

VNI West is a proposed 500kV double-circuit transmission line connecting the energy grids of NSW and Victoria. As part of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) being prepared, a detailed assessment will be undertaken to identify and assess the potential impacts of the project in relation to non-Aboriginal heritage.



### What is a non-Aboriginal Heritage Assessment?

As part of the EIS, both the non-Aboriginal Heritage Assessment and the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report (ACHAR) work together to provide a more comprehensive view of the cultural values of the study area.

Non-Aboriginal heritage includes all objects or places that have cultural heritage significances unless solely through their association with Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Peoples' traditions or customs. The non-Aboriginal assessment examines the cultural heritage of the broader non-Aboriginal community.

### What have we heard from the community?

The community have expressed their concerns about loss of heritage, highlighting the intergenerational significance of the land to families and outlining several heritage structures near the project.

### How is the assessment carried out?

The non-Aboriginal Heritage Assessment aims to identify places, buildings, works and relics having significance to European settlement, and proposes mitigation and management measures for identified items potentially impacted by VNI West.

The study area for the assessment comprises the project footprint and a two-kilometre buffer on either side of the footprint.

The assessment will include:

- a review of relevant legislation and policy context
- a review of relevant archaeological and historical data including heritage registers and schedules, local histories and archaeological reports

- searches of statutory heritage registers and schedules
- details of field surveys conducted within the project footprint
- assessment of potential direct and indirect impacts to non-Aboriginal heritage
- recommendation of relevant mitigation and management measures to minimise any identified impacts.

### Existing heritage registrations and listings

There are no World heritage, National heritage, Commonwealth or State heritage items identified within the project footprint. Four local heritage items are located within the immediate vicinity of the project. These include:

**Black Swamp** – west of the Cobb Highway at Boorooban, north of the alignment of the project

**Ivydale, Gregadoo** – located within the Wagga to Gugaa section of the project area

**Ivydale Woolshed, Gregadoo** – located within the Wagga to Gugaa section of the project area

**Stone Ruin, Gregadoo** – located within the Wagga to Gugaa section of the project area.

Additional sites or items of historic heritage may also be identified as part of the ongoing field surveys of the project footprint and these will be detailed in the Historic Heritage Impact Assessment.



## Potential impacts identified to date

### Construction

Construction activities that have the potential to impact upon non-Aboriginal heritage values include activities such as clearing of vegetation, construction of access tracks and tower pads, site establishment for substitution infrastructure and establishment of the workers accommodation and construction compound sites. However, impacts to the identified non-Aboriginal heritage sites and artefacts are not likely to be significant and would be avoided through design refinement (such as through detailed siting of transmission structures or access tracks) wherever possible.

### Post construction impacts to heritage items

During construction any non-Aboriginal heritage features or items of significance discovered and to remain in situ within the transmission line easement will be mapped and recorded to reduce the potential for impacts during maintenance activities.

### Operation

Maintenance activities during project operation will be unlikely to result in disturbance of additional areas not assessed in relation to construction. Mitigation and management measures will be put in place to ensure that potential impacts on identified non-Aboriginal heritage items are minimised. With mitigations in place, impacts are expected to be negligible.

### How are these impacts minimised?

Proposed mitigation measures to avoid or minimise the project's impact to non-Aboriginal heritage would likely include:

- an Unexpected Finds Protocol that will outline the process to follow if any items of potential non-Aboriginal historic heritage significance, or human remains are discovered during construction
- additional surveys which would be carried out prior to ground disturbing activities in areas that were previously inaccessible
- protecting identified non-Aboriginal heritage items post-construction through geospatial mapping to avoid these areas during maintenance activities.

### Next steps

There will be ongoing opportunities for the community to provide input throughout the development of the EIS. Once all the technical assessments have been completed the EIS is placed on public exhibition. During this time, the community members will be able to view the EIS and all supporting studies and provide written submissions on the project to the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure.

## Connect with us

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



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