

**Submission  
No 20**

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

**Name:** Mr John Glenn

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JOHN G GLEN

9 July 2023

The Hon Emily Suvaal,  
Committee Chair,  
Inquiry - Feasibility of undergrounding the  
transmission infrastructure for renewable energy projects  
Standing Committee on State Development  
Parliament House  
6 Macquarie Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

*telephon*  
*mobil*  
*emai*

Dear Committee Chair,

## Humelink undergrounding

I am a landholder on the proposed Humelink corridor and will be paid considerable compensation for the construction of towers and cross my land. Nevertheless, I feel the construction is a flawed concept, built on a business case that was overly biased more to the commercial rather than the social outcomes. I do understand that to attract investment requires a strong return on than investment. But investment is not just cost versus profit, it can be balanced by other factors such as duration and other opportunity, offsets and co-investment.

The reality is, one can build a business case to prove any proposition – as long as one can tweak the comparative importance of the competing factors.

In essence the question is one of achieving balance between social value, long term consequence and opportunity, as well as direct commercial value. It appears that the trade of an immediate “renewables” response to a power production shortfall, leans to heavily towards the commercial outcomes, most of which is not in favour of Australian companies. I don’t think the balance has been achieved for a modern society.

Some observations:

- Society is increasingly concerned regarding environmental impact. The corridor will have a lasting impact on wildlife, endangered species, visual amenity – when it need not.
- It is an aging approach, cost effective today but not future proof. With forethought we would have one transmission network, with multiple users. Instead, we have a myriad of single purpose, costly, transmission lines. Within sight of my property there rare three such corridors. This is not planning, this is anarchy. Whatever goes, when – and we have seen the result of that behaviour in any number of countries.
- Aerial access will become increasingly important. The use of UAVs, drones, to interact, to deliver, the famous Jetson taxi comes ever closer to realisation. It is being trialled and becomes more promising with

advances in power and automation. Fixed incursions into the aerial corridor only complicate and limit potential. We are constraining ourselves by building yesteryears answer today.

- Clearly aerial power lines are dangerous, linked with bushfires that have caused many deaths and extraordinary loss of property. They require constant maintenance and ongoing work to reduce the danger to acceptable levels. Nothing is 100% safe, but I'm not convinced we would allow a work environment with that level of risk.

I'm sure there will be many with more detailed observations. I suspect that the choice of aerial transmission was the simple answer and produced the best commercial business case. Its an easy option, and easy to defend on numbers. But I'm a bit tired of easy choices by industry and bureaucrats, especially choices made to satisfy an agenda.

I'm more interested in wise choices. The Humelink approach requires a rethink.

John ~~Q~~ ~~A~~ ~~n~~