

HUMELINK UPDATE

Supporting Australia's transition to a lower carbon future

Ongoing technical assessment and consultation are helping to shape and refine the route for a new 500kV transmission line connecting Wagga Wagga, Bannaby and Maragle.

Changes to the project's electrical configuration

Large infrastructure projects, such as HumeLink, are developed and refined over several years as investigations and more detailed information, including feedback from community and landowners, inform the project development process.

Recently we finalised the technical assessment of various network configurations (the number and type of electrical circuits between destination points) to determine which circuit will deliver the best network reliability, capacity and value-for-money.

A double-circuit configuration has been identified as the preferred option for the HumeLink project and was published in late July. One key benefit of moving to double-circuit for the entire HumeLink alignment is that it reduces the project's overall footprint, minimising environmental impacts and reducing the total number of landowners impacted by the project.

Moving to a double-circuit configuration has resulted in a number of changes to the project's study corridor. See more detail of these changes overleaf.

Want to learn more about the project?

Join us online at 4pm on Thursday 7 October to hear from the project team about the status of the project and more on the route selection process.

Email humelink@transgrid.com.au to register for this webinar event.

Not able to join us online? We understand meeting online is not possible for everyone, and that, like us, many of you would prefer meeting in person. Unfortunately, due to current COVID-19 restrictions we are only able to host virtual information sessions at this time. We hope to see you in person soon, and as soon as it is safe to do so, our locally-based team will resume face-to-face meetings and events.

A summary of the event will be available following the session, and will also be published on the project website. Please reach out if you'd like a copy of the summary or if you would like to provide suggestions on how we can best keep you updated while restrictions are in place.

Connect
with us

Toll-free phone number: 1800 317 367
Email: humelink@transgrid.com.au

Map

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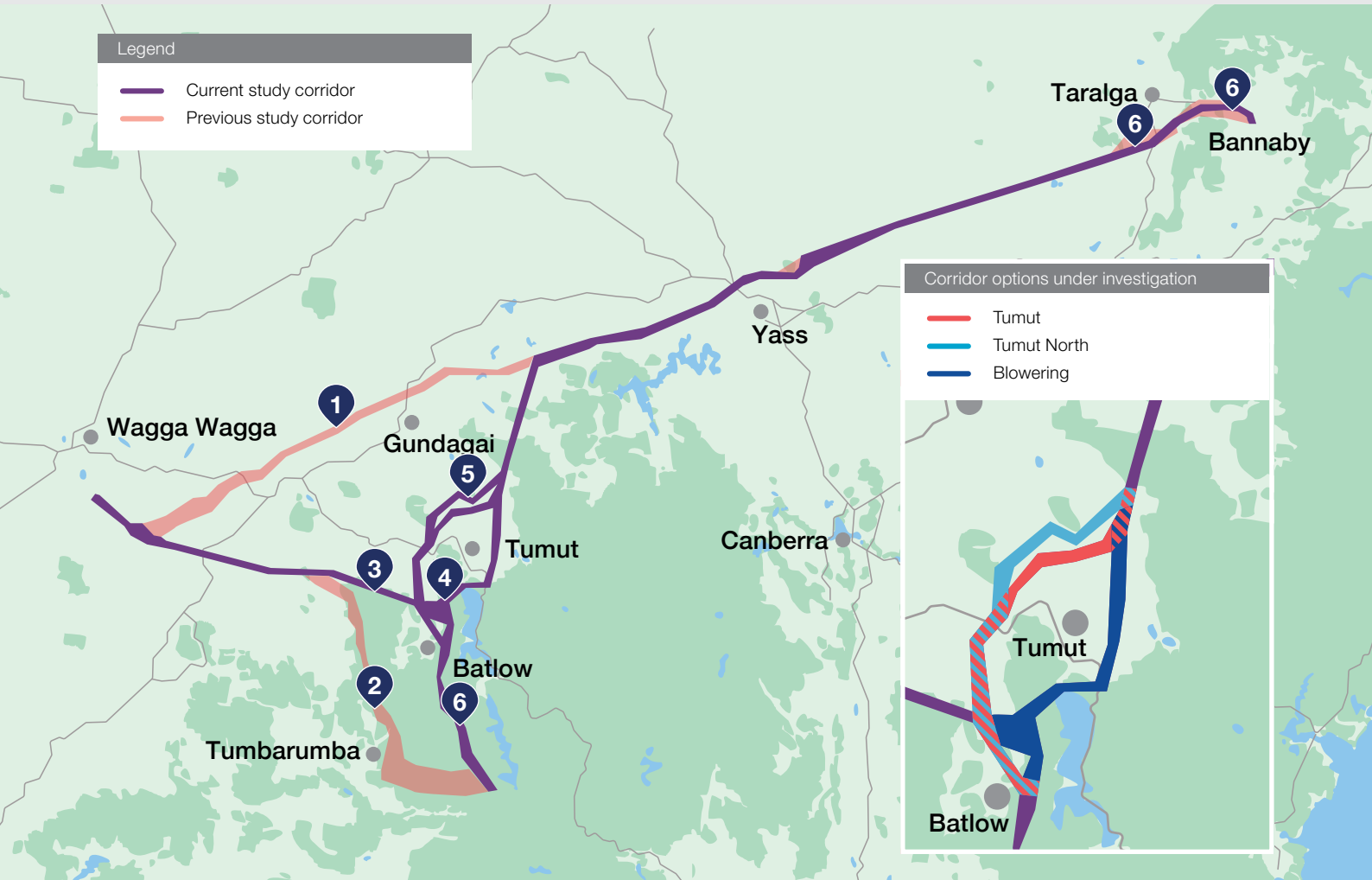
The proposed transmission line between Book Book and Gobarralong is no longer required

