

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

5/10/2023

Dear Sir/Madam,

**SUBMISSION IN RESPONSE TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT OF THE
HUMELINK PROJECT – APPLICATION NO SSI-36656827**

I hereby submit this response to the HumeLink Environmental Impact Statement report. I object to this project due to the following:

Land Use and Property Impact

Agricultural Impact – include aviation

Economic Impact

Bush Fire Risk and decreased ability to fight fires

Surface Water Impact – pollution & erosion

Landscape Character and Visual Impact and Noise and Vibration Impact – so close to house and main work areas

Trucks and building the towers will cause erosion to fragile soil, by the heavy machinery used for building of new roads then the construction of towers on steep hills on our land plus the much-increased traffic whilst building. We already have ten 330 kV towers on our property and there has been continuing erosion and weed infestation where these towers have been built. **The Humelink EIS is insufficient because it does not does not adequately address the issues of erosion and sedimentation for our property and our area.**

If this 500 kV transmission line is put underground, then further proposed lines could also be installed at the same time leading to much lower costs of construction and much less disruption to the land and people. A bit of forward thinking could save immeasurably in damage to land and people and the whole of Australia.

During construction the disruption to the stock, leading to less productivity from lower birth rates, mis-mothering and interference with our work schedules and activities so that we cannot look after our animals properly. **The Humelink EIS is insufficient because it does not does not adequately address these issues of agricultural practices and economic impact for our property and our area.**

Biosecurity will be affected by cross contamination by people and vehicles. This includes spreading of vectors such as ticks, to inland areas which currently do not have them. This affects the beef export industry as well as killing stock from diseases such as Theileria, as they do not have antibodies to fight the diseases. The threats of lumpy jaw, foot and mouth, and other diseases as well as lice and footrot. **The Humelink EIS is insufficient because it does not does not adequately address these issues of agricultural practices and economic impact for our property and our area.**

The biosecurity threat also involves the spreading of weeds to our land from other properties and especially from the weed nursery of the forestry land. Spreading of weeds such as Pattersons curse, St Johns's wort, fire weed and many others, for which it is expensive to buy chemicals and to pay for spraying and especially in our

hilly country where it is almost impossible to contain if the weeds are introduced here, so therefore spreading to all agricultural land in Australia. Our food producing capacity locally and for export is put in extreme danger. The spraying of chemicals is hazardous to the operators, the people living nearby and to the export meat market as overseas countries will not buy our meat if there is risk of contamination from chemicals. **The Humelink EIS is insufficient because it does not does not adequately address these issues of agricultural practices and economic impact for our property, our area, our industry and our country.**

Overseas customers of our product, meat, are not wanting meat from animals that have grazed close to power lines which will close the market for our product. **The Humelink EIS is insufficient because it does not does not adequately address these issues of agricultural practices and economic impact for our property, our area, our industry and our country.**

Their environmental impact statement is not correct because Transgrid will not be able to “mitigate” the noise, erosion, and other affects to us because of the terrain. On our property along the proposed 3.5 km line, it will be crossing 10 waterways with great risk of soil erosion and transport of sediment into waterways which cannot be “appropriately managed” because of the slope and the soil.

As we are so close to the lines 400 m from the house, we will be one of the closely affected families by noise levels and major visual impact which cannot be lessened and if more lines are put in in the future the levels will be increased. **The Humelink EIS Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment and Landscape Character and Visual Impact Assessments are insufficient because they do not does not adequately address how these issues will affect us.**

It means absolutely nothing when Transgrid says in their EIS they will mitigate, manage, take appropriate measures, use strategies, rectify, certain activities would have an insignificant effect, negligible risks, vegetation management to manage bushfire risks, emergency preparedness and response procedures, minimise risks. These are all abstract terms and these and many other terms might sound good but mean nothing. This extreme lack of specific language means the **Humelink EIS is insufficient because it is very subjective and does not prove correct conclusions or compel compliance.**

The Humelink Bushfire Risk Assessment in the EIS is totally insufficient. There will always be bushfires, some started by the lines and others by other causes but all bush firefighting activities will be impeded by the power lines. The critical time to stop bushfires is within the first few hours before the fire gets going and cannot be stopped. Transgrid did not help in any way during the catastrophic fire we had 2019-20; the forestry commission did not protect their forests, or us. The local volunteer firefighters are the ones that get straight to the fires and mostly put them out. Governments do not put out fires only firefighters and therefore the whole of the Australian population needs to be bushfire ready and many, many firefighters need to get to each fire quickly and not be impeded by the powerlines. If the lines went underground this could be achieved.

The Humelink EIS is totally insufficient because Bushfire Risk Assessment does not address the issues of how the construction and the operation of the transmission lines and structures will increase the risk of fire and significantly hinder the fighting of fires on our property and in our area. The EIS examines and assesses minimising risks for workers while building the lines but we are here and the risks for us are permanent. Permanently unable to get help during fires, risks to ourselves while trying to fight fires under the lines, risks because planes cannot come and help during fires. The bushfire was not controlled, partly because of lack of man-power, some of which was fighters who refused to come in under our present power line and the situation will be much worse for all aspects with the completion of more lines.

The erosion we suffered after the 2019/20 bushfires has been huge and irreparable. Hectares of ground have been lost, gullies, practically gorges, have been created and we can no longer get water for domestic purposes from the creeks and have to live on rainwater all year round even in dry summer and drought conditions. Our

pumps cannot function on the creek because of too much sediment in the water. We have had pumps repaired and broken again, new pumps and they have burnt out too. This will be much worse after during and after construction of the towers and **this is not considered or judged to be significant in the insufficient Surface Water and Groundwater Impact Assessment.**

Fire risk from commission towers of lines swinging together in high winds. This is how the fire near Bega in 2018 started. At least 3 lives were lost and over 500 houses on the south coast of NSW. 100's of stock were killed and many people suicided after being without houses for years. There are still people living in tents. There are many more living with trauma and still contemplating suicide BECAUSE OF THE LACK OF HELP DURING the fires.

Having gone through the horrifying fire 2019-20 and half our property being burnt and which our family and friends fought day and night for 15 days and saved our stock and the other half of the property, we are aware of the damage caused by fires for which it takes years to physically replace structures but the mental and emotional damage can never be fixed. With the transmission towers and lines nobody but ourselves and our neighbours will come anywhere near to fight fires and so we are put at greater risk fighting fires and as a small group it is unlikely that the fires will be stopped and will be let to burn across thousands of hectares with subsequent loss of life, human and animal, horrifying wounds to them too, and loss of flora and agricultural productivity.

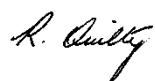
The greatest trauma suffered by us was when there were not enough people fighting the fire despite tankers and people standing by and they were just watching it burn. People must put out the fires for them to be stopped and if the towers and lines stop them fighting, it increases the fire risk and damage HUGELY.

The Humelink Bushfire Risk Assessment in the EIS is insufficient because it does not does not adequately address the issues of Bushfire risk for landholders and rural communities. And it has very specifically not assessed the impact of the Dunn's Road fire on our property and area. Maps referenced 16-19 are missing from the relevant report, further proof of inadequate care about the accuracy and quality of the assessment. Even though the Dunns Road fire started just kilometres away from our property.

I object to the Humelink Project.

- I acknowledge and accept the Department of Planning and Environment's disclaimer and declaration.
- Declaration of political donations: No. I have made no political donations.

Yours sincerely,



Robin Quilty