

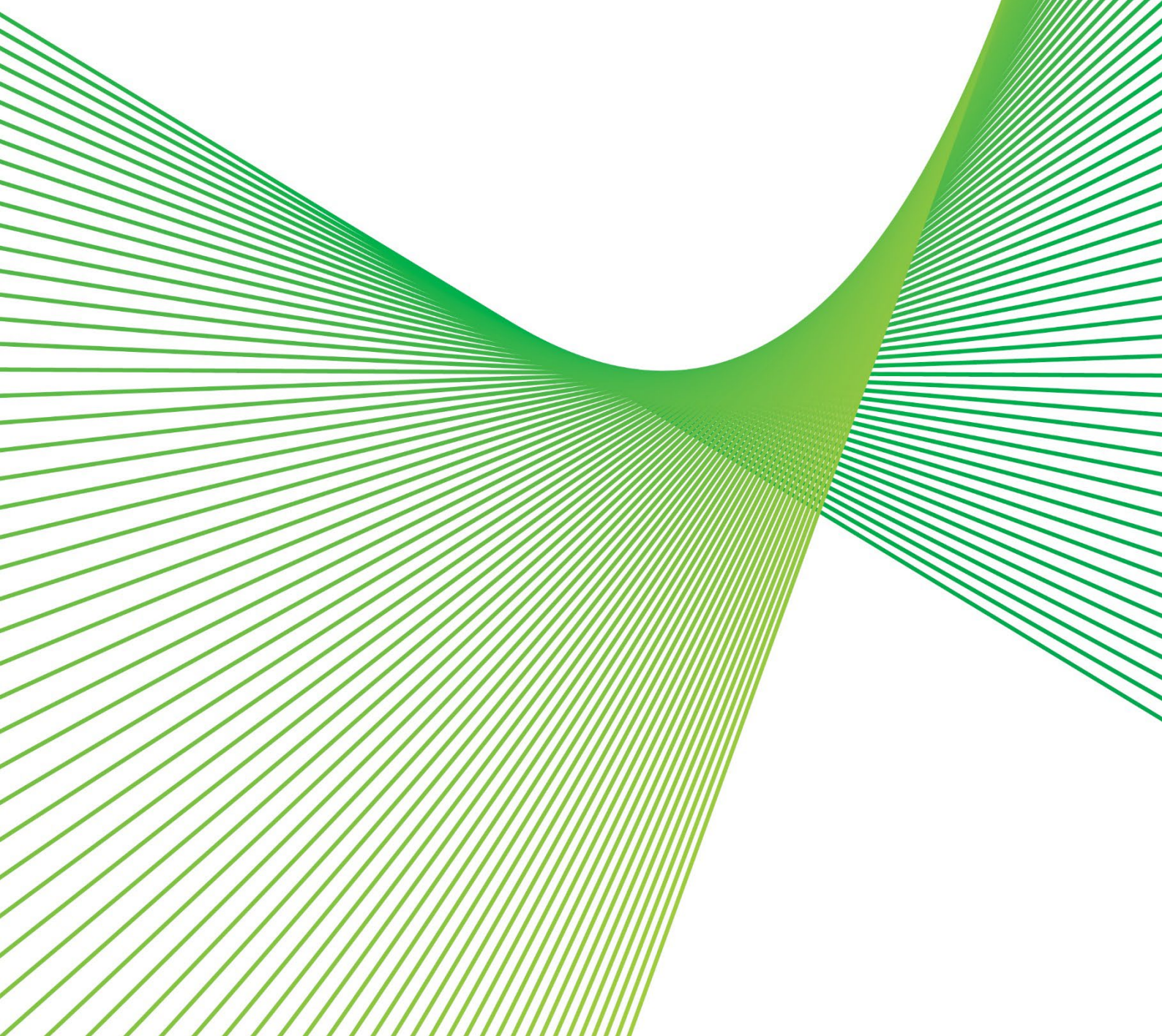


People. Power. Possibilities.

What We Heard Report

HumeLink Interactive Map

July 2023



Contents

Purpose	2
Summary.....	2
Engagement Approach.....	3
Issues Raised and Key Themes.....	5
1.1. Key Issues Raised by Category.....	6

Purpose

The purpose of a 'What We Heard Report' is to capture and share information and issues raised through key project communication channels, direct engagement and consultation. The reports are published on the HumeLink project website as a record of engagement and to ensure transparency. They are also provided to the project team for consideration and inform decision making during project development.