2

The proposed transmission line between Maragle and Yaven Creek is no longer required

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A new, shorter connection between Westwood and Gilmore is being considered



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A new connection to the Blowering corridor has been introduced through Gilmore Valley

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We will begin actively exploring a new corridor option north of Tumut

6

The corridor has been narrowed to about 1km wide at Bannaby, Myrtleville and Buddong

Changes to the project's study corridor

Refinement of the corridor to determine the final 70m easement required for the final transmission line, is an ongoing process. As more information is collected and assessed and more studies finalised, the project corridor is adjusted. The shift to a double-circuit configuration has meant some more significant changes will now be implemented.

A single-circuit configuration between Maragle, Wagga Wagga and Gobarralong was initially considered the preferred option for HumeLink. However more detailed technical assessments which consider the risks associated with extreme weather events, such as bushfire and lightning strikes, have now been completed and these assessments support the shift to a double-circuit configuration.

Last month, as a result of these assessments, we were able to verbally advise about 80 landowners between Book Book and Gobarralong that a transmission line in their area was no longer required. Similarly, the proposed single-circuit transmission line between Maragle and Yaven Creek is also no longer required.

For these changes to be able to occur, a new shorter connection between Westwood and Gilmore has been introduced. Over the coming months we will be engaging with landowners on this new corridor, ensuring we are able to capture feedback and respond to any queries or concerns as the project develops.

We appreciate that this may be unexpected news and that most landowners do not want a new transmission line on their property. We are committed to working collaboratively with all landowners and communities to minimise the impacts wherever feasible.

Exploring a new corridor option through the Tumut region

During early consultation on the proposed corridor west of Tumut; the Snowy Valleys Council, the Rural Fire Service and the local community shared their concerns about the effect a transmission line may have on the operation and future extension of Tumut Airport. We also received feedback about the critical role that Tumut Airport plays for the region during an emergency response.

As a result of this feedback, an alternative corridor through Blowering was introduced and over the past six months we have focussed our efforts on trying to better understand this area. Throughout this process, the original Tumut corridor has remained within the project's area of investigation.

There will now be two new areas introduced for further investigation as we continue to assess the best way for HumeLink to traverse through the Tumut region.

The first change is a new connection point to the Blowering corridor via the Gilmore Valley. We have already identified some local considerations, such as private airstrips, and so have kept the study corridor in this area more than 4km wide to allow us to work collaboratively with the local community to identify potential route options.

