



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

[STANDING COMMITTEE ON STATE DEVELOPMENT]

MEDIA RELEASE

INQUIRY INTO THE FEASIBILITY OF UNDERGROUNDING THE TRANSMISSION INFRASTRUCTURE FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

31 August 2023

The Standing Committee on State Development has today tabled its final report into the feasibility of undergrounding the transmission infrastructure for renewable energy projects.

Over the course of this inquiry, the committee received over 300 submissions, conducted five hearings and two public forums. The inquiry considered current and planned transmission infrastructure projects in New South Wales, and examined the feasibility of putting that infrastructure underground. The committee's particular focus was HumeLink, a transmission line connecting Wagga Wagga, Bannaby and Maragle, involving 360 km of proposed new transmission lines and new or upgraded infrastructure at four substations. The committee considered factors including cost, time to build, technical suitability, impacts on landowners, impacts on the local community and economy, impacts on the local environment and bushfire risk.

Ms Emily Suvaal, chair of the committee, said: "In relation to HumeLink, ultimately, the committee found that the current plan for constructing HumeLink as an overhead line is the correct approach, especially given the applicable regulatory environment and the lack of any action to date in progressing the undergrounding option. We acknowledge that this is not what many in the local community are calling for, and we emphasise that this was not an easy conclusion to come to.

"I would like to thank everyone who contributed to this inquiry through writing submissions or appearing at hearings or public forums, or by hosting the committee at their properties on site visits."

The Chair further said: "The committee carefully considered all the evidence provided, acknowledges the range of concerns provided by the community, and has made a number of recommendations in its final report."

Details of the inquiry, including copies of the final report, may be found on the committee's website at <https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/committees/inquiries/Pages/inquiry-details.aspx?pk=2966>

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For further information please contact Committee Chair, Ms Emily Suvaal MLC, on (02) 9230 2731