This report considers the information received through the HumeLink interactive map, located on the [HumeLink webpage](#). The interactive map reflects the proposed transmission line corridor route and offers stakeholders the opportunity to provide feedback and insights through direct comment submission. As the proposed transmission line corridor is refined, the interactive map is updated. This report provides a high-level summary of the comments submitted via the interactive map and key themes.

Summary

The HumeLink interactive map was designed to engage the general public, landowners, communities and businesses along the proposed HumeLink transmission line corridor. The interactive map enabled stakeholders to provide input, feedback and commentary on specific geographic locations within or nearby to the proposed transmission line corridor. It has facilitated a diverse range of voices to be heard across the 360-kilometre alignment, increasing the HumeLink project teams understanding of a variety of perspectives and priorities amongst communities within and adjacent to the HumeLink project area.

The interactive map was made publicly available in May 2020. Between May 2020 and June 2023 2,175 comments have been submitted via the interactive map by 232 stakeholders.

The comments submitted via the interactive map were reviewed for profanity, offensive phrasing, personal or private information or property details prior to being published. The public were given the option of keeping their submission private in which case their feedback was not published on the interactive map but still captured and passed on to the project team for consideration. Feedback received via the interactive map has been shared with those leading the development of the HumeLink Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and the design teams to inform the planning phase of the project.

Analysis has been undertaken on the 2,175 comments submitted via the interactive map between May 2020 and July 2023. The information below summarises key topics raised in these comments.

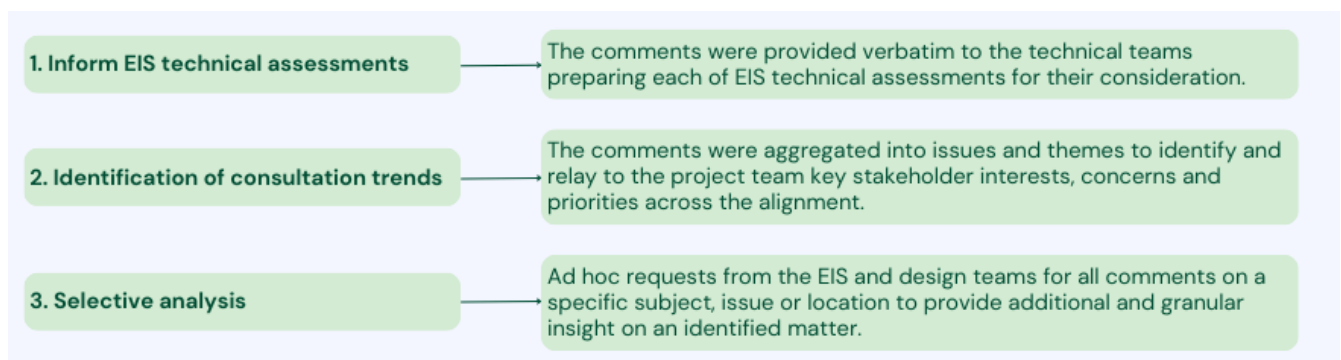
Map



Figure 1: HumeLink interactive map hosted on the HumeLink webpage.

Engagement Approach

The feedback and insights provided via the interactive map has informed the planning of the project in three key ways:



* All comments received before 30 June 2023 have been included the HumeLink EIS engagement chapter.

The HumeLink interactive map was advertised through multiple project communication channels including in person and online community information sessions, project newsletters distributed via letterbox drop to more than 16,000 locations, as well as via emails to more than 600 project subscribers, impacted landowners, and CCG members. The interactive map has also been accessible through our Remote Access Community Hub (RACH), a mobile community information hub that has been used to engage communities and landowners in locations across the HumeLink alignment.

This advertising approach was designed to maximise the reach and awareness of interactive map and opportunity to provide feedback.



Figure 2: remote Access Community Hub (RACH) and the HumeLink interactive map in Yass.

Issues Raised and Key Themes

Prior to submitting a comment via the interactive map, stakeholders were asked to categorise their comment. Comments could be categorised into the following:

Category	Category Description
Community	Social, lifestyle, health, business and economic impacts
Environment	Flora, fauna, soil, water, air and visual impacts on the landscape.
Heritage	Aboriginal and European.
Opportunities	Things the project can do to minimise impacts or create benefit.
Other	Issues not covered by the above categories.