The second change is the introduction of a modified version of the Tumut corridor, known as Tumut North. The Tumut North option allows us to still respond to the operational needs of Tumut Airport but will reduce the proximity to residences.

We will continue to actively investigate all corridors in this region over the coming months, with landowner consultation, ecological surveys, bushfire assessments and cultural heritage studies to be completed to help inform the final decision.

This is a complex decision and we will be seeking advice from an independent engineering specialist to help us determine the preferred option. We anticipate reaching this decision in the first half of 2022.

Introducing your new Place Managers

Three new Place Managers have now joined the team and will connect regularly with landowners to check that you are receiving the information you need and that your feedback is heard. They will work alongside the Land Access Officers who will remain a key contact for any project or land related questions.

Your Place Manager will be in touch soon.

Otherwise you can reach out to Sam, Deb or Cristina on 1800 317 367.

Narrowing the corridor in your area

We appreciate that landowners located along the corridor, and particularly in areas where there has been no change or update in some time, want certainty as soon as possible.

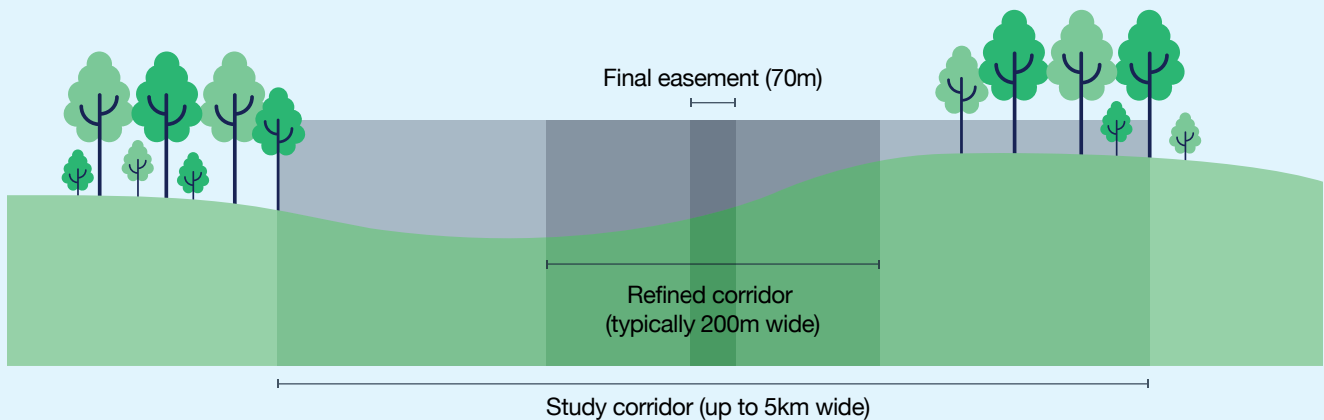
In the coming months we will begin talking to landowners about the narrowed 200m-wide corridor and, for those with an existing transmission line on their property, we will be sharing current design preferences for which side of the existing line HumeLink could parallel.

Being inside the preferred 200m-wide corridor means we are actively investigating your property for a transmission line easement. This does not mean that a decision has been reached on the final location of the transmission line. Rather, ongoing technical assessments and feedback gathered during this consultation are still required to help inform and confirm the final decision.

We will release the narrowed 200m-wide corridor for most areas in late 2021.

Ongoing active investigation and consultation in the new corridors between Westwood and Gilmore, and through Tumut, will continue into 2022 to ensure we have time to gather input and feedback from landowners.

Thank you to everyone who has already taken the time to share your views, preferences and concerns. To share your local knowledge, you can put your comments on the interactive project map available via the project website or contact the Place Managers on 1800 317 367.



HumeLink route refinement

Free support service for landowners

We appreciate that for many, the idea of a large tower and transmission line being built on your property may cause an increased level of stress, anxiety or anger. We also know that some landowners want to turn to someone outside of TransGrid to discuss these concerns.

To offer support through this process, we have engaged an external service provider, Assure Programs, to provide short-term support and counselling to interested landowners.

