

OUT25/11373

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C/- Major Projects Portal

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Victoria to NSW Interconnector West SSI-72887208

Dear Mr Ko

Thank you for your referral of 1 August 2025 and the opportunity to provide advice on the EIS for the Victoria to NSW Interconnector West.

The NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (the 'Department') collaborates and partners with our stakeholders to protect and enhance the productive and sustainable use and resilience of agricultural resources and the environment.

The Department has reviewed the EIS and associated documents for the project and notes the project involves the development of a new electrical connection between NSW and Victoria called the Victoria to NSW Interconnector West project (VNI West).

The Department has previously requested specific issues for incorporation into the SEARs:

- Land Use Conflict Risk Assessment (LUCRA)
- Biosecurity measures
- Rehabilitation during and post construction
- Decommissioning and returning the land to its previous agricultural potential
- Assessment of any worker accommodation proposal.

While it is noted that, in relation to these issues, a Land Use Conflict Risk Assessment has been undertaken, a project wide Biosecurity Plan is to be prepared, and decommissioning will involve rehabilitation and revegetation of operational areas consistent with the existing land use, there is minimal information covering:

- Groundcover management and site rehabilitation during and post construction.
- Any subdivisions or land acquisitions, eg for substations and offsets, below the MLS should not result in extra dwelling entitlements.

The Construction Environmental Management Plan needs to include a project wide Agricultural Biosecurity Plan.

The EIS also states that TransGrid does not prepare operational environmental management plans, instead relying on its “EMS with an Environmental Assessment Framework, which contains checklists, procedures, guidance notes and an *Environmental Handbook* to assess and manage the potential impacts of maintenance activities”. It is not clear how transparent this process will be for agency monitoring and or community scrutiny and how TransGrid’s EMS/Environmental Assessment Handbook would maintain alignment with DPHI approval requirements.

Therefore clarification is required about how the issues raised by the Department will be addressed during operations– eg the project wide Biosecurity Plan, decommissioning strategy, groundcover management and site rehabilitation during and post construction, etc.

Should you require clarification on any of the information contained in this response, please do not hesitate to contact me by email at landuse.ag@dpird.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

LParker

Lilian Parker
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Signed 29 August 2025