

Appendix A

**Secretary's Environmental Assessment
Requirements cross-reference**

Table A.1 Secretary's environmental assessment requirements cross-reference

Requirement	Item	Where addressed in EIS
General Requirements	The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the project must comply with the requirements in Schedule 2 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000 (EP&A Regulation). In particular, the EIS must include:	A checklist is provided in Appendix B
	> a stand-alone executive summary;	Executive Summary
	> a summary of the background to the project, including alternatives that were considered to the project;	Chapter 2 (Strategic context and need) and Chapter 3 (Proposal design development)
	> a full description of the project, accompanied by suitable maps and plans, including the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - disturbance area; - physical layout of the project over time, including sections of key components; - key uses and activities to be carried out on site; - likely timing of the project including any stages, the key phases within each stage (site preparation, construction, commissioning, operation, decommissioning and rehabilitation) and the sequencing of these stages and phases; 	Chapter 5 (Proposal intrastate and operation) and Chapter 6 (Proposal construction)
	> the relevant strategic context for the project, having regard to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - State legislation, policies and guidelines including current initiatives to improve energy security and reliability in the National Electricity Market; - any other existing, approved or proposed projects that could result in cumulative impacts with the project; 	Chapter 2 (Strategic context and need) and Chapter 22 (Cumulative impacts)

Requirement	Item	Where addressed in EIS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > the relevant statutory context for the project, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the assessment pathway for the project under the <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i>; - the approvals required before the project may be carried out; - any relevant matters for consideration; 	Section 1.4 and Appendix C.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > a description of the engagement that was carried out during the preparation of the EIS, the key issues raised during this engagement and the proposed engagement strategy for the project if it is approved; 	Chapter 7 (Stakeholder and community consultation)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > an assessment of the likely economic, social and environmental impacts of the project having regard to the requirements in any relevant Government legislation, policies and guidelines (see below), including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the state of the existing environment; - community views; - the measures that would be implemented to avoid or minimise impacts, including a consolidated summary of the proposed mitigation measures for the project; - the predicted impacts of the project, including any cumulative impacts; - actions proposed to deal with any uncertainties associated with the assessment 	Chapters 9 to 22
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > a detailed evaluation of the merits of the project as a whole 	Chapter 24 (Justification and conclusion)
	In addition to the matters set out in Schedule 1 of the EP&A Regulation, the EIS must be accompanied by a signed report from a suitably qualified person that includes an accurate estimate of the capital investment value of the project (as defined in Clause 3 of the EP&A Regulation).	Appendix E

Requirement	Item	Where addressed in EIS
Key issues		
Biodiversity	> an assessment of the biodiversity impacts of the project in accordance with the <i>NSW Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016</i> , the Biodiversity Assessment Method (BAM) and documented in a Biodiversity Development Assessment Report (BDAR).	Chapter 9 (Biodiversity) and Technical paper 1
	> the BDAR must document the application of the avoid, minimise and offset framework including assessing all direct, indirect and prescribed impacts in accordance with the BAM.	Chapter 9 (Biodiversity) and Technical paper 1
	> an assessment of the impacts of the project on aquatic ecology including impacts on key fish habitat and threatened species of fish	Chapter 9 (Biodiversity) and Technical paper 1
Heritage	> an assessment of the Aboriginal and historic heritage (cultural and archaeological) impacts of the project	Chapter 10 (Aboriginal heritage), Chapter 11 (Non-Aboriginal heritage) and Technical paper 2
	> adequate consultation with the local Aboriginal community and other relevant stakeholders, having regard to the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Consultation Requirements for Proponents (OEH, 2010)	Chapter 10 (Aboriginal heritage) and Technical paper 2
Water quality	> an assessment of the impacts of the project on the quantity and quality of the region's surface water resources, including the Murray River, the Darling, Great Darling Anabranch and Lake Victoria, having regard to NSW Water Quality Objectives	Chapter 15 (Hydrology, flooding and water quality) and Technical paper 6
	> details of water requirements, supply arrangements and wastewater disposal arrangements for construction and operation;	Chapter 15 (Hydrology, flooding and water quality), Chapter 20 (Soils, contamination and groundwater), Technical paper 6 and Technical paper 13

Requirement	Item	Where addressed in EIS
	> an assessment of the impacts of the project on groundwater aquifers and groundwater dependent ecosystems having regard to the NSW Aquifer Interference Policy and relevant Water Sharing Plans	Chapter 20 (Soils, contamination and groundwater) and Technical paper 13
	> an assessment of the potential flooding impacts and risks of the project	Chapter 15 (Hydrology, flooding and water quality) and Technical paper 6
Land	> an assessment of impacts of the project on soils and land capability of the site and surrounds	Chapter 12 (Land use and property), Chapter 20 (Soils, contamination and groundwater) and Technical paper 3
	> an assessment of the risk of soil contamination and disturbance of land associated with naturally occurring asbestos in the vicinity of the site	Chapter 20 (Soils, contamination and groundwater) and Technical paper 12
	> assessment of impact of the project on any Crown lands and travelling stock reserves	Chapter 12 (Land use and property) and Technical paper 3
Transport	> an assessment of the transport impacts of the project on the capacity, condition, safety and efficiency of the local and State road network	Chapter 18 (Traffic and transport) and Technical paper 9
	> details of the ongoing maintenance works required to service assets, outlining the measures to maintain the road network	Chapter 18 (Traffic and transport) and Technical paper 9
Amenity	> an assessment of the likely visual impacts of the development on surrounding residences, scenic or significant vistas, night lighting, air traffic and road corridors in the public domain	Chapter 13 (Landscape character and visual amenity) and Technical paper 4
	> an assessment of the construction, operational and road noise and vibration impacts of the project	Chapter 17 (Noise and vibration) and Technical paper 8
Air	> an assessment of the air quality impacts of the project	Chapter 16 (Air quality) and Technical paper 7

Requirement	Item	Where addressed in EIS
Hazards	> an assessment of potential hazards and risks associated with electric and magnetic fields (EMF) having regard to the latest advice of the Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency (ARPANSA)	Chapter 19 (Hazards and risk) and Technical paper 11
	> an assessment of the risks to public safety, paying particular attention to bushfire risks, emergency egress and evacuation, and the handling and use of any dangerous goods	Chapter 19 (Hazards and risk) and Technical paper 10
Waste	> identify, quantify and classify the likely waste streams to be generated during construction and operation, and describe the measures to be implemented to manage, reuse, recycle and safely dispose of this waste	Chapter 21 (Waste management and resource use)
Social and Economic	> including an assessment of the social and economic impacts and benefits of the project (including the workers accommodation facility) for the region and the State as a whole, including consideration of any increase in demand for community infrastructure and services	Chapter 14 (Social and economic) and Technical paper 5
Consultation	> during the preparation of the EIS, you should consult with the relevant local, State or Commonwealth Government authorities, service providers, community groups, affected landowners, Native Title holders, exploration licence holders, quarry operators and mineral title holders.	Chapter 7 (Stakeholder and community consultation) and Appendix D – Consultation outcomes report
	> if you do not lodge the EIS for the project within 2 years of the issue date of these requirements, you must seek revised requirements for the EIS for the project	The requirements were issued on 30 July 2020. The 2 year period has not expired.

Appendix A of the Secretary's environmental assessment requirements cross-reference

Guidelines for preparing assessment documentation relevant to the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act)* for proposals being assessed under the *NSW Assessment Bilateral*.

Project EnergyConnect (NSW – Western Section) (EPBC 2020/8673)

Table A.2 details the response to requirements detailed in Appendix A of the SEARs, which commences from Paragraph 5 onwards. Paragraphs 1 to 4 outlines an introduction to the controlled action.

Table A.2 Appendix A of the Secretary's environmental assessment requirements cross-reference

Requirement	Paragraph	Where addressed in EIS
Relevant regulations	5. The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) must address all matters outlined in Schedule 4 of the <i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Regulations 2000</i> (Cth) and all matters outlined below in relation to the controlling provisions.	<p>The below provides a checklist against the matters outlined in Appendix A of the SEARs.</p> <p>Appendix A of the SEARs duplicates, in part, some provisions of Schedule 4 of the <i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Regulations 2000</i> (Cth) (the EPBC Regulations). This checklist identifies the provisions of that Regulation not covered by the matters specifically identified in Appendix A of the SEARs.</p>
Project description (Clause 1 and Clause 2 of Schedule 4 of the EPBC Regulations)	<p>6. The title of the action, background to the action and current status</p> <p><u>Additional provisions of Schedule 4 of the EPBC Regulations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Clause 1, Schedule 4 of the EPBC Regulations also requires the following: > the full name and postal address of the designated proponent > a clear outline of the objective of the action > the consequences of not proceeding with the action. 	<p>The title of the action (being EnergyConnect (NSW – Western Section)) and details of the proponent are available in the Certification page of the EIS.</p> <p>This EIS seeks approval for the action.</p> <p>The objectives of the proposal are outlined in Section 1.2.2 of the EIS.</p> <p>The consequences of not proceeding with the proposal is outlined in Section 2.6 of the EIS.</p>
	7. the precise location and description of all works to be undertaken (including associated offsite works and infrastructure), structures to be built or elements of the action that may have impacts on MNES	<p>A description of the proposal is provided in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 of the EIS. The assessment considers an indicative disturbance area as described in Chapter 8 of the EIS.</p> <p>Further description is provided in sections 1.6, 7, 9.9 and Appendix E of Technical paper 1.</p>

Requirement	Paragraph	Where addressed in EIS
	<p>8. how the action relates to any other actions that have been, or are being taken in the region affected by the action</p>	<p>The proposal is part of EnergyConnect, which would be constructed in progressive sections. A description of the South Australian Section, the Victorian Section and the NSW – Eastern Section is provided in Chapter 1 of the EIS. The South Australian Section (referral reference no 2019/6468) and the NSW – Eastern Section (referral reference no 2020/8766) were determined to be separate controlled actions.</p> <p>This action (being the proposal) is a standalone action which would have distinct potential impacts that would not change due to development of any subsequent sections of EnergyConnect. Further:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > EnergyConnect has been divided by its different jurisdictions, except in NSW. The proposal is able to operate independently of the NSW – Eastern Section, and subsequent sections of EnergyConnect would be geographically distinct to the proposal (the action) > the other components of EnergyConnect would be subject to separate assessments and approvals once the details of the other sections are more developed. Assessing both sections of EnergyConnect in NSW or any other sections as a combined project would not change the assessment on relevant Matters of National Environmental Significance (MNES) compared to assessing as separate projects. Relevant MNES for subsequent sections of EnergyConnect are expected to be different and not of a cumulative nature to the MNES relevant to the currently proposed action.

Requirement	Paragraph	Where addressed in EIS
	<p>9. How the works are to be undertaken and design parameters for those aspects of the structures or elements of the action that may have relevant impacts on MNES</p>	<p>A description of the proposal is provided in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 of the EIS. The assessment considers an indicative disturbance area as described in Chapter 8 of the EIS.</p> <p>Further description is provided in Sections 1.6, 7, 9.9 and Appendix E of Technical paper 1.</p>
<p>Impacts (Clause 3 of Schedule 4 of the EPBC Regulations)</p>	<p>10. The EIS must include an assessment of the relevant impacts of the action on the matters protected by the controlling provisions, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > a description and detailed assessment of the nature and extent of the likely direct, indirect and consequential impacts, including short term and long term relevant impacts > a statement whether any relevant impacts are likely to be unknown, unpredictable or irreversible > analysis of the significance of the relevant impacts > any technical data and other information used or needed to make a detailed assessment of the relevant impacts. <p>For this requirement, Appendix A defines relevant impacts as those impacts likely to significantly impact on any matter protected under the EPBC Act.</p>	<p>The BDAR concludes that based on full and comprehensive seasonal targeted survey data, that no MNES are likely to be significantly impacted, so this factor does not strictly apply.</p> <p>However, for consideration, further description is provided in Sections 1.6, 7, 9, 10 and Appendix E of Technical paper 1 in relation to these factors.</p>

Requirement	Paragraph	Where addressed in EIS
<p>Avoidance, mitigation and offsetting</p> <p><i>(Clause 4 of Schedule 4 of the EPBC Regulations)</i></p>	<p>11. For <u>each</u> of the relevant matters protected that are likely to be significantly impacted by the action, the EIS must provide information on proposed avoidance and mitigation measures to manage the relevant impacts of the action including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – a description, and an assessment of the expected or predicted effectiveness of the mitigation measures – any statutory policy basis for the mitigation measures – the cost of the mitigation measures – an outline of an environmental management plan that sets out the framework for continuing management, mitigation and monitoring programs for the relevant impacts of the action, including any provisions for independent environmental auditing – the name of the agency responsible for endorsing or approving each mitigation measure or monitoring program. 	<p>The BDAR concludes that based on full and comprehensive seasonal targeted survey data, that no MNES are likely to be significantly impacted, so this factor does not strictly apply.</p> <p>Avoidance measures are discussed in Section 8 of Technical paper 1.</p> <p>Also for consideration, further relevant description is provided in Sections 1.6, 7, 9, 10 and Appendix E of Technical paper 1 in relation to these factors.</p> <p>A consolidated list of mitigation measures is provided in Section 23.1 of the EIS. Section 11 of Technical paper 1 summarises the mitigation measures specific to the biodiversity assessment</p>
	<p><u>Additional provisions of Schedule 4 of the EPBC Regulations</u></p> <p>Clause 4, Schedule 4 of the EPBC Regulations also requires the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > a consolidated list of mitigation measures proposed to be undertaken to prevent, minimise or compensate for the relevant impacts of the action, including mitigation measures proposed to be taken by State governments, local governments or the proponent 	

Requirement	Paragraph	Where addressed in EIS
	12. Where a significant residual adverse impact to a relevant protected matter is considered likely, the EIS must provide information on the proposed offset strategy, including discussion of the conservation benefit associated with the proposed offset strategy	<p>Technical paper 1 (the BDAR) concludes that based on full and comprehensive seasonal targeted survey data, that no MNES are likely to be significantly impacted, so this factor does not strictly apply.</p> <p>Nevertheless, all impacts of the project will be offset via the application of the Biodiversity Assessment Method (BAM) for the recorded MNES. The BAM is the approved method required to be implemented under the bilateral process.</p>
	<p>13. for each of the relevant matters likely to be impacted by the action the EIS must provide reference to, and consideration of, relevant Commonwealth guidelines and policy statements including any:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – conservation advice or recovery plan for the species or community – relevant threat abatement plan for the species or community – wildlife conservation plan for the species – any strategic assessment 	Refer to Section 9.9 and Appendix E of Technical paper 1.
	14. In addition to the general requirements described above, specific information is required with respect to each of the determined controlling provisions. These requirements are outlined in paragraphs 15-17.	Refer to responses to requirements 15-17 below.
Biodiversity	15. The EIS must identify each EPBC Act listed threatened species and community and migratory species likely to be impacted by the action. For any species and communities that are likely to be impacted, the proponent must provide a description of the nature, quantum and consequences of the impacts. For species and communities potentially located in the project area or in the vicinity that are not likely to be impacted, provide evidence why they are not likely to be impacted	Refer to Sections 1.6, 7, 9, 10 and Appendix E of Technical paper 1 in relation to these factors.

