

HumeLink Environmental Impact Statement

Soils, Contamination and Geology Assessment

AUGUST 2023

What is an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

The HumeLink project has been classified by the NSW Government as Critical State Significant Infrastructure (CSSI). All CSSI development applications must be accompanied by an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The purpose of the EIS is to identify and assess the potential environmental, economic and social impacts of the project to help government agencies, relevant authorities, community and stakeholders make an informed decision or provide an informed submission on the merits of the project.

EIS project footprint

The [HumeLink project](#) extends from the existing Wagga Wagga 330 kV substation to the existing Bannaby 500 kV substation and the future Maragle 500 kV substation.

The EIS footprint is based on an indicative 200 metre corridor and is defined as the area directly affected by the construction and operation of the project. It includes the indicative location of project infrastructure, the area that would be directly disturbed during construction and any easement required during operation.

The final location of all proposed infrastructure will be confirmed during detailed design.

HumeLink planning approvals and EIS

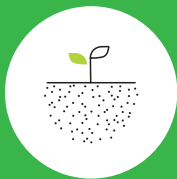
As part of the planning approval process for HumeLink, Transgrid is preparing an EIS in accordance with the [Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements \(SEARs\)](#). The SEARs identify matters which must be addressed in the EIS and essentially form its terms of reference. It includes the requirements from both the NSW and Commonwealth Governments.

A series of detailed technical studies and reports are completed as part of the EIS. This includes soil, geology and contamination covered in this fact sheet.

Can I provide feedback?

Once the EIS is finalised, the NSW Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) will place it on exhibition and call for public submissions. Feedback on the EIS can be provided directly to the DPE during this public display period.

To learn more about the HumeLink EIS, please visit the [EIS Frequently Asked Questions](#) on our website.



**Soils, geology and
contamination**

HumeLink Environmental Impact Statement Specialist Studies



Aboriginal heritage



Electric and magnetic fields



Social



Agricultural land



Greenhouse gas and climate change risk



Soils, geology and contamination



Air quality



Historic heritage



Surface water and groundwater



Aviation safety



Hydrology and flooding



Sustainability



Biodiversity



Landscape character and visual amenity



Traffic and transport



Bushfire risk



Land use and property



Economic



Noise and vibration



Soils, Geology and Contamination Impact Assessment

What does this assess?

As part of the HumeLink EIS, Transgrid assessed soils, geology and contamination conditions to identify past and present activities that have the potential to cause soil contamination. The assessment consisted of a desktop study and site inspections.

The assessment included a review of existing conditions, identification of potential impacts on soil, geology and contamination as a result of the construction and operation of the project, and how we propose to manage these impacts.



Pictured: Soil analysis on-site.

What does this study tell us?

The contamination study area covers the project footprint plus a one kilometre buffer to capture potential contaminating activities close to the project footprint.

Additional desktop study

An additional desktop study was completed with the buffer extended to 10 kilometres to consider the NSW Government per-and-poly-fluorinated alkyl substances (PFAS) Investigation Program and Department of Defence Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) Program. These contaminants can be persistent and travel long distances however our assessment demonstrated a low impact due to distance from the project footprint.



Pictured: Truck mounted drill rig collecting soil and rock samples on site.



Pictured: Tower foundations being prepared at Project Energy Connect west of Wagga Wagga.

The methodology for this assessment involved:

- reviewing relevant legislation, policy and guidelines
- desktop review to of environmental conditions including topography, regional geology, historical investigations, soil mapping and geological hazards
- identifying registered sites or areas which may contain contamination including on the NSW EPA public register
- surveys to confirm the desktop research recording:
 - » terrain
 - » surface condition
 - » topography
 - » vegetation cover
 - » drainage pathways
 - » contamination land risk areas
 - » surrounding land uses
- identifying potential soils, geology and contamination impacts which may occur during construction and operation of the project
- identifying mitigation measures for the potential impacts.

Identified areas of concern were assigned a risk rating.

The majority of areas of environmental concern were evaluated as having a low risk rating. Several locations, predominantly waste facilities, substation sites and areas of disturbed land, uncontrolled fill, stockpiling and dumping are rated as moderate risk.

The assessment also identified areas where naturally occurring asbestos may be present.

Natural occurring asbestos (NOA) is a mineral component found in certain types of soil or rock formations, as opposed to asbestos present in commercial products, mining or processing operations.

Undisturbed, it does not present a risk of human health.

