

ABN 70 250 995 390

180 Thomas Street, Sydney
PO Box A1000 Sydney South
NSW 1235 Australia
T (02) 9284 3000
F (02) 9284 3456

Friday, 2 August 2024

Julia Green
Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure
Planning and Assessment
4 Parramatta Square,
12 Darcy Street
Parramatta NSW 2124

Transgrid response to the EIS exhibition (EXH-73204707) for the Dinawan Wind Farm (SSD-50725708)

Dear Ms Green,

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) exhibition for the Dinawan Wind Farm (SSD- 50725708) referred on 12 July 2024 by the Applicant, Spark Renewables.

Transgrid builds and maintains the most important electricity network in Australia, providing the backbone of the National Electricity Market while supporting the transition to a cleaner energy future. It is currently developing and delivering several projects to enable the transition to renewable energy including Project Energy Connect (PEC) and the Victoria to NSW Interconnector West – known as VNI West.

The power system in eastern Australia is undergoing fundamental, rapid and complex change. The integration of renewable generation and adoption of innovative technologies continues to shift the characteristics of electricity supply and is essential to meet Australia's commitments to emissions reductions and achieve net zero by 2050. Transgrid supports the development of renewable energy projects.

Transgrid is delivering the Federal and State Government's vision for a clean energy future, building the required transmission "super-highway" infrastructure to connect these new renewable energy generation projects within government determined REZs (Renewable Energy Zones) to the grid which will transform the energy supply for millions of Australians.

Our major transmission projects are a priority for Governments and for the nation and as such have been classified as Critical State Significant Infrastructure (CSSI) developments. The integration of renewables will secure and strengthen the electricity network and enable greater sharing between NSW, ACT, Victoria, South Australia and Queensland.

Transgrid is the proponent for the NSW component of the Victoria to NSW Interconnector West (VNI West) project which is a proposed new 500 kV double circuit transmission line connecting the high voltage electricity grids in NSW and Victoria (refer to Figure 1).

The preferred route for the 500kV transmission line for VNI West (which is included in our EIS scoping report) runs through the NSW South-West REZ (Renewable Energy Zone) and

intersects with the Dinawan Energy Hub (refer to Figure 2). More details on VNI West can be found at: [Victoria to NSW Interconnector West | Transgrid](#).

VNI West is being jointly developed with Transmission Company Victoria and will connect major projects EnergyConnect in NSW and Western Renewables Link in Victoria.

The VNI West project will:

- Unlock and allow access to new renewable energy sources;
- Enable greater sharing of energy between NSW and Victoria;
- Improve reliability and security of electricity in NSW and Victoria;
- Benefit regional communities through jobs and support regional economic growth; and
- Help achieve renewable energy targets and the overall decarbonisation of the National Electricity Market (NEM), while continuing to deliver safe, reliable and affordable electricity to consumers.

VNI West was declared a CSSI project on 3 July 2024. The EIS scoping report and the EPBC (Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation) Referral application for the preferred route were lodged in May 2024. Draft SEARs (Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements) were issued in July 2024. Currently, VNI West is in the process of refining the EIS construction corridor (within this preferred route), and the EIS preparation is underway. More details on the VNI West scoping report can be found at: [Victoria to NSW Interconnector West | Planning Portal - Department of Planning and Environment](#).

Transgrid has reviewed the EIS exhibition for the Dinawan Wind Farm and requests that the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (the Department) require that Spark Renewables gives due consideration to Transgrid's VNI West double circuit 500kV transmission line EIS preferred route which crosses the Spark Renewables proposed Eastern Area (Stage 1) (refer to Figure 2 below). More specifically, Transgrid requests that the Department require Spark Renewable to provide any necessary easement for access, construction, operation, and maintenance of this vital transmission infrastructure. This will enable the preferred route for the VNI West transmission line and ensure the Dinawan Substation site does not become land locked and unable to deliver the transmission capacity that is necessary for interconnection with Victoria and the transfer of energy generated in the South West REZ, to the benefit of this and other SW REZ renewable energy generation proponents.

Transgrid has completed an extensive route selection process with the community and government authorities to find a route that has the least impact on multiple factors including environment (biodiversity, waterways, and heritage) and agricultural land use. It is, therefore, extremely important that the Department provides assurance that the preferred routes resulting from this extensive and sensitive process are protected, and current and future renewable energy proponents work closely and collaboratively with Transgrid to ensure the protection of Transgrid's preferred easements.