Requirement	Paragraph	Where addressed in EIS
	<p>16. For <u>each</u> of the EPBC Act listed threatened species and communities and migratory species likely to be impacted by the action the EIS must provide a separate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – description of the habitat (including identification and mapping of suitable breeding habitat, suitable foraging habitat, important populations and habitat critical for survival), with consideration of, and reference to, any relevant Commonwealth guidelines and policy statements including listing advice, conservation advice and recovery plan – details of the scope, timing and methodology for studies or surveys used and how they are consistent with (or justification for divergence from) published Australian Government guidelines and policy statements – description of the relevant impacts of the action having regard to the full national extent of the species or community's range – description of the specific proposed avoidance and mitigation measures to deal with relevant impacts of the action – identification of significant residual adverse impacts likely to occur after the proposed activities to avoid and mitigate all impacts are taken into account – a description of any offsets proposed to address residual adverse significant impacts and how these offsets will be established – details of how the current published NSW Biodiversity Assessment Method (BAM) has been applied in accordance with the objects of the EPBC Act to offset significant residual adverse impacts 	<p>These factors have specifically been considered in Appendix E of Technical paper 1.</p>

Requirement	Paragraph	Where addressed in EIS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – details of the offset package to compensate for significant residual impacts including details of the credit profiles required to offset the action in accordance with the BAM and/or mapping and descriptions of the extent and condition of the relevant habitat and/or threatened communities occurring on proposed offset sites 	
	<p>17. Any significant residual impacts not addressed by the BAM may need to be addressed in accordance with the EPBC Act 1999 Environmental Offset Policy. http://www.environment.gov.au/epbc/publications/epbc-act-environmental-offsets-policy.</p>	<p>Technical paper 1 (the BDAR) concludes that based on full and comprehensive seasonal targeted survey data, that no MNES are likely to be significantly impacted, so this factor does not strictly apply.</p> <p>Nevertheless, all impacts of the project will be offset via the application of the Biodiversity Assessment Method (BAM) for the recorded MNES. The BAM is the approved method required to be implemented under the bilateral process.</p> <p>Any biodiversity offsets will be provided in accordance with the EPBC Act 1999 Environmental Offset Policy.</p>

Requirement	Paragraph	Where addressed in EIS
Other approvals and conditions	<p>18. Information in relation to any other approvals or conditions required must include the information prescribed in Schedule 4 Clause 5 (a) (b) (c) and (d) of the EPBC Regulations 2000.</p> <p><u>Provisions of Schedule 4 of the EPBC Regulations</u></p> <p>Clause 5, Schedule 4 of the EPBC Regulations requires the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > details of any local or State government planning scheme, or plan or policy under any local or State government planning system that deals with the proposed action, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – what environmental assessment of the proposed action has been, or is being, carried out under the scheme, plan or policy – how the scheme provides for the prevention, minimisation and management of any relevant impacts <p>(clause 5.01a)</p>	<p>This EIS presents the environmental impact assessment to support the application for the proposal under Division 5.2, Part 5 of the EP&A Act. The status of the NSW planning approval process is summarised in Section 1.4 of the EIS. A determination from the NSW Minister for Planning and Public Spaces will be required in addition to an approval under the EPBC Act.</p> <p>Other approvals, licences or permits required under NSW legislation is summarised in Appendix C of this EIS.</p> <p>Other than the EIS, no other environmental assessment has been, or is being carried out for the project for the purpose of any local or state plan or policy.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > a description of any approval that has been obtained from a State, Territory or Commonwealth agency or authority (other than an approval under the Act), including any conditions that apply to the action <p>(clause 5.01b)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > a statement identifying any additional approval that is required <p>(clause 5.01c)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > a description of the monitoring, enforcement and review procedures that apply, or are proposed to apply, to the action <p>(clause 5.01d).</p>	<p>A brief description of monitoring, enforcement and review processes is provided in Section 23.1 of the EIS. Environmental management system (EMS) of the construction contractor and TransGrid are accredited under ISO 14001:2015. The procedures during construction would be further detailed in the Construction Environmental Management Plan. Operational management of the proposal would be under TransGrid's Environmental Management System, and associated procedures.</p>

Requirement	Paragraph	Where addressed in EIS
Environmental record of person proposing to take the action	<p>19. Information in relation to the environmental record of a person proposing to take the action must include details as prescribed in Schedule 4 Clause 6 of the EPBC Regulations 2000.</p> <p><u>Provisions of Schedule 4 of the EPBC Regulations</u></p> <p>Clause 6, Schedule 4 of the EPBC Regulations requires the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Details of any proceedings under a Commonwealth, State or Territory law for the protection of the environment or the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources against: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the person proposing to take the action; and – for an action for which a person has applied for a permit, the person making the application <p>(clause 6.01a)</p> > If the person proposing to take the action is a corporation—details of the corporation’s environmental policy and planning framework. <p>(clause 6.01b)</p>	Refer to the detail provided below this table.
Information sources	<p>For information given in an EIS, the EIS must state the source of the information, how recent the information is, how the reliability of the information was tested; and what uncertainties (if any) are in the information.</p>	<p>Technical paper 1 was prepared by suitably qualified and accredited ecologists based on comprehensive seasonal targeted field surveys and reviews of relevant publicly available desktop sources. As such, the level of reliability is high. Internal reviews by expert ecologists were undertaken to ensure the reliability of the information and no uncertainties exist.</p> <p>A table presenting the information sources and the associated required details is presented in Technical paper 1 (References section).</p>

Environmental record of person proposing to take the action

TransGrid has a consistent record of proactively seeking environmental approvals where required and ensuring that any commitments or conditions placed on activities as a result of these approval processes are adhered to.

In 2001, TransGrid was subject to proceedings under State Environmental laws for clearing vegetation in the vicinity of transmission lines. TransGrid subsequently invested \$5 million toward site rehabilitation. Since the 2001 incident, TransGrid has not been subject to any proceedings under a Commonwealth, State or Territory law for the protection of the environment or the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources.

TransGrid is committed to conducting its activities and services in a manner that minimises pollution and complies with relevant environmental legislation, industry standards and codes of practice. TransGrid implores all employees and contractors to stop and consider the potential impact to the environment from their activities.

TransGrid aim to enhance their systems and processes in a manner that promotes continuous improvement in environmental management and which will lead to the achievement of industry best practice.

In meeting these commitments, TransGrid:

- > maintains an Environmental Management System (EMS) that provides the framework for setting and reviewing our environmental objectives and targets, including the implementation, monitoring and review of these objectives and targets, as well as facilitating continuous improvement in environmental performance
- > continues to develop systems that recognise sensitive environmental and cultural sites on or near our infrastructure, and provides processes to manage and our activities with the aim of preventing environment harm or adversely impacting the environment
- > integrates environmental management considerations into the planning, design, siting, construction, maintenance, operation, decommissioning and disposal of all TransGrid assets
- > provides environmental training, assessment and authorisation under our Environmental Management System to employees and contractors to enable them to perform their duties in an environmentally sensitive manner
- > engages with the community, customers, employees, government and other stakeholders regarding potential environmental or cultural impacts associated with our plans and activities
- > pursues opportunities to maximise resource efficiencies and reduce the generation of waste through avoidance, reduction, reuse and recycling programs
- > identifies, sets and monitors realistic environmental measures and communicates them to all employees and stakeholders.

The proposal (the action) would be undertaken in accordance with TransGrid's environmental policy and planning framework TransGrid Environment Policy is available on their web site, and the construction contractor's EMS. Both EMS' are accredited under ISO 14001:2015.

TransGrid's Environmental Policy commits to protecting and enhancing the natural environmental and social values in all TransGrid's activities. TransGrid's planning framework allows for early identification of environment and social values and methods for avoiding, minimising and mitigating impacts caused as a result of their developments via preliminary detailed screening and risk assessments within the development envelope and finally subsequent footprint selection.

TransGrid's EMS is independently certified and covers all of their processes and activities that have the potential to impact on the environment. The EMS enables compliance with TransGrid's environment and heritage compliance obligations, providing the framework for driving environmental requirements throughout leadership, planning, support, operation, performance evaluation and continuous improvement actions. The proposed action, therefore, will be undertaken, monitored and measured in accordance with the TransGrid's EMS.

Appendix B

Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000 checklist

Table B.1 Requirements of Schedule 2 (Part 3) of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000

Requirement	EIS Reference
6. Form of environmental impact statement	
An environmental impact statement must contain the following information	
a the name, address and professional qualifications of the person by whom the statement is prepared,	Certification page
b the name and address of the responsible person,	Certification page
c the address of the land:	Certification page
i in respect of which the development application is to be made, or	Certification page
ii on which the activity or infrastructure to which the statement relates is to be carried out,	Certification page
d a description of the development, activity or infrastructure to which the statement relates	Certification page, Chapter 5 (Proposal infrastructure and operation) and Chapter 6 (Proposal construction)
e an assessment by the person by whom the statement is prepared of the environmental impact of the development, activity or infrastructure to which the statement relates, dealing with the matters referred to in this Schedule	Certification page
f a declaration by the person by whom the statement is prepared to the effect that:	Certification page
i the statement has been prepared in accordance with this Schedule, and	
ii the statement contains all available information that is relevant to the environmental assessment of the development, activity or infrastructure to which the statement relates, and	
iii that the information contained in the statement is neither false nor misleading.	
7. Contents of the environmental impact statement	
An environmental impact statement must also include each of the following:	
g a summary of the environmental impact statement,	Executive Summary
h a statement of the objectives of the development, activity or infrastructure,	Section 1.2.1
i an analysis of any feasible alternatives to the carrying out of the development, activity or infrastructure, having regard to its objectives, including the consequences of not carrying out the development, activity or infrastructure,	Chapter 3
j an analysis of the development, activity or infrastructure, including:	
i a full description of the development, activity or infrastructure, and	Chapter 5 (Proposal infrastructure and operation) and Chapter 6 (Proposal construction)

Requirement	EIS Reference
ii a general description of the environment likely to be affected by the development, activity or infrastructure, together with a detailed description of those aspects of the environment that are likely to be significantly affected, and	Chapter 4 (Proposal setting) and Chapters 9 to 22
iii the likely impact on the environment of the development, activity or infrastructure, and	Chapters 9 to 22
iv a full description of the measures proposed to mitigate any adverse effects of the development, activity or infrastructure on the environment, and	Chapters 9 to 22, and Technical papers 1 to 12
v a list of any <u>approvals</u> that must be obtained under any other Act or law before the development, activity or infrastructure may lawfully be carried out,	Chapter 1 and Appendix C
k a compilation (in a single section of the environmental impact statement) of the measures referred to in item (d) (iv),	Chapter 23 (Environmental management)
l the reasons justifying the carrying out of the development, activity or infrastructure in the manner proposed, having regard to biophysical, economic and social considerations, including the principles of ecologically sustainable development set out in subclause (4).	Chapter 24

Appendix C

Statutory planning assessment

C.1 Statutory planning requirements

This appendix outlines the statutory requirements and explains the environmental impact assessment and planning approval process for the proposal. This appendix also outlines the environmental planning instruments applicable to the proposal.

Environmental planning approval for the proposal is required in accordance with the (NSW) *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act). Consideration of the NSW environmental planning legislation and approvals requirements is provided in Section C.1.1. A referral under the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) was also submitted for the proposal which determined the proposal to be a controlled action. Commonwealth assessment and approval under the EPBC Act is considered in Section C.2.1.

A summary of the overall assessment and approval process for the proposal is shown in Figure C-1 and described in greater detail in the following sections.

C.1.1 NSW Environmental planning legislation and approvals

The EP&A Act and the EP&A Regulation are the primary pieces of legislation regulating land use planning and development assessment in NSW. This legislation is supported by a range of environmental planning instruments including State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPPs) and Local Environmental Plans (LEPs).

Part 5, Division 5.2 of the EP&A Act establishes the assessment and approval regime for SSI and CSSI.

The requirements of Clause 192 of the EP&A Regulation for applications seeking approval of the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces to carry out SSI are also addressed in the following sections.

C.1.2 Permissibility

The proposal is permissible without development consent under clause 41 of *State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007* (Infrastructure SEPP) being 'development for the purpose of an electricity transmission or distribution network, carried out by, or on behalf of, an electricity supply authority or public authority without consent on any land'.

The proposal is characterised as an electricity transmission network under the Infrastructure SEPP which defines an 'electricity transmission or distribution network' to include:

- > above or below ground electricity transmission or distribution lines (and related bridges, cables, conductors, conduits, poles, towers, trenches, tunnels, ventilation and access structures)
- > above or below ground electricity kiosks or electricity substations, feeder pillars or transformer housing, substation yards or substation buildings.

TransGrid is defined as an electricity supply authority under clause 40 of the Infrastructure SEPP being a transmission operator under the *Electricity Supply Act 1995*. Therefore, the proposed electricity transmission and distribution works is permissible without consent pursuant to clause 41 of the Infrastructure SEPP.

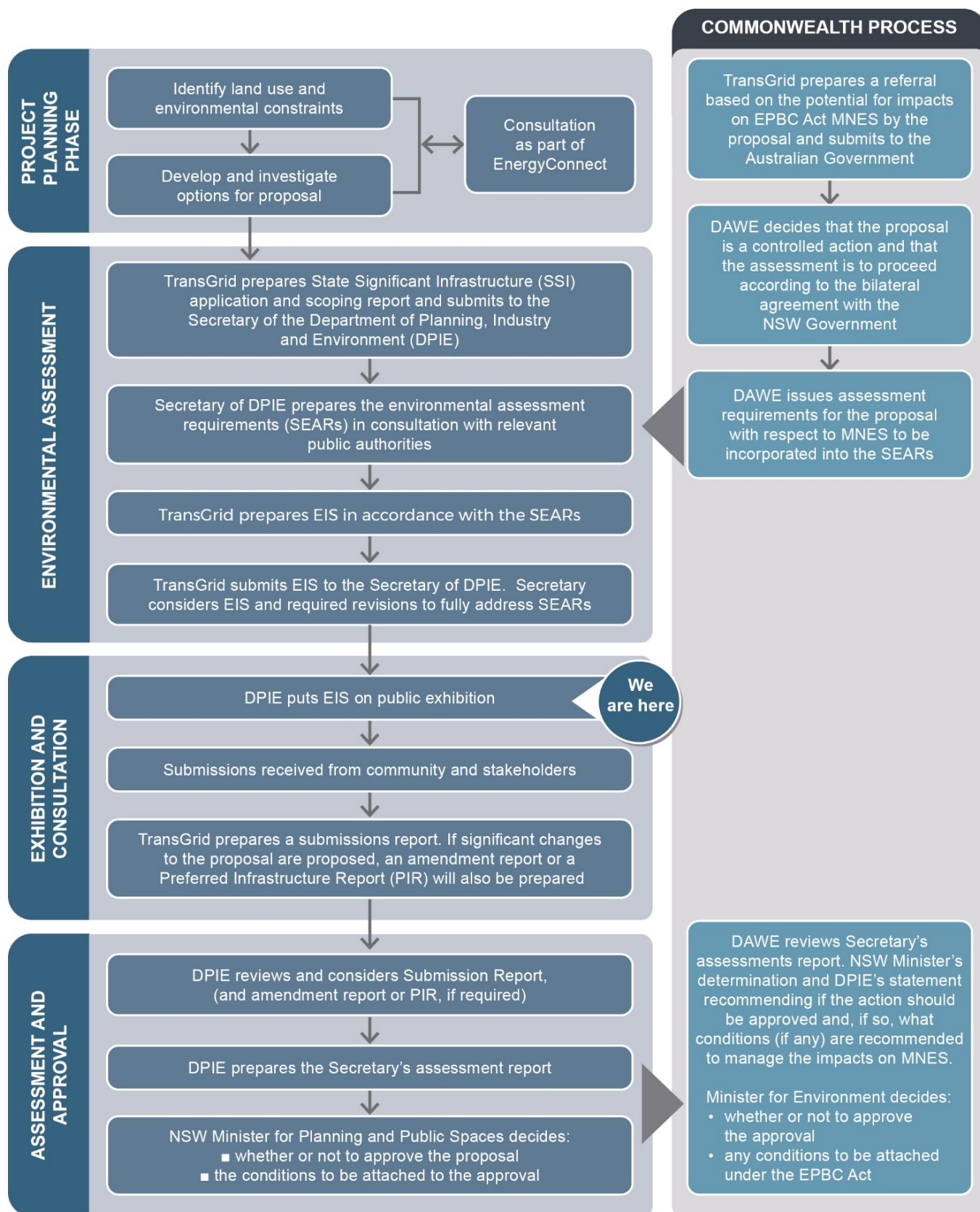


Figure C-1 Assessment and approval process for the proposal

C.1.3 NSW State Significant Infrastructure

As stated above, Clause 41 of the Infrastructure SEPP permits development for the purpose of an electricity transmission or distribution network to be carried out by, or on behalf of, a public authority without consent, provided that the project is not carried out on land reserved under the NSW *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974* (NP&W Act). The proposal study area does not contain any land reserved under the NP&W Act. Therefore, the proposal can be assessed under Part 5 of the EP&A Act. Development consent (under Part 4 of the EP&A Act) is not required.

TransGrid, as the proponent, has however formed the view that the proposal is likely to significantly affect the environment (as a result of potential impacts including, but not limited to, biodiversity, Aboriginal heritage, land use and visual impacts) and therefore requires the preparation of an EIS. This determination triggered clause 1 of Schedule 3 of *State Environmental Planning Policy (State and Regional Development) 2011* (SRD SEPP) and the proposal was declared State significant infrastructure and is controlled by Part 5, Division 5.2 of the EP&A Act.

The Minister for Planning and Public Spaces has also declared EnergyConnect (which includes the proposal) to be a Critical State Significant Infrastructure (CSSI) project under section 5.13 of the EP&A Act. Schedule 5 the SRD SEPP has been amended to include the project as CSSI.

On this basis, the proposal will be assessed as a CSSI project and this EIS has been prepared to support the application under Division 5.2 of the EP&A Act.

C.1.4 Planning approval process under Part 5 of the EP&A Act

SSI and supporting document

An SSI application was submitted to the Secretary of the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) on 15 May 2020 seeking the Secretary's environmental assessment requirements for the preparation of the EIS for EnergyConnect (NSW - Western Section) (the proposal). The application was accompanied by a supporting document, the *Environmental Scoping Report, EnergyConnect (NSW – Western Section)* (TransGrid, May 2020).

The supporting document provided an overview of the proposal, outlined the key likely environmental impacts during the construction and operation of the proposal, and proposed an indicative scope for the EIS.

Secretary environmental assessment requirements

After consultation with the relevant State and local government authorities, and using information provided in the supporting document, the Secretary issued his environmental impact assessment requirements (SEARs) for the proposal on 31 July 2020.

A copy of the SEARS and where they are addressed in this EIS is provided as Appendix A.

Preparation of the EIS

This EIS documents the description of the proposal, identification of the existing environment, assessment of the likely environmental impacts, and outlines the proposed mitigation measures to minimise the likely impacts of the proposal.

Form and content of the EIS

The form and content of this EIS has been prepared to address the SEARs and the requirements of Schedule 2, Part 3 of the (NSW) Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000 (EP&A Regulation) (as per section 5.16 of the EP&A Act). The SEARs also require compliance with Schedule 2, Part 3.

Consideration of the EP&A Regulation is provided in Appendix B.

Public exhibition and invitation to make submissions

Pursuant to Section 5.17 of the EP&A Act, the EIS is to be made available for public review for a period of no less than 28 days. During the exhibition period, the community, affected landowners, local businesses, public authorities and other stakeholders are invited to make submissions to the DPIE in response to the proposal.

Further details regarding the proposed activities and public exhibition of the proposal is provided in Chapter 7 of this EIS.

Consideration of submissions

Copies of all submissions received by DPIE during the exhibition period are provided to the proponent and any relevant public authorities. All submissions regarding the EIS are treated as public information unless the submission specifically requests that certain details are not made public.

Following the exhibition period, TransGrid may be required to prepare and submit the following to the Secretary:

- > a submissions report providing responses to issues raised in submissions made to DPIE during the exhibition period
- > a preferred infrastructure report or an amendment report outlining any proposed changes to the proposal, including any to reduce environmental impacts, in response to issues raised in submissions during the exhibition period. If the changes to the proposal are considered to be significant, the preferred infrastructure report / amendment report may also be made available to the public, at the discretion of the Secretary, for comment prior to determination.

