

**Submission  
No 65**

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

**Name:** Mr Richard Breward

**Date Received:** 12 July 2023

---

*WB Breward, RR Breward, JA Breward &  
Al Young*

*11 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

Dear The Hon Emily Suvaal MLC,

**Re: Feasibility of undergrounding the transmission infrastructure for renewable energy projects**

We are a hardworking family who have been on our farming property for generations, since the 1930s. Our farm is proposed to host the Humelink line.

We believe that this transmission line should be undergrounded. It is the safest way to minimise the ongoing impact to our family, our property and the local community. Green energy should not just be about generation – it should mean green transmission too.

The HumeLink towers will be in full view of our residences. We already have one 330 kv transmission line and tower on our property that is in sight of the residences, thereby the impact is doubled. Having two transmission lines (and three towers) on the property will devalue our property more so than just the impact of HumeLink alone.

This transmission line will have a severe impact on our property.

Our property was devastated by the Black Summer Bushfires and the impact cannot be understated.

Wondalga and its surrounds was overrun by the Dunns Road Bushfire at the beginning of 2020. Our property was badly impacted, with the vast majority of the land burnt by the bushfire, as well as destroying the main residence, our shearing shed and various other buildings (including equipment stored in them). The majority of our fences were destroyed. Many of our merino sheep perished, and we had to sell off the rest immediately as there was no feed on the property.

This is a link to an ABC News video of the bushfire approaching our property (recorded by our neighbour Geoff Purcell). In it you can see the highly wooded large hill (the Big Hill) where the HumeLink transmission line is proposed to run, and the existing 330 kv tower on our property.

[The Dunns Road fire races towards Geoff Purcell's property. - ABC News](#)

We are trying to get the property back on its feet. The threat of HumeLink, the Covid-19 pandemic and three successive La Nina's have not helped. We have been working tirelessly on weekends for

three years either repairing or clearing and building fences. We have had to rely on the good nature of neighbours to get some weed spraying done. We have had to lease part of the property for cattle, to keep the grass down, while we work towards restocking ourselves - which cannot be merino sheep – we have to change what and how we farm.

The HumeLink transmission line, if built as overhead transmission lines, will dramatically increase the bushfire risk to our property. We will be surrounded on three sides by transmission lines with the fourth side being the Greenhills State Forest, an extreme fire hazard by itself.

The Rural Fire Service did not come onto our property during the Black Summer Bushfires as we were later told the risk due to the existing overhead transmission line was too great. They were ordered to move back to the Gilmore RFS shed leaving our and our neighbours' properties to face the fire alone.

With the experience gained in the Black Summer Bushfires we know we will have no support during the next bushfire.

We also have concerns regarding the health impacts of living so closely to the electromagnetic fields of two high voltage transmission lines. The current line emits a buzzing sound (especially at night), that is heard up and down the valley. We can only assume the higher voltage HumeLink transmission lines will increase the noise significantly.

The indicative corridor/easement line that is proposed runs over a large hill that bore the full brunt of the force of the Dunns Road bushfire. It is only now starting to green up and will take years to regenerate (we were planning on planting new trees to help it along). It is still a dangerous area to access as we have not been able to do any significant tree assessment and felling in that area. The transmission line will forever blight the landscape. If the line was undergrounded it will be safer for us and the local community, and the negative impacts on the landscape will be minimized. It will also help reduce the bushfire hazard level, which is extremely important to us.

When the property was purchased 80+ years ago there were no transmission lines and all surrounding land was farms. The property has been subject to numerous acquisitions or the like over the years. Our grandparents could not have foreseen that so many government entities (or their representatives) would be picking off bits of the farm constantly, ever making it smaller, creating unusable areas of land, and devaluing the property and increasing the bushfire hazard level.

This land has been home to four generations. It is our home, our farm, our life, our past, our legacy, our future. This is the land our grandparents worked so hard to buy and build a farm, to make a living and a life for our family.

In your review please consider all the facts we have outlined above, the mental anguish this is causing us, the impacts to our physical and mental well-being, and the fact that we must live with this for the rest of our lives. The trauma of going through this process on top of the bushfires and trying to recover from all of this is enormous to our family and even our family that are not living on the property. Humelink must be undergrounded!

Regards

The Breward family