

HumeLink Community Newsletter

June 2023

What is HumeLink?

HumeLink is one of Australia’s largest energy infrastructure projects connecting renewable energy sources to the grid, increasing availability and market competition and helping to put downward pressure on energy prices in Australia.

The project consists of 360 kilometres of 500 kV overhead transmission lines connecting Wagga Wagga, Bannaby and Maragle, and new or upgraded infrastructure at four substations.

HumeLink is critical to bringing more affordable, reliable and renewable energy to the grid and is a priority project for the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) and the Commonwealth and NSW Governments. HumeLink is subject to the approval of the Australian Energy Regulator.

To view HumeLink’s interactive route map go to transgrid.com.au/humelink.

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Feature story: Exploring HumeLink's Environmental Impact Statement

HumeLink's Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is made up of a number of technical assessments. In this newsletter we take a look at the impacts from noise and vibration as well as our agricultural impact assessment.

Visit the HumeLink website for more information about the EIS and how you can make a submission to the NSW Department of Planning and Environment (DPE).



Noise and Vibration Assessment

HumeLink's EIS assesses the possible impacts from noise and vibration during the project's construction and operation. The assessment includes measuring noise levels in different areas before construction starts to establish the background noise level, and analysing activities that are likely to generate noise and vibration during construction and operation. Where the work is expected to be much louder than the background noise the team considers ways to reduce the impact of this noise and vibration.

The noise and vibration impact assessment is based on criteria set out in guidelines such as the *Interim Construction Noise Guidelines* (DECC 2009), the *Noise Policy for Industry* (NSWS EPA 2019a) and the *NSW Road Noise Policy* (DECCW 2011).

Noise and vibration during construction

The following activities are expected to generate noise:

- tree removal
- building construction site sheds and facilities
- delivery of equipment and materials
- earthworks such as digging, drilling and building foundations
- assembling and standing up towers
- installing cables.

The following activities are expected to cause vibration:

- earthworks such as digging, compacting, drilling and building foundations.

How noisy will it be?

The noise and vibration you may experience will vary depending on factors including location, activity, work duration, size of the work site and weather conditions. In some instances, work may generate noise that would be considered as high impact, however the team will seek to avoid this where possible.

Where possible, measures will be applied to keep noise and vibration impacts within acceptable levels during construction. These measures may include scheduling work during standard work hours, positioning equipment away from homes and turning off machines when not being used.

You will be consulted in the event an activity is expected to have a significant noise or vibration impact on you or your property.

Noise and vibration impacts during operation

The HumeLink team does not anticipate any vibration impacts during the project's operation, however the following noise impacts are possible:

- a crackling noise called corona. This noise is created by electricity interacting with the air around the cable joints and is generally louder in overcast and rainy weather conditions.
- noise created at substations from transformers and other equipment.

Potential noise impacts and how they could be managed will be further considered in the detailed design stage. For example, corona noise can be reduced through design features at the cable joints.

You can read more in our noise and vibration impact assessment factsheet and other EIS topics on the [HumeLink website](#).



Pictured: Noise logger measuring background noise levels.



Agricultural Impact Assessment

Transgrid completed an Agricultural Impact Assessment that evaluated the potential impacts from HumeLink on agricultural land and operations. The assessment considered area along the project footprint as well as other agricultural areas likely to be directly or indirectly affected by the project.

Agriculture is the predominant land use in the study area, specifically sheep and cattle grazing, cropping and other horticultural enterprises.

Both the construction and operation stages of HumeLink will have similar types of impacts on agricultural land. The scale of the impact will be greater during construction due to the larger area required to construct HumeLink and the intensive nature of construction activities. Construction impacts will be temporary while operational impacts, while smaller in scale, will be permanent.

Impacts to agricultural land during construction and operation of HumeLink may include:

- physical disruptions such as access changes and the creation of construction sites
- biosecurity
- livestock and vehicle movements
- disruptions to on-ground, aerial spraying and irrigation operations
- noise disturbance to livestock
- radio communication and global positioning system (GPS) interference.



