

# HumeLink Community Newsletter

November 2022

## What is HumeLink?

HumeLink is a once in a generation investment in Australia's energy future, increasing the amount of renewable energy that can be delivered to consumers, and helping Australia to move towards a net zero future.

This proposed 500 kV transmission line will connect Wagga Wagga, Bannaby and Maragle and will be one of the nation's largest energy infrastructure projects, with about 360 km of proposed new transmission lines and new or upgraded infrastructure at four substations.

HumeLink is critical to bringing more affordable, reliable and renewable energy to the grid as Australia transitions to a clean energy future. HumeLink is a priority project for the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) and the Commonwealth and NSW governments.

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## Announcements

### Strategic Benefits Payment Scheme

Transgrid and many landowners have been advocating to the NSW Government about changes to the compensation scheme for impacted landowners.

Recently, the NSW Government (EnergyCo) announced the Strategic Benefits Payments Scheme for private landowners. This scheme acknowledges the vital role landowners are playing in securing energy for NSW.

This payment is in addition to any compensation paid by Transgrid under the *Just Terms Compensation Act 1991*, and will apply to landowners hosting transmission lines for the HumeLink project on their private property.

Under the scheme, private landowners hosting new high voltage transmission lines, will be paid a set rate of \$200,000 per kilometre of transmission line, paid out in annual instalments over 20 years.

In other words, it is a payment of \$10,000 per kilometre of transmission line across privately-owned land, paid annually over a period of 20 years and adjusted for inflation based on the Consumer Price Index.

Transgrid advocated for these additional payments as part of our commitment to landowners. This is just one of a range of initiatives we have been working on with EnergyCo to support landowners and recognise their important role in Australia's energy transition.

You can find more information about the scheme on [EnergyCo's website](#) and the [HumeLink website](#). We have developed [Frequently Asked Questions](#) to share more information about how the scheme affects you.

If you have any questions please contact the HumeLink team toll-free on 1800 317 367 or via email at [humelink@transgrid.com.au](mailto:humelink@transgrid.com.au)



## Key project areas update

### Technical

The technical stream incorporates the engineering and design elements of the project, which is currently focused on the development of a preliminary design.

This will consider things like:

- height
- shape
- location

of the transmission line, towers and substations.

The design is developed in stages as additional information is gathered such as ground conditions, the environment and specific needs of landowners.



**Final design will be developed over the next two years.**

### Environmental

The environmental stream considers the potential impacts the project might have on the environment and communities during construction and operation. The project team is undertaking a number of technical studies to understand the potential environmental, economic and social impacts of the project.

Over the coming months, the environmental team will continue to progress the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The HumeLink EIS is a requirement of the NSW and Commonwealth Governments. It is being prepared in accordance with the NSW Planning Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs).

The EIS will allow government agencies, relevant authorities, community and stakeholders to make an informed view on the project. The EIS forms the foundation for approval by the NSW Department of Planning and Environment.



**The EIS will be made available for comment in 2023 before it is considered for approval.**

### Commercial

The commercial stream focuses on identifying and engaging construction contractors to build HumeLink. Transgrid spent several months engaging with industry bodies, suppliers and potential contractors.

These contractors have been shortlisted:

- Acciona Construction Australia Pty Ltd, Kalpataru Transmission Limited and Genus Plus Group Ltd (joint venture)
- Downer Utilities Australia Pty Ltd and Consolidated Power Projects Australia Pty Ltd (joint venture)

- UGL Engineering Pty Ltd.

The transmission line route will be divided into two construction sections or packages. Over the coming months, the three shortlisted tenderers will compete for the two packages.

The preferred contractor for each package will be announced in 2023.



**27 October 2022, Transgrid announced three shortlisted contractors.**

### Key project dates



## Property

The project team is currently undertaking property valuations and entering into negotiations with impacted landowners to acquire the required easement rights along the proposed route.

Transgrid is also working with landowners to minimise construction disturbance by agreeing to a Property Management Plan (PMP). The PMP is a plan developed for each individual property which defines how Transgrid will work on the site. These plans outline property specific requirements such as: access, operating hours, stock management, service impacts, weed and pest management, fencing (temporary and otherwise) and site rehabilitation.



