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Director – Energy Assessments,
Development Assessment,
Department of Planning and Environment,
4 Parramatta Square,
12 Darcy Street,
Parramatta NSW 2150

Dear Sir/Madam,

**SUBMISSION IN RESPONSE TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
OF THE HUMELINK PROJECT – SSI-36656827**

I hereby submit this response to the Humelink Environmental Impact Statement Report.

I object to the Humelink proposal on several grounds, as follows:

- **SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE IMPACTS, VISUAL, AUDIO, ECONOMIC, AND FAMILY SUCCESSION PLANNING**
- **SUBSTANTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL DAMAGE**
- **INADEQUATE CONSULTATION AND ASSESSMENT**
- **FAILURE TO REVISE ALTERNATIVE ROUTES WITH LESSER ADVERSE IMPACTS WITHIN THE ORIGINAL CORRIDOR**

INTRODUCTION

I live and work every day on our property, Cowridge. I am eighty-four years young. My husband John Betts (Dec.2005) was born in the old homestead on Cowridge in 1935, before any powerlines existed.

He was a genuine, compassionate man and well known in the Yass region and beyond. John was proactive in many fields volunteering his time to teach and help others. John supported the inception of the Landcare networks, seeing the desperate need for more care for land and

waterways. John and business partner were the first to develop and trial, direct seed machines, then developing native grass seed harvesters, a business selling native grass seed. John was on many committees, one being the Upper Murrumbidgee Catchment Management. He volunteered many hours at field days and workshops, he was many years in the local bushfire leadership and his lifetime devotion to the wool industry, producing wool, and teaching wool classing. His legacy lives on today.

Cowridge was a portion of 'Bellevale' The Hume/Barbour Families very large landholding since the 1850's. My Grandchildren are the 5th generation growing up on Cowridge.

My family's agricultural business is a fine wool merino sheep and meat primary production, producing and exporting natural wool fibre. The family records will show a deep love and connection to the land. It is an ingrained ambition and commitment to be care takers of the land for our lifetimes, to improve the land and environment and to pass it on to the next generation in a better condition, always striving to make a difference. It is long-term commitment.

Perhaps today we are too impatient, it is forgotten, how slow time is, when you stand under the one hundred- or two-hundred-year-old tree and marvel at its resilience, its deep-rooted connection to the earth. It is sad we have lost true values, in what makes this world a happier and healthy mother earth. Today is focused on short-term values for energy hungry material things we think we need.

After the fact, when all the good is undone and destroyed, we humans are adding to the endangered list every day with bad decisions, the full impact is a heavy burden for our younger general to inherit and to live with.

This case in point is directed at Transgrid. The Humelink project is very determined to take and destroy at maximum speed, take the cheapest option, and with little care for the long-term consequences.

We are not an easy walk-over, it appears we have been targeted as a convenient larger property holding to make the Humelink project a 'tiny bit' cheaper, with unreasonable claims why Transgrid are comfortable knowing what they are destroying is not acceptable in today's climate change crisis. **The right solutions are not always the cheapest.**

Transgrid have misread the landholder's commitment, love of their country, industry, homes, and determination to protect which we are invested in.

I cannot tell you how proud I am of my daughter, Mary-Jane, who has clear focus with high values ensuring my grand-children's future will be equally strong and resilient. Working towards and, maintaining a viable agricultural business and contributing a long-term environmental biodiversity plan that currently engages close to one third of our property.

I despair watching my daughter suffer undue stress and frustration, in her unwavering fight for environmental protection and upholding our strong values for the amazing biodiversity we are privileged to live with, and care take.

This is not what I wish to be experiencing in my latter half of my lifetime.

1. SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE IMPACTS, VISUAL, AUDIO, ECONOMIC AND FAMILY SUCCESSION PLANNING

- **Damage to generational family business.** Significantly devalued property and compromised agricultural management of generational sheep and wool business. Alignment of eight transmission towers, 75m high, four tiers of cables, 70m cleared easement, severing 3.1km through a scenic, working rotational grazing property.
- **HIGH IMPACT- Animal husbandry, sheep yards and semi-truck loading zone.** The infrastructure will be highly disruptive and damaging to farming operations, high volume sheep movements and animal husbandry practices.
- Long working hours yarding livestock.
- High impact for all agricultural practices with the base of a 75m tower at 50 x 70m (Ref: EIS construction) CROSSING an existing 132kv 99M line (which is to be doubled in capacity-Coppabella wind turbines) on a 70m easement located on the edge of the sheep yards. This is the worst location for a tower.
- High impact of semi-truck loading and turning zone
- Surrounding paddocks are lambing paddocks
- Surrounding paddocks are tree lined, for seasonal climate shelter and lambing protection. We will expect higher lambing losses.
- **VISUAL HIGH IMPACT**
- **AUDIO HIGH IMPACT** disturbances for sheep yard work and livestock yarded for long working hours.
- Livestock camps and lambing paddocks under towers and lines will cause audio disturbances and potential injuries to yarded livestock.
- **STRUCTURE HIGH PERMANENT IMPACT**
- The health of the livestock held in yards for long hours (24 hours), personnel working with livestock for long hours and frequency of animal husbandry practices.
- **Increased bushfire risk to catastrophic and extreme ratings.** Impossible Aerial water bombing due to overhead transmission lines. Extreme steep difficult terrain has no safe access for ground RFS crews and vehicles.
- **Constructional damages to water supply.** All the property is self-sufficient in water with an extensive pipeline system from large dams, solar pumped to large cement tanks which gravity feed 28 stock water troughs. This system will be damaged in the construction process. The large 120kl cement tank in on the edge of easement.

Positioned on a high rocky area, is critical no earth movements by blasting footings and foundations occur. (Ref: EIS, construction)

- **High impact aerial weed management** - Annual and occasionally biannual invasive weed control throughout steep terrain only accessible by HELICOPTER VOID. The helicopter pad is central to our property management, The helicopter pad next to the large cement 120kl tank. The highest point on our property.
- **No achievable prospects for future development**. Family invested, succession plan for diversified enterprises is NULL and VOID. Currently developing, 2018, public walking tracks and Eco-lodge (lodged Yass Valley Council, is on hold pending the disastrous outcome of Humelink proposed route) as a regional and environmental attraction featuring the Derringullen Falls.
- **SUBDIVISION BLOCKS. VISUAL AND AUDIO IMPACT**. Three blocks are adversely affected with the dominant overhead transmission line crossing over the Black Range Road. The first blocks boundary on the easement. Significant de-valued blocks impacting the succession family plan and future developments.

2. SUBSTANTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL DAMAGE

Irreversible Environment Destruction, loss of habitat, ecology, and biodiversity. Damages effecting over sixty years of conversational tree planting to create long-term protection of Yass River Derringullen Falls and Waterway with the critical role in protecting the biodiversity, natural and historical heritage of the area.

Our generational family has taken the initiative and managed the property with the forward planning proactive opportunities combining successful and profitable alliance with increasing land conservation and revegetation projects, implementing climate change practices with primary production, producing a natural, 'green' product fine merino wool.

We continue to learn and set goals to achieve the highest values, ethics and aesthetics with agriculture and land conservation.

- **Devastation of birdlife, flora and fauna**. Wildlife corridors of Raptor Birdlife including Wedgetail and Little Eagles will be permanently damaged.
- **Demolition of culturally sensitive Ngunnawal areas**. Declaring rights to conserve Indigenous Protected Areas including a Women's Area within Derringullen Falls NULLIFIED. High impact of visually dominating towers and lines. Noise impact destroying the natural ambience and 'un-touched' experience of this sacred site.

3. INADEQUATE CONSULTATION AND ASSESSMENT

To three years of correspondence with Transgrid regarding acquisition and the assumption of authority. We have persisted asking for the relevant and critical construction information. With 3.1 km, 8 towers at 75m high, clearing a 70m easement, this is a significant infrastructure and walk-over disruption over much of our property.

The answers to our questions have only just been revealed via the EIS, three years later. Absolutely disgraceful, now with a very small window of time to reply and submit our objections, but first, find the time to read through thousands of pages. Landholders are entitled to be angry, frustrated and locking the front gates.