Determination

As a CSSI project, the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces will be the decision maker for the proposal.

Following the exhibition period and TransGrid's response to any issues raised in submissions, the Secretary will prepare a report to the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces in accordance with the provisions of section 5.18 of the EP&A Act. The Secretary's assessment report must be considered by the Minister's in determining whether or not to approve the carrying out of the proposal. The Minister's approval may be subject to conditions of approval, in accordance with section 5.19 of the EP&A Act.

C.1.5 Applicable NSW environmental planning instruments

Section 5.22 of the EP&A Act provides that environmental planning instruments (EPIs, such as LEPs and SEPPs) other than *State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure)* 2007 and the SRD SEPP, do not apply to SSI and CSSI projects. Notwithstanding, the key environmental planning instruments have been considered with respect to the proposal for consistency.

These instruments are discussed in Table C-1.

Table C-1 Environmental Planning Instruments of potential relevance to the proposal

Environmental planning instruments	Relationship to EnergyConnect
<p><i>State Environmental Planning Policy (State and Regional Development) 2011</i></p>	<p>Amongst other provisions, <i>State Environmental Planning Policy (State and Regional Development) 2011</i> identifies development that is SSI. As discussed in Section C.1.1. above, the <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Amendment (Project EnergyConnect (SA to NSW Electricity Interconnector)) Order 2019</i> was made by the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces on 30 August 2019.</p> <p>The order amended Schedule 5 of the SRD SEPP to include the proposal (as part of the broader EnergyConnect project) as critical SSI (note that clause 16 of the SRD SEPP provides that proposals listed under Schedule 5 as Critical SSI are also deemed SSI).</p>
<p><i>State Environmental Planning Policy (Koala Habitat Protection 2019)</i></p>	<p>This SEPP aims to encourage the conservation and management of areas of natural vegetation that provide habitat for koalas to support a permanent free-living population over their present range and reverse the current trend of koala population decline. The policy applies to a number of LGAs across NSW, including the Wentworth LGA.</p> <p>While the requirements of this SEPP would not apply to the proposal (as it would not be subject to council consent), TransGrid have considered potential impacts to koala populations as part of the EIS process and biodiversity impact assessment for the proposal (refer to Chapter 9 and Technical Paper 1).</p>
<p><i>State Environmental Planning Policy No. 55 – Remediation of Land</i></p>	<p>This SEPP provides a State-wide approach to the remediation of contaminated land for the purpose of minimising the risk of harm to the health of humans and the environment. In accordance with Clause 7(1) of SEPP 55, a consent authority must not consent to the carrying out of development on any land unless:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > it has considered whether the land is contaminated > if the land is contaminated, it is satisfied that the land is suitable in its contaminated state (or would be suitable, after remediation) for the purpose for which the development is proposed to be carried out > if the land requires remediation to be made suitable for the purpose for which the development is proposed to be carried out, it is satisfied that the land would be remediated before the land is used for that purpose. <p>A Phase 1 contamination investigation has been undertaken for the proposal to inform the design and EIS process. The outcomes of the contamination investigations concluded that based on the available data, the proposal study area is considered suitable for the proposal subject to implementation standard measures and management controls during site development. Operational phase contamination risk management was also considered to be manageable with standard controls and procedures. Further consideration of contamination is addressed in Chapter 20 of this EIS.</p>

Environmental planning instruments	Relationship to EnergyConnect
<i>State Environmental Planning Policy (Primary Production and Rural Development) 2019</i>	<p>This SEPP aims to facilitate the orderly economic use and development of land for primary production and reduce land use conflict and sterilisation of rural land by balancing primary production, residential development and the protection of native vegetation, biodiversity and water resources. The SEPP is also intended to identify land which has been declared to be State Significant agricultural land (currently no land identified by the SEPP).</p> <p>Overall, the proposal would not adversely affect the objectives of this SEPP. As discussed in Chapter 3 (Proposal design development), the proposal has been designed to minimise impacts on important agricultural lands, and where possible, utilise previously disturbed corridors such as existing electrical easements or road corridors. Further condition of impacts to agricultural land is provided in Chapter 12 of this EIS.</p>

C.1.6 Local Environmental Plans

The proposal would be located within Wentworth local government area (LGA) and would therefore fall under the *Wentworth Local Environmental Plan 2011* (Wentworth LEP).

The Wentworth LEP provides for development standards, zoning and planning controls for development in the Wentworth LGA. The zoning which is applicable to the proposal includes the following:

- > RU1 Primary Production (consisting of a majority of the land on which the proposal would be located)
- > SP2 Infrastructure (at the crossing points of the Silver City Highway and the Sturt Highway)
- > E2 Environmental Conservation (between the Darling River and Pooncarie Road, Ellerslie)
- > W1 Natural Waterways (at the crossing point of the Darling River west of Pooncarie Road, Ellerslie)

While the LEP guides local development within the LGA, the EP&A Act expressly provides that LEPs do not apply to SSI or CSSI projects. Therefore, the remaining provisions of the Wentworth LEP have not been considered further in this EIS. However, the assessment has considered heritage items listed under the LEP in Chapter 11 (Non-Aboriginal heritage) and has considered impacts to land use in Chapter 12 (Land use and property).

C.1.7 Other NSW Legislation

Table C-2 discusses other NSW legislation that would be, or may be, applicable to the proposal regardless of the proposal being declared CSSI. The applicability would be confirmed in the EIS.

Table C-2 Other NSW planning legislation of potential relevance to the Proposal

Legislation	Requirement
<i>Aboriginal Land Rights Act (NSW) 1983</i>	<p>The purpose of the <i>Aboriginal Land Rights Act (NSW) 1983</i> includes providing land rights for Aboriginal persons and representative Aboriginal Land Councils in the State. This Act applies to Crown lands that are not lawfully needed for an essential public purpose; referred to as claimable Crown land.</p> <p>No claimable Crown lands have been identified that would be affected by the proposal.</p>
<i>Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 (BC Act)</i>	<p>The BC Act aims to conserve threatened species, populations and ecological communities through ensuring appropriate assessment, management and regulation of actions that may damage critical or other habitat for a listed threatened species, or may otherwise significantly affect a threatened species, population or ecological community.</p> <p>Under this Act, State significant infrastructure projects are required to prepare a biodiversity development assessment report (BDAR) to identify and assess biodiversity impacts under the provisions of the BC Act and offset those impacts by retiring biodiversity credits, determined using the Biodiversity Assessment Methodology.</p> <p>Biodiversity impacts associated with the proposal have been assessed in accordance with the <i>Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016</i>. The results of this assessment are presented in the BDAR for the proposal (Technical paper 1) and summarised in Chapter 9.</p>
<i>Biosecurity Act 2015 (Biosecurity Act)</i>	<p>The Biosecurity Act provides for the prevention, elimination, minimisation and management of biosecurity risks in NSW posed by biosecurity matter, which is defined in section 10 of the Bio Act. It replaces the former <i>Noxious Weeds Act</i>.</p> <p>Under the Biosecurity Act, weeds are defined as a plant that is a pest and a biosecurity risk exists where invasive weeds, now termed priority weeds under the Biosecurity Act, have the potential to negatively impact on the environment.</p> <p>The Biosecurity Act introduces a responsibility for landowners or land managers to control and prevent the introduction and spread of these priority weeds, which is to be known as a General Biosecurity Duty.</p> <p>As discussed above, the EIS for the proposal has included an assessment of biodiversity impacts including consideration of noxious weeds (refer to Chapter 9 and Technical paper 1).</p>

Legislation	Requirement
<i>Contaminated Land Management Act 1997</i> (CLM Act)	<p>The CLM Act outlines the circumstances in which notification of the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) is required in relation to the contamination of land.</p> <p>A Phase 1 contamination investigation (Technical paper 11) has been undertaken for the proposal to inform the design and EIS process. The outcomes of the contamination investigations concluded that based on the available data, the proposal study area is considered suitable for the construction and operation of the proposal.</p> <p>Further consideration of contamination is summarised in Chapter 20 of this EIS.</p>
<i>Crown Land Management Act 2016</i>	<p>This Act sets out the requirements for the management of Crown land in NSW, including where councils and other organisations can deal with Crown land.</p> <p>There are areas of Crown Land that would be affected by the proposal.</p> <p>Impacts to Crown Land have been discussed in greater detail in Chapter 12 of this EIS.</p>
<i>Heritage Act 1977</i>	<p>The Heritage Council must be notified if a relic is uncovered during construction and if it is reasonable to believe that the Heritage Council is unaware of the location of the relic. The Heritage Council must also be notified if an item listed on a Government Agency's Section 170 Heritage Register is demolished.</p> <p>Section 139 specifies that a person must not disturb or excavate land knowing, or suspecting, that the action may result in the discovery, exposure, movement, damage or destruction of a relic, unless the work is undertaken in accordance with an excavation permit. Additionally, section 146 requires that the discovery or location of a relic must be notified to the Heritage Council unless the Heritage Council is aware of the relic's location.</p> <p>Under the State significant infrastructure provisions for the proposal, exemptions and permits that would otherwise be required under Part 4 and section 139 of the Heritage Act are not required for approved State significant infrastructure projects by reason of section 5.23 of the EP&A Act.</p> <p>Notwithstanding, heritage impacts associated with the proposal have been assessed in accordance with the Heritage Act 1977. The results of this assessment are presented in the <i>Cultural Heritage Assessment</i> (Technical paper 2) and summarised in Chapter 10 (Aboriginal heritage) and Chapter 11 (Non-Aboriginal heritage).</p>

Legislation	Requirement
<i>Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991</i> (Land Acquisition Act)	<p>The Land Acquisition Act was introduced in relation to the acquisition of land on just terms by authorities of the State with the objective of simplifying and expediting the compulsory acquisition process while ensuring compensation on just terms for the owners of land that is acquired by an authority of the State when the land is not available for public sale.</p> <p>The provisions of the Land Acquisition Act apply to the proposal. Some of the land on which the proposal is proposed to be located is privately owned and may need to be acquired to accommodate the proposal. Further discussion of potential land acquisition associated with the proposal is discussed in Chapter 5 and Chapter 12 of the EIS.</p>
<i>National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974</i> (NPW Act)	<p>The NPW Act establishes statutory provisions for the preservation and management of national parks, historic sites and certain other areas, as well as the protection of certain Aboriginal objects. The NPW Act provides for the conservation of elements of the natural environment, as well as the conservation of objects, places or features of cultural value to Aboriginal people and the people of NSW. Under the provisions of section 86 of the NPW Act, a person must not harm or desecrate a known Aboriginal object unless authorised by an Aboriginal heritage impact permit issued under section 90 of that Act.</p> <p>The proposal is Critical State significant infrastructure. Under the provisions of section 5.23(1) of the EP&A Act, a permit that would otherwise be required under section 90 of the NPW Act is not required for approved State significant infrastructure projects.</p> <p>Notwithstanding, a detailed assessment of potential impacts to Aboriginal heritage associated with the proposal has been undertaken. The results of this assessment are presented in the <i>Cultural Heritage Assessment</i> (Technical paper 2) and summarised in Chapter 10</p>
<i>Native Title (NSW) Act 1994</i>	<p>This Act provides for native title in relation to land or waters. The <i>Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Consultation Requirements for Proponents 2010</i> (DECCW 2010a) stipulates that where relevant, consultation must be conducted with Native title holders or registered native title claimants in accordance with the <i>Native Title Act 1994</i>.</p> <p>The EIS for the proposal has included an assessment of native title and Aboriginal heritage impacts (refer to Chapter 10 and Technical paper 2).</p>

Legislation	Requirement
<i>Roads Act 1993</i> (Roads Act)	<p>The principal object of the Roads Act of relevance to the proposal is the regulation of the carrying out of various activities on public roads.</p> <p>Part 9 of the Roads Act nominates the requirements for undertaking works within a public road, including the requirement to obtain consent under section 138 for carrying out works in, on or over a public road (this includes the erection of structures), and the digging up or disturbance of the surface of a public road.</p> <p>The proposal would potentially require temporary/partial closure of classified and unclassified roads for the construction of the proposal, and may require works to connect new access points. TransGrid will require consent to undertake work on classified roads. However, by reason of clause 5(1) of Schedule 2 of the Roads Act, TransGrid is not required to obtain consent to carry out work on unclassified roads.</p>
<i>Rural Fires Act 1997</i> (RF Act)	<p>The objects of the RF Act are focused on the prevention, mitigation and suppression of bush and other fires in rural fire districts, and the co-ordination of firefighting and prevention across the State.</p> <p>Section 100B applies to bush fire prone land and empowers the Commissioner of the NSW Rural Fire Service to issue a bush fire safety authority. The bush fire authority authorises certain types of development, subject to compliance with matters considered by the Commissioner to be necessary to protect persons, property or the environment.</p> <p>Potential hazards associated with bush fire risk to the proposal (including during construction), have been considered as part of a <i>Bushfire Impact Assessment</i> (Technical paper 10) and summarised in Chapter 19.</p>
<i>Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Act 2001</i> (WARR Act)	<p>The WARR Act aims to encourage the most efficient use of resources to reduce environmental harm in accordance with the principles of ecologically sustainable development.</p> <p>The proposal would consume some natural resources and would produce waste. Waste and resource impacts associated with the proposal have been considered in Chapter 21 of this EIS.</p>

Legislation	Requirement
<p><i>Water Management Act 2000</i> (WM Act)</p>	<p>The overarching objective of the WM Act is to provide for the sustainable and integrated management of the water resources of the State and including the application of the principles of ecologically sustainable development.</p> <p>Water use approvals, which authorise and confer a right on the holder of the approval to use water for a particular purpose at a particular location, are dealt with in section 89 of the WM Act. Section 90 of the WM Act identifies three kinds of water management works approvals, being a water supply work approval, a drainage work approval and a flood works approval, with all three of these approvals conferring a right on the holder of the approval to construct and use the specified works at a specified location.</p> <p>There are two kinds of activity approvals that are dealt with in section 91 being a controlled activity and aquifer interference, both of which confer a right on the holder to carry out the specified activity at the specified location.</p> <p>The proposal is Critical State significant infrastructure. Under the provisions of section 5.23(1) of the EP&A Act, a water use approval pursuant to section 89 of the WM Act, a water management work approval pursuant to section 90 of the WM Act, and an activity approval (other than an aquifer interference approval) pursuant to section 91 of the WM Act are not required and accordingly, do not apply to approved State significant infrastructure project.</p> <p>As discussed in Chapter 15 of the EIS, water would be sourced from existing regulated sources, purchased from the existing water market or council facilities and accessed via existing, licensed water extraction infrastructure only.</p> <p>Additionally, the NSW <i>Aquifer Interference Policy</i> (Department of Primary Industries, 2012) documents the NSW Government's intention to implement the requirement for approval of 'aquifer interference activities' under the <i>Water Management Act 2000</i>, however, the provisions for aquifer interference approvals have not been enacted.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that the proposal would interfere with any aquifers as the proposal would not likely require excavation to a sufficient depth to intercept an aquifer or result in drawdown. Consideration of the NSW <i>Aquifer Interference Policy</i> has been included in Chapter 20 and Technical paper 12.</p>

C.1.8 Approvals or Authorisations that are not required or cannot be refused

In accordance with Section 5.23 of the EP&A Act some planning legislation does not apply to Critical State significant infrastructure or must be applied consistently with an approved Critical State significant infrastructure project.

Approvals of potential relevance to the proposal which are not required under section 5.23(1), include:

- > permits under Sections 201, 205 and 219 of the *Fisheries Management Act 1994* (FM Act)
- > approvals under Part 4, or an excavation permit under Section 139 of the *Heritage Act 1977*
- > Aboriginal heritage impact permits under Section 90 of the NP&W Act
- > various approvals under the *Water Management Act 2000*, including water use approvals under Section 89, water management work approvals under Section 90, and activity approvals (other than aquifer interference approvals) under Section 91.

Section 5.23 of the EP&A Act also specifies directions, orders or notices cannot be made or given so as to prevent or interfere with the carrying out of approved CSSI. Of relevance to the proposal would be:

- > an interim protection order under (within the meaning of the NP&W Act or the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*)
- > an order under Division 1 (Stop work orders) of Part 6A of the NP&W Act or Division 7 (Stop work orders) of Part 7A of the FM Act
- > an environment protection notice under Chapter 4 of the *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997* (POEO Act)
- > an order under section 124 of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

Section 5.24 of the EP&A Act identifies approvals or authorisations that cannot be refused if they are necessary for carrying out approved SSI and are substantially consistent with the Part 5.2 approval, including:

- > environment protection licences (EPLs) under Chapter 3 of the POEO Act
- > consent (Road Occupancy Licence) under Section 138 of the *Roads Act 1993* from the relevant roads authority for the erection of a structure, or the carrying out of work in, on or over a public road, or the digging up or disturbance of the surface of a road.

With respect to EPLs, Schedule 1 of the POEO Act, does not define electrical transmissions lines or substations as a scheduled activity requiring an EPL.

With respect to Road Occupancy Licences, the proposal would potentially require temporary/partial closure of classified and unclassified roads for the construction of the proposal. TransGrid will require consent to undertake work on classified roads. The contractor would be responsible for this. However, by reason of clause 5(1) of Schedule 2 of the Roads Act, TransGrid is not required to obtain consent to carry out work on unclassified roads.

C.1.9 Ecologically sustainable development

Part 3, Schedule 2 (clause 7(4)) of the EP&A Regulation and section 6(2) of the *Protection of the Environment Administration Act 1991* outlines the four principles of ecologically sustainable development (ESD). The four ESD principles comprise the precautionary principle; intergenerational equity; conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity; and improved valuation, pricing and incentive mechanisms.

TransGrid has considered the principles of ESD in the design development of the proposal. A discussion of how the proposal has considered ESD principles is included in Section 24.2 of the EIS. Section 23.2 of the EIS identifies how sustainability will be incorporated into the proposal.