Transgrid is currently working with another renewable energy project where our preferred route was not considered in the layout during the EIS phase. This has required Transgrid to work with this proponent to seek to rectify this situation post EIS approval. Transgrid wishes to ensure that this unfortunate and considerably more challenging situation does not reoccur with the Dinawan Wind Farm.

Not addressing this increases the risk that such important transmission projects are further delayed, therefore jeopardising the federal and state governments' commitment to their renewable energy transition strategy.

In line with the above, Transgrid requests that the Department require that Spark Renewables must consider the design and planning of the Transgrid VNI West project and work collaboratively with Transgrid to ensure the design of the Dinawan Wind Farm does not preclude the VNI West project from being developed and delivered to realise the maximum benefits for electricity consumers.

Transgrid respectfully requests that the Department consider including the following conditions of approval for the Dinawan Wind Farm EIS:

- Spark Renewables must work collaboratively with Transgrid in relation to electricity transmission network requirements as part of the planning, design, construction, and commissioning of the project and work with Transgrid to ensure any necessary easements across the Dinawan Wind Farm project site are created and protected to facilitate the access, construction, operation, and maintenance of the 500kV double circuit transmission line. The Department must be assured that any agreed Transgrid easement has been allocated and protected by the proponent prior to any approval.
- **Spark Renewables must take into consideration the Energy Networks Australia Guideline for Wind Turbines Proximity to Electricity Transmission Lines (ENA DOC 047-2022) which lays out required safe clearance distances between wind turbines and electricity transmission lines, notably the proposed VNI-W and PEC 500kV transmission line alignments.**
- Spark Renewables must give due consideration to potential cumulative environmental impacts.

On request, Transgrid can participate in a meeting with Spark Renewables to further discuss the potential design interactions between the Dinawan Wind Farm and VNI West projects.

Transgrid reaffirms its support to renewable energy projects such as the one proposed. Transgrid commits to working with Spark Renewables to obtain the best outcomes for Spark Renewables, Transgrid and the electricity consumers of New South Wales.

Lastly, in the interests of transparency, until approximately October 2023 Spark Renewables was a wholly owned subsidiary of Spark Infrastructure which is, in turn, a securityholder of Transgrid. However, in approximately October 2023 Spark Renewables was acquired by a third party, being Tenaga Nasional Berhad and, as a result of that change of ownership, there is no longer any ownership connection between Spark Renewables and Transgrid.

Thank you for your consideration of our submission. Please feel free to contact Transgrid's Project Director should you have any questions.

Colin Mayer
Major Project Delivery Director – VNI West | Major Projects
M: 0407 297 103
E: Colin.Mayer@transgrid.com.au