I attended CCG meetings at Yass and Gundagai (we had to register for audience only) These meetings were conducted in overruling disregard of the consequences for landowners, their business, and those dwelling near powerlines, within the electronic field. The meetings of multiple, over-time paid employers across the project were well versed strategists for Transgrid. (One person even commented ‘well, we turned up, didn’t we...such an inconvenience to him indeed.)

We also attended (one) community meeting in the Yass memorial hall. This display was ridiculous. Not only is it our time off work, the multiple Transgrid employees stood around with only a few landholders able to attend. In our discussion the same questions we have been asking for two years still went unanswered. The ‘doozy’ Transgrid flaws, and valid criticism due, after been asked by Transgrid about our property, location of the waterfall and the boundaries, my daughter suggested we look at the map...Transgrid didn’t have one!

4. FAILURE TO REVISE ALTERNATE ROUTES WITH LESSER ADVERSE IMPACTS WITHIN THE ORIGINAL CORRIDOR

Our correspondence relates to the assumption of acquisition upon a line drawn on a satellite map. Our gates are locked until an appropriate environmental assessment is made and re-assessment made for our justified multiple reasons for re-alignment. Our property cannot endure nor accept the HIGH IMPACT ISSUES. Our insisting for a more appropriate ground survey taking part of the two adjoining neighbours, on the north bounding Transgrid corridor. I cannot help feeling Transgrid targeted my daughter and I, as an easy push over target.

Our issue from 2020, RE-ALIGNMENT ASSESSMENT. –

- We had requested for two years, a surveyor, mapping team member or structural engineer come on-site to understand our urgent call to re-align before the project progresses too far. On-ground site assessment compared to satellite maps is vastly different in reality Transgrid did not oblige us with this request but instead offered to bring their land valuer on-site.
- Clearly Transgrid have not listened, intentionally replied with generic and false statements.
- The last correspondence of May 2023, replying they did not want to go through two neighbours that Transgrid would incur more expense. Our reply,

1. The two neighbours were in the original corridor. This infrastructure goes through their back paddocks. One will see the line, as we all will, crossing the Black Range Road, the other will not see the line at all. A much lower impact.
2. The indicated re-alignment line does not go outside of the original wider corridor.
3. Overall greater benefits for; -
 - Less environmental impact, less tree clearing overall
 - 70m easement accessible for heavy machinery construction,
 - Crosses the Derringullen Creek at the narrowest point
 - Crosses the Black Range Road at the narrowest point
 - Crosses the 132kv 99M line in a clear open flat paddock with safe level construction access both sides of the two lines.
 - The crossing of the 99M line does not have to be a 90-degree angle as evidence contradicts and annuls that Transgrid statement.
4. Transgrid has to absorb the cost of an extra bend as it is a one-off cost. Whereas the environment, biodiversity, ecological impact is permanently damaged. The better outcome, to avoid our conservation land, revegetation program and wildlife corridor will remain intact.
5. Avoids the contradiction in the EIS, a very large span over the Derringullen Creek waterway. Which cuts the conservation land in half, is death by electrocution to our raptor birdlife, particularly the Little Eagle (vulnerable) and the Wedge-tailed Eagle (protected) It is a heavy permanent price to pay.

I request a re-evaluation on environmental impact and question how 'green' the carbon footprint of the Humelink project is with construction material quality, alarming concerns for the longevity of steel quality having been compromised. Locally we have had transmission lines crumple at half the size. Huge footings – the volume of cement, water consumption alone is outrageous, these resources are limited. Our landscape and ecology cannot be sacrificed without repercussions. Endangered flora and fauna species added to the list.

I implore all governing bodies to re-assess projected massive destruction of the for renewable energy hungry nation we have become. **IN SUPPORT FOR UNDERGROUND TRANSMISSION LINES.**

Yours sincerely,



Mrs Nanette Betts



Magnificent ancient Yellow Box tree



Wedge-tailed Eagles nesting pair and tree
(Protected) -

Little eagle (Vulnerable) –

Death by electrocution.

The raptor birdlife cannot co-exist with
75m towers, 4 tiers of 24 cables.

Strung across the widest point and deepest
gorge of a waterway, Derringullen Creek

Cutting 110ha conservation in half, and
feature landmark
Derringullen Falls