C.1.10 Commonwealth legislation

The EPBC Act is the Australian Government's key piece of environmental legislation. It enables the Australian Government to join with the states and territories in providing a truly national scheme of environment and heritage protection and biodiversity conservation. The EPBC Act focuses Australian Government interests on the protection of matters of national environmental significance, with the states and territories having responsibility for matters of state and local significance.

Key parts of the EPBC Act that are relevant to the proposal are:

- > Part 3 – requirements for environmental approvals
- > Part 5 – bilateral agreements
- > Part 7 – whether an approval is needed
- > Part 8 – assessing the impacts of a controlled action
- > Part 9 – the approval of actions

Part 3 of the EPBC Act provides for the referral to the Commonwealth Minister for the Environment and Energy a proposal that is likely to have a significant impact on the following:

- > Matters of National Environmental Significance (NES) (refer to Section C.1.2.1)
- > an action by the Commonwealth or a Commonwealth agency which has, will have or is likely to have a significant impact on the environment
- > an action which has, will have or is likely to have a significant impact on the environment on Commonwealth land, no matter where it is to be carried out.

TransGrid is not a Commonwealth agency and a preliminary assessment of the proposal indicates no Commonwealth land would be affected. As such, this potential trigger was not considered further.

C.1.11 Matters of National Environmental Significance

Under the EPBC Act, a proposal is required to be referred to the Commonwealth Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (DAWE) for activities that have the potential to significantly impact on matters of NES. If the proposal is considered likely to significantly affect matters of NES, the Minister can deem the proposal a controlled action, and their approval is required prior to proceeding to construction. A controlled action may comprise a project, development, undertaking, activity or series of activities.

A summary of the potential impacts to matters of NES as a result of the proposal is presented in Table C-3. As detailed in Chapter 9 (Biodiversity) and Appendix A of this EIS, the proposal would not have a significant impact on EPBC listed threatened species and ecological communities, or EPBC listed migratory species.

Table C-3 Matters of NES under the EPBC Act

Matters of NES	Matters which may be affected by the proposal
World heritage properties	None
National heritage places	None
Wetlands of international importance	<p>No wetlands of international importance (RAMSAR wetlands) have been identified within the proposal study area.</p> <p>The nearest RAMSAR wetland is the Riverland Wetland located within Chowilla Game Reserve in SA. This is located approximately three kilometres south-west of the proposal study area.</p>
Great Barrier Reef Marine Park	None
Commonwealth listed threatened species and ecological communities	<p>Based on broad scale state vegetation mapping and database searches a total of two candidate threatened ecological communities listed under the EPBC Act were considered likely to occur. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Buloke (<i>Allocasuarina luehmannii</i>) Woodlands of the Riverina and Murray-Darling Depression Bioregions > Coolibah (<i>Eucalyptus coolabah</i>) – Black Box (<i>Eucalyptus largiflorens</i>) Woodlands of the Darling Riverine Plains and the Brigalow Belt of South Bioregion. <p>Neither of these, or any other threatened ecological communities listed under the EPBC Act, were recorded within the proposal study area during surveys for the proposal. The plant community types found within the proposal study area do not correspond to any EPBC Act listed threatened ecological communities.</p> <p>Five threatened flora and 17 threatened fauna species have a moderate or higher likelihood of occurrence within the proposal study area.</p> <p>As documented in Technical paper 1, the proposal is unlikely to lead to a significant impact on any threatened species and/or their habitat listed under the EPBC Act.</p>
Commonwealth listed migratory species	<p>The results of likelihood of occurrence assessments for these migratory and marine bird species identify that 26 species have a moderate or higher likelihood of occurrence within the proposal study area.</p> <p>As documented in Technical paper 1, the proposal is considered unlikely to substantially modify, destroy or isolate an area of important habitat for any EPBC Act listed migratory species and is unlikely to seriously disrupt the lifecycle of an ecologically significant proportion of a population of migratory birds.</p>
Nuclear action	The proposal would not result in any nuclear action nor would any nuclear activity need to be undertaken.
Commonwealth marine area	None

Bilateral agreement

Based on the potential impacts to the listed threatened species identified in Table C-3, a referral under the EPBC Act was submitted on 27 May 2020. Determination by the DAWE on 25 June 2020 confirmed the proposal to be a controlled action and would be subject to the bilateral agreement under section 45 of the EPBC Act.

Part 5 provides for a written agreement between the Commonwealth and a State that is aimed at minimising duplication in the environmental assessment and approval process through the accreditation of that State's processes.

In February 2015, the Commonwealth and NSW entered into a bilateral agreement under section 45 of the EPBC Act. Since entering into that agreement, NSW has amended the accredited process through the repealing of the *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995* and the commencement of the BC Act and the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Amendment Act 2017*. The current agreement provides for certain actions that are State significant development or State significant infrastructure within the meaning of the EP&A Act to be accredited for the purposes of meeting the requirements for assessment and public exhibition of an action under the provisions of the EPBC Act.

The requirements to meet this bilateral process have been included within the SEARs provided by the DPIE for the proposal (refer to Appendix A).

C.1.12 Airports Act 1996

Part 12 of the Airports Act 1996 (Airports Act) and the Airports (Protection of Airspace) Regulations 1996 (the Airspace Regulations) establish a framework for the protection of airspace at, and around airports.

Section 181(1) of the Airports Act defines the prescribed airspace as '...an airspace specified in, or ascertained in accordance with, the regulations, where it is in the interests of the safety, efficiency or regularity of existing or future air transport operations into or out of an airport for the airspace to be protected under this Part'. The Airspace Regulations define the 'prescribed airspace' around Mildura Airport.

The prescribed airspace consists of the obstacle limitation surface (OLS) and the Procedures for Air Navigation Services – Aircraft Operations (PANS-OPS) surface. The OLS provides a protected space that is free of obstructions for aircraft flying into and out of the airport. It defines the lower limits of an airport's airspace, which should be kept free of obstacles during the initial and final stages of flight or manoeuvring. Intrusions into the OLS require approval under the Airports Act.

The PANS-OPS protects aircraft flying into and out of the airport when the flight is guided solely by instruments in conditions of poor visibility. The PANS-OPS surface is generally situated above the OLS. Intrusions into the PANS-OPS surface are prohibited.

The Airports Act (section 183) defines any activity that intrudes into an airport's prescribed airspace to be a 'controlled activity', which requires approval. Controlled activities include:

- > permanent structures, such as buildings, intruding into the protected airspace;
- > temporary structures such as cranes intruding into the protected airspace; or
- > any activities causing intrusions into the protected airspace through glare from artificial light or reflected sunlight, air turbulence from stacks or vents, smoke, dust, steam or other gases or particulate matter.

Carrying out a controlled activity without approval is an offence under Section 183 of the Airports Act.

The proposal is not located in the obstacle limitation surface (OLS) for Mildura Airport. As such no further approval is required.

Appendix D

Consultation outcomes report



TransGrid

EnergyConnect

Consultation outcomes report

October 2020

Contents

- 1. Executive summary 5
- 2. Introduction..... 7
- 3. Document purpose 8
- 4. Background..... 9
- 5. Overview of proposal 11
- 6. Engagement overview and objectives 13
- 7. Stakeholder engagement activities..... 14
- 8. Stakeholder feedback 18
- 9. Topics raised and responses 21
- 10. Conclusions and next steps 25
- 11. Appendix 26

List of Tables

- Table 1 Relevant SEARs requirements 8
- Table 2 Stakeholder engagement activities 14
- Table 3 Topics raised and responses 21

List of Figures

- Figure 1 EnergyConnect overview map 11

Glossary

Acronym / proposal term	Definition
AEMO	Australian Energy Market Operator
AER	Australian Energy Regulator
CSSI	Critical State Significant Infrastructure
DPIE	(NSW) Department of Planning Industry and Environment
EES Group of the DPIE	Environment, Energy and Science Group – a division of the Department of Planning Industry and Environment (DPIE) (formerly NSW Office of Environment and Heritage)
EIS	environmental impact statement
EMF	electromagnetic fields
EnergyConnect	An electrical interconnector of approximately 900 km between the power grids of New South Wales and South Australia, with an added connection to north-west Victoria
ISP	Integrated System Plan
LALC	Local Aboriginal Land Council
NEM	National Electricity Market
NSW	New South Wales
proponent, the	The proposal is proposed to be undertaken by NSW Electricity Networks Operations Pty Ltd as a trustee for NSW Electricity Operations Trust (referred to as TransGrid). TransGrid is the operator and manager of the main high-voltage (HV) transmission network in NSW and the Australian Capital Territory (ACT), and is the Authorised Network Operator (ANO) for the purpose of an electricity transmission or distribution network under the provisions of the <i>Electricity Network Assets (Authorised Transactions) Act 2015</i> .
proposal, the	<p>The proposal is known as ‘EnergyConnect (NSW – Western Section)’</p> <p>The proposal would involve the following key features:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Construction of new high-voltage transmission lines and associated infrastructure between the SA/NSW border near Chowilla and the existing Buronga substation > An upgrade to the existing transmission line between the Buronga substation and the NSW/Victoria border at Monak, near Red Cliffs > An expansion and upgrade of the existing Buronga substation from an operating capacity of 220 kV to 330 kV > Establishment and upgrade of access tracks and roads, as required > Other ancillary works required to facilitate the construction of the proposal e.g. laydown and staging areas, concrete batching plants, brake/winch sites, site offices and accommodation camps.

Acronym / proposal term	Definition
RIT-T	Regulatory Investment Test for Transmission
REZs	Renewable Energy Zones
SA	South Australia
SEARs	Secretary Environmental Assessment Requirements

1. Executive summary

TransGrid has undertaken a program of community and stakeholder engagement to support the lodgement of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for EnergyConnect (NSW – Western Section) (the proposal). EnergyConnect includes the construction of new transmission infrastructure and upgrades to existing transmission infrastructure. It is known as an *interconnector* as it connects New South Wales (NSW), South Australia (SA) and Victoria.

The primary objective for the proposal is to secure increased electricity transmission capacity between SA, NSW and Victoria of about 800 megawatts (MW) and to facilitate the longer-term transition of the energy sector across the National Electricity Market (NEM) as the energy generation mix changes.

EnergyConnect has been declared Critical State significant infrastructure (CSSI) by the NSW Minister for Planning and Public Spaces, and is listed as a priority transmission project in the NSW Government's *NSW Transmission Infrastructure Strategy*, an immediate priority project in the Australian Energy Market Operator's *2018 Integrated System Plan* (2018 ISP) and a 'no regret' Actionable project in the 2020 ISP.

TransGrid has a genuine desire to work with stakeholders in a proactive and transparent process. Since November 2018, TransGrid has been engaging to capture the needs and views of stakeholders and communities that are directly and indirectly affected by the proposal.

This report outlines the outcomes of over 890 stakeholder and community engagement activities undertaken to address the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) in support of the EIS process. This has been achieved through a variety of different engagement activities tailored to the needs of specific stakeholder groups. This approach has created broad awareness about the project and enabled stakeholders and the community to provide input and feedback on areas of interest or issues of concern. Key communication channels and stakeholder engagement activities included:

- > direct consultation with key stakeholders including:
 - Members of Parliament (Commonwealth and State)
 - Government departments and agencies (Commonwealth and State)
 - local government
 - Traditional Custodian groups
 - industry and interest groups
 - landholders
- > communication and engagement with the broader community, including public information sessions and local media advertisements to generate project awareness and participation
- > dedicated toll free 1800 community information line and email address
- > the EnergyConnect website
- > interactive EnergyConnect map focused on collecting stakeholder feedback on the proposed route.

Landholders, as directly-affected stakeholders, have been prioritised and proactively engaged, receiving detailed project information and predominately engaged through face to face engagements. Bespoke holding maps were developed to enable landholders to identify opportunities and constraints specific to their properties. This feedback was then used to refine the alignment, both on specific properties and through the corridor more generally.

To build project awareness and maximise engagement opportunities a diverse range of communication mechanisms have been used to date. These include:

- > a project website and other digital tools (such as an online interactive map)
- > direct correspondence and engagement (letters, emails and phone calls)
- > meetings and face to face engagements with stakeholders including community events
- > advertising in traditional print media and social media posts
- > community feedback channels (community information line and email)
- > project collateral (such as fact sheets).

Stakeholders have explored and provided feedback across numerous themes. These vary from overarching comments about the consultation process through to detailed questions about longer term considerations such as operations and maintenance. To date, the vast majority of stakeholders have demonstrated a willingness to work with TransGrid, shown interest in identifying a preferred route and indicated a desire to remain informed and engaged on the progress of EnergyConnect.

2. Introduction

TransGrid's network enables more than three million homes and businesses to access a safe, reliable and affordable supply of electricity. The network comprises more than 100 substations and more than 13,000 kilometres of high-voltage transmission lines, underground cables, and interconnections with Queensland and Victoria.

This report has been prepared to support the EIS of EnergyConnect (NSW – Western Section), which is submitted to the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces under Division 5.2, Part 5 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*. TransGrid is the proponent of the proposal.

In particular, this report outlines the program of communication and community engagement activities undertaken by TransGrid and its consultants to address the SEARs issued by the DPIE. It includes details of the tools and activities used to engage a broad range of stakeholders since November 2018, along with a summary of the key issues raised and how they have been considered or addressed.

An expansive engagement program was developed prior to and during preparation of the EIS to consider the range of stakeholders who may be potentially impacted by or interested in EnergyConnect and the proposal. This included providing opportunities for general community participation as well as more targeted consultation with the various tiers of Government, interest groups and landholders.

TransGrid recognises the need to build community and stakeholder interest in EnergyConnect to achieve effective and genuine consultation outcomes. Activities documented in this report include:

- > initial engagement with stakeholders introducing EnergyConnect
- > detailed communication and engagements with landholders, Aboriginal group representatives and industry stakeholders
- > broader communication and engagement with the local community
- > further consultation with the relevant agencies and stakeholders during the preparation of the EIS.

3. Document purpose

This report has been prepared in accordance with the relevant SEARs demonstrating how the general and consultation requirements have been achieved. In addition, evidence of complimentary consultation undertaken to inform the wider community and provide opportunities for feedback has also been included.

3.1 SEARs requirements

The consultation requirements of the SEARs and where they have been addressed in this report are outlined in Table 1.

Table 1 Relevant SEARs requirements

Reference	Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements	Where addressed in this report
General requirements	The EIS must include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">> a description of the engagement that was carried out during the preparation of the EIS, the key issues raised during this engagement and the proposed engagement strategy for the project if it is approved.	Sections 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10
Consultation	During the preparation of the EIS, you should consult with the relevant local, State or Commonwealth Government authorities, service providers, community groups, affected landowners and lease holders, exploration licence holders and mineral title holders.	Sections 7 and 8

4. Background

The Australian energy landscape is transforming with an increased focus on low-emission renewable energy sources. The reasons for this transformation are multi-faceted and include:

- > pressure on future supply of energy due to the expected closure of coal-fired power plants
- > increasing appetite for renewable energy generation and transmission solutions
- > commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- > technological advancement of cost-competitive, low-emissions generation
- > predicted increases in electricity consumption over the next ten years.

4.1 Current energy landscape

The NEM, which connects the southern and eastern states in Australia, delivering around 80 per cent of Australia's electricity consumption, has a system dominated by coal-fired generation.

The retirement of coal generation is predicted to be most rapid in NSW, with Mount Piper likely to become the sole remaining coal fired generator after the expected closure of the Liddell, Eraring and Bayswater power stations by 2035. This has the potential to put pressure on the future supply of energy, with electricity consumption across NSW increasing consistently over recent years and forecast to continue accelerating over the next decade.

In Australia, electricity generation is the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions, accounting for 34 per cent of the country's total emissions. Initiatives to transition to renewable energy generation and supply are an opportunity to honour the Commonwealth Government's emissions policy commitments and achieve the NSW Government's Net Zero Plan, including a 35 per cent cut in emissions by 2030 compared to 2005 levels.

4.2 Transition to renewable energy

To transition from traditional energy sources, like coal-fired generation, to lower emission alternatives including renewable energy, the NEM requires infrastructure to connect to new energy generation sources. Current interest in new, low emission energy generation projects in the NEM exceeds the existing transmission network capacity in several locations, meaning that not all projects would be viable.

In response, several Renewable Energy Zones (REZs) with high energy resource potential have been identified across the NEM. To unlock the potential of the REZs, the transmission grid itself needs targeted enhancement, including strategically placed large-scale interconnectors, substations and transmission line extensions.

To facilitate the strategic transition from traditional energy sources to lower emission alternatives, the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) developed the *2018 Integrated System Plan* (ISP), with an updated 2020 ISP released in July 2020. Also in November 2018, the NSW Government developed the *NSW Transmission Infrastructure Strategy*, which aims to prioritise transmission infrastructure projects to increase NSW's energy capacity through Energy Zones including the South West region of NSW.

Given the expected life span of aging coal-fired generators, government commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, growing energy demand and increasing consumption, the timing of solutions to escalate the existing transmission network's capacity is growing in urgency and importance.

4.3 EnergyConnect

EnergyConnect is one of these strategic transmission infrastructure upgrades and has been identified as one of four priority transmission projects in the *NSW Transmission Infrastructure Strategy* (DPE, 2018), an immediate priority project in the 2018 ISP and a 'no regret' Actionable project in the 2020 ISP. TransGrid will deliver the NSW and Victorian sections of EnergyConnect, facilitating improved mechanisms for energy sharing between states and enabling the connection of future renewable energy projects to the power grid.

The primary objective for the proposal is to secure increased electricity transmission capacity between SA, NSW and Victoria of about 800 megawatts (MW) and to facilitate the longer-term transition of the energy sector across the National Electricity Market (NEM) to low emission energy generation sources.

