowners. - The Steering Committee member answered that the process has given the community members the opportunity to ask the right questions and the process has been far better. 	

- The Chair noted that if the Undergrounding Feasibility Study produces better options than what is currently being explored, Transgrid will have to further consider undergrounding as an option.
- An organisational CCG member stated that undergrounding can still have impacts on land use.
- Tim noted that having Amplitude as a body representing the community means that the outcome will be as balanced as it can be.
- The Chair paraphrased what Craig Stallan noted during the February CCG meetings, even though the Regulator is looking for the solution with the least cost to the consumer, if there is a sound argument for undergrounding he (Craig) would want to take that argument to the Regulator. It will be important to compare the true costs of undergrounding, in whole or part.
- A community CCG member asked if the regulatory limitations stem from the RIT T.
- Tim responded that Transgrid needs to provide a solution with the least cost to the consumer stems from the National Electricity Rules.
- The Chair noted that conversations surrounding compensation and social impact are happening at a federal and state level.
- An organisational CCG observer noted that those debates will result in something tangible too late in the piece for this project. The least cost option still has to respect jurisdictional mandates.
- Tim confirmed that there are jurisdictional mandates that can override broadly applied rules.
- An organisational CCG member asked if it was possible to quantify the real costs over a lifetime of the project and compare them to the end user costs. The costs of those in Sydney will not compare to local landowners.
- Elli noted that is difficult to set up a framework that encompasses everything as holistically as that.

<p>Update on the HumeLink Engagement Strategy</p>	<p>Naomi gave an update on updated engagement collateral.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It was noted that the engagement strategy workshop following the CCG meeting would be where the majority of the conversation about engagement would occur. - The Transgrid team have heard from landowners and community members around bushfires, easement compensation and electric and magnetic fields. - This information has informed new factsheets on each subject available on the Transgrid website. - Bushfires – LINK - Easement compensation - Electric and magnetic fields – LINK - Naomi gave an update on the upcoming community engagement activities which are outlined on slide 22 of the presentation. 	
<p>Agenda setting for subsequent meetings</p>	<p>Next meetings</p> <p>June</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tuesday 28 <p>October</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tuesday 11 <p>December</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tuesday 6 <p>The Chair noted that the current CCG membership guidelines state that if a member’s property comes out of the refined corridor they must resign from the CCG. The Chair would like to ask that members have a conversation with him before resigning from the CCG as those members are still impacted by the corridor in some way or can contribute meaningfully to the CCG. This was agreed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A community CCG member noted that the HumeLink manifesto prepared by the Kyemba Valley residents includes many points that keep coming up in the CCGs. <p>ACTION: Transgrid to address the HumeLink manifesto.</p>	
<p>Meeting close</p>	<p>The meeting closed at 12:57.</p>	

Meeting minutes endorsed by HumeLink CCG Chair, Brian Elton on 16/05/22.

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
If Place Managers or CCG members are aware of landowners who would be interested in the CCG, please pass them on to Brendan Blakeley – Brendan.blakeley@wsp.com	Underway
Transgrid to determine if they can send Wagga Wagga Business Chamber the draft HumeLink engagement plan so messages and communications channels can be complimented	Underway
Transgrid to institute the \$50 reimbursement for eligible members	Ongoing
Transgrid to provide CCG members with a diagram presenting how planning and regulatory processes relate	Underway
Transgrid to provide a timeline/diagram of HumeLink progress as it currently stands and a timeline of HumeLink progress if undergrounding or Option 2F are deemed feasible	Underway
HumeLink EIS and SEARs to be circulated to CCG members	Underway
Transgrid to follow up with GHD for more insight into their value scoring methodology and reasoning.	Underway
Transgrid to request that GHD make the finer details of the weighting in the report clear to the CCG as well as what the heads of consideration are and what weighting they give each head of consideration.	Underway
Transgrid to ask GHD how much compensation is planned to go to the State Forest.	Underway
Transgrid to request the value of the multiplier from used in their report.	Underway
Transgrid to address the HumeLink manifesto.	Underway
Transgrid to address how the Constraints Map was applied to the preferred route	Underway