Between May 2020 and June 2023 2,175 comments of local insight and feedback were submitted via the interactive map by 232 stakeholders. Figure 3 shows the percentage of comments submitted by category.

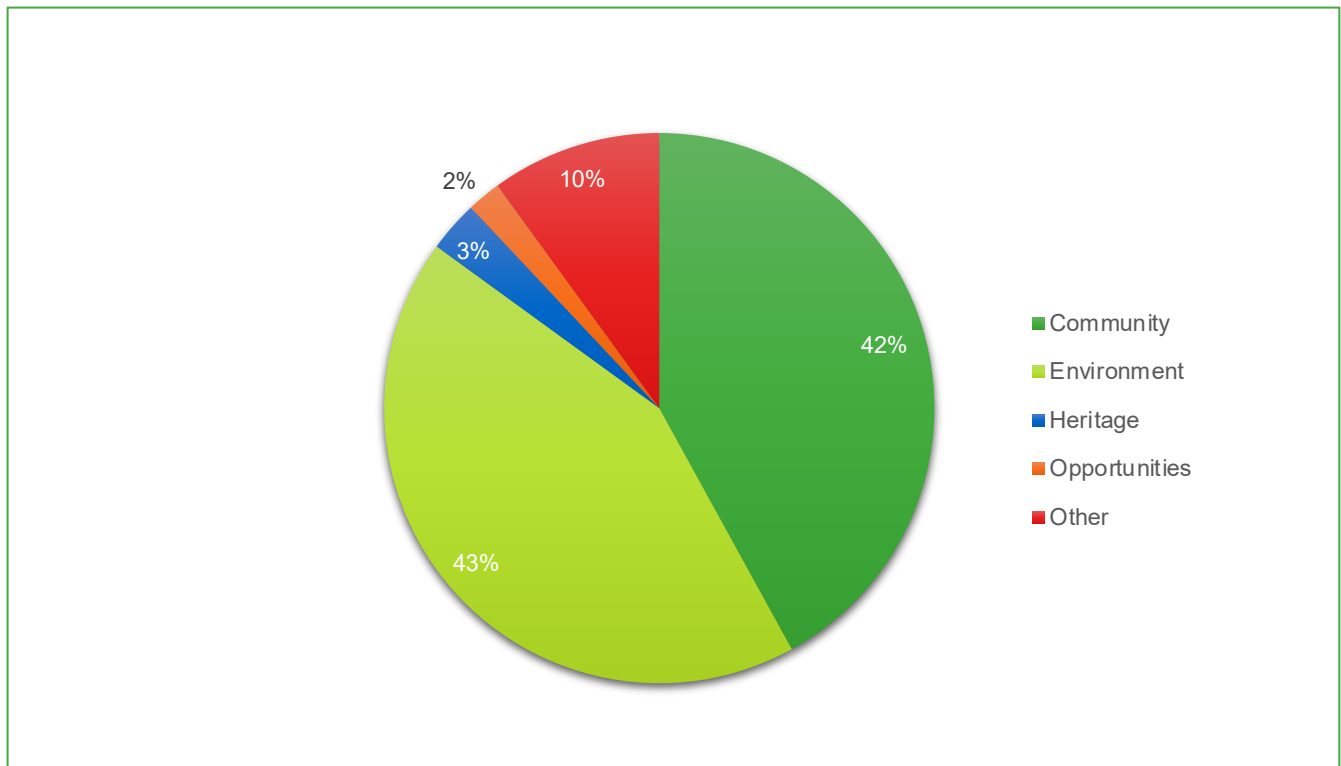


Figure 3: percentage of HumeLink interactive map comments by category.