EnergyConnect is subject to approval processes, through the Australian Energy Regulator (AER), and, for the NSW sections of EnergyConnect, approvals under the NSW *Environment Planning and Assessment Act 1979* and the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act).

The AER approved the Regulatory Investment Test for Transmission (RIT-T) for EnergyConnect in January 2020. The next step involves the lodgement and review of a Contingent Project Application with the AER for approval. A determination on the Contingent Project Application is expected in late 2020.

In addition:

- > the NSW Minister for Planning and Public Spaces has declared the NSW portions of EnergyConnect to be Critical State significant infrastructure (CSSI)
- > The Australian Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment determined the NSW portions of EnergyConnect to be a separate controlled actions under the EPBC Act and that each section will be assessed using the bilateral assessment process.

Further detail on the environmental approvals required for the proposal are provided in Chapter 1 of the EIS.

5. Overview of proposal

TransGrid (electricity transmission operator in New South Wales (NSW)) and ElectraNet (electricity transmission operator in South Australia (SA)) are seeking regulatory and environmental planning approval for the construction and operation of a new High Voltage (HV) interconnector between NSW and SA, with an added connection to north-west Victoria. Collectively, the proposed interconnector is known as EnergyConnect.

EnergyConnect comprises several components or 'sections' (shown on Figure 1). The NSW – Western Section (the proposal) is the subject of this report.

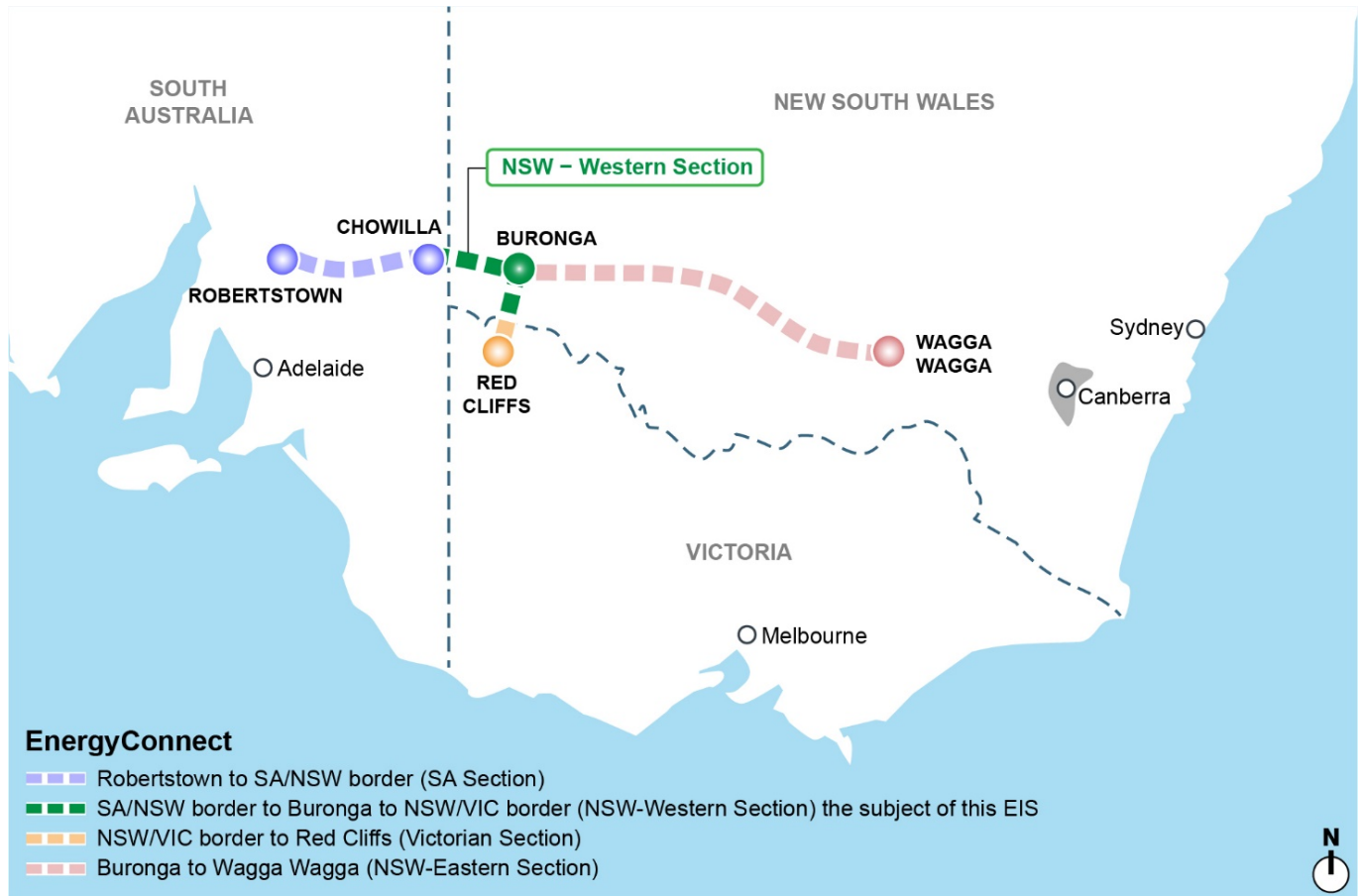


Figure 1 EnergyConnect overview map

The key components of the proposal include:

- > a new 330 kilovolt (kV) double circuit transmission line and associated infrastructure, extending around 135 kilometres between the SA/NSW border near Chowilla and the existing Buronga substation
- > an upgrade of the existing 24 kilometre long 220 kV single circuit transmission line between the Buronga substation and the NSW/Victoria border at Monak (near Red Cliffs, Victoria) to a 220 kV double circuit transmission line, and the decommissioning of the 220 kV single circuit transmission line (known as Line 0X1)
- > a significant upgrade and expansion of the existing Buronga substation to a combined operating voltage 220 kV/330 kV
- > new and/or upgrade of access tracks as required
- > a minor realignment of the existing 0X2 220 kV transmission line, in proximity to the Darling River
- > ancillary works required to facilitate the construction of the proposal (e.g. laydown and staging areas, concrete batching plants, brake/winch sites, site offices and accommodation camps).

Subject to approval, construction of the proposal would commence in mid-2021. The construction of the transmission lines would take approximately 18 months while the Buronga substation upgrade and expansion would be delivered in two components to be operational by mid-2023, with site decommissioning and rehabilitation to be completed by mid-2024. The final construction program would be confirmed during detailed design.

The proposal is further described in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

The primary objective for the proposal is to secure increased electricity transmission capacity between SA, NSW and Victoria of about 800 megawatts (MW) and facilitate the longer-term transition of the energy sector across the National Electricity Market (NEM) to low emission energy generation sources. More specifically, the proposal aims to:

- > lower power prices
- > improve energy security
- > increase economic activity
- > support the transition to a lower carbon emission energy system
- > support a greater mix of energy generation in the NEM.

6. Engagement overview and objectives

TransGrid is committed to an engagement process that is proactive, transparent and represents a genuine desire to work with stakeholders. TransGrid recognises that a two-way feedback process is the key to understanding the needs and views of stakeholders and communities who are directly and indirectly affected by its operations.

Additionally, TransGrid acknowledge DPIE's emphasis on effective and genuine community consultation, including a comprehensive and transparent process during the preparation of the EIS, to ensure the community is provided with an understanding of the proposal. This includes a description of any potential impacts and ensuring stakeholders are actively engaged in issues of concern.

To date, the scope for community and stakeholder engagement has focussed on the early work being undertaken to support the route selection process.

To meet the requirements of the SEARs and to ensure a consistent approach across various stakeholder groups, the methodology for community and stakeholder engagement was coordinated across three key areas:

1. engagement with relevant interest groups, agencies and authorities to address specific requirements of the SEARs
2. targeted engagement with the community and stakeholders, particularly those with a direct interest in the proposal, such as landholders, neighbours and other identified community stakeholders
3. broader communication and engagement with stakeholders in the region.

6.1 Objectives

TransGrid recognises the importance of early and effective engagement with communities and stakeholders in alignment with principles from IAP2's Quality Assurance Standard and Clean Energy Council's Best Practice Charter.

Fundamental to the engagement approach was a focus on ensuring the community and stakeholders were provided with an early understanding of what is proposed, were actively engaged in issues of concern and had the opportunity to provide feedback.

The objectives of community and stakeholder engagement were to:

- > identify and engage early with community and stakeholders in genuine, honest and transparent engagement
- > enable stakeholders to provide informed feedback, through the provision of tailored, timely and meaningful information
- > provide clear communications on what the proposal is, relevant/potential impacts and the underlying project need
- > encourage stakeholders to actively participate in and build acceptance towards the route selection methodology and process
- > consult on the potential environmental and social impacts of the proposal
- > conduct the engagement and communications process in a manner that addresses regulatory requirements and is regarded as providing stakeholders with just and fair opportunities to participate
- > develop and maintain respectful working relationships with stakeholders.

These objectives will be in place throughout the life of the proposal.

7. Stakeholder engagement activities

A dedicated program of communication and engagement occurred prior to and during the preparation of the EIS, to identify the range of stakeholders who may be potentially impacted by or interested in the proposal.

Stakeholder groups were identified early to facilitate targeted messaging and engagement approaches to best meet their shared interest, needs and concerns.

Since November 2018, over 890 engagement activities have been undertaken for EnergyConnect (including the proposal), ranging from community drop-in sessions and council briefings to face-to-face meetings with directly affected landholders, and phone calls and direct correspondence via email. Table 2 details the stakeholders, consultation process and overview of consultation.

Table 2 Stakeholder engagement activities

Stakeholders	Engagement activity	Summary
Energy Regulator / Operator		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) > Australian Energy Regulator. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Project briefings and subsequent updates > Regulatory consultation (RIT-T). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > 11 briefings and project updates have been provided.
Local Members of Parliament (State and Federal)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Federal Member for Riverina, The Hon Michael McCormack MP [Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure, Transport & Regional Development] > Federal Member for Farrer, The Hon Sussan Ley MP [Minister for Environment] > Federal Member for Hume, The Hon Angus Taylor MP [Minister for Energy and Emissions Reduction] > NSW Member for Albury, Justin Clancy MP [Chair, Legislative Assembly Committee on Investment, Industry and Regional Development] > NSW Member for Murray, Helen Dalton MP > NSW Member for Hornsby, Matt Kean MP [Minister for Energy and Environment] > SA Member for Stuart, Dan van Holst Pellekaan MP [Minister for Energy and Mining]. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Project briefings and subsequent updates > Community consultation discussions > Regulatory consultation and project updates with Energy Ministers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > 29 briefings and project updates have been provided.

Stakeholders	Engagement activity	Summary
Government – Departmental and Agency		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Australian Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment > Australian Department of Education, Skills & Employment > Australian Department of Industry, Innovation & Science > NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) and its divisions NSW Crown Lands, NSW Environment, Energy and Science, and NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service > NSW Department of Regional NSW, and its divisions NSW Local Land Services and Forestry Corporation NSW > NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet (heritage) > Property Acquisition NSW > Victorian Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning > Parks Victoria. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Project briefings and subsequent updates > Subject matter specific engagements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > 104 briefings, project updates, subject matter specific engagements and correspondence have been made.
Local government – Elected Officials/ Executive Staff		
<p>The local government within the proposed study area is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Wentworth Shire Council. <p>Additional local governments within the larger EnergyConnect project area including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Balranald Shire Council > Edward River Council > Hay Shire Council > Lockhart Shire Council > Murray River Council > Murrumbidgee Council > Federation Council > Narrandera Shire Council > Wagga Wagga City Council. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Project briefings and subsequent updates > Route selection workshop > Community consultation discussions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > 52 briefings and project updates have been provided to Wentworth Shire Council > Workshops have also been held with Council to secure their feedback into the route selection process > 495 briefings and project updates have been provided to nearby local governments.

Stakeholders	Engagement activity	Summary
Traditional Owners and other Aboriginal Groups		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > NSW Aboriginal Land Council > NTSCORP > Barkandji Traditional Owners (Native Title Group) > Barkindji Maraura Elders Council (BMEC) > Barkindji Maraura Elders Environment Team (BMEET) > Ta-Ru Board of Management / Maraura Barkintji Traditional Owners > Murra Bidgee Mullangari > Dareton Local Aboriginal Land Council. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Project briefings and subsequent updates > Media advertisements > Direct letters and notices > Site walkovers and cultural heritage clearance activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > 70 briefings and project updates have been provided to Aboriginal groups and representatives > Media advertisements were published in the Koori Mail, Weekly Times and Mildura Weekly in April 2020 as notice and registration of Aboriginal interests > 19 consultation letters were issued in April 2020 to assist in the assessment of the proposal and provide input to the preparation of a cultural heritage assessment report.
Industry and interest groups		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > NSW Farmers Association > Lake Victoria Advisory Committee > Regional Development Australia > Western Landcare NSW Inc. > Industry Capability Network > Primary Producers SA > AI Group > Energy Consumers Australia > Energy Users Association of Australia > Public Interest Advocacy Centre > Business SA. > Relentless Resources > Morello Earthmoving > Essential Energy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Project briefings, regulatory consultation and subsequent updates > EnergyConnect website > Interactive map. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > 44 briefings and project updates have been provided to industry groups > 400+ individual businesses registered interest from NSW and Australia in working with TransGrid on EnergyConnect.

Stakeholders	Engagement activity	Summary
Directly impacted landholders		
Landholders (owners, occupiers, lease and other interest holders in the corridor).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Direct letters and information packs > Project factsheets > Face to face meetings, emails and phone calls > Property maps > Drop-in information sessions and public events > Interactive map > Media advertisements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > 44 introductory letters and additional information provided to each landholder > 494 engagement contacts, including face to face meetings, emails and phone calls > Invitations to community information sessions and public events.
Community members		
Community and local land users (considered not directly impacted)	<p>To cover the broad area affected by the Project, it was important to provide a number of channels to communicate with the local community and solicit feedback on the project proposal. This included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Toll free number > Email address > EnergyConnect website > Drop-in information sessions and public events > Interactive map > Fact sheets > Media advertisements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Invitations to community information sessions and public events via newspaper advertising and radio interview (ABC Mildura) > Attendance at community events > 1,894 interactive map views, since 29 February 2020 > 1,345 website views, since 9 March 2020.

8. Stakeholder feedback

General feedback, issues and suggestions from community and stakeholder engagement have been received through a variety of different channels. The information captured has been documented to better understand stakeholder concerns, trends analysis and continuous improvement.

This includes engagement prior to and during the EIS development process.

A summary of stakeholder feedback by engagement to date is outlined below. Further detail on topics raised and TransGrid's response is provided in section 9 Topics raised and responses.

8.1 Government departments and agencies

The project team focused on two key themes within its engagement of government departments and agencies, specifically the engagement necessary to prepare for the project approvals process and the regulatory consultation process.

The preparation for environmental planning approvals focused on seeking inputs from decision makers and subject matter experts on project requirements. Relevant feedback included:

- > management of local environment and biodiversity, including potential offset strategies
- > planning requirements, project applications and ongoing reporting
- > engagement on cultural heritage matters
- > project development activities.

The regulatory consultation process focused on planning of infrastructure investment (RIT-T) and future energy demands, to ensure the EnergyConnect development would meet the needs of energy consumers. Feedback was also specifically provided on:

- > route selection
- > prioritising local procurement
- > management of land access and acquisition process
- > engagement on cultural heritage matters
- > project timeframes and staging.

8.2 Local government

The project team has regularly engaged Wentworth Shire Council on the proposal, especially in regard to the proposed route and community consultation. Specific feedback included:

- > route alignment
- > overview and consideration of local issues
- > local employment and procurement opportunities
- > exploration to improve mobile phone coverage in the region.

In addition, surrounding local governments have received similar briefings and updates with similar feedback provided.

8.3 Aboriginal groups and representatives

Initial meetings with the various Aboriginal group representatives was focused on sharing project information and facilitating Aboriginal cultural heritage assessments, including participation in cultural heritage surveys and site supervision during preliminary activities.

In addition, representatives also provided feedback more generally, including:

- > willingness to continue participating and speaking for Country across aspects of project development (site walkthrough) and construction activity (such as excavation)
- > encouraging EnergyConnect to undertake skills development and training with Aboriginal people
- > a desire for TransGrid to promote Aboriginal finds, and to facilitate visits to cultural places on private land to explore shared values and enhance cultural heritage
- > noting Fletcher's Lake as an important place with great cultural value, similarly, areas near Lake Victoria and Darling River contain Women's Sites
- > advised that the project should implement culturally appropriate ceremonies of recognition aligned with project activity and milestones.

8.4 Industry and interest groups

A range of briefings and subsequent meetings with industry and interest groups were held prior to and during the EIS preparation. These briefings and meetings focused on a project overview, context of the project with AEMO's ISP and the current challenges and opportunities within the NEM. Industry stakeholders were particularly interested in the cost and benefits of EnergyConnect, the impact of potential earlier than anticipated closure of coal and gas generation and noting the social value of increased reliability in energy supply and EnergyConnect's role in supporting increased reliability.

8.4.1 NSW and Australian businesses

Over 400 NSW and Australian businesses have registered their interest in working with TransGrid on EnergyConnect. This includes registering their interest in multiple work packages, including civil engineering, quarry products, haulage, logistics, traffic management, concreting, fencing and workforce accommodation.

8.4.2 Exploration licence and mineral title holders

Discussions with exploration licence and mineral title holders within the proposal area have been made, with current proposal scoping and locations provided. Continued conversations in regard to potential impact, if any, to their exploration or title holding are ongoing.