Yours sincerely,

JC Mayer

Colin Mayer

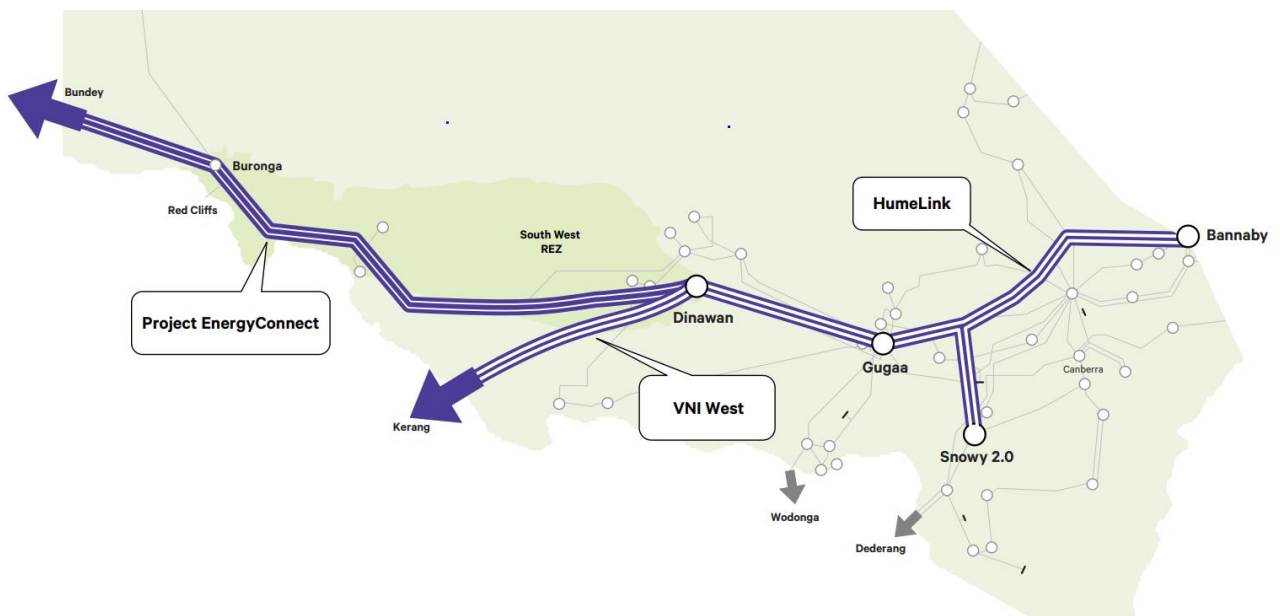


Figure 1 Regional context of VNI West project location

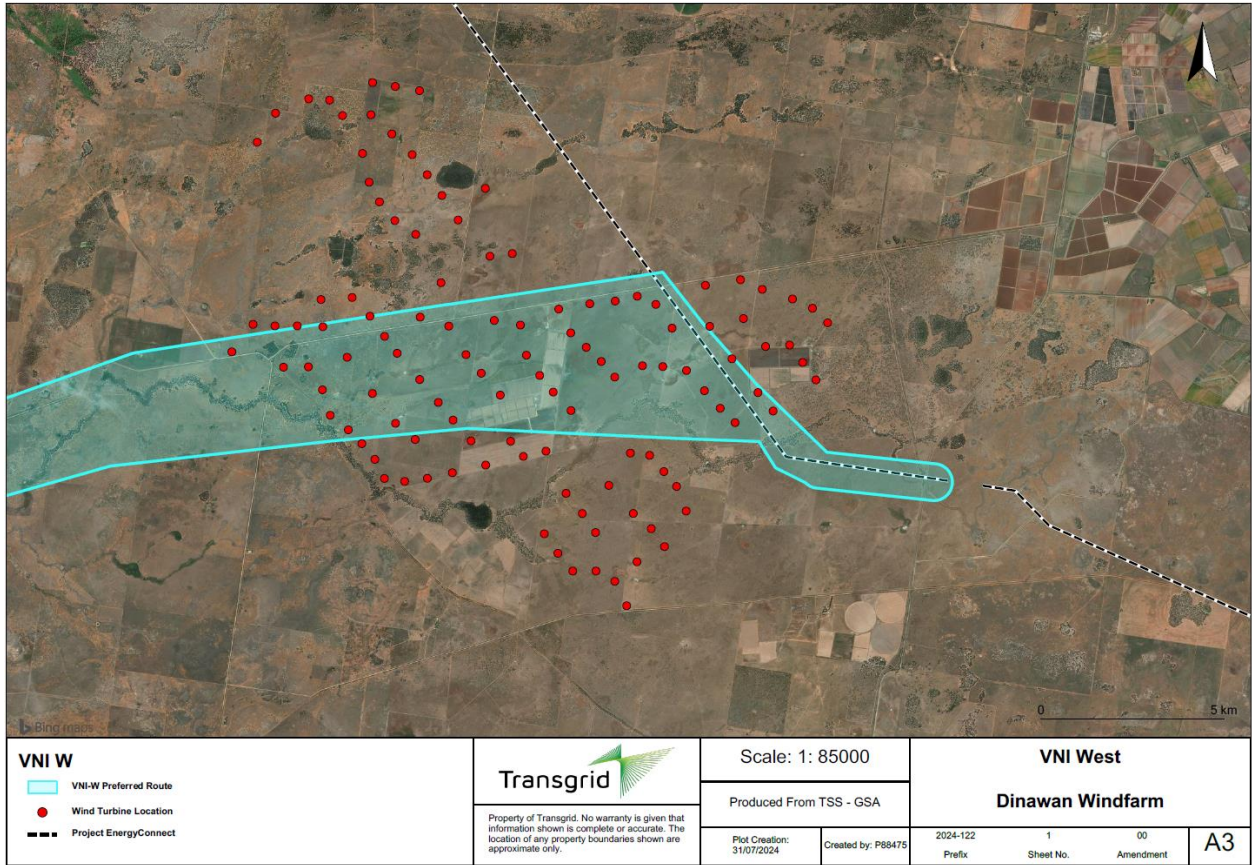


Figure 2 VNI West current preferred route