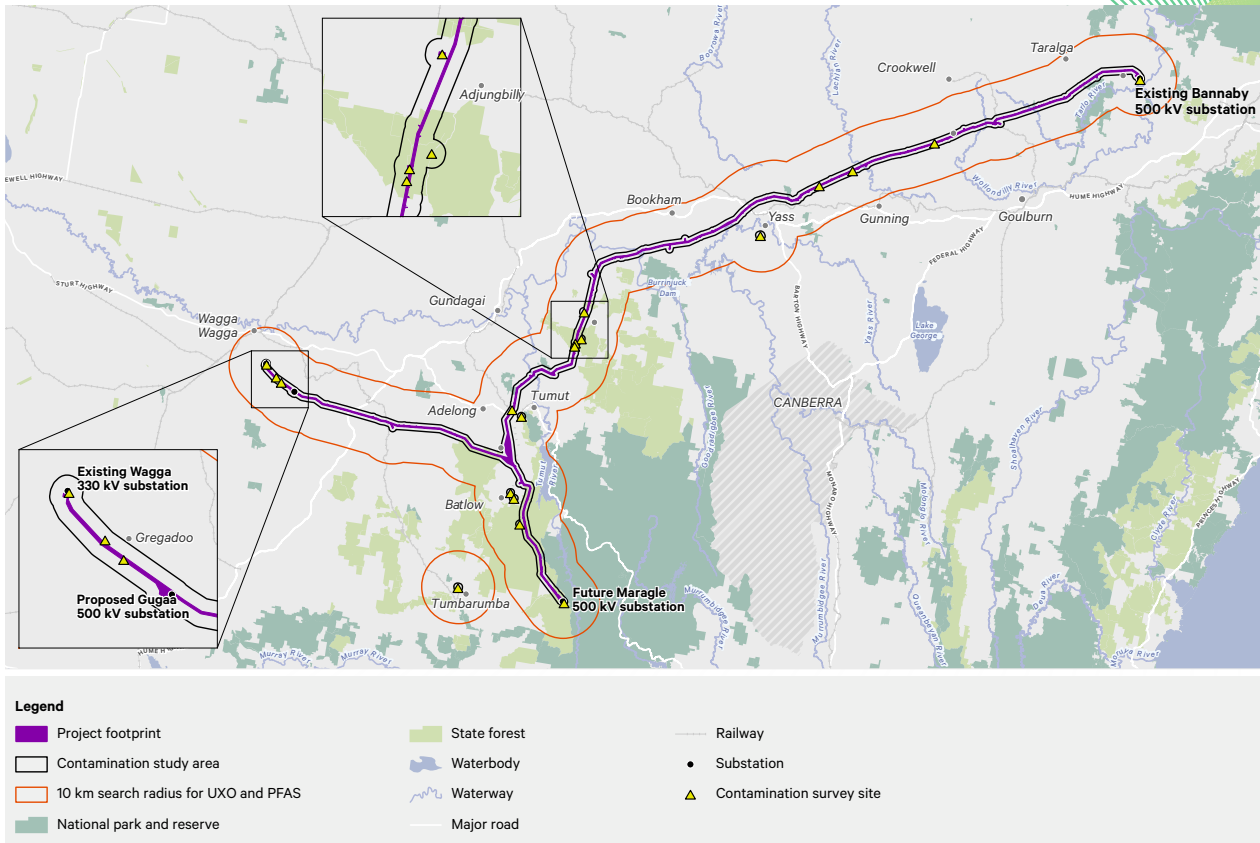


Figure 1: Contamination study area and survey sites.



Potential impacts and proposed management

Construction activities such as excavation, vegetation clearing and vehicle movement will disturb areas of soil. If disturbed soil exposes a contaminant it may impact on human health and water quality. These potential impacts would be managed through standard mitigation measures. This may include compliance monitoring, record keeping, management plans and procedures and additional investigations.

Transgrid will develop an Unexpected Contamination Finds Protocol as part of the Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) which outlines how the project will manage any unexpected contamination found during construction.

In addition, an Asbestos Management Plan (AMP) will be developed and will include specific protocols for asbestos separation, handling, monitoring, validation and clearance.

The CEMP, its associated Soil and Water Management Plan and the AMP will provide measures to manage and minimise impacts that may occur during construction.

During operation, there would be minimal soil disturbance from general maintenance activities. As such, the operation of the project is unlikely to result in exposure of contaminated soil. Localised contamination from storage and use of chemicals, accidental leaks and spills would be managed in accordance with Transgrid's existing environmental policies and framework.

As the project progresses, more information about the identified impacts to soils and geology, as well as the proposed management measures will become available.

Connect with us

Transgrid is committed to working with landowners and communities through the development of HumeLink. Please connect with us for more information.



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