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27 August 2025

The Team Leader
Planning and Assessment Division
Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure
Locked Bag 5022
PARRAMATTA NSW 2124

By Major Projects Portal

EPA Advice on Environmental Impact Statement – Victoria to NSW Interconnector West (VNI) – SSI-72887208

Dear Mr Ko

I am writing in response to your request for the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) to review the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed Victoria to NSW Interconnector West (VNI) (Application SSI-72887208), linking the Western Renewables Link proposal at Bulgana in Victoria with the Energy Connect project at the future Dinawan substation in NSW. In addition, the project includes line replacement works at Gregadoo in the Wagga Wagga Local Government Area.

The EPA has reviewed the following documents:

- Victoria to New South Wales Interconnector West (VNI West) (NSW), Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Main Volume – WSP Australia Pty Ltd - July 2025;
- Victoria to New South Wales Interconnector West (VNI West) (NSW), Technical Paper 7 – Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment – WSP Australia Pty Ltd – July 2025;
- Victoria to New South Wales Interconnector West (VNI West) (NSW), Technical Paper 9 – Hydrology, Flooding and Water Quality Impact Assessment – WSP Australia Pty Ltd – July 2025;
- Victoria to New South Wales Interconnector West (VNI West) (NSW), Technical Paper 10 – Groundwater Impact Assessment – WSP Australia Pty Ltd – July 2025;
- Victoria to New South Wales Interconnector West (VNI West) (NSW), Technical Paper 15 – Air Quality Impact Assessment – WSP Australia Pty Ltd – July 2025;
- Victoria to New South Wales Interconnector West (VNI West) (NSW), Technical Paper 16 – Greenhouse Gas Assessment – WSP Australia Pty Ltd – July 2025; and
- Victoria to New South Wales Interconnector West (VNI West) (NSW), Technical Paper 17 – Contaminated Land Impact Assessment – WSP Australia Pty Ltd – July 2025.

NSW Environment Protection Authority

As the environmental steward and regulator of our State we are committed to a sustainable future. Join us on our mission to protect tomorrow together.

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The EPA understand the proposal is for:

- Transmission line works comprising:
 - A new 500 kV double circuit overhead transmission line around 240 km in length between the NSW/Victoria border near Murrabit, and the future Dinawan substation;
 - Replacement of around nine kilometres of an existing 330 kV single circuit overhead transmission line (Line 51), generally between Ivydale Road (south of the existing Wagga 330 kV substation) and the future Gugaa 500 kV substation, Livingstone Gully Road with a new 330 kV double circuit overhead transmission line.
- Substation works comprising:
 - Connection and line diversion works at the future Dinawan substation to allow for connection of the proposed 500 kV switchyard;
 - Expansion of the future Dinawan substation to include a new 500 kV switchyard and two new 300 kV transformer bays;
 - Connection and line diversion work at the existing Wagga 330 kV substation and at the future Gugaa 500 kV substation to allow for connection to the newly replaced Line 51.
- Establishment of a new and/or upgraded temporary and permanent access tracks/roads;
- Provision of up to two telecommunications facilities (optical repeater sites) and associated connections to existing local electrical infrastructure; and
- Ancillary works required for construction of the project such as construction compounds, combined temporary worker accommodation facilities, utility connections and/or relocations, brake and winch sites, and helipad/helicopter support facilities.

Based on the information provided, the proposal does not appear to require an Environment Protection Licence under the *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997*. However, the proposal is being undertaken by an NSW public authority and therefore the EPA is the appropriate regulatory authority for the proposal.

Please note that as aspects of the project become more refined as part of the detailed design and construction process, the need for an Environment Protection Licence may be identified.

The EPA has reviewed the EIS and notes that it does not provide the information required to allow us to complete our assessment. The EPA has the following comments and recommendations

1. Matters to be addressed prior to determination

- a. Noise and Vibration Impacts – Combined temporary worker accommodation facilities and construction compounds

The EPA notes that the final location for the combined temporary worker accommodation facilities and construction compound in the Gregadoo area is yet to be finalised. The EPA note that the options – Gregadoo Road A (Wagga option 2), Gregadoo Road B (Wagga option 3) and Livingstone Gully Road (Wagga option 4) are all predicated to cause noise exceedances. Specifically impacts to five (5) receivers at Wagga option 2, three (3) receivers at Wagga 3 and four (4) receivers at Wagga option 4 during normal construction hours, and a significantly higher number of impacted receivers during outside of hours (OOH) works at options 2 and 3.

The EPA has significant concerns with the number of receivers in the vicinity of the proposed Gregadoo Road, Wagga A (Wagga option 2) during both construction and operation, with regards to noise and vibration impacts and recommends further assessment of options.

2. Matters to be addressed with conditions

b. Noise and Vibration Impacts – Enabling Works

The EPA recommends that during the enabling works phase the proponent develop site specific Noise and Vibration Management Plan (NVMP) for the construction of the combined temporary worker accommodation facilities that clearly outline the process for measuring and monitoring noise and blasting impacts at all nearby sensitive receptors to determine impacts. The Management Plan must also outline clear mitigation measures to be implemented should impacts be identified, including discussions around voluntary agreements.

The EPA also recommends that the proponent complete a noise compliance assessment report if ongoing noise complaints are received. The assessment must be prepared by a suitably qualified and experienced acoustical consultant and include:

- A measured assessment of noise impacts from the proposal;
- Details of recommended management actions and/or noise pollution controls required to be implemented; and
- Timeframes expected for implementing the controls.

Please note that if construction of the accommodation sites/compounds falls under the main contract, then site specific NVMP would then need to be included in the overall project NVMP as per below in 2c.

c. Noise and Vibration Impacts – Construction and Operation

The EPA notes that there are predicted noise exceedances during both the construction and operational phases at a number of sensitive receptors.

The EPA recommends that the proponent develop a Noise and Vibration Management Plan that clearly outlines the process for measuring and monitoring noise and blasting impacts at all nearby sensitive receptors to determine impacts. The Management Plan must also outline clear mitigation measures to be implemented should impacts be identified, including discussions around voluntary agreements.

The EPA also recommends that the proponent complete a noise compliance assessment report if ongoing noise complaints are received. The assessment must be prepared by a suitably qualified and experienced acoustical consultant and include:

- A measured assessment of noise impacts from the proposal;
- Details of recommended management actions and/or noise pollution controls required to be implemented; and
- Timeframes expected for implementing the controls.


3. Minor matters

d. Cumulative Impacts

The EPA has concerns that the existing and proposed future operations at the Gregadoo Waste Management Centre have not been appropriately considered. The EPA recommends that the proponent consult further with Wagga Wagga City Council around these operations.

If you have any questions about this request, please contact Briohny Seaman via email at info@epa.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Briohny Seaman".

Briohny Seaman
Unit Head – Operations
NSW Environment Protection Authority