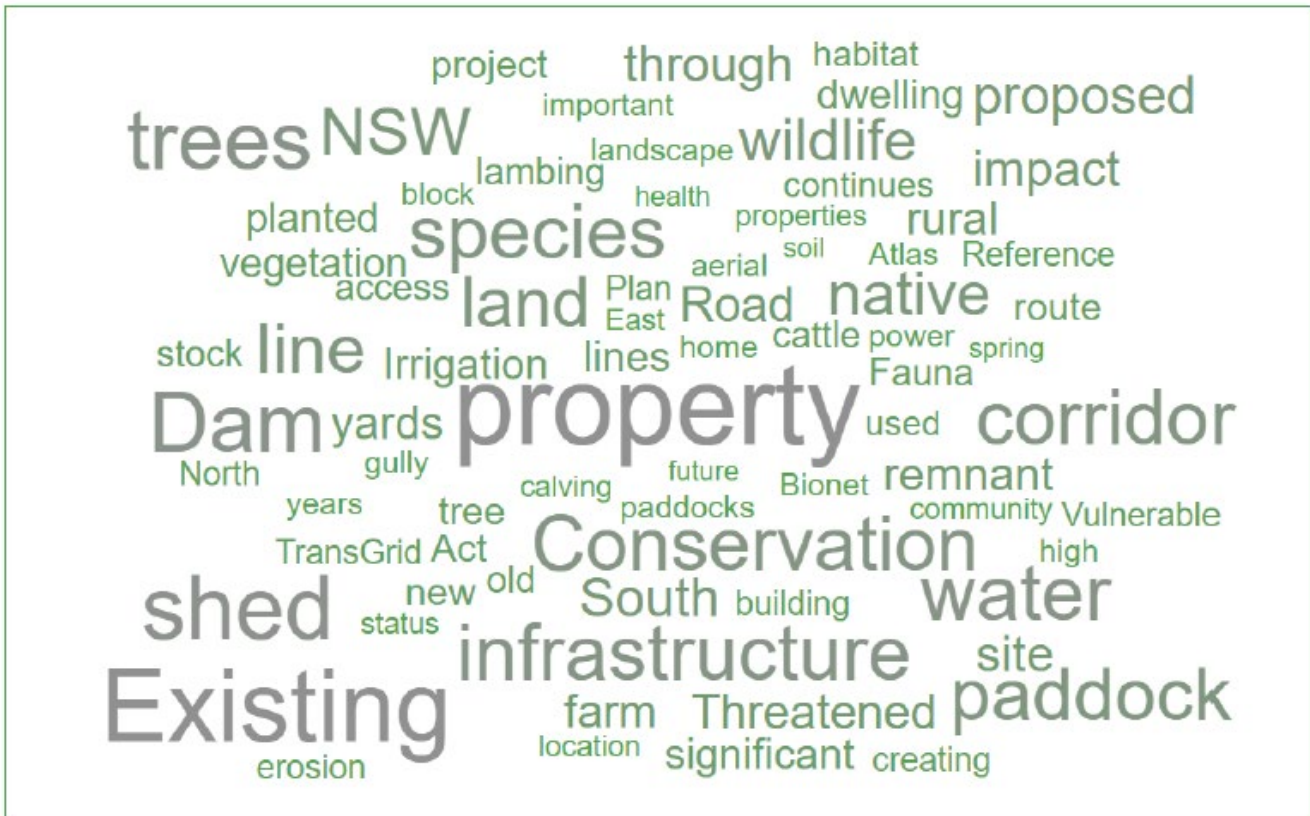


Figure 4: word cloud of key words used in comments submitted via the interactive map.

1.1. Key Issues Raised by Category

The following section details key issues raised within each comment category. Please note, the purpose of this report is to provide a high-level overview of the local insights and feedback received via the interactive map. Location and property specific feedback has been captured and provided to project EIS and design teams to inform the project planning phase.

Community

- **Route selection process** regarding assessment criteria and alternative above-ground route refinement decisions in key areas including Tumut, Bannaby, Pejar Dam, Green Hills and Kosciuszko National Park. Requests made for physical markers to indicate proposed corridor route.
- Justification for **project study corridor (up to 5km), refined corridor (200m) and final easement (70m)**.
- **Transmission tower structures** including proposed locations, tower type and impact of topographic conditions on tower visibility.
- Option to **underground HumeLink** and proposed benefits such as reduced bushfire risk, environmental impact and impact to private property. Encouragement for Transgrid to undertake an independent feasibility assessment to underground the project.
- **Landowner compensation and land value assessment** noting landowners intending to subdivide, sell, renovate or retire.
- Requests for **annual compensation payments** for those hosting electricity infrastructure, with reference to the [NSW Strategic Benefits Payment](#).