Like doctors, Assure Programs counsellors are bound by a professional Code of Ethics preventing the disclosure of personal information without written consent. Their team of psychologists are professionally qualified with a minimum of five years' post-registration experience.

There is no cost to landowners in accessing this confidential service.

Access to the service is available now. Dial 1800 808 374 to make an appointment.

Field investigations continue

Field investigations are underway to help us understand local conditions, identify potential impacts and determine the most appropriate location for the proposed new towers.

The spring ecological surveys have now begun, with small teams surveying properties to confirm existing vegetation types, and threatened animal and plant species. Ecological surveys will continue into the coming seasons and are expected to be completed in February 2022.

We also plan to commence Aboriginal cultural heritage surveys before the end of the year to look for historical evidence, artefacts and beliefs of Aboriginal peoples and those who have settled in the area. We will be working closely with Local Aboriginal Land Councils and other Aboriginal stakeholders. These studies will take a few months to complete, with small teams walking the corridor to identify any sites with cultural heritage significance.

Before undertaking any surveys on your property, your Land Access Officer will work with you to understand your requirements. You will be provided a map which indicates the area of your property that will be surveyed and surveys will only be conducted within this area. We will always contact you prior to entry to your property to confirm you are happy for the surveys to go ahead and to provide an opportunity for you to advise us if conditions have changed.



Cultural heritage studies will soon be underway along the corridor

What is the Consent to Enter document?

The Consent to Enter is an informal document which records a landowner's conditions of entry for survey activities, such as ecological or cultural heritage investigations. It allows us to understand farm businesses better so we can minimise disturbance during these works.

The Consent to Enter does not provide us with blanket approval to undertake works on your property. It is important to remember that you can withdraw or amend your Consent to Enter at any time.



We want to support local initiatives through our Community Partnerships Program

Community Partnerships Program – grants program now open

TransGrid supports local, grassroots initiatives by providing grants in areas where our assets are located or under development.

Our Community Partnerships Program is designed to help not-for-profit groups to deliver initiatives that will have a tangible and lasting impact on local communities. We do this in a way that demonstrates respect for those who were here before us, as well as for future generations.

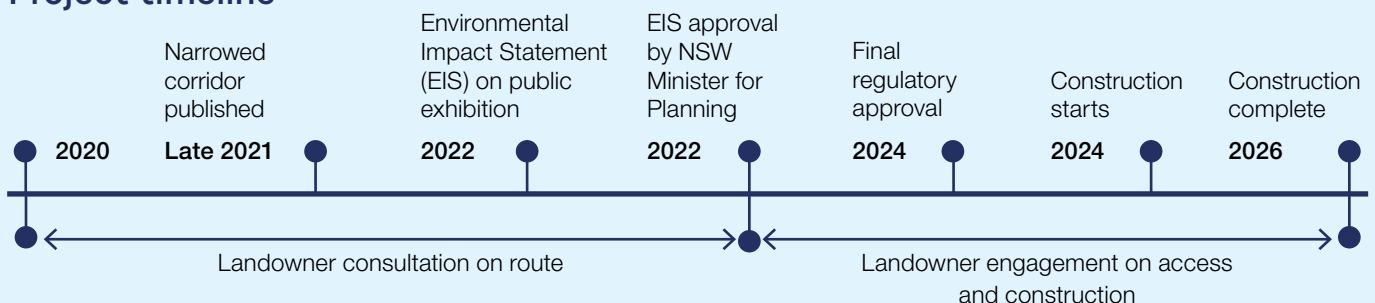
The first round of grants for the HumeLink project area is now open, with funding up to \$5,000 per community initiative on offer.

We will be reaching out to the community groups and local stakeholders shortly to find local projects and initiatives that are interested in support.

To find out more or to apply please visit transgrid.com.au/being-responsible/community-partnership-program

Applications close 7 November 2021, so get in quick!

Project timeline



Connect with us

Toll-free phone number: **1800 317 367**

Email: humelink@transgrid.com.au

Find out more at:
transgrid.com.au/humelink



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