

Submission  
No 68

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

**Name:** Name suppressed  
**Date Received:** 12 July 2023

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Partially  
Confidential

Dear The Hon Emily Suvaal MLC,

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

Internationally, Governments are choosing undergrounding on the basis that all costs, including environmental and social costs conclude that underground transmission is the cheapest long term solution. HVDC underground transmission, proposed for undergrounding HumeLink, has less transmission losses than AC overhead lines and so has offsetting energy efficiency benefits over the life of the project.

Undergrounding is also chosen due to it's benefits including:

- No risk of undergrounding causing a fire
- No restriction or hazard on safe firefighting
- Protection of the infrastructure from severe weather and fire events
- Will not impede agricultural operations
- No impact on landscape and amenity and

Significantly reduced impact on biodiversity as a much smaller easement is required

Our government are telling us that that renewable energy, like solar and wind will reduce the cost of electricity. Given this, it's critical that a better environmental option for transporting electricity, like undergrounding, isn't rejected on the basis of cost.

The benefits to the communities and the environment will last for generations.

Undergrounding will grant Transgrid Social licence, there will no longer be community opposition as concerns will be resolved with an underground solution. The community will work with the Government and TransGrid to assist in anyway possible to ensure the timetable is met.

There are greatly reduced environmental impacts with UG compared with the overhead lines.

Undergrounding requires a 15 m easement compared with a 70m easement OH

Much reduced removal of trees and plants

Reduction in endangered species types being killed (82 species impacted by HumeLink)

Land above UG cable can be rejuvenated after construction

No towers and wires interfering with bird flight or climbing animals

Eliminates the risk of OH lines causing fires (see California 2018.....84 dead and the town of Paradise destroyed. Fire started by power lines)

Eliminates air and ground fire control hazards

Eliminates the risk of interruption to power transmission in severe weather and/or bushfires and improves transmission security and resilience

Minimal impact on public or private land after construction is complete

No OH lines impeding agricultural operations, machinery use, irrigation, drones or aircraft operation.

No visual impact from the transmission lines and so no loss of of visual and rural landscape character.

Little of no electromagnetic field impacts, therefore less risk of serious health impacts plus no interruption to new technologies like precision agriculture that improve the productive efficiency of agriculture.

It would seem to the ordinary person that there is no doubt that the cheapest option is not the best option, that to get the full benefit we must commit to Worlds Best Practice and choose to put the power lines Underground.

Kind regards,