Property Management Plans

We have listened to the concerns of landowners and have developed a range of measures to minimise the project's impact. Working with landowners to create individual property management plans (PMPs) is one of the key ways we are doing this.

PMPs are specific to each property and outline how Transgrid and the landowner will work together during construction to minimise the impact on the property and its operation.

PMPs cover key items such as:

- consultation during construction planning
- property access protocols
- property specific biosecurity protocols
- livestock movement
- measures to minimise disruption to agricultural practices
- other property specific requirements including:
 - » access tracks/roads
 - » process for rectifying any damage
 - » rehabilitating disturbed areas after construction
 - » fencing and gate requirements.

You can read more in our [Agricultural Impact Assessment](#) factsheet on the HumeLink website.



Next steps

Once the EIS is finalised, the DPE will place it on exhibition and call for public submissions. The duration of the exhibition will be decided by the DPE.

The full EIS will be available online and in hard copy at nominated locations in your local community such as local council chambers. Summaries and supporting information will also be available online and at community information sessions throughout the exhibition period.

We will provide more information on the EIS exhibition period and how to make a submission in the July newsletter, on the HumeLink website and through advertising in local media.

Visit the [EIS Frequently Asked Questions](#) on our website to learn more about the HumeLink EIS.



Pictured: Transgrid is working with landowners to develop property management plans specific to each property.



In the community



Biosecurity protocols: supporting our landowners

Biosecurity is critically important to landowners and communities. It is a priority for us too.

As a minimum, Transgrid and our contractors must comply with the standards outlined in Transgrid's [Corporate Biosecurity Procedure and Environmental Guidance Note](#). All Biosecurity Management Plans outline our 'Come Clean Go Clean' Principle and meet the legislative requirements of the *NSW Biosecurity Act 2015* and *Biosecurity Regulation 2017*.

Additionally, Transgrid monitors the NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI) alerts and legislative changes to ensure any emerging biosecurity controls that apply to specific areas of the state are implemented as required and appropriate.

HumeLink's team of Place Managers and Land Access Officers are dedicated to supporting landowners and helping them navigate all stages of the project. They're currently working closely with landowners to develop individual PMPs that will outline how Transgrid and its contractors will manage biosecurity risks on each individual property.

A project specific Biosecurity Management Plan (BMP) will also be developed by Transgrid and our construction partners over the coming months. The BMP will bring together the requirements of the various PMPs and Transgrid's Corporate Biosecurity Procedure and Environmental Guidance Note to outline how biosecurity will be managed, monitored and reported on HumeLink.

While every property is different, measures might include:

- controlling vehicle and plant movements
- vehicle and plant inspections and clean downs
- use of biosecurity signage
- certification and tracking of imported dirt and materials
- weed management as per legislative requirements.

Visit the [HumeLink website](#) for more information on biosecurity and how Transgrid works with landowners to protect their properties.



What we heard at the latest round of community information sessions

HumeLink's community engagement team visited a number of communities along the alignment during May and June to share the latest information about the project. The sessions provided an opportunity for you to ask questions about the project, provide feedback and learn about our upcoming EIS.

Community information sessions were held in the following locations:

- Wagga Wagga
- Tumbarumba
- Tumut
- Yass
- Gundagai
- Crookwell
- Batlow
- Gunning
- Adelong
- Taralga

We have compiled a *What we heard report* outlining the key themes discussed at the sessions. The *What we heard report* is available on the [HumeLink website](#).

You may have also seen the debut of our portable information hub, known as RACH – our Remote Access Community Hub. RACH is an all-terrain trailer that is equipped with project information and satellite connectivity, designed to allow us to bring project updates and information to you, wherever you are.

We encourage you to keep an eye on your community notice boards and social media for where and when we will be in town, but we would love it if we could connect directly with you – so please sign up to our email newsletters [here](#).