8.4.3 Service providers and utilities

Initial studies were carried out to identify utilities and service providers along the alignment, all asset owners were notified as part of this process. Due to the potential level of impact, a briefing and follow-up discussions were held with Essential Energy regarding the undergrounding of distribution lines where they cross the EnergyConnect corridor. Final designs will be provided to Essential Energy as part of their approval process, with ongoing meetings held as required. Remaining asset owners will be further engaged as part of the detailed design process.

8.4.4 Other interest groups

Other interest groups including Regional Development Australia, Riverina and Murray Joint Organisation and NSW Farmers Association, have expressed positive feedback regarding the economic development and employment opportunity that a large-scale construction project would provide in the region, advocating for use of local labour and suppliers. As representative groups, there was indication of support to work with TransGrid to maximise the spread of project information through their member base.

Groups with a focus on agricultural and environmental matters advocated for the importance of maintaining biosecurity practices to protect farming operations, and advocated to maintain or enhance local environments and biodiversity.

8.5 Local landholders and the community

8.5.1 Landholders

The project team engaged directly with potentially impacted landholders during the consultation process to help inform the alignment of the proposed transmission line and understand potential impacts of the proposal including associated access tracks. Landholders expressed a range of sentiment towards the proposal and potential impact on their properties. Overwhelmingly, landholders displayed a willingness to be engaged by TransGrid to develop the best possible outcome for the proposed transmission line design in coexistence with existing operations and land use. During the engagements, TransGrid was able to incorporate landholders' preferences and/or solutions for a proposed easement on their property to best minimise impacts. Landholders also worked with TransGrid in the development of comprehensive Property Management Plans.

8.5.2 Community members

Community events and activities primarily focused on providing general proposal information, information about route selection and capturing stakeholder feedback.

Accordingly, the majority of feedback obtained over the course of the engagements related to route selection and the proposed methodology and measures to minimise impact as much as possible. Key topics of discussion included:

- > potential impacts of the proposal
- > utilising existing infrastructure corridors (e.g. roads and existing transmission line)
- > visual amenity considerations
- > better understanding of the impacts, if any, of electromagnetic fields on the area and community.

The local community also requested continuation of information sharing in relation to progress of the EnergyConnect and associated details.

9. Topics raised and responses

Stakeholders provided feedback across numerous themes.

TransGrid's analysis of the feedback provided during the engagement period found that although views expressed by specific stakeholder groups differed, several common themes emerged.

Table 3 provides a summary of the key themes, relevant topics of feedback within each theme and a high-level overview of responses provided.

Table 3 Topics raised and responses

Theme	Relevant topic of feedback	Response
Aboriginal heritage	Engagement with Aboriginal groups	<p>TransGrid published its first <i>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement and Participation Policy</i> in May 2020, affirming its commitment to the importance of cultural heritage, creating participation opportunities, developing sustainable relationships and enhancing cultural awareness.</p> <p>TransGrid will continue working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities during the development, delivery maintenance and operation of EnergyConnect.</p> <p>More information on TransGrid's policy is available online at https://www.transgrid.com.au/being-responsible/.</p>
Biosecurity	Weed hygiene and biosecurity procedures	<p>TransGrid is committed to limiting the impact of construction and operational activities on the communities in which we work, including weed management.</p> <p>TransGrid works with relevant authorities and landholders to understand any specific requirements to ensure that weed hygiene and biodiversity risk is prevented, eliminated or minimised.</p>
Consultation	Landholder consultation process	<p>Landholders and communities are helping identify regional constraints and opportunities that may impact the location of the transmission line, as well as providing insight into other local considerations.</p> <p>These considerations are being factored into the preferred route to minimise impact to environmental, social and cultural values that are important to landholders and the community.</p>
Dust management	Dust management and impact to property operations	<p>Pre-emptive dust suppression activities will be conducted during construction. Specific instances and concerns will be addressed as they arise.</p>

Theme	Relevant topic of feedback	Response
Easement compensation	Land valuations and offers of compensation	<p>In seeking to acquire an easement, TransGrid will engage qualified professionals to value the impact of the easement on the land in accordance with the <i>Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991</i>.</p> <p>The landholder receives written advice outlining the offer. Depending on the circumstances, the offer would cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > value of the easement > incurred costs (e.g. legal fees) > any 'special value' as defined by the <i>Just Terms Act</i> that may apply.
Electric and magnetic fields (EMF)	People, agriculture and environment.	<p>TransGrid works to provide safe transmission services across its electricity network, including EMF and ensuring compliance with Australian Standards.</p> <p>TransGrid's EMF Fact Sheet provides further information on electric and magnetic fields and is available online at https://www.transgrid.com.au/being-responsible/public-safety.</p>
	GPS enabled equipment and communications devices	<p>TransGrid will design the transmission line to minimise impacts from radio frequency interference (RFI) emissions.</p> <p>The operation of residential, commercial or industrial devices on properties should not be impacted by the RFI emissions from the transmission line, as the devices and the transmission line will generally operate at different frequencies.</p>
Employment	Expression of interest to work on EnergyConnect	<p>TransGrid has encouraged local suppliers and business to register their interest in helping deliver EnergyConnect. Over 400 NSW and Australian businesses have registered expressions of interest across multiple work packages.</p>
Environment (flora, fauna and bio-diversity)	Mature trees and other riparian vegetation	<p>TransGrid is undertaking ecology surveys and investigations. These activities help identify existing animal and plant species, including their habitats within the local area.</p>
	Mallee woodland	
	Modified pastoral leases and conservation areas	<p>These surveys will help us understand the local environment, and identify issues to be taken into account during engineering design and project planning.</p>
	Environmental offset areas	

Theme	Relevant topic of feedback	Response
Land use (current and proposed)	Proximity to farm infrastructure and associated equipment	TransGrid has worked with landholders to understand current land use and any planned future activity, to minimise impact and refine the potential route alignment.
	Future land use	
	Co-existence between transmission line and farming operations	
	Local airstrips	
Maintenance and remediation	Maintenance of roads and other shared infrastructure	TransGrid will regularly inspect sites and shared infrastructure to ensure sites are safe.
	Remediation of proposal sites	
Property access	Access	TransGrid seeks agreements with landholders regarding property access. Prior consent is required for entry to a property for site investigations, or an easement is negotiated on the land for the purpose of construction, operation and maintenance of the transmission line.
	Access notification process	
	Security	Any specific requirements regarding property access (prior notification, gate security, etc) are recorded during these engagements.
Property value	Proximity of transmission line infrastructure	Factors like visual amenity and land use are taken into account during the route selection process. Opportunities to co-locate proposed and existing infrastructure is a key aspect of minimising impact to the community and the environment. TransGrid will continue to work with stakeholders to resolve concerns and minimise impacts, as much as possible.
	Duplication of transmission line and easement	
Route alignment considerations	Existing tracks, fence lines and disturbed areas	Within the area of investigation, TransGrid identifies: > constraints like social and environmental factors that must or should be avoided > opportunities to minimise the potential impact on local communities and the environment.
	Farm infrastructure, agricultural equipment, communications equipment and access gates	
	Dwellings	TransGrid then refines the potential route in consultation with landholders, identifying local considerations that will assist in informing the proposed route.
	Current and future land use	
Telecommunications	Mobile phone coverage	The resolution of local blackspots to mobile coverage is outside the scope for EnergyConnect, however opportunities to improve coverage are currently being investigated.

Theme	Relevant topic of feedback	Response
Tourism and recreation areas	Local recreation areas	<p>TransGrid works with stakeholders and landholders to better understand the social, environmental and cultural values held by the community about the local area.</p> <p>These factors are considered as inputs to developing the proposed transmission route.</p>
	Tourism	
Visual amenity	Tourism and recreation areas	<p>TransGrid works with stakeholders and landholders to best understand the social, environmental and cultural values held by the community about the local area.</p> <p>These factors are considered as inputs to developing the proposed transmission route</p>
	Local towns	
	Dwellings	
Water	Water supply and management	<p>Water would be required during construction for a range of activities. TransGrid will engage with key stakeholders regarding the supply of water, complying with the relevant council and utility approval processes.</p>

10. Conclusions and next steps

The consultation and engagement undertaken to support the preparation of the EIS has ensured the community and all stakeholders identified in the SEARs were made aware of and had an understanding of EnergyConnect and the proposal. It also ensured they had an opportunity to provide feedback on issues and matters of concern.

In addition to stakeholders identified in the SEARs, and in accordance with DPIE's expectations for effective and genuine community consultation, the program of communication and engagement undertaken also provided an opportunity to create broader awareness among a larger range of stakeholders including industry, interest groups and community members.

TransGrid will continue to work with stakeholders promoting participation, updating information and encouraging stakeholders to provide feedback throughout the assessment process and beyond. It is anticipated that the next stage of community and stakeholder engagement will build on relationships already established through early engagement activities and will complement the formal consultation required under planning regulations.

In addition to engagement coordinated by the project team, community members and other stakeholders will have the opportunity to 'have their say' during a future public exhibition period of the EIS.

11. Appendix

Attachment A: Route selection workshop presentation to Wentworth Shire Council



Welcome and introduction

- > Purpose of today
- > Project EnergyConnect – background and status
- > Route selection process overview
- > Constraints and opportunities feedback
- > Engagement and local opportunities

Project EnergyConnect – background and status

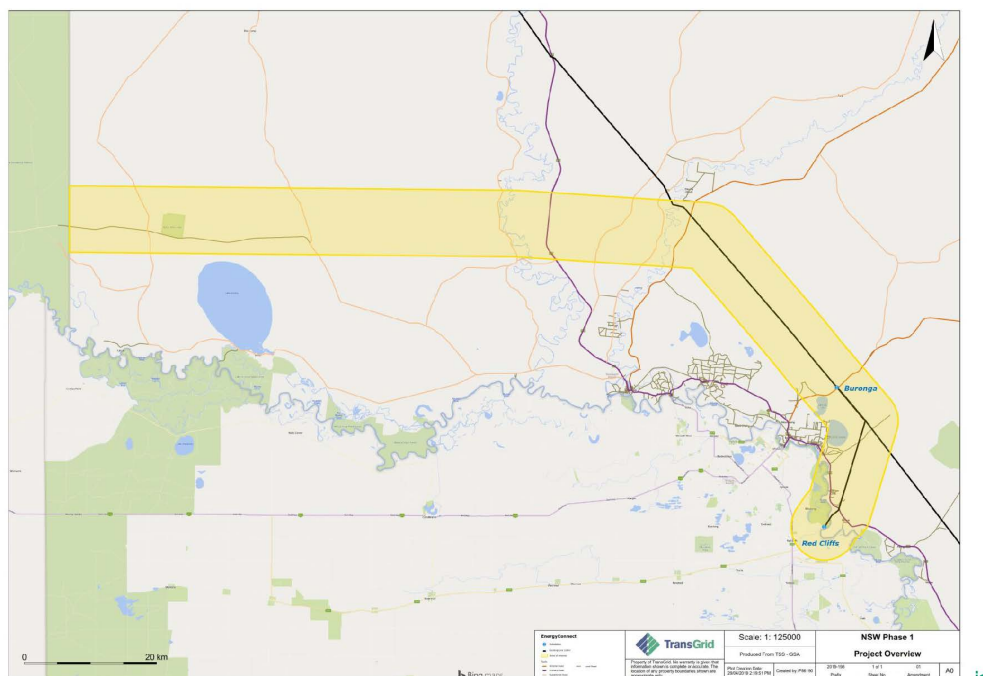
- > Why an interconnector?
- > How was the Interconnector identified as an option?
- > Overview of Project EnergyConnect
- > Anticipated timelines



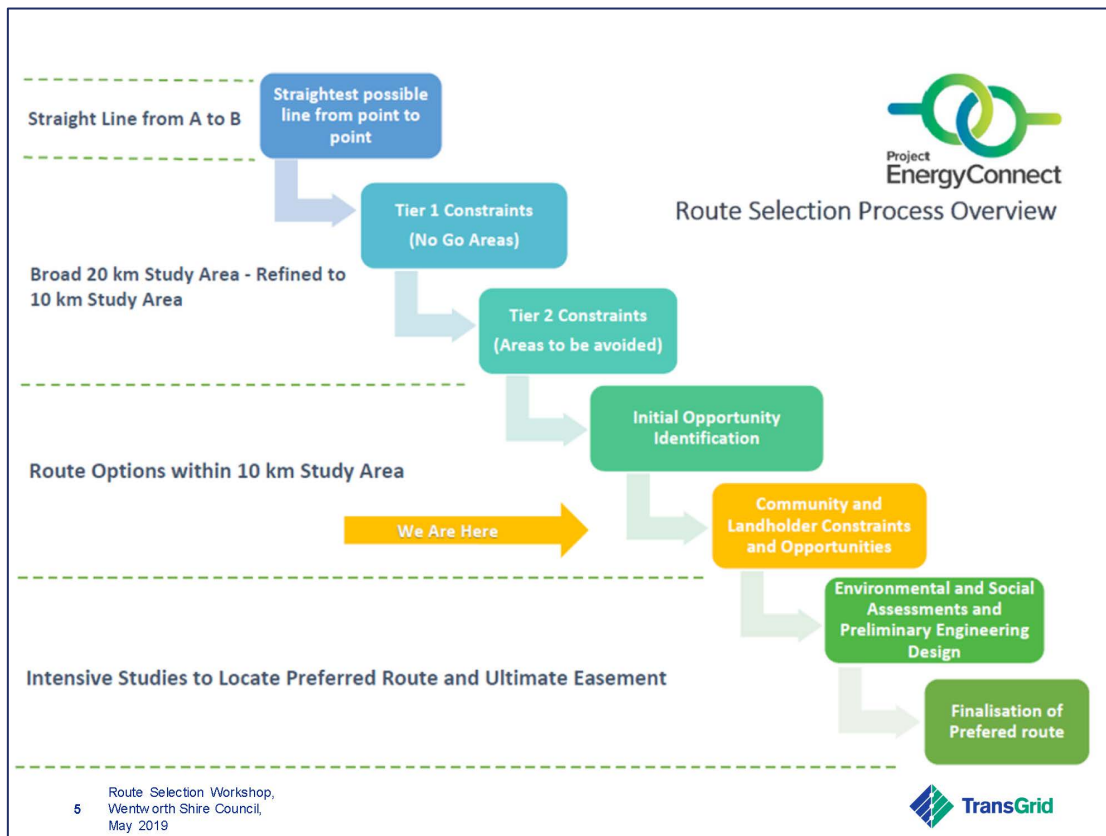
3 Route Selection Workshop,
Wentworth Shire Council,
May 2019