**Over the past 12 months, we have engaged more than 300 impacted landowners.**

## Community engagement

The community engagement stream focuses on ensuring that communities and stakeholders that are impacted or interested in the project have the opportunity to learn and provide feedback.

Hosting community information sessions along the alignment enables the team to share project information, provide updates, answer questions and gather feedback on the project.



**In September and October, we delivered 17 in-person events.**



## In the community

### Transgrid and Regional Development Australia

Transgrid and Regional Development Australia (RDA) Riverina have formed a \$1.5 million Workforce Development Strategic Partnership to deliver a major jobs and skills boost as the region becomes a hub for the country's renewable energy transformation.

The partnership will secure substantial economic, employment and education benefits and support RDA Riverina's key programs over the next three years.

The partnership follows the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the two organisations to drive workforce development and economic growth initiatives for the Riverina as part of Transgrid's Energy Connect, HumeLink and VNI West projects.

For more information on this exciting partnership please see [Transgrid's media release](#).

### Women in Business and Local Business Awards, Wagga Wagga

Transgrid was delighted to support Wagga Women in Business in sponsoring an evening with Grace Tame in October. Wagga Women in Business is a dynamic community of local women from a diverse range of businesses and backgrounds committed to supporting each other through programs and events to empower, educate and advocate for women.



**Pictured:** HumeLink Community Engagement Officer, Charlotte May; Wagga Women in Business Vice Chair, Gioia Giannotias; Traditional Owner, Aunty Cheryl; Community Investment Manager, Sasha Deshon.



## Upcoming events and activities

### Geotechnical investigations

The HumeLink team is currently undertaking geotechnical investigations along the transmission line route to understand the local geology in each area. Ground conditions along the proposed route vary from alluvial flood plains to bedrock. We need to understand these local ground conditions to inform the detailed design.

Specifically, these investigations will help inform the final design, including; the location of towers and engineering of the towers, to ensuring they are structurally stable. Soil and rock samples will be collected, using a drill rig, from more than 400 separate locations.

### Heritage test excavations

As part of the EIS, Transgrid's Aboriginal heritage assessment, a number of Potential Archaeological Deposits (PAD) and areas of archaeological sensitivity have been identified.

The project team is currently conducting a test excavation program that will concentrate on testing PADs and a selection of additional areas of archaeological sensitivity that may be impacted by the project.

The outcomes of the test excavation will be documented as part of the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report (ACHAR), which will form part of the EIS and will be put on display during the EIS public exhibition period.

### Community Consultative Groups

Transgrid has established three Community Consultative Groups (CCGs) to encourage and facilitate community participation in HumeLink's project planning. The CCGs provide valuable feedback on behalf of the community, to Transgrid and the HumeLink team on all aspects of the project.

The latest round of CCGs took place in October. The meeting minutes will be posted on HumeLink's [webpage](#).

### Community information EIS webinars

If you're interested in learning more about the EIS, then these webinars are for you.

You will have the opportunity to hear from key members of the HumeLink engagement and EIS teams, ask questions, and provide feedback on what topics within the EIS you want to know more about.

The sessions will be held online using Zoom. You can join by phone, mobile, tablet or computer. Each session will cover the same information so please only register to one webinar.

**Scan the QR code to view the webinar schedule and RSVP. Or phone 1800 317 367**

Webinar	Date	Time
1	Wednesday 30 November	5:30pm to 6:30pm (AEST)
2	Thursday 1 December	5:30pm to 6:30pm (AEST)
3	Friday 2 December	12:00pm to 1:00pm (AEST)
4	Tuesday 6 December	5:30pm to 6:30pm (AEST)
5	Wednesday 7 December	1:00pm to 2:00pm (AEST)
6	Thursday 8 December	12:30pm to 1:30pm (AEST)



**Pictured:** Transgrid CEO, Brett Redman; Rachel Whiting, RDA Riverina CEO.

### Connect with us

Transgrid is committed to working with landowners and communities through the development of HumeLink. Please connect with us if you need any information.



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