If you have not had a visit from us yet, please reach out to the team to request we come and visit your community.



Pictured: The HumeLink project team at the May Community Information Session in Adelong.



HumeLink transmission towers

HumeLink is planned to be made up of approximately 850 steel towers that will be connected by large wires (also known as conductors). These conductors will transport high voltage electricity over long distances, where it will be converted at substations to low voltage electricity for delivery to businesses and consumers.

The design of the towers will vary depending on the terrain but will typically range from 50–76 metres in height. Distances between the towers will vary from approximately 300 to 600 metres, dependent on topography and ground conditions.

Through our consultation sessions with community members and landowners we have been asked about the transmission towers and their construction process. To help you and your community better understand these structures, our team has prepared a HumeLink Transmission Towers factsheet.

The fact sheet details:

- what makes up a transmission tower
- different types of towers
- how the towers will be constructed
- tower construction sites
- tower easements and operations.



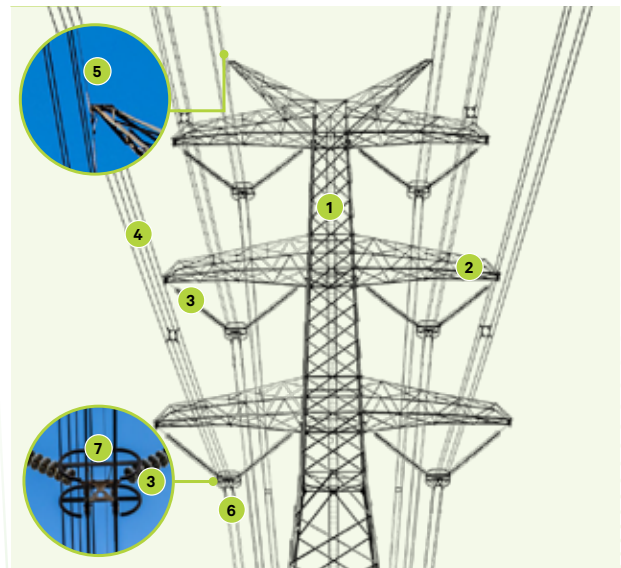
What makes up a transmission tower?

- 1 Tower body** is the main central structure that connects to the foundations.
- 2 Cross arms** also known as wings, are the sections that extend outward from the main body and hold the conductors.
- 3 Insulators** connect the conductors to the cross arms. They stop the electricity from finding a path to ground, and also prevent the conductors from touching the tower body.
- 4 Transmission conductors** (also known as cables or wires) provide the path the electricity flows through.
- 5 Earth wires** do not transmit electricity, but instead protect the line against lightning and voltage surges.
- 6 Vibration dampers** prevent damage to transmission lines and reduce the effects of vibration caused by wind.
- 7 Corona rings** also known as ‘grading rings’ help provide a smooth surface around sharp edges, such as bolts and connection pins, and help reduce noise.



Pictured: Example of a 500 kV transmission tower.

To find out more about HumeLink’s transmission towers, including the difference between a suspension and a tension tower, please read the factsheet on the [HumeLink website](#).



Photomontages now available on the HumeLink website

Photomontages are computer generated images that provide an example of what the project may look like when complete. The HumeLink team creates them by overlaying a 3D model of the proposed transmission towers and lines onto photographs from the project footprint and surrounding areas.

The photomontages are based on concept designs as of mid-2023 and are subject to change.

To view more photomontages please visit the [HumeLink website](#).



Pictured: Photomontage – view from Yaven Creek (image on the right has towers highlighted in red to help identify them).



What's coming up

Community Consultative Group (CCG)

For more information on the CCG visit the [HumeLink website](#).

Acknowledgement of Country

Transgrid acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of this great land. We recognise and acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the first explorers, scientists, farmers, astronomers, and storytellers.

We pay respects to the people, the Elders both past and present and celebrate the diversity and successes of Aboriginal peoples and their ongoing connections to the lands and waters where we work and live.

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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