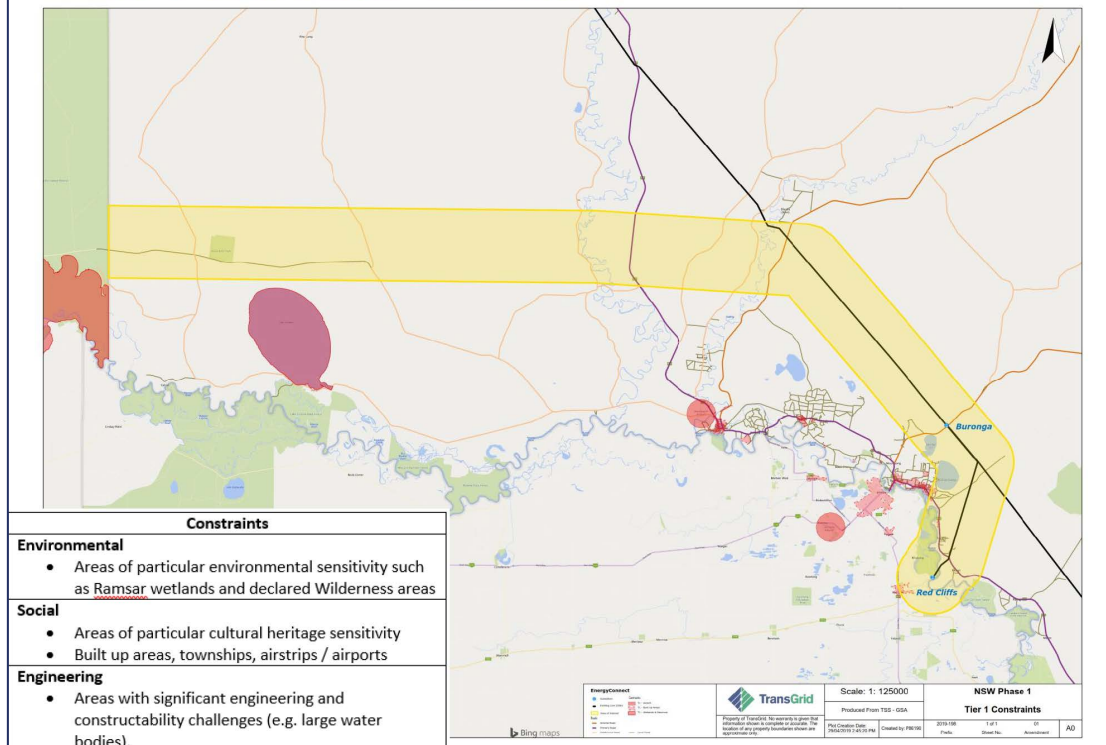
Route Overview - Border to Buronga



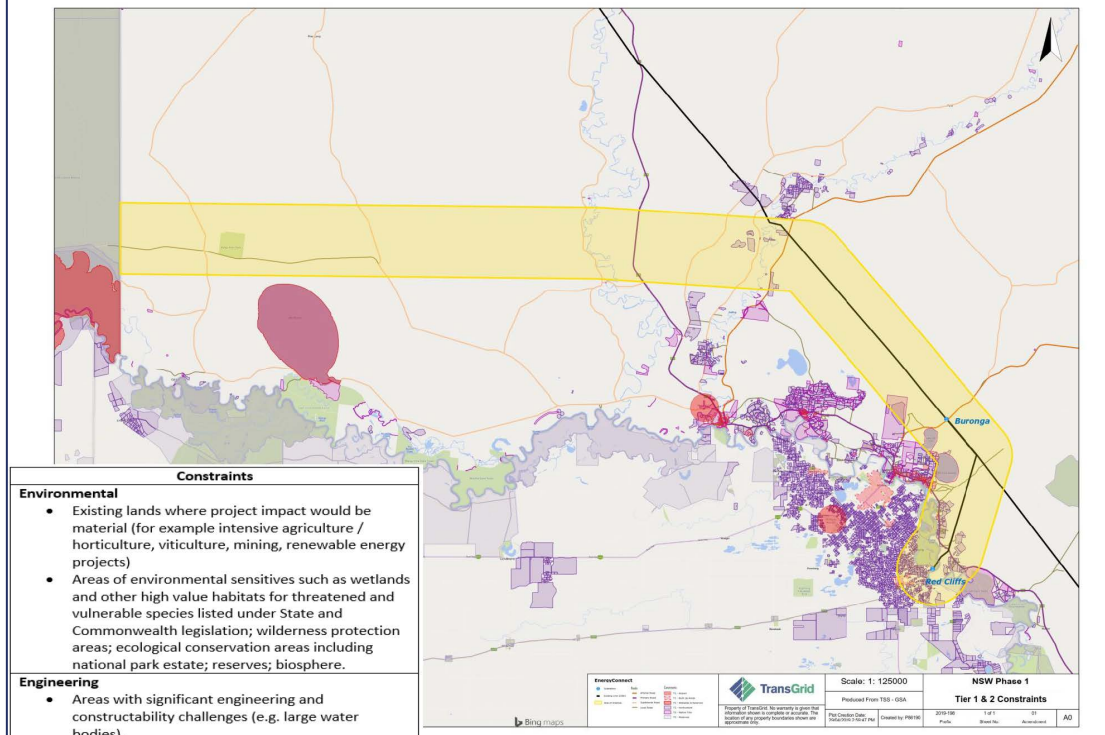
May 2019



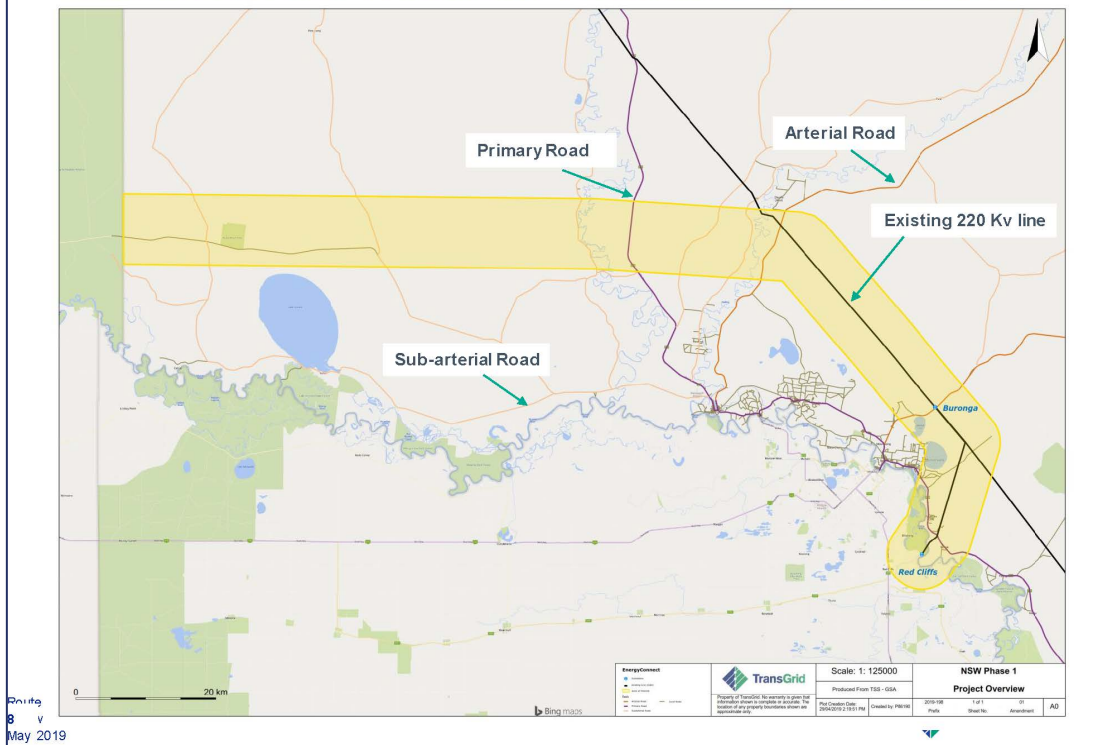
Tier 1 Constraints overview



Tier 2 Constraints overview



Landholder and community constraints & opportunities



Engagement and local opportunities

Upcoming engagement events

- > Drop-in sessions

Online engagement

- > Interactive mapping
- > Online survey

Engagement moving forward

Route Selection Workshop,
Wentworth Shire Council,
May 2019



Thankyou

10 Route Selection Workshop,
Wentworth Shire Council,
May 2019



Attachment B: Project introduction landholder letter



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

14/02/2019

[Landowner]
[Address]
[Suburb State Postcode]

Dear [Landowner]

Project EnergyConnect

Project EnergyConnect is a proposed new electricity interconnector between Robertstown in South Australia and Wagga Wagga in New South Wales, with a connection into Victoria. The Project was announced this week, by TransGrid and ElectraNet, who operate the transmission networks in New South Wales and South Australia.

An electricity interconnector is a connection that allows power to flow between states in the National Energy Market. The proposed new interconnector is currently being assessed under the formal Regulatory Investment Test for Transmission (RIT-T) required by the Australian Energy Regulator.

In parallel to the RIT-T process, TransGrid is undertaking preliminary investigations to better understand the environmental, social and land use constraints of an initial 10 km-wide study area that has been identified as a potential corridor for the interconnector.

We are writing to you as land you have an interest in is within the initial 10km-wide study area.

We would like to provide you with information about the Project and secure your input into the methodology being used to narrow the 10 km-wide study area. We would also like to understand more about your property and your initial feedback on the project.

As Project EnergyConnect is in its early stages, the feedback you provide will assist in informing the location of the potential interconnector route.

To enable us to make contact with you, please can you advise us of the most appropriate phone or email details. Please provide these details to us via:

Phone: 1800 222 537 or

Email: community@transgrid.com.au

Once we have received your details we will contact you with a view to setting up a face-to-face meeting in March 2019.

Please find enclosed additional, general information regarding Project EnergyConnect. Further information can also be accessed at www.projectenergyconnect.com.au.

If you have any questions or would like further information please get in touch on the above contacts.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Michael Lloyd".

Michael Lloyd
Community Relations
Project EnergyConnect

www.transgrid.com.au



ENERGYCONNECT FACTSHEET

Connecting New South Wales, South Australia and Victoria

A new electricity interconnector is proposed between Wagga Wagga in New South Wales and Robertstown in South Australia, with an additional smaller connection to Victoria. TransGrid is partnering with ElectraNet to deliver EnergyConnect.

Why is this project needed?

The Australian energy landscape is transitioning to a greater mix of renewables. To support this transition, the national electricity grid needs to change to connect new energy generation sources to Australian communities and businesses. At the same time, customers are demanding lower power bills and a more secure and reliable service.

What is the project?

EnergyConnect involves the construction of a transmission line connecting New South Wales and South Australia, with connection into Victoria. The proposed interconnector would be around 900km long and run between Wagga Wagga in NSW and Robertstown in SA.

The interconnector is a key element of the Australian Energy Market Operator's *Integrated System Plan* and the New South Wales Government has declared it Critical State Significant Infrastructure.

What are the project benefits?

If approved, EnergyConnect would deliver a range of direct benefits for consumers in New South Wales, South Australia, and Victoria including:

Lower prices

- Typical residential electricity bills are estimated to be reduced annually by \$30 in NSW
- Typical small business electricity bills are estimated to be reduced annually by \$71 in NSW.

Energy security

- Enables a greater mix of renewable energy generation to connect to the network
- Increases reliability and security of electricity supply.

Increased economic activity and jobs

- Creates 1,500 jobs in NSW
- \$4 billion net economic benefit in NSW
- Unlocks development of new energy projects.

What is an interconnector?

An electricity interconnector is a connection that allows power to flow between regions in the National Energy Market, providing access to a larger number of electricity generators.

Connect with us 1800 49 06 66 | pec@transgrid.com.au
transgrid.com.au/energyconnect

 **TransGrid**

MAY 2020



How we work

Initial studies of a potential project corridor are underway to understand environmental, social and engineering considerations as well as stakeholder perspectives for the project.

TransGrid has been seeking feedback on a potential route between the NSW/SA border and Wagga Wagga since 2019, and is committed to open and transparent engagement across all phases of the project.

We will continue to engage with communities along the proposed route throughout the life of the project, including meetings with relevant landholders.

These discussions will continue as feedback is collected and the route is further refined.

Have your say online at:

www.transgrid.com.au/energyconnect

Key project dates



Contact us

To contact the project team, phone 1800 49 06 66 (toll-free) or email pec@transgrid.com.au



The factsheet features a background image of a vast, flat landscape under a clear blue sky, with several high-voltage power line towers stretching across the horizon. A large, white, stylized speech bubble shape is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing the 'ENERGYCONNECT' logo and the title 'Route selection'.

ENERGYCONNECT

Route selection

EnergyConnect

TransGrid is reinforcing the transmission network in southern NSW to improve the flow of electricity between new generation sources and the State's major demand centres.

Reinforcing the southern transmission network will:

- Allow new energy sources to come online, including renewables
- Unlock the full capacity of the expanded Snowy Hydro Scheme
- Enable greater sharing of energy between the eastern states.

Route selection

TransGrid is committed to working with landowners and communities to identify the route for the interconnector.

To develop the transmission route, we are conducting:

- Landowner and community consultation
- Environmental field studies and site assessments.

What to expect?

TransGrid representatives are in the process of meeting with local landowners, communities and other stakeholders to better understand local considerations. This includes:

- Discussions with individual landowners
- Drop-in sessions for community members
- Meetings with local representatives.

In addition to this, you may see specialists undertaking field studies. These studies will occur on public and private land.

Route refinement process

To identify a preferred route for the transmission line, an area of investigation is initially determined. This area is between two known points being the start and end points of the transmission line. These points are usually at the location of a sub-station.

The area of investigation is then refined and further developed to identify an initial route. This involves:

- Identifying regional constraints and opportunities
- Refining the area of investigation
- Investigating local considerations.

Connect with us

1800 49 06 66 | pec@transgrid.com.au
transgrid.com.au/energyconnect



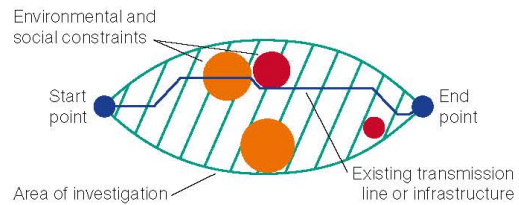
Regional constraints and opportunities

Within the area of investigation, we first identify:

- Constraints like social and environmental factors that must or should be avoided
- Opportunities to minimise the potential impact on local communities and the environment.

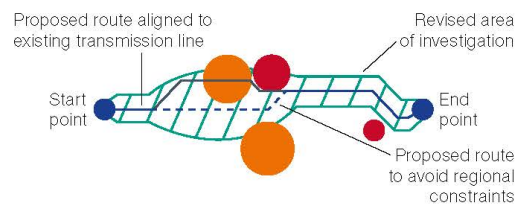
Constraints can include intensive agriculture, licensed airstrips, conservation areas and significant cultural heritage sites.

Opportunities can include aligning the new transmission line with existing transmission infrastructure, fence lines, roads and access tracks.



Refining the area of investigation

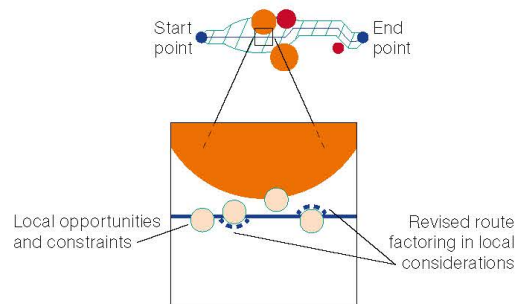
As constraints are identified and opportunities to minimise potential disturbance are confirmed, the area of investigation is refined to focus the potential route alignment.



Local considerations

TransGrid representatives are currently consulting various stakeholders, including landowners, community members and Traditional Custodians, to help identify local considerations that will assist in informing the proposed route.

In addition, the proposed transmission route will be further refined by detailed environmental and cultural heritage surveys, land access negotiations and engineering design.



Connect with us

TransGrid is committed to working with landowners and communities to understand local considerations that can be taken into account in developing the proposed route for EnergyConnect.

To share your views or find out more about EnergyConnect, please connect with us.

1800 49 06 66 (free call)
pec@transgrid.com.au
transgrid.com.au/energyconnect



Invitation to Community Info Sessions Project EnergyConnect

We need your local views on the project opportunities and constraints for the construction of a new 330KV transmission line.

Feedback received will be considered during route selection development.

Find out more

www.projectenergyconnect.com.au

community@transgrid.com.au

1800 222 537

Community Drop in Sessions

Date: Tuesday 7 May 2019

Time: 12:30pm – 6pm

Venue: Wentworth Town Hall,
24 Adelaide Street, Wentworth

Date: Wednesday 8 May 2019

Time: 12:30pm – 6pm

Venue: Meeting Room 1, Midway
Centre, Midway Drive, Buronga



TransGrid



Project
EnergyConnect



TransGrid added an event.

7 May 2019 · 🌐



WED, 8 MAY 2019

Project EnergyConnect - Community Drop-in Sessions

Meeting Room 1, Midway Centre, Midway Drive, Buronga



Causes





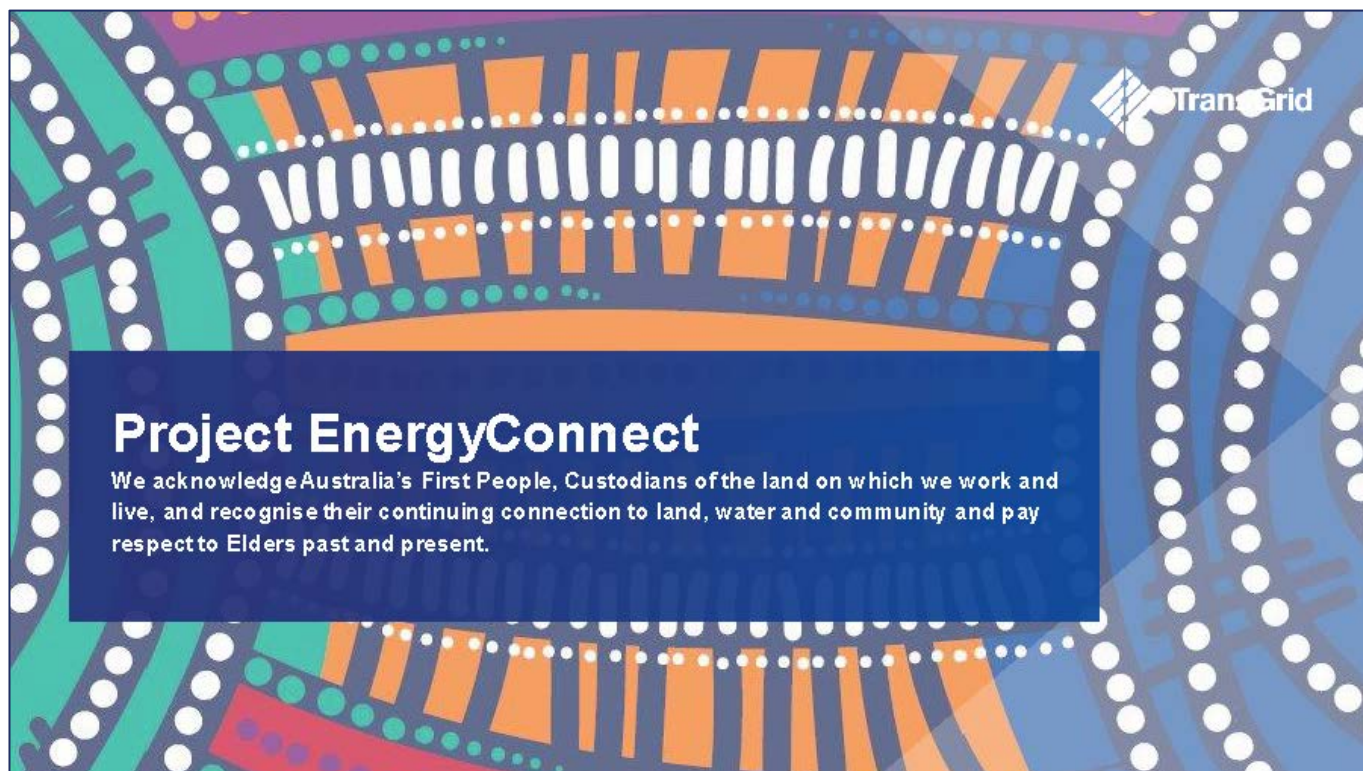
TransGrid

23 August 2019 · 🌐

Come and see us at the Wentworth Show this weekend! The team are there are ready to chat all things Project EnergyConnect South Australia.

#community #wentworthshow2019





Welcome

Meeting Agenda

- > Introductions
- > Who is TransGrid?
- > Project EnergyConnect – background
- > Corridor & Route selection process overview and feedback
- > Cultural Heritage site surveys

About TransGrid

Aboriginal Languages in NSW
- TransGrid Network



TransGrid is the operator and manager of the NSW transmission network.