- Proposed **property and infrastructure development locations** within the corridor.
- **Visual amenity impacts** associated with transmission line and tower proximity to existing residences, including impacts to neighbouring landowners and local landscape aesthetics.
- **Community engagement and consultation** including quality and accuracy of the HumeLink interactive map, and request for on-site engagement.
- Impacts to **current and future tourism opportunities** including farm stays, open spaced camping, ecotourism, and waterfall tracks.
- **Significant social infrastructure** such as schools, bus stops, bridges, churches, cemeteries, cricket fields and worker accommodation.
- **Existing infrastructure** including quarries, windmills, transmission lines, substations and transformers.
- Impacts on **airports, private airstrips and other aviation safety measures**.
- **Bushfire risk and fire hazard**, and the ability for landowners and the RFS to fight fires in areas with transmission lines. Comments highlighted severe impact of the Dunn's Road Fire during 2019-2020 bushfires.
- **Fertile agricultural land** within the proposed corridor such as fodder production paddocks, trufferies, lucerne pastures, vineyards, dairy farm operations, orchards and eucalyptus oil plantations.
- **Agricultural infrastructure** including shearing sheds, milking sheds, machinery sheds, electric fences, workshops, and combustible and flammable substance storage.
- **Transmission line exclusion zones** and permitted activity parameters e.g., cropping, grazing, machinery use and tree/shrub cultivation.
- Impacts of **aerial spraying restrictions** including application of fertiliser and weed control.
- **Biosecurity** concerns and protective measures, noting impacts of cross contamination via animal manure and plant seed.
- Impacts of **Electric and Magnetic Fields (EMF)** on landowners, workers, wildlife and cropping.
- **Pest and vermin control** activities and the use of firearms.
- Location of **domestic and stock water supply**.
- **Property and vehicle access** along proposed transmission line corridor and associated safety risks.
- **Noise** associated with project operation and mitigation measures.
- Impact of project on landowner **social and mental health**.
- Existing **Transgrid asset management and easement maintenance**.
- Location of **telecommunication infrastructure** and possible local service disruption.
- Importance of **tree lines** as natural windbreaks, livestock pens and vantage points.

Environment

- Location and impacts to **native and threatened animals** such as wombats, kangaroos, wallabies, possums, echidna, koalas, lyrebirds and wedge-tailed eagles.
- Location and impacts of **native and threatened plants** such as lilies, orchards and White Box-Yellow Box-Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Derived Native Grassland.
- **NSW Government Biodiversity Conservation Areas** within the proposed corridor.
- Location and impacts to **wetlands and associated ecosystems**.
- Current and proposed **conservation activities** carried out by landowners and Landcare groups such as native flora and fauna rehabilitation, protective fencing of creeks, establishment of wildlife corridors, building of biodiversity-landscape aesthetics and sequestering carbon.
- Risks associated with **invasive and noxious weed species and current management practices**.

- **Water and soil management** during construction and operation, noting steep terrain, the presence of gullies and areas prone to soil erosion.
- Impacts of **vegetation clearance on tree lines** established 20+ years ago that provide shelter and habitat for wildlife, nesting and roosting sites, areas necessary for endangered animal breeding and maintain soil erosion prone areas.
- Impact of **vegetation clearance on local timber industry** and **carbon credit lock-up areas**.
- Location and impacts to **natural springs, waterfalls and associated ecosystems**.
- Areas prone to **flooding** and impassable during wet weather within the proposed corridor and location of **contour banks**.

Heritage

- Location of **Aboriginal heritage sites** including Aboriginal yarning sites, scar trees, marker trees, stone scatter and grinding stones.
- **Significant Aboriginal and local water ways and lagoons**, emphasising the importance of maintaining 'wild rivers' and Transgrid's responsibility to minimise impact on river systems and associated ecosystems.
- Sites of **marked and unmarked graves**.
- Location of **historical homesteads and infrastructure** including old mine shafts, brick kilns, water tanks, country huts, bridges, oil extraction equipment remnants, local roads, shearers quarters and schools.
- Location of **early settler house ruins** where tools and bottles have been collected from site.
- **Fossil sites**.

Opportunities

- **Use of public land for transmission line corridor** to minimise impact to private property and prime agricultural land.
- Opportunity for HumeLink to **parallel existing transmission lines and utilise existing easements**.
- Consideration of **alternative routes with favourable access tracks for project construction and operation**.
- Improvement of landscape under and around existing and proposed transmission lines including **wildlife corridors, natural bushland and erosion correction**.

Other

- **Current and proposed wind farm locations** and potential points of interaction with HumeLink infrastructure.

If you feel the high-level feedback you raised via the interactive map is not represented in this report, please reach out to the HumeLink project team by calling 1800 317 367 or email humelink@transgrid.com.au.