

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 – APPLICATION NO SSI-36656827**

I hereby submit this response to the HumeLink Environmental Impact Statement report.

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

My main points for your consideration,

- **Cultural & Heritage Concerns** – the proposed line will be very close to Mudjarn Nature reserve, the reserve is also known locally as “Pine Mountain” due the locally abundant Black Cypress Pine (*Callitris endlicherii*), which gives the reserve a very dark appearance and makes it stand out from other high points in the area.

Mudjarn Nature Reserve protects areas of remnant native forest, including small pockets of Yellow Box and Red Gum woodland, a component of the endangered White Box - Yellow Box - Blakely's Red Gum woodland community. Nine species of mammal, four frogs, seven reptiles and 153 species of bird have been recorded in the reserve, including six threatened bird species.

Mudjarn Nature Reserve also protects Aboriginal cultural heritage sites, landscapes and other features that have high significance to the local Aboriginal community. Whereas the valleys were a focus for living, the high peaks and hills are associated with ritual. Initiations are known to have occurred within the ranges and hills until the 1920s.

The towers are proposed to be a mere 20-50 m from the boundary of this significant area.

The NSW government need to be protecting areas with such significance from extra fire risk, placing towers this close is a huge risk and moving away or undergrounding needs considering.

HumeLink Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report EIS Technical Report 2 Page 237/432

10.1.2 Mudjarn Nature Reserve Mudjarn Nature Reserve is an Aboriginal place about 300 metres from the project. Mudjarn is associated with significant ceremonial sites, burials and a source of natural materials to manufacture traditional weapons and tools. It is the dwelling place of the spirit being Dulargul. Mudjarn represents the long-term occupation of the Wiradjuri, Ngunnawal and Walgalu of the Tumut River Valley. The distance of Mudjarn Nature Reserve from the project footprint means that the indirect visual impact to the significance of this site is assessed to be negligible.

HumeLink Historic Heritage Impact Assessment EIS Technical Report 3

Page 55 - Killimicat was the site of a timber beam bridge across the Tumut River, constructed in 1897, as well as a quarry.¹³⁴ In 2016 it had a population of 29, engaged primarily in grazing.¹³⁵

Figure 5-16 The Pine Mountain from Killimicat Hill on road from Tumut to Gundagai, sunset, 1881 ¹³⁶

I have read most of the reports and it is wonderful but the word negligible and indirect visual impact when the project is a mere 300metres and the towers are up to 75m tall the visual impact will be seen from the nature reserve, Pine Mountain and from the Brungle Road where we have many people stop to take picture and view the Nature Reserve. The area of amazing cultural and heritage significance. This is where the amenity and the visual changes happen, it will become a metal eye saw.



The Bushfire risk will be significantly higher for the nature reserve as the area is of high lightning strikes. We have lost many trees and some livestock over the past 25 years we have lived there. and the towers will increase the danger to this significant site. One which we need to preserve and the undergrounding of the HumeLink project could really be the best option for all involved.

- **Biosecurity Concerns** – The risks are a huge problem for all of the HumeLink project if the transmission lines are erected or buried, and considerations need to be taking into how the government will manage a huge outbreak of disease if caused from construction of the project. Eg Foot & mouth and Lumpy Skin. And weeds coming into the property.

Transgrid can't tell me how the project will ensure we don't have an outbreak. They are telling me to have a biosecurity Plan – I don't want the project. I shouldn't have to do their hard work.

They tell me that they will wash the vehicles at the gate of the property. Well – its on a hill and the water will wash into our property.

We haven't asked for this project. And we shouldn't have to do the work. The Property Management plans will have the details. again, TransGrid want me to write it me to do their work.

The mental health and extra burden of this project has caused me to become distressed and consequently I have been diagnosed with depression. I don't want to think about a disease coming to our place and the chance we will have to slaughter every animal.

- **Bushfire Concerns** – I am current a volunteering member of the Darlow Fire Brigade which I live and work, we were directly impacted in the 2019/20 Dunn's Road fire, where we lost 95% of my in-laws farm including the block we live on, and lost hundreds of head of livestock and countless amounts of trees shrubs not to mention wildlife and ecosystems.

Data shows that the bushfire risk is getting higher as the temperatures are rising with global warming, making towers and lines even more dangerous.

Outdated transmission tower technology significantly increases the risk of deadly bushfires and makes it harder to fight them, threatening lives, property and native animals.

HumeLink EIS Technical Report 13 – Bushfire Risk Assessment Report

Inside the report

1. Transgrid do not mention how us as land owners are able to control a bushfire if there is a fire.

2. They do not mention the hazard of their assets (overhead lines) and the increased risks to starting a fire in severe or adverse fire condition including weather.
 3. They mention that there are only 16 residents within 100m of the project footprint that are at public safety risks. **What about the livestock, infrastructure (hay sheds, machinery shed water tanks, cattle yards), Mudjarn National Park on our boundary, forestry also on another boundary, the list goes on- that we also have to protect. Not just houses. Transgrid don't see this as an issue.**
 4. The EIS states - Electrical faults in equipment can create high ignition risk to adjacent vegetation. The undergrounding would alleviate this happening.
 5. The towers could become a security risk to our homes and livelihood. If the towers were to be targeted in the future the country could be at risk.
 6. Mental health- as RFS member how can I sleep at night on a hot windy thunderstorm night thinking what if a fire starts and we can't go under the powerlines and the risk of losing animals. I have become depressed since the Dunns Road Fire in 2019/2020 when we had to shoot hundreds of sheep that were black, burnt and still alive. Why is the government letting people put overhead towers up when the technology is there to go underground and to keep people safe.
- The consultation and engagement – I work for my parents and Uncle and Aunt – I am the Office manager for the business – and I am the first point of contact for most people outside the business – when the original letter came – which I can show you we didn't get one for the other property. When we met with a Transgrid employee and he found this out he said "it is on the way" any way days later a letter arrived and after reading the letter I noticed that my phone number was used instead of the Land access officer. This story goes on, but not for me to type. I would prefer to speak to you on this matter as I would like to keep some privacy on this story.
 - The maps have been another story – The TransGrid maps that they gave us didn't correspond with the webpage maps. I raised this with the staff – next thing we know the map is inactive for months.
 - I then became a part of the CCG so I could follow this project and hope for the best outcome – which is undergrounding the project – and since being on the CCG It has become aware that Transgrid are not actively consulting the community – not engaging with dwelling who will have visible links to the transmission line. Not answering questions, not being honest. It has been terrible.

My list of objections goes on, but now I will leave it here. I would be willing to speak to anyone if needed on any one these matters.

We live and work on our family farm, we will have to go under these powerlines' multiple times a day.

And my 7-year-old daughter broke down in tears when I showed her the photo montage. Her family farm was ruined – "but mum why can't they put it underground" I was quick to tell her it was only a picture and as TransGrid told me after 2 years we wouldn't even notice it. Well, the mental strain and workload – it is noticed, my stress levels are elevated, and they still want me to prepare 4 property management plans,

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

Yours sincerely,

Jessie Reynolds