NSW is the largest region in the National Electricity Market, connecting QLD and VIC



32% of Australia's population



32% of energy in the NEM

Our network comprises:



13,000 km transmission lines and cables



105 substations



4,000 km optical fibre



Where we fit in the NSW energy industry



Generators

Electricity is sourced from coal, gas, wind, hydro and solar power plants.

Transmission

TransGrid keeps you and your way of life connected by moving high voltage electricity across NSW and the ACT.

Distribution and direct connect customers

TransGrid transports electricity to the distributors and our direct connect customers.

Retailers

Retailers purchase electricity and sell to consumers.

Residential, commercial and industrial consumers

Buy and use electricity to power their everyday.

Competitors include



Regulated monopoly



Regulated regional monopolies



Competitors include

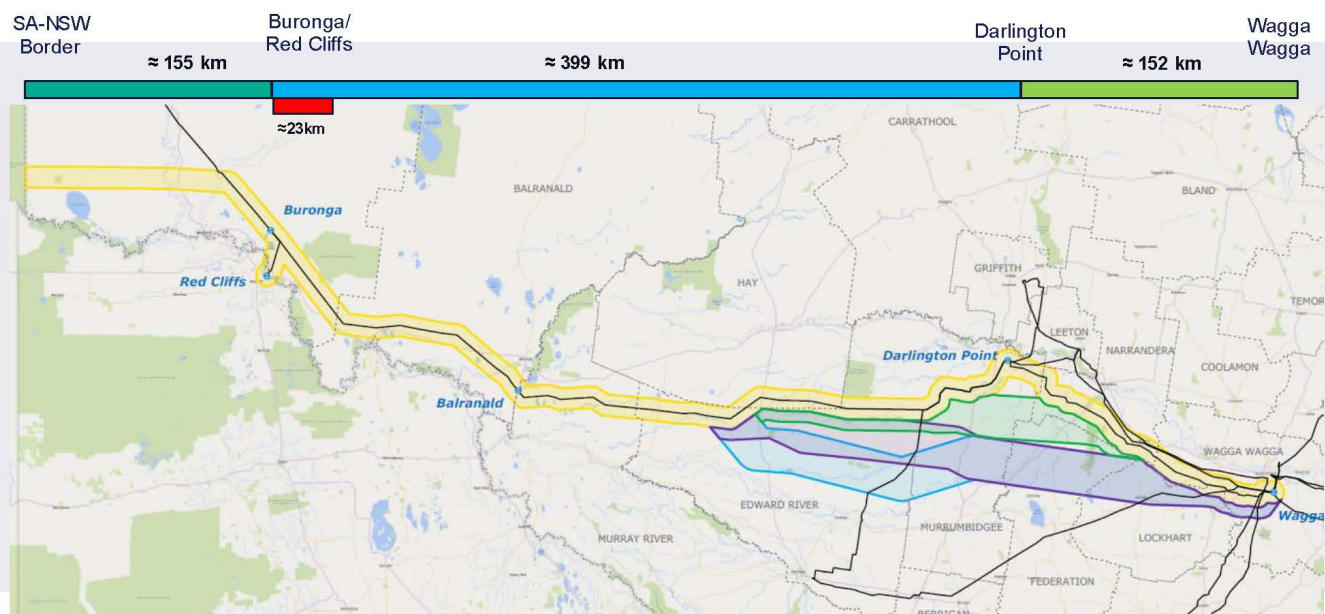


Project EnergyConnect

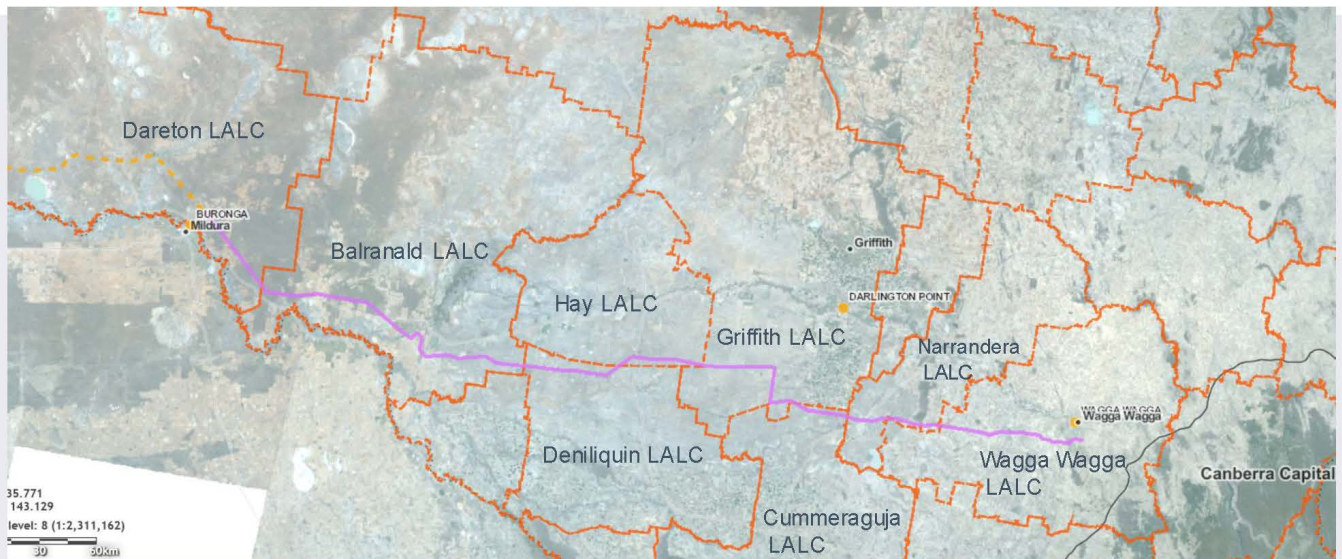
- The missing link between the SA and NSW transmission networks
- Greater access to diverse, low-cost renewable generation sources as existing coal-fired generators retire
- Red Cliffs connection would relieve system constraints and allow for NSW and SA consumers to benefit from access to low-cost renewable power from Victoria.



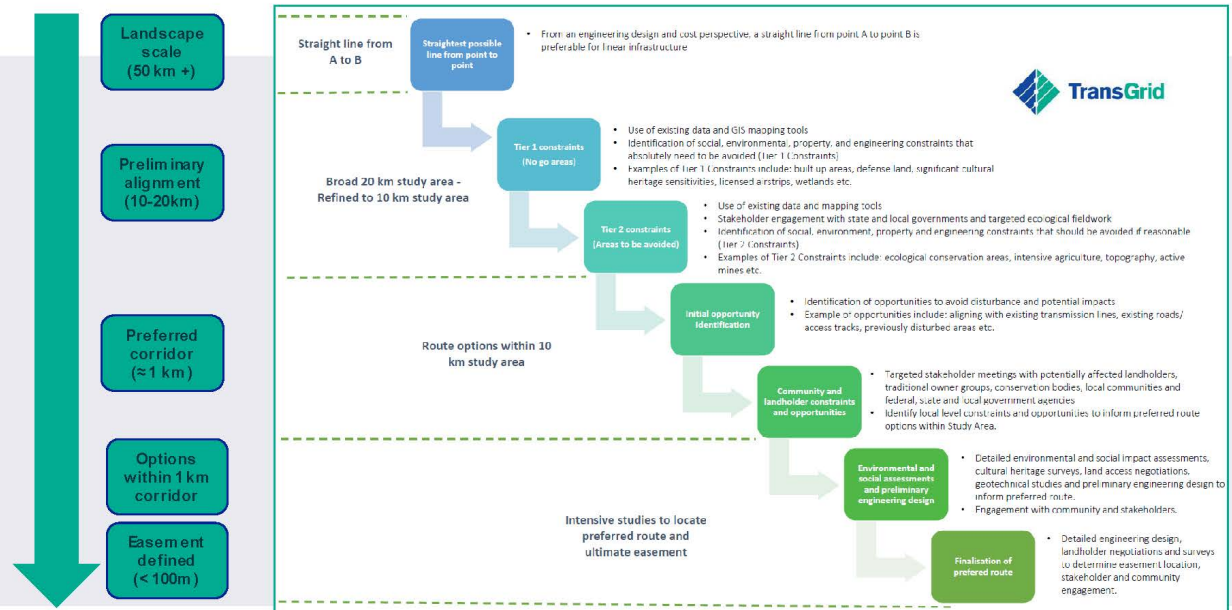
Project Overview



Project Overview Continued



Corridor identification and route selection



8



Variation across Landscape



Engagement Process for the EIS



- Requires State and Commonwealth environmental planning approval
- Consultation with Aboriginal people is a fundamental part of the impact assessment process
- TransGrid are committed to engagement in accordance with the *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Consultation Requirements for Proponents 2010 (DECCW, 2010)*
- This guideline sets out the consultation requirements with Aboriginal people who hold knowledge about the significance of Aboriginal cultural heritage relevant to a planning proposal
- TransGrid will commence this process in February/March 2020 requesting registration of RAP's



Cultural Heritage Survey Approach

- Meeting place for morning pre-start will be communicated prior to works commencing
- Timesheets to be filled in and signed off at the beginning and end of each work day. Work day is from approx. 7am-4pm and weather dependent
- Payments will be processed once timesheets and invoices are received
- Safety is paramount at all times, if you spot a hazard or if there is an incident report it to the supervisor on site
- Zero tolerance to drugs, alcohol and violence (verbal and physical) on all TransGrid projects
- Remain hydrated and have regular rest breaks and meals, water will be available on site
- Smoke only in designated areas or at designated stops, there is no smoking on private properties
- PPE is to be worn, including enclosed footwear, long sleeve top and long trousers, cap and eyewear



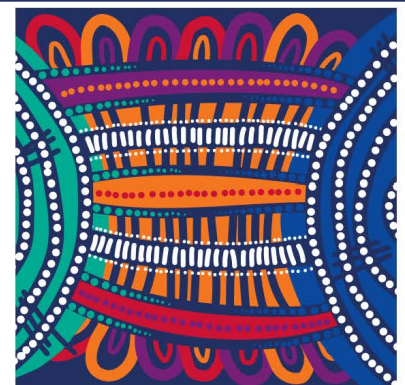
TransGrid's Commitment

TransGrid recognises that it has a significant role to play in reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We recognise that our transmission lines, substations and other assets exist on land that has belonged to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples for millennia before European settlement. We recognise the injustices perpetrated upon Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples over the past two centuries and the devastating impact this has had on communities, including disproportionate incarceration rates, reduced life expectancies and resulting reduced access to opportunities.

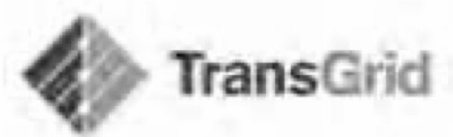
We envisage a future where educational and employment opportunities are of the same high standard as those enjoyed by other Australians, and a future where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People's deep knowledge of and connection to land is recognised, respected and celebrated by all Australians.

As we continue to develop our energy network we are in a unique position to play a part in nurturing a synergy with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and communities as we recognise that they hold great knowledge of, and have deep connections to the lands upon which those assets will exist.

We will do this by improving relationships with, showing respect for and increasing opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as colleagues, stakeholders, community members and consumers of our services. We will maintain a culture that values diversity and equity, and encourage all TransGrid employees and contractors to be role models for reconciliation.



Thank you



EnergyConnect (NSW - Western Section)

Notice and registration of Aboriginal interests

EnergyConnect is a proposed new electricity interconnector between Robertstown in South Australia (SA) and Wagga Wagga in New South Wales (NSW), with a connection into north-west Victoria. An electricity interconnector is a connection that allows power to flow between regions in the National Energy Market.

TransGrid is responsible for the NSW components of EnergyConnect, which are anticipated to be assessed and approved in stages, starting with the western section (the subject of this notice).

In the western section, TransGrid proposes to construct new high voltage transmission lines between the NSW/SA border and the existing Buronga substation as well as an upgrade to the existing transmission line between Buronga and the NSW/Victoria border at Monak, near Red Cliffs. The new transmission line structures would be up to 80 metres in height and spaced about every 300 to 600 metres along the line. The proposal would also require the upgrade of the existing Buronga substation from 220 to 330 kilovolts, new and upgraded access tracks and roads as well as ancillary works such as the establishment of brake and winch sites, crane pads, site compounds and equipment laydown areas.

TransGrid and our consultant, Navin Officer Heritage Consultants, are seeking registrations of interest from Aboriginal people who hold cultural knowledge relevant to determining the significance of Aboriginal objects and/or places within the western section of EnergyConnect. The purpose of consultation with Aboriginal people is to assist TransGrid to prepare advice to assist the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment in assessing the development application for the proposal.

Following registrations of interest, we will work with the registered Aboriginal people to determine our preferred consultation approach and assessment methodology over the coming months.

You can register in writing (email or letter) to:

Nicola Hayes

Navin Officer Heritage Consultants

U4 Kingston Warehouse, 71 Leichhardt St,
Kingston ACT 2604

Telephone: 02 6282 9415

Email: nhayes@nohc.com.au

Registrations must be received by close of business 6 May 2020.

TransGrid: PO Box A1000 Sydney South, NSW 1235 Australia

Attachment H: Aboriginal heritage consultation letter



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

[Date]

[Contact]

[Organisation]

[Address]

[Suburb State Postcode]

Dear [Contact]

EnergyConnect (NSW – Western Section) – Invitation for consultation

EnergyConnect is a proposed new electricity interconnector between Wagga Wagga in New South Wales and Robertstown in South Australia, with an added connection into north-west Victoria. EnergyConnect is a joint project between TransGrid and ElectraNet, who operate the transmission networks in New South Wales (NSW) and South Australia (SA), respectively.

TransGrid is responsible for the NSW components of EnergyConnect, which are anticipated to be assessed and approved in stages, starting with the western section (the subject of this invitation and referred to as 'the proposal').

The proposal includes:

- > construction of new high voltage transmission lines and associated infrastructure between the SA/NSW border near Chowilla and the existing Buronga substation
- > an upgrade to the existing transmission line between the Buronga substation and the NSW/Victoria border at Monak, near Red Cliffs
- > an expansion and upgrade of the existing substation from an operating capacity of 220 kV to 330 kV
- > establishment and upgrade of access tracks and roads, as required
- > other ancillary works required to facilitate the construction of the proposal e.g. laydown and staging areas, concrete batching plants, brake/winch sites, site offices and accommodation camps.

TransGrid is currently undertaking environmental, social and engineering studies as part of the corridor refinement and environmental and planning assessment processes for the proposal. The initial study area for the proposal is shown in **Attachment A**.

TransGrid is seeking Aboriginal knowledge holders (preferably those who have undertaken cultural heritage assessments and/or site monitoring) to assist in the assessment of the proposal and provide input into the preparation of a cultural heritage assessment report (CHAR) in accordance with the *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Consultation Requirements for Proponents 2010* (Office of Environment and Heritage, 2010). The results of the CHAR will inform an environmental impact statement, which will be prepared for the proposal in accordance with Division 5.2 of the NSW *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.

It would be appreciated if your organisation could please provide a list of the names of Aboriginal people who may hold cultural knowledge relevant to determining the significance of Aboriginal objects or Aboriginal places for the proposal within the study area. We will then work with the interested Aboriginal people to determine our preferred consultation approach and assessment methodology for the proposal over the coming months.

Thank you for your assistance and advice in this matter. If you have any questions or would like to discuss this further, please contact Nicola Hayes as per the contact details below. More information on the proposal can be accessed at www.projectenergyconnect.com.au.

Yours sincerely

Nicola Hayes

Principal Archaeologist – Navin Officer Heritage Consultants (on behalf of TransGrid)

Email: Phone:

www.transgrid.com.au

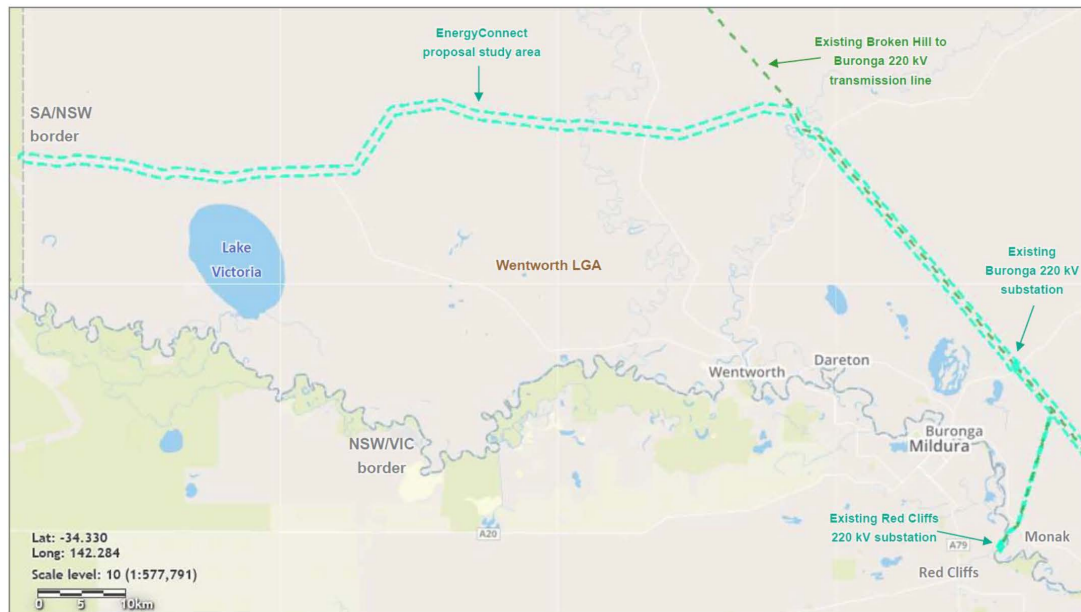


Figure 1 Initial proposal study area for EnergyConnect (NSW – Western section)

Attachment I: Site supervision of geotechnical drilling works on Country as part of preliminary design investigation work

